



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

LAND USE AGENDA ITEM

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

PALOMA AGUIRRE
First District

JOEL ANDERSON
Second District

TERRA LAWSON-REMER
Third District

MONICA MONTGOMERY STEPPE
Fourth District

JIM DESMOND
Fifth District

DATE: April 22, 2026

09

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT

HARMONY GROVE VILLAGE LIVE/WORK GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT, SPECIFIC PLAN AMENDMENT, TENTATIVE MAP, SITE PLAN, MAJOR USE PERMIT MODIFICATION AND CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) ADDENDUM (DISTRICT: 3)

OVERVIEW

The Harmony Grove Village Specific Plan was approved by the Board of Supervisors (Board) in 2007 to allow a mixed-use, residential village with up to 742 dwelling units, along with supporting commercial uses, open space, parks, recreational facilities, and infrastructure. As currently developed, Harmony Grove Village is largely built out, with remaining opportunities for future development limited. The proposed Harmony Grove Village Live/Work (HGVLW) Project within the original approved Specific Plan area, proposing a total of 27 live/work units, is located on approximately two acres in the San Dieguito Community Plan Area. Live/work units are residential units designed to accommodate small-scale business or professional activities within the same structure, allowing occupants to both live and work on-site. The proposed Project includes a Specific Plan Amendment and modification to the approved Major Use Permit, formally transitioning the site from its previously envisioned commercial designation to residential use and authorizing an updated total unit count. These changes are intended to implement a community-oriented live/work residential project that aligns with the existing development pattern and character of Harmony Grove Village.

The 27 units proposed in this Project would be bisected by Country Living Way, with nine units and the historic Johnston/Ward House located on the southern side, and 18 units on the northern side (see Attachment H, Project Site Plan). Residential units would range from approximately 2,200 to 2,700 square feet, with each unit featuring a rear-facing two-car garage. The Project site is located at the northwest and southwest corners of Country Club Drive and Country Living Way within the San Dieguito Community Plan Area. The site is located approximately a half of a mile southwest of the City of Escondido, approximately a mile southeast of the City of San Marcos, and approximately a fourth of a mile north of Escondido Creek. The Project site is currently vacant other than the existing historic Johnston/Ward House, which was relocated to the site in 2015. The historic structure would remain unaltered and is intended to be rehabilitated and operated by a third party.

SUBJECT: HARMONY GROVE VILLAGE LIVE/WORK GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT, SPECIFIC PLAN AMENDMENT, TENTATIVE MAP, SITE PLAN, MAJOR USE PERMIT MODIFICATION AND CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) ADDENDUM (DISTRICT: 3)

The original Harmony Grove Village Specific Plan permitted a total of 742 units throughout the community; however, 739 have already been constructed, leaving only three remaining units available within the applicable planning area for the proposed Project site instead of the 27 needed to complete this project. As such, the applicant is requesting a General Plan Amendment (GPA) to revise the Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove portion of the San Dieguito Community Plan allowing the additional project units to be counted within the community total; an amendment of the Harmony Grove Village Specific Plan to incorporate the live/work units and associated development standards; a Tentative Map to establish lots; the approval of a Major Use Permit Modification to modify the existing entitlements for the Harmony Grove Village development; and a site plan for Community Design Review. This request would not have any impact on the separate Harmony Grove Village South project, located approximately one-half mile south of the Project site, which was approved by the Board on October 1, 2025 (4).

Today's requested actions are for the Board to consider amendments to the General Plan confined to the Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove Community Plan, together with amendments to the Harmony Grove Village Specific Plan, and approval of the associated implementing actions, including a Tentative Map, Major Use Permit Modification, Site Plan and environmental documentation.

**RECOMMENDATION(S)
PLANNING COMMISSION**

On January 9, 2026, the Planning Commission considered the Harmony Grove Village Live/Work Project and made the following recommendations to the Board of Supervisors:

1. Adopt the Environmental Findings which includes the adoption of an Addendum to the existing Environmental Impact Report for Harmony Grove Village (EIR), REF: PDS2024-ER-17-08-003A) (Attachment A).
2. Adopt a Resolution entitled: A RESOLUTION OF THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ADOPTING GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT (GPA) PDS2025-GPA-25-006, for the reason stated therein and discussed in this report (Attachment B).
3. Adopt a Resolution entitled: A RESOLUTION OF THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS APPROVING SPECIFIC PLAN AMENDMENT SPA-25-001(Harmony Grove Village Specific Plan), for the reason stated therein and discussed in this report (Attachment C).
4. Adopt a Resolution entitled: A RESOLUTION OF THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS CONDITIONALLY APPROVING TENTATIVE MAP PDS2025-TM-5660, which includes those requirements and conditions necessary to ensure that the Project is implemented in a manner consistent with State law and County of San Diego (County) Regulations (Attachment D).

SUBJECT: HARMONY GROVE VILLAGE LIVE/WORK GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT, SPECIFIC PLAN AMENDMENT, TENTATIVE MAP, SITE PLAN, MAJOR USE PERMIT MODIFICATION AND CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) ADDENDUM (DISTRICT: 3)

5. Grant Major Use Permit Modification PDS2025-MUP-04-012W1 and impose the requirements and conditions set forth in the Form of Decision Approving PDS2025-MUP-04-012W1 (Attachment E).
6. Grant the accompanying Site Plan PDS2024-STP-24-007 and impose the requirements and conditions set forth in the Form of Decision Approving PDS2024-STP-24-007 (Attachment F).

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Planning & Development Services (PDS) concurs with the recommendations made by the Planning Commission, and makes the following additional recommendations to the Board of Supervisors (Board):

1. Require the applicant to enter into a standard Defense and Indemnification Agreement with the County of San Diego (County) in accordance with County Code Section 86.201 et seq. and authorize the Director of PDS to execute the Agreement. If litigation is filed challenging the Board's action on this Project, require H Grove N K Investors, LLC to provide security in the amount of \$850,000, either as an irrevocable letter of credit or bond (whichever is acceptable to County Counsel), within 10 days of litigation being filed (Attachment N).

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

This amendment is aligned with the goal of providing housing opportunities that meet the needs of the community. The approval of the Project would provide 27 new housing units in the Harmony Grove-Elfin Forest Subarea of the San Dieguito community. The Project does not displace existing residents, preserves a historic structure, and supports economic activity by allowing residents to live and work in the same location. Overall, the Project contributes to community vitality while maintaining compatibility with surrounding development and access to services.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The proposed development would convert a previously designated commercial site to 27 live/work units, reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and associated emissions through lower trip generation and internalized commutes. By promoting compact, mixed-use development, the Project advances General Plan smart growth policies and supports Climate Action Plan strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle dependency. The Project's compact footprint minimizes land disturbance, and the preservation and adaptive reuse of the existing historic structure conserves materials and embodied energy, furthering the County's long-term sustainability and resource conservation goals.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with today's recommendations. There will be no change in net General Fund costs and no additional staff years.

SUBJECT: HARMONY GROVE VILLAGE LIVE/WORK GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT, SPECIFIC PLAN AMENDMENT, TENTATIVE MAP, SITE PLAN, MAJOR USE PERMIT MODIFICATION AND CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) ADDENDUM (DISTRICT: 3)

BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT

N/A

ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT

The Project site is located within the Harmony Grove Village Specific Plan Area of the San Dieguito Community Plan Area, which is represented by the San Dieguito Community Planning Group (CPG). On July 10, 2025, the San Dieguito CPG voted to recommend approval of the Project as proposed by a vote of 10-0-2-0-1 (10 ayes, 0 noes, 2 absent, 0 abstain, 1 vacant).

INVOLVED PARTIES

H Grove NK Investors, LLC by NUWI Capital, Inc. (Owner/Developer).

PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE

On January 9, 2026, the Planning Commission voted 5-0-2-0-0 (Ayes:5; Noes: 0; Absent: 2; Abstain: 0; Recused: 0) to recommend approval of the Project on consent.

See Attachment N, Planning Commission Report and Action Sheet, for the Planning Commission vote and recommendation.

BACKGROUND

The Project site is located within the San Dieguito Community Planning Area and is within Harmony Grove Village, a planned community in unincorporated San Diego County. Harmony Grove Village encompasses approximately 468 acres and is bounded by the City of Escondido to the east and the City of San Marcos to the north-northwest.

The Harmony Grove Village Specific Plan was approved in 2007 to allow a mixed-use, rural residential village with up to 742 dwelling units, along with supporting commercial uses, open space, parks, recreational facilities, and infrastructure. As currently developed, Harmony Grove Village is largely built out, with remaining opportunities for future development limited to this site and one additional location that is currently under development. The Project site is located near the village core and is adjacent to Fourth of July Park, a 2.5-acre public park. Existing single-family and live/work residential development surrounds the site. The northwest portion of the site contains the historic Johnston/Ward House, relocated to the site in 2015 and protected under a conservation easement. No changes to the historic structure are proposed. The remainder of the site is vacant and was previously graded. The proposal promotes development of the site in a manner that is compatible with surrounding residential uses and consistent with the Village's established development pattern.

Project Description

The Project proposes 27 live/work units on a two-acre site within the Harmony Grove Village Specific Plan area that is currently designated for office, retail, or residential uses. The proposed subdivision would create 24 lots, including 14 residential lots, two common condominium lots containing 13 live/work units, and a separate lot for the historic Johnston/Ward House.

SUBJECT: HARMONY GROVE VILLAGE LIVE/WORK GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT, SPECIFIC PLAN AMENDMENT, TENTATIVE MAP, SITE PLAN, MAJOR USE PERMIT MODIFICATION AND CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) ADDENDUM (DISTRICT: 3)

General Plan and Community Plan Amendment (GPA)

The Project proposes a GPA to modify the Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove Subarea Plan of the San Dieguito Community Plan. The original Harmony Grove Village Specific Plan permitted up to 742 units; however, 739 units have been constructed elsewhere within the community to this point, leaving an insufficient allotment available for the Project's 27 units.

Specific Plan Amendment

The Project includes a Specific Plan Amendment to revise the Harmony Grove Village Specific Plan to incorporate the proposed live-work units. The amendment would formally replace the planned office/retail space with the proposed live/work residences, as indicated as an alternative for the site in the original Specific Plan for Harmony Grove Village. This change would facilitate associated adjustments to total land use acreage and updates to applicable tables, figures, and narrative text within the Harmony Grove Village Specific Plan. As part of the proposed Specific Plan Amendment, the total dwelling unit count would be updated to reflect an increase from 742 to 769 units.

Tentative Map

The Project proposes a Tentative Map that will subdivide the approximately three-acre site into 24 lots. Of the 24 lots, 14 will be for individual market-rate single-family homes, and two will be condominium lots allowing 13 units. The remaining lots would provide private road and pedestrian infrastructure, landscape buffers, drainage and detention facilities, and dedication of the historic Johnston/Ward home site for community use. The proposed residential units, ranging from approximately 2,200 to 2,700 square feet, are consistent in scale and character with existing live/work units within Harmony Grove Village.

Major Use Permit Modification

The Project includes a Major Use Permit Modification to amend the existing entitlement applicable to the site. The existing Major Use Permit authorizes a total of 739 dwelling units along with associated recreational facilities within the Harmony Grove Village community. The proposed modification would revise the permit to reflect the additional units proposed as part of this Project.

Site Plan Permit

The Project site is subject to a "B" Special Area Designation and requires Design Review. The "B" Special Area Designator is a zoning designation defined in the San Diego County Zoning Ordinance that requires Community Design Review and site plan approval. The purpose of the Site Plan review process is to ensure that proposed structures and site improvements are compatible with the character of the site, surrounding development, and the broader community.

PROJECT ANALYSIS

Planning & Development Services (PDS) reviewed the Project for conformance with all relevant ordinances and guidelines, including the San Diego County General Plan. A summary of the Project's consistency with applicable codes, policies, and ordinances is provided below.

SUBJECT: HARMONY GROVE VILLAGE LIVE/WORK GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT, SPECIFIC PLAN AMENDMENT, TENTATIVE MAP, SITE PLAN, MAJOR USE PERMIT MODIFICATION AND CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) ADDENDUM (DISTRICT: 3)

Community Character and Visual Impacts

The Project has been reviewed for consistency with applicable County plans, policies, and development standards that govern residential development within Harmony Grove Village. These include the County of San Diego General Plan (General Plan), the Harmony Grove Village Community Plan, applicable zoning and subdivision regulations, and County design, landscaping, and safety standards.

The Project site is located within the designated village center, an area planned to accommodate residential development in a compact and integrated manner. The surrounding neighborhood consists of single-family homes developed under prior discretionary approvals that established the overall character of the village. The site is zoned Specific Planning Area (S88), and under the approved Specific Plan, allows for office, retail, or residential uses, with the option to develop live/work units where market demand for commercial uses is insufficient.

Commercial development of the site is no longer considered feasible due to a combination of physical constraints related to site access, traffic circulation, and engineering and utility limitations, combined with limited market demand and the surrounding land use context. Evaluation of the originally planned retail and office program identified site access and circulation limitations that would have directed commercial traffic through neighboring residential development, resulting in increased traffic volumes, operational challenges, and compatibility concerns.

In contrast, the proposed development aligns with the village's established residential character, generates fewer and more predictable vehicle trips, and avoids the circulation impacts associated with commercial uses. The proposed development is consistent with the planned framework of the Specific Plan and does not introduce land uses or development patterns that are inconsistent with the surrounding area.

The Project's layout, building scale, and overall design have been evaluated to ensure compatibility with adjacent residential uses. The proposed development maintains appropriate setbacks, building massing, and site organization consistent with County standards and the established village character. These features help minimize potential visual and land use conflicts with surrounding properties.

A Conceptual Landscape Plan has been prepared for the Project. The plan provides landscaped setbacks, street trees, and visual buffering that help integrate the Project into the surrounding neighborhood and enhance the public streetscape. The use of drought-tolerant and native plant species is consistent with County water efficiency and sustainability policies. Together, these measures support the finding that the Project is compatible with its surroundings and consistent with applicable County policies.

SUBJECT: HARMONY GROVE VILLAGE LIVE/WORK GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT, SPECIFIC PLAN AMENDMENT, TENTATIVE MAP, SITE PLAN, MAJOR USE PERMIT MODIFICATION AND CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) ADDENDUM (DISTRICT: 3)

Cultural Resources

The Project site has been reviewed for potential tribal and cultural resources in accordance with Senate Bill 18 (SB 18), which requires consultation with affected tribal governments when a project may impact cultural resources. SB 18 consultation was conducted for the original Harmony Grove Village project as well as the GPA and Specific Plan Amendment associated with the Project.

The site was previously monitored for cultural and archaeological resources during grading activities, and no resources were identified at that time. However, due to the nature of the site and surrounding area, there remains the potential for previously unidentified resources to be present. As a result, the Project will include tribal and archaeological monitoring during future grading and construction activities.

The County remains committed to meaningful and ongoing consultation with tribal governments and recognizes the importance of tribal knowledge in identifying and protecting cultural resources. Through continued coordination and monitoring, the Project incorporates measures intended to avoid or minimize impacts to cultural resources. These actions support the protection of tribal cultural heritage and ensure that development occurs in a manner that is respectful of the site's historical and cultural context.

Historical Resources

The Project site includes the historic Johnston/Ward House, an existing structure that was previously relocated to the site. No structural changes or exterior modifications to the historic building are proposed as part of the Project. The Project does include subdividing the lot containing the Johnston/Ward House so that it may be sold separately from the proposed residential development.

The Johnston/Ward House was identified as a historically significant resource in the original Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for Harmony Grove Village due to its age, association with the early history of the Ward Ranch, and the integrity of the structure. To address potential impacts, a conservation easement was granted to the County of San Diego at the time the house was relocated to the site. This easement remains in effect and protects the historic resource by prohibiting demolition or exterior alterations.

The Project does not propose any changes to the Johnston/Ward House and includes parking to support its continued use. While the building is currently vacant, the long-term plan for the structure remains unchanged. The house is intended to be restored and operated by a third party for an allowed commercial use, public museum, heritage gallery, and/or community meeting space. These measures ensure the continued preservation of the Johnston/Ward House and allow it to remain an integrated and protected historic resource within Harmony Grove Village.

SUBJECT: HARMONY GROVE VILLAGE LIVE/WORK GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT, SPECIFIC PLAN AMENDMENT, TENTATIVE MAP, SITE PLAN, MAJOR USE PERMIT MODIFICATION AND CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) ADDENDUM (DISTRICT: 3)

ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

The Project has been reviewed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). An Addendum dated October 16, 2025, to the previously approved Environmental Impact Report (EIR) (Log No. 04-08-011), was prepared and is on file with Planning & Development Services as Environmental Review No. PDS2004-3910-0408011. The Final EIR for the Harmony Grove Village Specific Plan was certified by the Board of Supervisors in February 2007. The Project would not result in any new significant environmental impacts or substantially worsen or increase the severity of impacts already identified in the Harmony Grove Village Final Environmental Impact Report.

The proposed live/work units would replace the previously approved 25,000 square feet of retail development within the same development envelope, resulting in reduced environmental impacts due to a less traffic-intensive use. In addition, the Project would improve stormwater management and further the preservation of the historic Johnston/Ward House by providing dedicated parking and enhanced site aesthetics in lieu of a commercial parking lot.

PUBLIC INPUT

At the time of application submittal and in accordance with Board Policy I-49, public notices were sent to property owners within a minimum radius of 1,500 feet of the Project site. In total, over 600 public notices were distributed during the public review period for the Project and the associated California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Addendum from October 16, 2025, to December 1, 2025.

Prior to the Planning Commission hearing on January 9, 2026, notice was sent to over 600 property owners, exceeding County Code and State law. Staff received two public inquiries, including one formal letter submitted by the San Diego County Archaeological Society and one email request from a neighboring property owner. These inquiries focused on the preservation of the historic Johnston/Ward House and the implementation of dust control and mitigation measures during construction activities. In addition, the Harmony Grove Village Homeowners Association submitted comments expressing concern regarding the proposed use of the historic Johnston/Ward House in relation to the Project. Specifically, the Association requested clarification and revisions to the project description to more clearly state that the historic structure would be rehabilitated and operated by a third-party entity for use and enjoyment by the broader community. With these changes, the Homeowners Association indicated their support for the project.

DEPARTMENT REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

The Project will provide new housing opportunities while preserving an existing historic structure for future utilization by the community. The Project would also implement a previously analyzed alternative use for the site, allowing development to proceed in the absence of market demand for retail while maintaining the site's aesthetic character and compatibility with the surrounding community.

SUBJECT: HARMONY GROVE VILLAGE LIVE/WORK GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT, SPECIFIC PLAN AMENDMENT, TENTATIVE MAP, SITE PLAN, MAJOR USE PERMIT MODIFICATION AND CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) ADDENDUM (DISTRICT: 3)

LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN

Today's proposed action supports the Strategic Initiatives of Equity, Empower, and Community in the County of San Diego's 2026-2031 Strategic Plan by ensuring that San Diego is a vibrant region with planning, development, infrastructure, and services that strengthen the local economy. The Project is aligned with the goal to provide housing opportunities because it will create 27 new housing units within a developed village area with amenities, including trails, parks and open space.

Respectfully submitted,



DAHVIA LYNCH

Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENT(S)

Note: Due to the size of the attachments, the documents are available online through the Clerk of the Board's website at www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/cob/bosa.html.

Attachment A – Environmental Findings

Attachment B – A RESOLUTION OF THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ADOPTING GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT (GPA) PDS2025-GPA-25-006

Exhibit A – Amendment to the San Dieguito Community Plan

Attachment C – A RESOLUTION OF THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS APPROVING SPECIFIC PLAN AMENDMENT SPA-25-001(Harmony Grove Village Specific Plan)

Exhibit B – Amendment to the Harmony Grove Village Specific Plan

Attachment D – A RESOLUTION OF THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS CONDITIONALLY APPROVING TENTATIVE MAP PDS2025-TM-5660

Exhibit C – Grading Plan

Attachment E – Form of Decision Approving PDS2025-MUP-04-012W1

Attachment F – Form of Decision Approving PDS2024-STP-24-007

Attachment G – Public Documentation

Attachment H – Planning Documentation

Attachment I – Addendum to the previously certified Final Environmental Impact Report and Notice of Determination

Attachment J – Environmental Findings

Attachment K – Ownership Disclosure

Attachment L – Service Availability Forms

Attachment M – Planning Commission Action Sheet

Attachment N – Defense and Indemnification Agreement