

Downtown Specific Plan Amendments Ad-Hoc Subcommittee

TO: Historic Preservation Commission, Staff

FROM: Ad-Hoc Subcommittee

SUBJECT: Proposed Amendments to the Downtown Specific Plan

BACKGROUND:

The current version of the Downtown Specific Plan (DSP) is a document that serves to implement the goals and policies for Downtown Escondido as identified in the 2012 General Plan. The DSP establishes seven land use districts and provides zoning, design policies, standards, and guidelines for each. As an implementation tool, the DSP includes design review procedures, and contains a matrix identifying the review process required for various types of construction and development activity.

The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) was established 40 years ago to oversee historic preservation efforts in the city and to protect historic and cultural resources that are significant to Escondido's heritage.

According to the current Municipal Code Sec. 33-791. Historic Preservation Commission:

- (a) Established membership. An historic preservation commission (HPC), shall be established by and serve at the discretion of the city council. The HPC shall act in an advisory capacity to the city council and planning commission in **all matters relating to the identification, protection, retention and preservation of historical sites and areas within the city**. All members of the HPC shall have demonstrated **special interest, competence, experience or knowledge in historical preservation**. Prior to appointment by mayor, the prospective HPC members shall have demonstrated that they meet the **requirements of a commissioner set forth under the certified local government guidelines**.
- (b) HPC duties. The HPC shall act in an advisory capacity to the city council and planning commission **in all matters relating to the identification, protection, retention, and preservation of historical sites and areas within the city...**

In other words, the Historic Preservation Commission members are specifically qualified to determine the appropriateness of modifications to existing historic resources and infill construction within the DSP area, which features significant concentrations of historic resources within the City of Escondido.

While the DSP currently only requires HPC review for a relatively small range of modifications to resources specifically listed on the City's Historic Local Register, ANY modifications to properties throughout the DSP area, can also adversely impact numerous nearby properties on the Local Historic Register and historic areas as a whole. The matrix also states that "if standard time frames for review and consideration cannot be met, an expedited review may be accommodated subject to city approval," which potentially negates any HPC review for designated resources and potentially eligible resources.

Additionally, the Municipal Code reinforces the need for more extensive HPC review as it includes the following, pertaining to properties other than those on the Local Register: Sec. 33-790. Purpose and definitions.

- (1) *Alteration* means any exterior change or modification through public or private action of **any historical property or resource on the Escondido Historic Sites Survey**, local register or located within an historical district, affecting the exterior visual qualities of the property or resource excluding routine maintenance (masonry tuckpointing, cleaning), temporary fixtures (awnings and canopies, signs and plaques, light fixtures, portable spas, steps, and landscape accessories) and maintenance and removal of plantings and nonmature trees. Alteration also includes removal of historical resources such as mature trees and other landscape features identified on the Escondido historic sites survey as well as disturbances of archaeological sites.

The Historic Preservation Commission has a history of documented value and the commissioners' input is critical to the preservation of the historic integrity of Escondido's Downtown area, which is not only meaningful to future generations, but important to retaining the character and vibrancy of the Downtown as a thriving commercial and residential area.

SUB-COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Ad-Hoc Subcommittee has studied, discussed, and made the following recommended changes to the review procedures for the Downtown Specific Plan area.

1. HPC shall review any and all amendments to the DSP.
2. Certificates of Appropriateness (COA) shall be reviewed by the HPC for ALL properties within the Historic Downtown District (a potential historic district), including new construction and all properties 45 years of age or older throughout the DSP.

Including:

- a. All new construction, including primary structures, accessory structures, and additions for any property.
 - b. Removal, demolition, and relocation
 - c. Exterior changes to the structure and material restoration changes – architectural details and decorative elements, painting, roofs, staircases, steps (exterior), doors, windows, security grills.
 - d. Changes and modifications to the site – Grading, parking lots, surface paving, landscaping, public right-of-way improvements, light fixtures, satellite dishes, and swimming pools.
 - e. Signs, fencing walls, and retaining walls.
3. COA review shall continue for all properties on the Local Register located within the DSP area.
 4. Expedited review shall not preclude input from the HPC in the DSP area.

The intent of the additional opportunities for HPC review is not to encumber the process, but to reduce adverse impacts to historic and cultural resources located throughout the DSP areas. If time is critical for a project, the HPC could be noticed and a quorum assembled for a special meeting to provide review. It is the aim of these recommendations to better equip the DSP to fulfill the goals and policies for Downtown Escondido as presented in the General Plan in order for the area to retain its unique character and contribute to the vibrancy as a local and regional attraction featuring diverse shopping and dining opportunities.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Current Activity Construction Review Process Matrix, Figure VIII-1 of the DSP
2. Amended Activity Construction Review Process Matrix, as proposed by the ad-hoc subcommittee

Downtown Specific Plan

IMPLEMENTATION & ADMINISTRATION

**FIGURE VIII-1
ACTIVITY CONSTRUCTION REVIEW PROCESS**

Type of Work to be Done:	COA Required Reviewed by:		Building Permit Issued by: Bldg. Div.	Engineering Permits Issued by: Engin. Div.
	Staff	HPC		
<u>New Construction:</u>				
Primary Structure	X		X	
Accessory Structures	X	H	X	
Additions (including porch enclosures, dormers, etc.)	X	H	X	
Additions to Commercial Properties	X	H	X	
<u>Removal, Demolition</u>				
	X	H		
<u>Relocation</u>				
	X	H	X	
<u>Exterior Changes to the structure and material restoration changes:</u>				
Architectural details and decorative elements: (fish scale, shingles, dentils, shutters, siding, brick, stucco, metal, roof material, porches, columns, cornices, trim, railing, ornamentation, etc.)	X	H	X	
Painting – exterior	X			
Roofs (changes in shape, eaves, ornament)	X ¹	H	X	
Staircases, steps (exterior)	X ¹	H	X	
Doors	X		X	
Windows, skylights	X		X	
Mechanical systems (roof top and window units, exhaust fans, vents)	X ¹	H	X	
Storm windows, doors, security grills	X		X	
Satellite dishes	X		X	
Solar collectors			X	
<u>Changes and modifications to the site:</u>				
Grading	X			X ²
Parking lots (pavement and landscaping)	X			X ²
Surface paving	X			
Landscaping	X ¹			
Public right-of-way improvements (curb & gutters, sidewalks, street paving, driveways, curb cuts, street furniture, outdoor dining areas, etc.)	X			X ³
	X			X ³
Swimming pools	X			
Light fixtures	X			
Removal of specimen vegetation	Pursuant to Article 55, Sections 33-1068A – 33-1069			
<u>Signs</u>				
	X			
<u>Fencing walls, retaining walls</u>				
	X		X ⁴	

X = Review required for all buildings

H = Review required for properties listed on the City's Historic Local Register only. If standard timeframes for review and consideration cannot be met, an expedited review may be accommodated subject to City approval.

1. Review required for all structures EXCEPT single-family residences NOT on the Historic Local Register.
2. Grading Plan Approval and Grading Permit required for over 1 foot of fill, over 2 feet of cut, or over 200 cubic yards.
3. Encroachment Permit required for any work in the public right-of-way.
4. Fences over 6' high; retaining walls over 3' high.

Proposed

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IMPLEMENTATION & ADMINISTRATION

**FIGURE VIII-1
ACTIVITY CONSTRUCTION REVIEW PROCESS**

Type of Work to be Done:	COA Required Reviewed by:		Building Permit Issued by:	Engineering Permits Issued by:
	Staff	HPC	Bldg. Div.	Engin. Div.
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Primary Structure	X	H	X	
Accessory Structures	X	H	X	
Additions (including porch enclosures, dormers, etc.)	X	H	X	
Additions to Commercial Properties	X	H	X	
<u>Removal, Demolition</u>				
	X	H		
<u>Relocation</u>				
	X	H	X	
<u>Exterior Changes to the structure and material restoration changes:</u>				
Architectural details and decorative elements: (fish scale, shingles, dentils, shutters, siding, brick, stucco, metal, roof material, porches, columns, cornices, trim, railing, ornamentation, etc.)				
	X	H	X	
Painting – exterior	X	H		
Roofs (changes in shape, eaves, ornament)	X ¹	H	X	
Staircases, steps (exterior)	X ¹	H	X	
Doors	X	H	X	
<u>Changes and modifications to the site:</u>				
Grading	X	H		X ²
Parking lots (pavement and landscaping)	X	H		X ²
Surface paving	X	H		
Landscaping	X ¹	H		
Public right-of-way improvements (curb & gutters, sidewalks, street paving, driveways, curb cuts, street furniture, outdoor dining areas, etc.)				
	X	H		X ³
	X	H		X ³
Swimming pools	X	H		
Light fixtures	X	H		
Removal of specimen vegetation	Pursuant to Article 55, Sections 33-1068A – 33-1069			
<u>Signs</u>				
	X	H		
<u>Fencing walls, retaining walls</u>				
	X	H	X ⁴	

X = Review required for all buildings

H = Review required for all properties within the entire Historic Downtown District of the DSP, as well as all properties 45 years of age or older anywhere within the DSP.

1. Review required for all structures EXCEPT single-family residences NOT on the Historic Local Register.
2. Grading Plan Approval and Grading Permit required for over 1 foot of fill, over 2 feet of cut, or over 200 cubic yards.
3. Encroachment Permit required for any work in the public right-of-way.
4. Fences over 6' high; retaining walls over 3' high.