



County of San Diego, Planning & Development Services  
**SPECIFIC PLAN/SPECIFIC PLAN  
AMENDMENT APPLICANT'S GUIDE**  
*ZONING DIVISION*

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Please review [SP/SPA coversheet](#) for submittal requirements.

Requirements for the processing of a Specific Plan/Specific Plan Amendment are based on Government Code Sections 65450-65457 and procedures of the County Departments of Planning & Development Services, Public Works, Environmental Health and Parks and Recreation. A Specific Plan is adopted and amended in the same manner as a General Plan (see Government Code Section 65350), except that a Specific Plan may be adopted by resolution or by ordinance and may be amended as often as deemed necessary by the Board of Supervisors. The County of San Diego typically adopts or amends Specific Plans by Resolution.

A Specific Plan/Specific Plan Amendment shall not be approved until it has been found that such Plan:

- Systematically implements and is consistent with the General Plan and applicable Community or Subregional Plan.
- Conforms to all applicable laws and ordinances.
- Is compatible with adjacent development.
- Demonstrates long-term feasibility of all public services and facilities and the short-term availability of those services necessary to serve the development.

Specific Plan/Specific Plan Amendments are under the jurisdiction of the Board of Supervisors. Pursuant to Government Code Section 65354, the Planning Commission must make a recommendation on the Specific Plan/Specific Plan Amendment. The Commission public hearing and notice is done pursuant to Government Code Sections 65090, 65091 and 65353.

Major Pre-application meeting is required for a Specific Plan/Specific Plan Amendment (for projects that will be heard by the Planning Commission or Board of Supervisors). [Pre-application meetings](#) are optional for other project types. Major Pre-Apps consist of a more detailed review and are intended to identify and resolve major issues that may affect project design and processing for large and/or complex projects. (Typical costs range from \$5,000.00 - \$10,000 or more).

Pre-application meetings are available to assist the public. An hourly fee is charged, check with PDS Zoning for the current rates. A pre-application meeting with a planner is often recommended when there appear to be issues which should be discussed with professional staff before a Specific Plan/Specific Plan Amendment is prepared in final form. Contact Zoning for more information in person or by phone at (858) 565-5981.

Application requirements for processing a proposed Specific Plan/Specific Plan Amendment are listed and described on this Applicant Check List. The Check List should be used to verify that an application is complete before it is submitted to the County. If the application is not complete, it may not be accepted for processing.

Information concerning Specific Plans or Specific Plan Amendments can be obtained from Zoning in person or by phone at (858) 565-5981.



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**PART I: MORATORIA**

The County Code of Regulatory Ordinance prohibits acceptance of applications for projects located in moratorium areas. Call Zoning Information (858) 565-5981 to determine whether it can be accepted for processing.

**PART II: FEES AND DEPOSITS**

All required fees and deposits must be paid on submittal of application. Checks are made payable to the "County of San Diego." Two party checks are not acceptable.

NOTE: FEES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. PLEASE CONSULT  
 PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES FOR CURRENT FEES.

**PART III: DOCUMENTS**

You must include the following documents with your submittal at the time you file your Specific Plan/Specific Plan Amendment application:

- Discretionary Permit Application [PDS-346](#). Complete the front of this form. The back will be completed at time of submittal by Zoning staff.
- Environmental Documents. (See Sec. 81.302 of County Code of Regulatory Ordinances.)
  - One (1) completed copy of [PDS-367](#), Application for Environmental Initial Study (AEIS), USGS map with site marked and photos with directions marked.
- OR**
- For an application covered by a previous environmental document, submit four (4) copies of Environmental Review Update Application [PDS-366](#) and one (1) copy of the original AEIS.
- Evidence of Legal Parcel [PDS-320](#), See Policy G-3, [PDS-219](#). Top half must be completed and signed.
- Disclosure Statement [PDS-305](#). Must be completed, signed and dated.
- Associated requests for Rezones, Tentative Maps, Major Use Permits, Variances, Boundary Adjustments, etc. being filed concurrently\_\_\_\_\_.
- School Service Letter(s) [PDS-399SC](#). Must be completed and signed by each school district for Elementary, Junior High and High School.
- Sewer Service Letter [PDS-399S](#). Must be completed and signed by the district or public agency which would provide sewer service for the project (If applicable).
- Water Service Letter [PDS-399W](#). Must be completed and signed by the district or public agency which would provide water service for the project (If applicable).
- Fire Protection Service Letter [PDS-399F](#). Must be completed and signed by the district or public agency which would provide fire protection service for the project.



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- Public Notice [PDS-514](#), [515](#), [516](#), [524](#). PDS must notify all property owners within 300 feet of the Specific Plan and a minimum of 20 different property owners ([Board Policy I-49](#)). In order to complete the notification, the following must be submitted with the application (refer to [PDS-516](#) for detailed instructions):
  - a. Separate sheets (11" x 17") of the San Diego County Assessor's Map(s) showing the entire property outlined in red with a green line encircling the property at a distance of 300 feet from the property line. Each parcel lying wholly or in part within the 300 feet shall have its number highlighted in yellow. Assessor's maps must be 11" x 17" (full size) at true scale and not reduced.
  - b. Typed list of all affected property owners (parcels highlighted in yellow above) by Assessor's Parcel Number with name and address. Minimum of 20 different property owners. (The addresses must be of the property owner and not the lessee or renter.)
  - c. One set of stamped and addressed (typed) plain (no letterhead) envelopes 4¼" x 9½" "business" size) for each property owner on the list. If a property owner has several parcels you need only submit one envelope. No enclosed business cards are allowed. Planning & Development Services will provide the return address at intake.
- Completed Public Notice Certification [PDS-514](#). This form, signed by the applicant, certifies that the names and addresses submitted with the Public Notice Package are from the latest adopted San Diego tax roll. You should be aware that if any of this information is incorrect, the processing may be delayed.
- Supplemental Public Notice. Board Policy I-49, Items 2 and 3, pertains to notification of apartment building and mobilehome park residents. Comply with the requirements listed in the Supplemental Public Notice Procedure [PDS-298](#) and submit a completed Supplemental Public Notice Certification [PDS-299](#).
- Vicinity Map and Project Summary [PDS-524](#). Must be completed and a vicinity map prepared according to the instruction form.
- Acknowledgement of Filing Fees and Deposits [PDS-126](#). Applicant must sign the back half of the application to acknowledge that there may be additional deposits required after the initial deposit. This assists the County in seeking full recovery of the processing costs (Board of Supervisors Policy B-29).

**PART IV: SPECIFIC PLAN TEXT AND MAP**

- See [coversheet](#) for required number of text and maps. The map should be folded as an insert in the back of the text. The following is a suggested format for a Specific Plan. (Refer to Section 65451 of the Government Code)

**1. INTRODUCTORY PLAN INFORMATION**

- a. Title page; the name of the Specific Plan, name of project applicant, name of preparer and date prepared; table of contents; list of tables and list of diagrams and maps.



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**2. INTRODUCTION**

- a. Detailed project description.
- b. Purpose of the Specific Plan and governmental authority.
- c. Project location, including adjacent jurisdictions
- d. Description of existing land uses, General Plan designation and zoning.
- e. Development and conservation issues addressed in the plan.
- f. Planning area information and environmental description.
- g. Discussion of concurrent processing if proposed.
- h. Typical graphics include:
  - i. Vicinity map/regional setting.
  - ii. Site location including adjacent jurisdictions.
  - iii. Existing General Plan designations, project site and surrounding area.
  - iv. Existing Zoning, project site and surrounding area.

**3. DESIGN INFLUENCES**

- a. Specific Plan goals and objectives.
- b. A written discussion of the location, regional setting and existing surrounding land uses with supporting diagrams and aerial photo(s).
- c. Opportunities and constraints.
  - i. Site characteristics and significant environmental resources.
  - ii. Encumbrances, i.e., easements, roads, and trails.
- d. Typical graphics include:
  - i. Aerial photo(s) showing existing surrounding land uses.
  - ii. Opportunities and constraints.
  - iii. Slope analysis.
  - iv. Encumbrances.

**4. LAND USE PLAN**

- a. Development plan that includes a statement of development policies (opportunities, issues and analysis of data) pertaining to the planned type, intensity and location of land uses consisting of written text and appropriate diagrams and graphics:
  - i. Objectives.
  - ii. Policies.
  - iii. Programs.
  - iv. A diagram and written description of the planned land uses.
  - v. Characteristics of each land use designation, i.e., single-family residential, neighborhood commercial, open space, etc.
  - vi. A Specific Plan map/land use plan.
- b. Open space and private and community recreational elements.
- c. Landscape concepts, including streetscapes, manufactured slopes and community recreation areas.
- d. Circulation.
  - i. Regional and local road access.
  - ii. On-site circulation.
  - iii. Existing and proposed non-vehicular circulation system, i.e., trails and bikeways.
  - iv. Public and private street standards, including cross-sections.



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- v. Public transportation.
- vi. Typical graphics include:
  - 1. A land use summary table.
  - 2. A specific plan map showing proposed land uses.
  - 3. Proposed and existing open space.
  - 4. Conceptual landscape plan.
  - 5. Circulation plan, including trails and bikeways.
  - 6. Typical roadway and trail sections – on and off-site.

e. PUBLIC FACILITIES/ INFRASTRUCTURE

- i. Water and sewer service including existing conditions and proposed improvements.
- ii. Fire protection, including existing facilities, emergency response times and proposed improvements.
- iii. Schools, existing conditions, impact from the proposed project and proposed improvements.
- iv. Typical graphics include:
  - 1. Existing and proposed water facilities/lines, including size of pipes.
  - 2. Existing and proposed sewer facilities/lines, including size of pipes.
  - 3. Existing and proposed fire protection facilities.

f. IMPLEMENTATION

- i. Regulations and ordinances that will implement the specific plan, i.e., Rezone, Tentative Map, Major Use Permit, etc.
- ii. Design Guidelines, if proposed, and implementation strategy.
- iii. Project phasing, if proposed.
- iv. Maintenance responsibilities for open space, parks, trails, private streets, landscaping, etc.
- v. Typical graphics include:
  - 1. Phasing plan

g. PUBLIC FACILITIES FINANCING PLAN

- i. Required improvements, including roads, water, sewer, fire, schools, open space and recreation facilities, etc.
- ii. Financing options, i.e., general fund, county service areas, Mello-Roos Community Facilities Act, assessment districts, development fees, homeowners' associations, etc.
- iii. Recommended financing mechanisms.

5. **CONSISTENCY WITH THE GENERAL PLAN AND APPLICABLE COMMUNITY OR SUBREGIONAL PLAN**

- a. Conformance to the pertinent goals, objectives, and policies of all of the Elements of the General Plan and the applicable Community or Subregional Plan. The General Plan goal/objective/policy must be stated as written in the General Plan text and then followed by a discussion of the how the proposal is consistent with or furthers achievement of the goal/objective/policy. It is acceptable to group goals/objectives/policies if they are closely



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related. However, the discussion must clearly indicate how the project is consistent with each of the goals/policies/objectives.

**6. APPENDICES**

- a. A Specific Plan Map at 200' scale placed in a map pocket.
- b. Public Facility Availability Forms and conditions or letters from serving district.