

Where a project is subject to design review pursuant to Sections 23.08.030 and 23.08.040 of the Encinitas Municipal Code, applicants should review these design guidelines. These guidelines shall be used prior to initiating the project design and throughout the design process. Specific plan areas contain separate design guidelines, and applicants for projects located in those areas should instead refer to the design recommendations in the applicable specific plan.

1. Introduction and Background

1.1 Community Description

The City of Encinitas is a unique collection of 5 distinct communities. The individuality of each Community is vital to the overall character of the City and shall be maintained. Architecture, landforms, landscape and streetscape are the primary determinants of this character. The City of Encinitas also is fortunate in that it contains a wide variety of topographic features. The city is bounded on the north and south by lagoons and their associated valleys. The Pacific Ocean lies to the west and steeper inland hills lie to the east.

Three of the communities are located along the coastline (Cardiff-by-the-Sea, Old Encinitas and Leucadia) and represent the older established beach communities. The primary land use is single-family residential, with some multi-family closer to the beach. Commercial/office uses are located typically along Highway 101 on small lots. Highway 101 and the I-5 Freeway traverse these communities. The combination of varied architecture, narrow uncurbed streets, pedestrian orientation, and mature, unplanned landscaping creates an informal, eclectic, small town feel that dominates the character of these communities.

The New Encinitas Community is centrally located within the City. A variety of land uses are located within the community with the primary land use being single-family residential. Major institutional and commercial uses are located along El Camino Real, the prime arterial roadway for the City, and Encinitas Boulevard. This



*Figure 1-1
Communities of Encinitas*

community is considered more of a planned community with a variety of private and public open space areas.

The Olivenhain Community is a rural community with an informal character having large residential lots, mature landscaping, equestrian facilities, open space, a variety of recreational trails, and rolling hills and canyons. Narrow roads with minimal improvements are associated with this rural community.

1.2 Background

To help develop the design guidelines for Encinitas, a series of community character workshops were conducted in November of 1999. At the conclusion of the five workshops, a common theme for each of the communities could be seen. There was pride in the prevailing character, especially in the older communities, and a concern that the inappropriate use and reuse of land was having a negative impact on the character of the communities.

Please refer to the City of Encinitas Community Character Workshops Summary Report, October 2000, for more information regarding these workshops.

1.3 Purpose of the Guidelines

The purpose of these guidelines is to guide development within the City of Encinitas toward design that is consistent with the character of each community. Architecture, landscaping and site planning are important to preserving the individual identity of each community.

The Design Guidelines are intended to promote well-designed development in Encinitas. The interpretation and implementation of the Design Guidelines shall be based on the following points:

- (1) Maintain and enhance the character of each community;
- (2) Contribute to a positive physical image and identity;
- (3) Supplement the development standards of the Encinitas Municipal Code on matters of design and aesthetics;
- (4) Implement the goals, objectives, and policies of the General Plan;
- (5) Maintain and protect the value of property; and
- (6) Maintain community character without unduly restricting private enterprise, or innovation in design.

These guidelines describe the preferred architectural character and development patterns within Encinitas today. Eclecticism and diversity are, and will continue to be, dominant themes. The guidelines, therefore, do not seek to impose an overriding style, a limited color palette, nor an artificial theme. They do seek to assist in promoting the positive design characteristics that exist throughout the City of Encinitas.

The design guidelines complement mandatory development standards by providing additional requirements and good examples of appropriate design solutions. The guidelines are more qualitative and less quantitative than mandatory development standards, and may be applied with some flexibility in the application to specific projects.

The guidelines are not to be used in a manner that would modify the density allowances of the underlying zoning of the subject property or modify the development standards of the Municipal Code applicable to that zone.

1.4 How to Use the Design Guidelines

Project proponents should review these design guidelines. These guidelines shall be used prior to initiating the project design and throughout the design process.

Examples contained in these guidelines should not be considered as the only design solution, but as a starting point

for the design process. Owners of properties should strive to be creative and innovative, and should look beyond franchise or boilerplate architectural and landscape design treatments. It is important, too, that property owners involve City staff, community groups, residents, and affected merchants and business owners in the design process prior to making a significant investment in design.

1.5 Interpretation of Provisions

The authorized agency shall be the designated authority to interpret and apply the Design Guidelines. Interpretations and application of the guidelines shall be based on the application submittal, the context and applicability of the guideline, and the design Guidelines as a whole.

Some guidelines may not apply to all projects due to a variety of reasons, such as land use, architectural design, site-specific location issues, and character of the neighborhood. Interpretations and application of the guidelines should achieve the Purpose of the Guidelines located in the Introduction and the Guiding Principles contained in each section.

The development standards are considered minimum standards. The design guidelines complement those standards and may, depending on circumstances, result in a project that exceeds the minimum development standards.

To aid in the interpretation of these guidelines, a development applicant should understand the meaning of “**shall**,” “**should**,” “**encouraged**,” and “**discouraged**”.

Guidelines, which employ the word “**shall**” are mandatory.

Guidelines, which employ the word “**should**” are intended to express the City’s desire and expectation. An alternative measure may be considered if it meets or exceeds the intent of the guideline.

Guidelines, which employ the word “**encouraged**” are intended to express a more desirable design solution.

Guidelines, which employ the word “**discouraged**” are intended to express a less desirable design solution.

1.6 Applicability

The provisions of the Guidelines are applicable to all development within the City of Encinitas that is subject to design review, as stipulated in Chapter 23.08 of the Encinitas Municipal Code.

1.7. Design Review Process

Specific submittal requirements for projects are described in the City of Encinitas Administrative and Discretionary Permit Applications.

Following submittal of the project drawings and a complete application, a continuing exchange of information should occur as the design is finalized and the City’s review process begins.

1.8 Design Review Approvals

Obtaining a Design Review approval signifies a project’s compliance with the architectural appearance and physical development of the City of Encinitas. Future alterations and/or remodeling of a project with a Design Review approval would be reviewed within the context of the original design review approval.