



Intelligent Infill

Palomar Heights Redevelopment in Escondido

Overview	The city of Escondido will be deciding the development plan for the old Palomar Hospital Site . Sierra Club is advocating for an amended development plan to require much higher density than that proposed by the developer, Integral. The site is zoned for up to 1,300 units, but the current proposal is only for 510 units. It is a 13.8 acre site.
What is the problem	The true housing shortage in our region is the need for affordable housing and housing that is affordable. We need to expand and diversify our housing options to create more local affordability and stop building the luxury units, in sprawl land use footprints. We need affordable housing and housing affordable to our professional families, teachers, public safety, health care, construction and other working families, etc...To meet climate goals new housing must be concentrated near transportation corridors. In addition to major environmental benefits, locating housing closer to jobs also lowers the transportation burden for households. In Escondido, transportation costs range from 22% of the household budget in Escondido . The current proposal is only proposing a small # of the units it is zoned for.
Relevant agencies	<p>Palomar Hospital Board – Owner of the property and party to the MOA with the city to develop the site into something beneficial for the city.</p> <p>Escondido City Council – Three votes of the City Council are needed to certify the EIR and to approve any plan.</p> <p>Integral– Developer with an option for the property and proposing the current plan.</p>
Background	The city and the PHB entered into a MOA in 2006. However, the hospital has not met its obligations under the MOA. The current needs of the city have changed and it is time for a new plan that serves the city’s current needs. MOA expired in Feb, 2020.
Sierra Club Position	Because this site is located near downtown, is infill, will not exacerbate gentrification, and is on a transit corridor, density should be maximized. This may be a case where additional city investment may result in many more housing units at a diversity of cost. Sierra Club is advocating for the maximum density at this site for climate, housing, equity, and economic and environmental reasons.
Terms to know	<p>Cal. Environmental Quality Act (CEQA): The state law requiring decision makers to understand, certify, and mitigate environmental impacts of projects they are approving.</p> <p>Environmental Impact Report (EIR): a detailed analysis of environmental impacts, project alternatives, and required mitigations.</p>
Status	<p>A Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) has been released. COMMENTS ARE DUE MAY 4TH BY 5PM. Plan to file a comment letter on the project asking for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minimum sized project of 1,100 units or more • At least 20% moderate and affordable housing
Actions	<p>Contact City Council to let them know you support higher density project in PH project. Pmcnamara@escondido.org, cmartinez@escondido.org, odiaz@escondido.org, mmorasco@escondido.org</p> <p>Get active with the Sierra Club Conservation Committee conservation@sierraclubncg.org</p>