



Downtown Community Planning Council San Diego

Planning a Vibrant Downtown for All

Downtown Community Planning Council (DCPC) Meeting Agenda

October 15, 2025, 5:30 PM

City Hall 12th Floor Committee Room

202 C Street, San Diego, CA, 92101

[Zoom Link](#)

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To share your thoughts and comments with DCPC members, please email chair@downtownplanningsd.org.

I. Call to Order & Roll Call

II. Non-Agenda Public Comment

Public comment will be limited to 1-minute per person if there are many speakers present. Maximum of 8 non-agenda public comment speakers at this time; additional speakers can speak at the end.

III. Community Reports

A. Representatives from Elected Officials and Agencies.

IV. Committee Reports

A. Public Spaces

B. Balboa Park

V. Action Items

A. Approve August Minutes (pg. 2)

B. 2499 Pacific Hwy - Conditional Use Permit Amendment (pg. 6)

VI. Informational Items

A. Committee Reports

B. 7th & Island surface parking CUP (pg. 7)

C. Airport Transit Connection project update (pg. 8)

D. Mirka Tower Presentation (pg. 9)

VII. Remainder Non-Agenda Public Comments

The remaining non-agenda public commenters (Item III) will speak at this time.

VIII. Adjournment

Next meeting on November 12, 2025, 5:30 PM, at City Hall's 12th Floor Committee Room.

August 20, 2025 Meeting Minutes Approval

Action Item

Approve the meeting minutes for the July 16, 2025 meeting of the Downtown Community Planning Council.

Draft Minutes:

Meeting Minutes

Downtown Community Planning Council

Date: August 20, 2025

Time: Called to order at 5:31 PM, adjourned at 6:56 PM

Chair: Brendan Bargmann

Roll Call: Members present: Brendan Bargmann, Gabrielle Werve, Danny Avita, Gary Hewitt, Chris Eddy, Greg Helmer, Gregory Barr, and Bob Link. Alejandra Salas and Damon Robles participated virtually.

Public Comment (Non-Agenda)

Becky Rapp: Raised concerns about intoxicating hemp products sold in convenience stores and smoke shops, citing recent city action against the Yard Hookah Lounge in Logan Heights. Urged the council to recommend a city-wide ban and stronger zoning policies.

Community Reports

Council Member Whitburn's Office (Christina Gaffney):

- New parking meter district approved for Balboa Park (6th Avenue and Balboa Drive); meters effective October 1st at \$2.50/hour
- City agreement with Caltrans for encampment management along 5-mile freeway stretch
- HBO installation updates: 11 projects complete, 4 under construction, 9 under permitting review
- North Central Square Park design plan to be complete in 4-6 weeks
- Development Services Department headquarters relocated to Mission Valley; Planning Commission meetings now held there

Senator Whitburn's Office (Jesse): Legislature returning from summer recess; available for state agency issues

Committee Reports

Balboa Park Committee (Chris):

- Parking funds allocation still unclear regarding budget allocation
- Balboa Park Committee meeting scheduled for September 4th

Downtown Parking:

- Second monthly meeting canceled
- Little Italy Association chair stepped down; Gary serving as interim chair
- Discussion of parking district management transition and funding challenges

Action Items

1. Ballpark District Maintenance & Services

Presentation by Dominic Lamandri (New City America, District Director):

- Services began July 2nd with 22 full-time employees covering 22 blocks
- Operations: 7 days/week, 5 AM-10 PM, plus security patrol 4 PM-1 AM
- July statistics: 30,000 lbs trash collected, 1,200+ tickets resolved (100% completion rate, 83% within one hour)
- 73.5% of tickets security-related
- New equipment received; pressure washing machine arriving in two weeks
- Coordinating with Department of Public Works on abatement services

Public Comments:

- **Rob:** Expressed concern about implied designation as "sports and entertainment district" potentially changing neighborhood character without proper community input or planning review
- **Gary Smith (Downtown Residence Group):** Reported complaints about service response, particularly residents being told to call police instead of receiving direct assistance
- Multiple residents emphasized need to maintain residential emphasis zoning and prevent entertainment district creep

Board Discussion:

- Concern raised about incremental expansion of entertainment uses without discretionary review
- Discussion of Padres land holdings and development plans
- Agreement that zoning changes would require community input through the planning process
- Note that New City America agreed to remove "entertainment" language from district description

Action: Informational item; no formal vote taken

2. July Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve: Passed unanimously

3. Market Tower Design Review

Design Review Committee Report (Greg Helmer):

- Appropriate development for the area with significant improvement to blighted site
- Goals for affordable housing (30%-80% AMI, 2-3 bedroom units)
- Target: 1,000 affordable units across three planned buildings
- Minimal parking (22 surface spaces) but well-situated for public transit
- Waivers requested generally acceptable, though outdoor open space at 50% of requirement
- Project includes three towers total; only reviewing first tower

Public Comments:

- **Gary Smith:** Strong objection to 22 surface parking spaces wasting over one-third of lot; concerns about driveway widths (30-40 feet) and pick-up/drop-off access creating noise/security issues
- **Paul Jamason (virtual):** Supported project; noted need for affordable housing distributed throughout city, not just downtown
- General support for project's affordable housing goals

Board Discussion:

- Parking necessary for building services (management, maintenance, deliveries)
- Project appropriate for area near transit
- Concern about concentration of affordable housing but noted 80% AMI serves working/middle-class families
- Adjacent Padres developments will provide market-rate balance
- Trolley noise mitigation through building design standards

Motion: Approve project as presented

Vote: Unanimous approval

Non-Agenda Public Comment & Announcements

- Nolita Hall conditional use permit granted with recommended conditions
- Mission Hills organizing effort for historic designation
- Horton Plaza development: Bank foreclosed; receivership discussions ongoing; quick action expected
- California Theater settlement reached
- City Operations Building listed as surplus
- Tom's Watch Bar conducting outdoor DJ events without apparent permits; code compliance to be pursued

Meeting adjourned at 6:56 PM

2499 Pacific CUP Amendment

Downtown Community Planning Council - Action Item

Description:

A Conditional Use Permit to amend a previously approved Conditional Use Permit for the Laurel Pacific Valero gas station, in order to allow the off-site alcohol sales of distilled spirits. The site is located at 2499 Pacific Highway, at the southeast corner of West Laurel Street and Pacific Highway, in the Little Italy neighborhood of the Downtown Community Plan area, within the Mixed Commercial land use district of the Centre City Planned District, in the non-appealable area of the Coastal Overlay Zone, within the Transit Priority Area Overlay, and in Council District

Applicant will present to DCPC.

LIA opinion forthcoming.

[Application Documents](#)

Action Item

DCPC will vote on its recommendation for this CUP amendment.

7th & Island Parking Lot CUP

Downtown Community Planning Council - Informational Item

Description:

DSD asked for our input on a temporary CUP to allow a commercial surface parking lot at 7th & Island (502 7th). The application is listed as 'temporary', but no information regarding a termination timeline is given. Very limited application information was provided and it was on an unusually shortened time frame.

The request was too soon before the 10/15 meeting to allow for action under the Brown Act, but the deadline to respond is 11/4/25. To provide input, we would need to call a special meeting.

We will be discussing whether a special meeting to make a recommendation is desirable and, if so, when would be the best time for such.

Project Number: PRJ-1140032

Address: 502 7th Avenue, San Diego, CA 92101

Project Information: A Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to allow a 15,033 square-foot temporary parking lot at 502 Seventh Avenue, located at the northwest corner of Seventh Avenue and Island Avenue, in the Ballpark sub-district of the East Village neighborhood of the Downtown Community Plan area.

Airport Transit Connection

Downtown Community Planning Council - Informational Item

Description:

DCPC Vice Chair Gary Hewitt will be presenting regarding his representation of DCPC at the Airport Transit Connection Second Stakeholder Roundtable

[Informational Presentation](#)

Mirka Tower Presentation

Downtown Community Planning Council - Informational Item

Description:

Mirka Tower was the application for a high-rise development in East Village that we approved last meeting.

The developers are nonetheless presenting their project at DSD's request. It is anticipated to be a brief presentation.