



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: February 11, 2026 REPORT NO. HRB-26-005

HEARING DATE: February 26, 2026

SUBJECT: **ITEM #1 – SOUTHWEST VILLAGE SPECIFIC PLAN SITE DEVELOPMENT PERMIT**

RESOURCE INFO: [California Historical Resources Inventory Database \(CHRID\) link](#)

APPLICANT: Tri Pointe Homes

LOCATION: Address Restricted, Otay Mesa Community Plan Area, Council District 8

DESCRIPTION: Review and consider, for the purpose of making a recommendation to the City Council, the historical resources section, recommendations, findings, and mitigation measures of the Subsequent Environmental Impact Report for the Southwest Village Specific Plan and findings associated with the Site Development Permit (SDP) as presented and consider the inclusion of additional permit conditions related to a designated historical resource if supported.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Recommend to the City Council approval of the historical resources section, recommendations, findings, and mitigation measures of the environmental document and findings associated with the SDP related to the important archaeological site (HRB #1537, CA-SDI-22,936) as presented.

BACKGROUND

San Diego Municipal Code (SDMC) [Section 126.0504\(b\)\(2\)](#) requires a recommendation from the Historical Resources Board (HRB) prior to a Planning Commission recommendation and City Council decision on an SDP when a historical district or designated historical resource is present. The HRB has adopted the following procedure for making recommendations to decision-makers (Historical Resources Board Procedures, Section II.D):

When the HRB is taking action on a recommendation to a decision-maker, the Board shall make a recommendation on only those aspects of the matter that relate to the historical aspects of the project. The Board's recommendation action(s) shall relate to the cultural resources section, recommendations, findings and mitigation measures of the final

environmental document, the SDP findings for historical purposes, and/or the project's compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties. If the Board desires to recommend the inclusion of additional conditions, the motion should include a request for staff to incorporate permit conditions to capture the Board's recommendations when the project moves forward to the decision maker.

The resource, CA-SDI-22,936 ("Resource") is a Native American archaeological site in the Otay Mesa Community Planning Area. The Resource was designated by the HRB on September 26, 2024 as HRB #1537 under San Diego Historical Resources Board Criterion A. Under Criterion A, CA-SDI-22,936 was historically designated as a special element of the City's and Otay Mesa's archeological and cultural development. Specifically, CA-SDI-22,936 likely functioned as a tool manufacturing location and could provide enough data to answer regional research questions regarding site function, chronology and subsistence due to its high density subsurface cultural deposit and minimal disturbance within the central portion of the site. A full discussion regarding the historic significance of the resource is available in the Historical Resources Investigation Report (Attachment 2).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Project includes adoption of a specific plan, amendments to the General Plan and the Otay Mesa Community Plan, rezone, vesting tentative map, and related actions for the construction of 920 multiple dwelling units, rough grading, water, sewer and transportation infrastructure improvements located north of the United States/Mexico international border; east of Interstate 805 (I-805); south of State Route 905 (SR-905); and west of the Central Village Specific Plan area within the Otay Mesa Community Plan area. The project proposes to impact the entirety of the important archaeological site, CA-SDI-22,936, HRB #1537, with the construction of the Caliente Avenue extension and associated grading (Attachment 1).

ANALYSIS

The Project proposes to deviate from the City's Historical Resources Regulations by constructing a road through the northwest corner of an important archaeological site, CA-SDI-22,936, HRB #1537. The accompanying grading of the land adjacent to the road will impact the entire archaeological site. Therefore, the proposed development is, by definition, a substantial alteration requiring an SDP, consistent with [SDMC Section 143.0220](#). Specific SDP Supplemental Findings pursuant to [SDMC Section 126.0505 \(g\)\(1-3\)](#) Supplemental Findings – Historical Resources Deviations for Important Archaeological Sites and Traditional Cultural Properties are required for projects proposing substantial alterations to an important archaeological site or traditional cultural property, including findings that require analysis of alternatives that could minimize the potential adverse effects on the Resource.

The required SDP Supplemental Findings regarding the Project's proposed substantial alteration to CA-SDI-22,936 and supporting information are below.

1. There are no feasible measures, including a less environmentally damaging location or alternative, that can further minimize the potential adverse effects on historical resources.

An investigation prepared by RECON Environmental, Inc. for applicant, Tri Pointe Homes (Attachment 2), found that archaeological site CA-SDI-22,936 retained integrity and was eligible for historic designation on the California and San Diego Registers. The site, HRB #1537, was designated in September of 2024 by the City of San Diego Historical Resources Board and was included on the San Diego Register under Criterion A as a special element of the City's and Otay Mesa's archeological and cultural development. Specifically, CA-SDI-22,936 likely functioned as a tool manufacturing location and could provide enough data to answer regional research questions regarding site function, chronology and subsistence due to its high density subsurface cultural deposit and minimal disturbance within the central portion of the site.

The Southwest Village Specific Plan (Base Project or Specific Plan) would encroach into 100 percent of historical resource CA-SDI-22,936 as a result of the width and design of Caliente Avenue south of Central Avenue and associated grading. The extension of Caliente Avenue is required as one of the primary access roadways to the Specific Plan. Primary access to the Specific Plan must be taken from the extension of two existing key arterials: Caliente Avenue offering north-south access from Otay Mesa and Beyer Boulevard offering east-west access from San Ysidro. These roadways are both identified as Mobility Element roadways in the Otay Mesa Community Plan (OMCP). The need to connect with the existing Caliente Avenue and Beyer Boulevard roadways greatly reduces the options for providing vehicular access to the site. Additionally, the project anticipates Caliente Avenue to carry over 29,000 vehicular average daily trips (ADTs), requiring the roadway to maintain a certain width and number of lanes to accommodate anticipated traffic needs. The applicant also considered removing the Caliente Avenue extension entirely; however, Beyer Boulevard would not be able to be modified to accommodate anticipated traffic volumes. Additionally, both Beyer Boulevard and Caliente Avenue are required to provide primary fire/emergency access routes to the Specific Plan.

The width of Caliente Avenue within the Specific Plan cannot be further downgraded from the proposed 4-Lane Urban Collector Street due to anticipated traffic volumes. Caliente Avenue within the Specific Plan area was planned as a 6-Lane Major Arterial within the City's OMCP (see OMCP Figure 3-2). The OMCP required that prior to consideration of any comprehensive development or rezoning proposals in the Southwest Village Specific Plan area that a Specific Plan to implement the land use framework be prepared. Accordingly, the Specific Plan identifies the mobility network for the Specific Plan area (Specific Plan Figure 4.1) and identifies Caliente Avenue between Central Avenue and Beyer Boulevard as a 4-Lane Urban Collector Street with a Class I bike path and Class II bike lane. This segment of Caliente Avenue, which would impact the historical resource, has already been downgraded from the OMCP planned 6-Lane Major Arterial to a 4-Lane Urban Collector Street. Further downgrade to allow for avoidance of the historical resource would not be feasible due to the anticipated traffic volume of 29,000 ADTs (see discussion below).

Several other existing factors provide significant constraints for the roadway alignment within the Specific Plan area. The proposed alignment of Caliente Avenue immediately north of the Specific Plan area was approved as part of the Candlelight development (Project No. PTS 30320/691625) which establish the location for Caliente Avenue. Therefore, the alignment of Caliente Avenue where it enters the Specific Plan area is established and cannot be modified without modifications to the Candlelight development approvals. Also, per the OMCP (see OMCP Figure 3-2), the Caliente Avenue alignment must connect to Beyer Boulevard in order to provide critical transportation connections between Otay Mesa and San Ysidro. Caliente Avenue and Beyer Boulevard are the two major roadways providing regional access to the project site to and from Otay Mesa and San Ysidro. Therefore, the connection point between Beyer Boulevard and Caliente Avenue is necessary for project access and cannot be modified.

The Specific Plan alignment of Caliente Avenue cannot be shifted southward. A City conservation parcel (Assessor Parcel Number 645-074-0600) that is part of the Vernal Pool Habitat Conservation Plan preserve and acquired with United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Endangered Species Act (ESA) Section 6 grant funding is located just south of the historical resource. Due to its funding source and its status as Vernal Pool Habitat Conservation Plan preserve, this parcel cannot be impacted by the road extension and must be avoided. As a result, the alignment of Caliente Avenue cannot be shifted as it is currently aligned to avoid this City conserved parcel, while staying within the Specific Plan boundary and connecting to Beyer Boulevard.

An analysis of four different alternatives to the Base Project was prepared by RECON for the project applicant, Tri Pointe Homes (Attachment 3). Alternative 1 studied the narrowing of the Caliente Avenue extension to reduce impacts to the archaeological site. Alternative 2 studied shifting the alignment of the Caliente Avenue extension to the north in an effort to avoid the archaeological site in its entirety. Alternative 3 studied a revised alignment of the Caliente Avenue extension that avoided the archaeological site by rerouting the road into areas with steep slopes, finger canyons, 100% conserved land and VPHCP/MHPA. Alternative 4 studied extending Caliente Avenue north to intersect with the existing Central Avenue then zigzagging before rejoining the existing portion of Caliente Avenue. The four alternatives were evaluated for their regulatory, physical and technical feasibility versus that of the Base Project, and are summarized in the table below:

Alternative	Description	Environmental Impact	Project Impact
Base Project	Extension of Caliente Avenue as a 4-Lane (122 feet wide) Urban Collector Street with Class I bike path and Class II bike lane.	100% encroachment into CA-SDI-22,936	N/A

Alternative 1	Extension of Caliente Avenue as a 2 lane (62 feet wide) Urban Collector Street with Class II bike lane.	Reduced roadway impacts to CA-SDI-22,936	Alternative 1 would narrow Caliente Avenue and would not meet the transportation and mobility objectives of the Specific Plan and Otay Mesa Community Plan.
Alternative 2	Shifting the alignment of the Caliente Avenue extension to the north as a 4-Lane (122 feet wide) Urban Collector Street with Class I bike path and Class II bike lane.	Complete avoidance of CA-SDI-22,936	Alternative 2 presents engineering challenges due to a tight curve radius, and extension of roadway into land not owned or controlled by Tri Pointe Homes and would encroach upon areas planned for residential development.
Alternative 3	Extension of Caliente Avenue north as a 4-Lane (122 feet wide) Urban Collector Street with Class I bike path and Class II bike lane rerouted through areas with steep slopes, finger canyons, 100% conserved land, and VPHCP/MHPA.	Complete avoidance of CA-SDI-22,936	Alternative 3 would complicate road construction, reduce long-term road stability, and necessitate additional environmental analysis and coordination with wildlife agencies.
Alternative 4	Extension of Caliente Avenue north to intersect with Central Avenue north as a 4-Lane (122 feet wide) Urban Collector Street with Class I bike path and Class II bike lane.	Complete avoidance of CA-SDI-22,936	Alternative 4 would expand the anticipated traffic volumes along Central Avenue, and encroach into adjacent property not owned or controlled by Tri Pointe Homes, and would encroach upon areas planned for residential development.

Based upon the alternatives analysis, the Base Project is the only feasible option among those presented and the other less environmentally damaging alternatives studied are not feasible due to regulatory, physical and technical restraints as described in more detail below.

According to the alternatives analysis:

- Alternative 1 would narrow Caliente Avenue within its current alignment (from 122 feet to 62 feet) in an effort to reduce the extent of intrusion into the archaeological site. The segment of Caliente Avenue in question has already been downgraded from the Otay Mesa Community Plan's originally planned 6-Lane Major Arterial to a 4-Lane Urban Collector Street. Any further reduction in roadway width is not considered feasible due to projected traffic volumes exceeding the reduced roadway capacity and the functional classification needed to support long-term circulation demands in the Specific Plan area. From a critical multi-modal perspective, the baseline Caliente Avenue has 122 feet of right of way (ROW) to accommodate Class I Bike Paths, Class II Bike Lanes, sidewalks and buffers as required by the OMCP. Reducing the ROW from 122 feet to 62 feet will result in a loss of two lanes of traffic. The reduction of Caliente Avenue to a 2-Lane Urban Collector Street would make it feasible to accommodate only 6,500 ADTs, far below the necessary 29,000 ADTs required to make the project feasible. Additionally, the grading associated with this alternative would impact portions of the important archaeological site. In view of the foregoing factors, alternative 1 is therefore not feasible.
- Alternative 2 would shift the alignment of Caliente Avenue to the north in an effort to avoid the archaeological site. However, the revised alignment presents engineering challenges due to geometric limitations including tight curve radii that do not meet standard design requirements. The minimum curve radius permitted for a 4 Lane Urban Collector is 380 ft with a 6% superelevation. A 6% superelevation is significant and would require a deviation from the City standards. It may not be possible to design this segment within the design requirements. As a result, deviations would be required for minimum curve radius and superelevation standards. In addition, this alignment would impact planned development within portions of Planning Area 8 (PA8) and extend onto property not owned or controlled by Tri Pointe Homes. These constraints introduce issues related to land acquisition, off-site improvements, and potential conflicts with adjacent development plans outside of the Specific Plan area. Alternative 2 is therefore not feasible. Additionally, as demonstrated by Attachment 3, Figures 2 and 6, avoidance of the archaeological site would preclude the property owner from realizing reasonable use of the land by encroaching on areas planned and designated for residential development resulting in the reduction of dwelling units within Planning Area 8.
- Alternative 3 would revise the alignment and geometry of Caliente Avenue to avoid the archaeological site by rerouting the road into areas with steep slopes, finger canyons, 100% conserved land, and VPHCP/MHPA. While this alignment may reduce direct impacts to the historical resource, it also introduces geological constraints that could complicate road construction and long-term road stability. Additionally, portions of the revised alignment would extend beyond the boundaries of the project-level environmental analysis area and introduce additional grading into sensitive resources, triggering the need for supplemental environmental studies and additional coordination with wildlife agencies. These factors could result in delays to project implementation and may require new or amended permits from the City and outside agencies. Vehicles would be required to use two "T-intersections" to reach this alternative Caliente Avenue alignment. The third leg of these T-intersections

would either be a dead end or to a low volume connection. Each of these T-intersections would require either all-way stop control or a traffic signal. Moving the project's anticipated 29,000 average daily trips through these T-intersections would require dual right and left turn lanes that would require additional ROW at the new intersections. In view of the foregoing factors, alternative 3 is not feasible.

- Alternative 4 proposes extending Caliente Avenue north to intersect with Central Avenue, then zigzagging before rejoining the existing Caliente alignment. Although this configuration aims to avoid the archaeological site, it is not considered feasible. Central Avenue is a 2-lane collector and lacks the capacity to accommodate the anticipated average daily trips (ADT) generated by Caliente Avenue, even over a short distance. The horizon year ADT would increase from 3,900 ADT to 24,900 ADT along Central Avenue between the Southwind Property and the existing Caliente Avenue alignment. This increase in ADT will require a 4 Lane Collector with 110-122 feet of ROW to operate at level of service (LOS) D. This segment of Central Avenue has 62 feet of ROW. A 4 Lane Collector would require 48-60 feet of additional ROW. Additionally, this alternative will create a significant number of left and right turning vehicles due to the zigzag route with this new alignment. Dual left and right turn lanes will be required at the new intersections of Caliente Avenue/Central Avenue adjacent to Southwind and at Central Avenue/Caliente Avenue at the existing Caliente alignment resulting in additional ROW needs. In addition, this realignment would affect planned development within Planning Area 8 (PA8) and require substantial encroachment onto the Southwind property, which lies outside of Tri Pointe's ownership and control. Given these constraints, the alternative is not practical from either a traffic operations or land use perspective. Alternative 4 is therefore not feasible. Additionally, as demonstrated by Attachment 3, Figures 2 and 8, complete avoidance of the archaeological site would preclude the property owner from realizing reasonable use of the land by encroaching on areas planned and designated for residential development resulting in the reduction of dwelling units within Planning Area 8.

As demonstrated by the alternatives analysis, the Base Project is the only feasible option due to the existing conditions of the site and surrounding properties outside the Specific Plan area and outside of the applicant's ownership and control. There is no other feasible location for the roadway extension that would serve the OMCP and Specific Plan area objectives or support anticipated traffic volumes of 29,000 ADTs and avoid the historical resource. Removal and/or reduction of the road would render the Specific Plan development infeasible through its inability to support anticipated traffic needs. Therefore, for these reasons, there are no feasible measures, including a less environmentally damaging alternative that can further minimize the potential adverse effects on the designated historical resource.

- 2. The deviation is the minimum necessary to afford relief and accommodate the development and all feasible measures to mitigate for the loss of any portion of the resource have been provided by the applicant.**

The City's Historical Resources Regulations (HRR), San Diego Municipal Code Chapter 14, Article 3, Division 2, require that all important archaeological sites be protected and preserved consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. The HRR permit a deviation from the regulations with the approval of a Site Development Permit and associated findings. By encroaching into 100 % of historical resource CA-SDI-22,936 as a result of the width and design of Caliente Avenue south of Central Avenue, the proposed Base Project is a substantial alteration to a historical resource that is not consistent with the Standards; therefore, a deviation from the Historical Resources Regulations is being requested. As demonstrated by finding 1. incorporated here by reference and the RECON alternatives analysis prepared for the applicant (Attachment 3), 100% encroachment into CA-SDI-22,936 is the minimum deviation from the City's Historical Resources Regulations necessary to afford relief and accommodate the development due to the existing conditions of the Specific Plan area.

As noted above, the extension of Caliente Avenue is required for the development of the Specific Plan. The applicant has provided mitigation measures to address the impacts to the historical resource. The environmental analysis for the Specific Plan is a Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) to the OMCP Final EIR (FEIR) (Attachment 4), which anticipated development of the Specific Plan area in addition to the proposed Caliente Avenue extension. The OMCP FEIR found that impacts to known and unknown historical resources could occur anywhere within the planning area and that grading of original in situ soils could expose buried historical archaeological resources and features including sacred sites and human remains. The OMCP FEIR Mitigation Framework includes HIST-1: Archaeological Resources, Step 3 which states "if the resource cannot be entirely avoided, all prudent and feasible measures to minimize harm shall be taken. For archaeological resources where preservation is not an option, a Research Design and Data Recovery Program is required."

The SEIR's project-level Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program requires a data recovery program as well as construction monitoring. PR-HIST-1 requires a Qualified Archaeologist to lead a data recovery program for CA-SDI-22,936. The data recovery program will systematically excavate the central area of the site that contains potential intact subsurface deposits as well as document and curate any artifacts found. The results will be documented in an Archaeological Data Recovery Program Final Report. The *Results of the Historical Resources Investigation of the Southwest Village Specific Plan, San Diego, California* (RECON Environmental, Inc. 2024) has outlined a research design and two-phased data recovery program that includes up to 2 percent recovery from the central area of CA-SDI-22,936 to comply with this mitigation measure. Mitigation measure PR-HIST-2 requires monitoring during construction by archaeological and Native American monitors. The mitigation measure outlines the steps and the process of managing discoveries during construction and requires preparation of a Final Monitoring Report which will be submitted to City staff. Implementation of these mitigation measures would minimize potentially significant impacts to buried archaeological resources during grading to the maximum extent feasible.

Therefore, the project is designed with the minimum necessary deviations to afford relief from the restrictions of the Historical Resources Regulations and accommodate the

development and all feasible measures to mitigate for the loss of any portions of the historical resource have been provided by the applicant.

3. There are special circumstances or conditions apart from the existence of historical resources, applying to the land that are peculiar to the land and are not of the applicant's making, whereby the strict application of the provisions of the historical resources regulations would deprive the property owner of reasonable use of the land.

The project includes the extension of Caliente Avenue to provide vehicular access to the Specific Plan area. The Caliente Avenue extension must connect to the existing terminus of Caliente Avenue and the planned terminus of Beyer Boulevard. The construction of Caliente Avenue north of Central Avenue was previously analyzed within the Candlelight FEIR (SCH No. 2013101036) that was approved by the City with a prior entitlement for the neighboring Candlelight development (Project No. PTS 30320/691625). Shifting the road alignment to the south to avoid the historical resource would not be feasible due to the City Vernal Pool Habitat Conservation Plan preserve lands including Assessor Parcel Number 645-074-0600, which was conserved with USFWS ESA Section 6 grant funding. There is no other location for the Caliente Avenue roadway extension while still serving the Specific Plan area, connecting to Beyer Boulevard, and avoiding the environmental resource.

As indicated in Findings 1 and 2 above, incorporated here by reference, Alternatives 1 through 4 would significantly and adversely impact overall circulation and undermine the Specific Plan's and community plan's mobility objectives. Furthermore, the impacts due to Caliente Avenue are not of the applicant's making as the general location of the roadway was planned as part of the OMCP as a public road providing regional access and circulation consistent with the OMCP (see OMCP Figure 3-2). Additionally, the location of Caliente Avenue directly to the north of the Specific Plan area was approved as part of the Candlelight development and is currently under construction. The constraints that exist in the area, as documented in Findings 1 and 2 above, incorporated here by reference, are not of the applicant's making.

Strict application of the Historical Resources Regulations would deprive the City of substantial future housing opportunities within the Specific Plan area. As discussed in Finding 1, there are no other feasible alternatives, that would have less of an impact on the important archeological site and meet the goals of the project. The strict application of the Historical Resources Regulations would require the removal, reduction, or relocation of the Caliente Avenue extension to avoid impacts to the important archaeological site. As noted in Attachment 3, the removal or reduction (Alternative 1) of the Caliente Avenue extension would significantly impair the ability to develop the Specific Plan area as envisioned in the OMCP because it would be infeasible to accommodate anticipated traffic needs and provide sufficient fire/emergency access routes. Additionally, as demonstrated by Attachment 3, Figures 2, 6, and 8, avoidance of the archaeological site in Alternatives 2 and 4 would preclude the property owner from realizing reasonable use of the land by encroaching on areas planned and designated for residential development. Strict application of the Historical Resources Regulations would also deprive the property owners within the Specific Plan area of a reasonable use of the land when compared to the land uses envisioned in the

OMCP. The 2014 OMCP identified the 490-acre Southwest Village Specific Plan area would be developed with a neighborhood village with a central town center of mixed uses. The OMCP specified the site would include 5,880 dwelling units (including 1,400 single-family and 4,480 multi-family units) with 59 acres of parkland with future roadway connections via Caliente Avenue and Beyer Boulevard.

Therefore, there are special circumstances or conditions apart from the existence of historical resources, applying to the land that are peculiar to the land and are not of the applicant's making, whereby the strict application of the provisions of the historical resources regulations would deprive the property owner of reasonable use of the land.

City Staff from the City Planning and Development Services Departments has concluded that there is sufficient evidence to support the SDP Supplemental Findings related to the important archaeological site. In addition, all feasible proposed mitigation measures and draft permit conditions (Attachment 5) have been provided to reduce the identified impacts to CA-SDI-22,936, HRB #1537.

CONCLUSION

Staff recommends that the HRB recommend to the City Council adoption of the historical resources section, recommendations, findings and mitigation measures of the environmental document and findings associated with the SDP related to the designated historic resource.



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City Planning Department

Attachments:

1. Development Plans
2. Historical Resources Investigation Report
3. RECON Alternatives Analysis dated January 21, 2026
4. Draft SEIR Southwest Village Specific Plan
5. Draft Permit with Conditions