



City of Huntington Beach Planning Department **STUDY SESSION REPORT**

TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Scott Hess, AICP, Director of Planning
BY: Rosemary Medel, Associate Planner *RM*
DATE: May 26, 2009

SUBJECT: GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT NO. 08-002, ZONING MAP AMENDMENT NO. 08-002 AND ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT NO. 08-002 (BEACH AND EDINGER CORRIDORS SPECIFIC PLAN)

LOCATION: The project site extends along Beach Boulevard, from the Coastal Zone boundary in the south to Edinger Avenue, and along Edinger Avenue from Beach Boulevard westward to Goldenwest Street. (Attachment No. 1)

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The City proposes to amend the Huntington Beach General Plan and Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance in order to establish the Beach and Edinger Corridors Specific Plan, SP14. The objective is to intensify land uses as one travels north along Beach Boulevard from the southern boundary of the study area, developing a Town Center concept at the major intersection of Beach Boulevard and Edinger Avenue and at Five Points. Mixed uses would be allowed throughout the area. On March 24, 2009 the Planning Commission held a study session on the overall concept of the proposed Specific Plan, including the development of the Specific Plan to-date and a review of previous workshops. On April 14, 2009 the Planning Commission held the second in the series of Beach and Edinger Corridor Specific Plan study sessions to discuss the Five Points and Edinger Districts. On May 12, 2009 the Planning Commission held its third study session in the series. The focus of the study session was on Residential Parkway, Neighborhood Parkway, and Neighborhood Boulevard Segments with the intent of discussing Existing Conditions, the Planning Approach and Strategy, and Envisioned Future Segments as described in Book I and the development standards for these areas provided in Book II Development Code. In this study session the discussion will focus on Street Regulations, Architectural Regulations, Landscaping and Signage Regulations completing review of Book II.

APPLICATION PROCESS AND TIMELINES

DATE OF COMPLETE APPLICATION:

MANDATORY PROCESSING DATE(S):

Draft EIR: January 20, 2009

Within 1 year of complete application; January 2010

General Plan Amendment: October 20, 2008

Not Applicable

Zoning Text Amendment: October 20, 2008

Not Applicable

CEQA ANALYSIS/REVIEW

Adoption of Specific Plans are typically accompanied by a Program EIR, as opposed to a Project EIR. The Program EIR for the Beach Boulevard and Edinger Avenue Corridors Specific Plan is currently being drafted. The required 30 day review period for the Notice of Preparation of the EIR was held from July 31, 2008 to August 29, 2008.

In addition, to facilitate three projects that are proposed within the Corridor, the City agreed to also concurrently prepare project level EIRs for these sites. The three sites are: former Levitz, southwest corner of Beach and Warner, and southeast corner of Beach and Ellis. Thus, the City will release a Program EIR and then subsequently release three project level EIRs that will rely in part on the information in the Program EIR level document. It is anticipated that the Program EIR will be released by mid-August and the project level EIRs approximately two months after.

COMMENTS FROM CITY DEPARTMENTS AND OTHER PUBLIC AGENCIES

The analysis and conclusions of the draft document are based in part on consultation with the City Staff Core Team, which is comprised of the Departments of Economic Development, Fire, Public Works, Police and Planning, including Community Input and direction from City Council.

PUBLIC MEETINGS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

A series of community meetings and workshops were held prior to the drafting of the specific plan document. They were held on the following dates:

- May 10, 2007 – Workshop #1
- June 20, 2007 – Workshop # 2
- August 27, 2007 – Workshop #3 – Traffic Discussion
- September 20, 2007 – Workshop #4 –Edinger Vision
- January 7, 2008 – City Council Study Session
- January 30, 2008 Workshop #5 – Character and Identity
- February 27, 2008 Workshop #6 –Beach Blvd. Vision
- April 17, 2008 – City Council Study Session

A joint Study Session of City Council and Planning Commission was held on October 20, 2008. The Draft Specific Plan was made public on this date. A public comment period on the Draft Specific Plan document was held from October 20, 2008 to December 19, 2008 and a total of 17 public comment letters were received.

PLANNING ISSUES

The primary issues for the Planning Commission to consider when analyzing this project are:

- The General Plan Amendment request to change the current land use designations to Mixed Use

- The Zoning Text Amendment to adopt the Specific Plan
- Compatibility with surrounding land uses
- The overall conformance with the goals, objectives, and policies of the General Plan

The approach in this study session is to focus on the regulations pertaining to streets, architecture, landscaping and signage. Staff’s objective is to introduce the basis for the suggested regulations. Staff will review the regulations that create the vision of the Specific Plan and compare them with the Huntington Beach Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance.

Book II Development Code-Analysis and Regulations for Street Design, Architecture, Landscaping and Signage

The Beach Boulevard and Edinger Avenue Centers and Segments are intended to develop as infill connecting the primary Core Districts of Five Points and the Edinger Avenue Corridor Core Center, which are the most urbanized and development intense areas. The Street, Architecture, Landscaping and Signage Regulations are designed to achieve cohesiveness for the Specific Plan area while allowing for differences within district areas.

Street Regulations: Section 2.5 contains Regulations and Guidelines for the improvement, provision, configuration, and design of streets. Streetscape improvements to existing streets are required to promote the type of change envisioned by the community by providing attractive and compatible environments for the desired types of new development, as well as for highly valued existing development.

The design of specific streetscape improvements is integrated with the configuration of Centers and Segments. This coordination results in the organization of streetscape improvements into three primary segment improvement types as follows: “Classic Boulevard” along Edinger Avenue; “Palm Tree Boulevard” improvements along Beach Boulevard located north of Main Street and “Parkway” improvements south of Main Street along Beach Boulevard. Street regulations are set forth to ensure that streets and blocks throughout the plan area are upgraded or built with the quality and care necessary to enhance the connectivity of streets, to create safe and attractive streetscape environments, and to encourage walking throughout the plan area as it intensifies. The plan speaks to the thoroughfare, which is the area between street curbs. It includes street lanes, parking lanes and central medians. The Public Frontage area is the area between the thoroughfare curb face and the back-of-sidewalk and any sidewalk landscape areas. The attached tables describe the primary street-types.(Attachment No. 4).

The attached tables indicate that Beach Blvd is developed with four-lanes in either direction north of Main Street, then decreases to three lanes south of Main Street in the Parkway Segment. The area south of Main Street is a more residential design and atmosphere with the installation of six foot wide sidewalks and nine foot wide planter areas. The unique light poles are pedestrian-scale in design and depict a more modern beach atmosphere as shown on page 64 of the specific plan document. As one travels north along Beach Blvd., land uses intensify along this section of the boulevard. The Palm Tree segment requires an 18 foot wide pedestrian zone sidewalk area to encourage pedestrian use and activity. Lighting along this segment of Beach Blvd is distinctive in that it will have double armed design as illustrated on page 63 of the Specific Plan document. The suggested design for the medians are clusters of of plam trees. This

design is used in the Neighborhood Boulevard segment, Neighborhood Center segment and Town Center Boulevard along Beach Boulevard to the intersection of Edinger Avenue.

Starting at the most north part of the Specific Plan area, the “Classic Boulevard” design will be used along Edinger Avenue. Edinger Avenue is illustrated as a thoroughfare design of three lanes in each direction. The center medians will be landscaped with trees. This area depicts the pedestrian zone with 12 foot sidewalks along with double armed light poles. Unique to Edinger Avenue is the incorporation of the Access Lane Configuration. Illustrated on page 62, the access lane is a protected lane with a row of angled parking oriented at forty-five degrees to the curb separated from the through lanes by curbed landscape separators. The separators are illustrated at 9 feet between the thoroughfare and the access lane.

Finally, the Five Points area incorporates yet a third design known as “Standard Avenue” design. The use of this design option at Five Points ensures that both sides of the street are the same in design and therefore compliment the Core District. This area will incorporate the 18 foot wide sidewalk of the Palm Tree Boulevard segment to allow for more sidewalk interaction between retailers and pedestrians with both pedestrian and boulevard scale lighting. (Attachment No.4).

Huntington Beach Street Standards Comparison with Proposed Specific Plan

The Circulation Element of the General Plan is intended to evaluate the transportation needs of the City and present a comprehensive transportation plan to accommodate those needs. A city’s vehicular system is composed of a wide range of transportation facilities which serve two basic functions: mobility and land access. Mobility is defined as providing the ability for motorists to travel between their points of interest. Land access is defined as providing access to properties at the final destination which may include parking or driveway access. The Circulation Element is composed of facilities that emphasize either mobility or access of varying degrees. The following are Facility Types pertinent to the Specific Plan area including definitions.

Arterial: High mobility with access to collectors, some access to local streets and major traffic generators.

Collector: Limited mobility connecting local streets with arterials; also provides good access to adjacent land uses.

Circulation systems are designed with the above hierarchy of streets largely as a means of achieving the goal of mobility and access in an efficient manner. The classifications utilized in Huntington Beach within the proposed Specific Plan area are: Principal Arterial (Beach Blvd); Major Arterial Street (Edinger Ave.); and Primary Arterial Street (Main St). The existing number of lanes within the Specific Plan area will not be reduced as a result of this proposal.

Finally, Beach Blvd is designated a Scenic Landscape Corridor in the General Plan. Policy CE 7.2.3 states: Encourage that all proposed building sites adjacent to a scenic highway include open space, plazas, gardens or landscape areas which enhance the scenic highway and create a buffer between the building site and the scenic highway. The proposed Specific Plan provides the design elements necessary to achieve the diversity in street design required by the Huntington Beach General Plan Circulation Element.

The primary difference with the Specific Plan street design as opposed to the Huntington Beach Street Standards is that the Specific Plan requires wider sidewalks, integration of pedestrian zones with the public right-of-way, iconic lighting systems and theme median landscaping. Landscaping maintenance and agency coordination will be discussed in Book III.

Setback Area Landscaping

Section 2.69 describes setback area landscaping requirements. In general, if an area does not have parking, a drive aisle or sidewalk, it must be landscaped. Boulevard Landscaping requires a coordinated frontage through the use of similar paving materials, and low walls so that there is no visual obstruction and that complete coverage of the setback zone is achieved. Living groundcover or decorative paving materials, accented by trees and shrubs must cover all setback areas. The Classic Boulevard depicts a formal, signature streetscape with multiple rows of trees, parking for retail shops, a broad promenade of sidewalk with street trees for shopping, outdoor dining, strolling, and special events. The Palm Tree Boulevard is depicted as wide sidewalks, ample lighting, shopfront visibility, and a palm tree-lined median. The landscape design shall support business and mixed use development. Finally, Parkway Landscaping is significant in its location, its informal landscaping design and the creation of a garden-like environment appropriate for housing.

This plan is unique in that it combines the public and private realm to create open space. Where minimum sidewalk widths established in Public Frontage Types standards result in the extension of the sidewalk width on to private property, such sidewalk extensions must be at the same grade and provide no obstructions, edges or barriers to access between portions of the public and private property necessitating the approval of a Public Access Easement. Paving material and design should be similar or the same material as used in the public right-of-way to create the effect of a single pedestrian walkway.

Huntington Beach Landscape Standards (HBZSO) Compared with Specific Plan

The one significant difference between the Specific Plan and the HBZSO is the code provision that requires 8 percent landscaping of the total net site area and specified tree box sizes. The Specific Plan requires that all setbacks be landscaped and regulates spacing and canopy width but does not state a minimum tree box size or percentage coverage. The emphasis within the Specific Plan is the ultimate creation of environment. Each Center and Segment has specific criteria addressing open space landscaping and setback area landscaping to achieve consistency while allowing for flexibility.

Architecture Regulations

Architecture regulations are set forth in Section 2.8 to ensure that new and renovated buildings in the Plan Area embody architectural characteristics that maintain the desired human scale, rhythm, and character appropriate for Beach/Edinger corridors. This is accomplished through use of architectural regulations that control height, façade materials and articulation. Consideration is always given for the visual impact of design. The regulations and suggestions within the Architectural Elements Regulations will guide the design elements used within new buildings and free standing parking areas in the Plan Area. The regulations and suggestions will ensure that new buildings maintain the quality and character of Huntington Beach while providing ample opportunities for creativity and choice. Requirements and

guidelines regulating architectural elements are identified as they apply to a particular building type, such as Residential.

Under Book II Architectural Standards, Façade elements, Roof features and Sustainability are addressed. With regard to Sustainability, the Plan addresses it as a guideline providing a broad overview of how to incorporate sustainability into building architecture. The Specific Plan suggests application of Green Building techniques but does not make them mandatory. The City of Huntington Beach has been developing methods to promote more green building techniques and incentive programs. However, sustainability is not mandatory in the city at this time.

Architectural Character is achieved in the detail of design. The Specific Plan is very detailed in the suggested façade materials, roof types and color suggestions to create a desired environment (Pages 88-100). Presently, the City uses the adopted Urban Design Guidelines as a tool to foster a positive community image. The Urban Design Element of the General Plan includes a comprehensive list of urban design issues that must be considered and addressed by new development. The Guidelines in conjunction with the goals, objectives and policies set forth in the General Plan are intended to improve the City's image and strengthen the public and private realm. The form based code of the Specific Plan relies on architectural detail to define an area, enhance public and private open space and develop visual connectivity and is more specific than the existing citywide Guidelines and General Plan.

Signage Regulations

Section 2.9 contains standards and guidelines for signage to ensure that signs installed in the Specific Plan area are consistent with the overall quality and character of new development anticipated for the corridors. Regulations include permitted sign types as well as sign size, location, materials, illumination, color, and design. The applicability of the sign criteria is similar to the HBZSO Chapter 233 Signs. Unless otherwise noted most signs will require a Building Permit. In comparison to the adopted Huntington Beach Zoning Code and Urban Design Guidelines, the Specific Plan provides a larger variety of signage options. One in particular is the Grand Projecting Sign, page 104. This vertically oriented sign projects from the building perpendicular to the façade and is structurally integrated into the building. It does not count toward the over allowable sign area. The Sign Regulations also allow for limited animation as well for uses such as night clubs, movie theaters, and live performance theaters with a capacity of 200 persons or greater.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Proposed Specific Plan Area- GPA No. 08-002, ZMA No. 08-002, ZTA No. 08-002
2. Project Timeline
3. Beach and Edinger Vision Statement Brochure
4. Comparison of Street Standards for Districts and Regulations

Proposed Beach Edinger Specific Plan Area *City of Huntington Beach*



BEACH and EDINGER DRAFT SPECIFIC PLAN

TENTATIVE PROJECT TIMELINE

<u>TASK</u>	<u>ESTIMATED COMPLETION *DATE*</u>
Introduction and Book I Overview PC Study Session # 1	March 24, 2009
Book II Overview PC Study Session #2	April 14, 2009
Book II continued Overview PC Study Session #3	May 12, 2009
Book III Overview PC Study Session #4	May 26, 2009
Book III Continued Overview PC Study Session #5	June 9, 2009
Publication of Draft EIR	August 14, 2009
45-Day Draft EIR Public Review Period Begins	Aug 14-Sept 28, 2009
Public Comment Meeting on Draft EIR	September 16, 2009
45-Day Draft EIR Public Review Period Ends	September 28, 2009
Planning Commission Study Session (Project)	October 13, 2009
Publication of Final EIR	October 26, 2009
Planning Commission Study Session (EIR)	October 27, 2009
Planning Commission Public Hearing (EIR and Project) (possible special meeting)	November 17, 2009

*All dates are approximate and subject to change based upon completion of noted milestones.

**BEACH and EDINGER CORRIDORS
SPECIFIC PLAN
VISION STATEMENT**

The Beach and Edinger Corridors Specific Plan will present the vision for the evolution and continued growth of the two corridors, and establish the primary means of regulating land use and development within the Specific Plan area.

The Specific Plan is also proposed to facilitate private and public investment activities along the corridors and immediate vicinity, and to support and promote investment that will enhance the beauty and vitality of the City.

**Beach & Edinger
Corridors
Tentative
Schedule:**

Planning Commission
Study Sessions

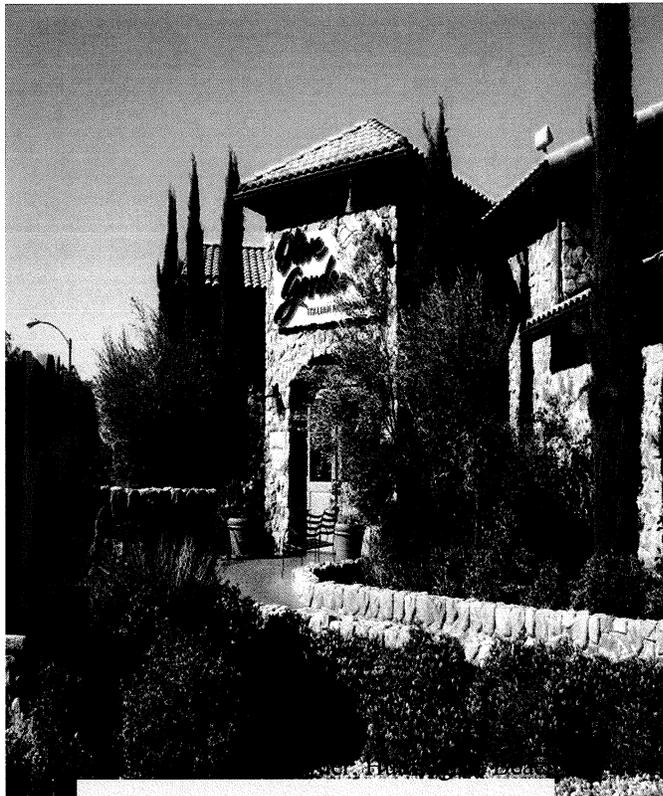
- April 14, 2009
- May 12th
- May 26th
- June 9th

Draft Environmental
Impact Report
Available
August 2009

For further information
visit [www.surfcity-hb.org/
departments/planning](http://www.surfcity-hb.org/departments/planning)

Or call:
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Kellee Fritzel, Deputy
Director of Economic
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(714) 536-5560



**The overall goals of the
Specific Plan are:**

- Actualize Market Demand
- Enable Most Promising Opportunities First
- Maximize existing value
- Promote a Range of New Housing Choices
- Support and augment current and potential future Auto-Dealerships along Beach Boulevard
- Integrate and Coordinate Interdependent Specific Plans to Enhance the Community Vision
- Leverage Goldenwest College and the Transit Center

Smart Growth Development

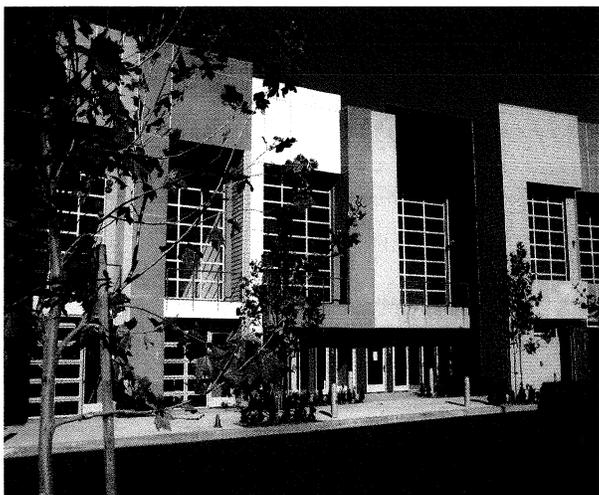
The underlying principle of the proposed Specific Plan is “Smart Growth.”

What is Smart Growth?

Smart Growth is development that takes into account the economy, community, and the environment. It provides a framework for communities to make informed decisions about how and where they grow. Smart growth makes it possible for communities to grow in ways that support economic development and jobs; creates strong neighborhoods with a range of housing, commercial, and transportation options; and achieve healthy communities that provide families with a clean and safe environment.

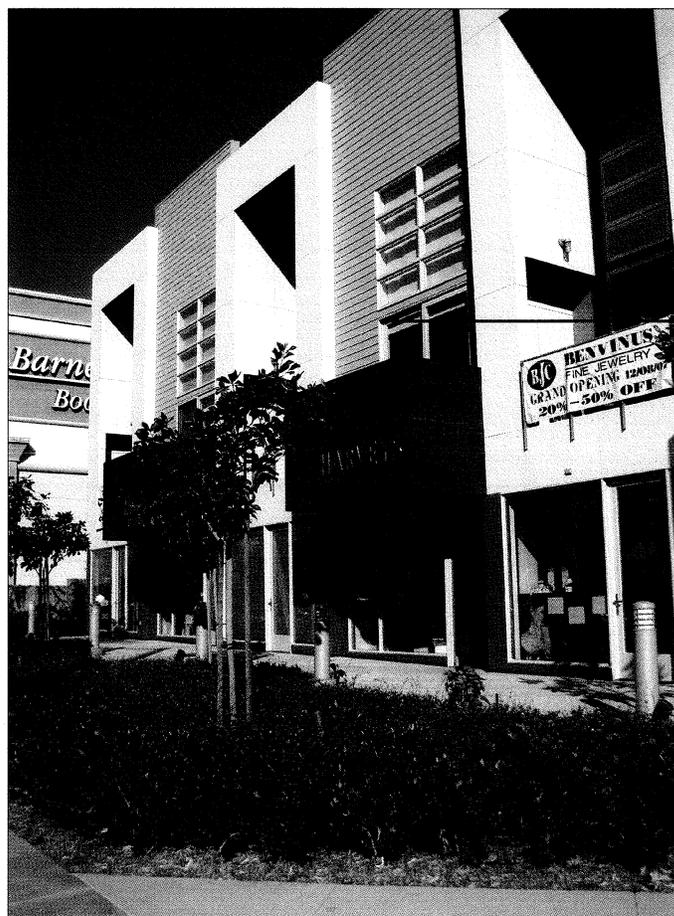


*Bella Terra (Specific Plan 13),
Huntington Beach, CA*



“City Place”

*Mixed Use Development-across the street from
The Main Place Mall, Santa Ana, CA*

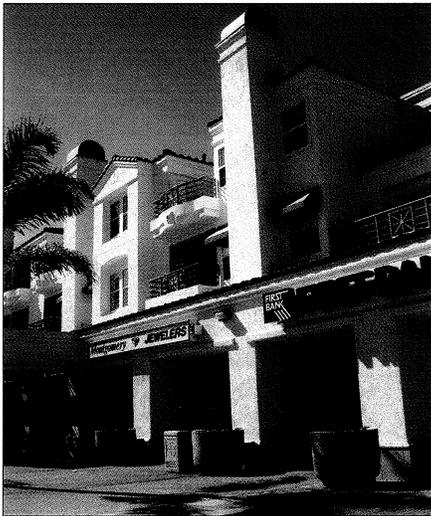




Design Principles of Smart Growth

1. Identify appropriate locations for density.
2. Connect people and places to home, shops, schools and offices.
3. Add more jobs and homes to areas through Mixed Use development.
4. Create parking alternatives because mixed use areas help minimize demand for parking by allowing people to park once and reach a number of shops.
5. Create a sense of place in a neighborhood.

(Photos to the left: Plaza Almeria and Town Square Huntington Beach, CA)



“Soco District,” Transit Station & Mixed Use Development, City of Fullerton



The Beach and Edinger Corridors Specific Plan will be a Form Based Code...

Beach & Edinger Corridors Specific Plan Tentative Schedule:

Planning Commission Tentative Study Session s

- April 14, 2009
- May 12th
- May 26th
- June 9th

Environmental Impact Report Available
August 2009

For further information visit
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What is Form Based Code?

A method of regulating development to achieve a specific urban form. Form-based codes create a predictable public realm primarily by controlling physical form, with a lesser focus on land use, through city or county regulations. Form-based codes address the relationship between building facades and the public realm, the form and mass of buildings in relation to one another, and the scale and types of streets and blocks.

Mixed use comes in many forms. It may be a corner store in each neighborhood. It may be a neighborhood work center for people who sometimes telecommute during the week. Mixed use can help add jobs or homes to an area, improving a jobs/housing balance. This balance benefits the community when people relocate to the area to be within walking distance of jobs.

So how is a great Mixed Use development achieved through Form Based Codes?

The regulations and standards in Form-Based codes are keyed to a *regulating plan* that designates the appropriate form and scale (and therefore, character) of development rather than only distinctions in land-use types. This is in contrast to conventional zoning's focus on the micromanagement and segregation of land uses, and the control of development intensity through abstract and uncoordinated parameters (e.g., FAR, dwellings per acre, setbacks, parking ratios, traffic Level Of Service-LOS) to the neglect of an integrated built form. Not to be confused with design guidelines or general statements of policy, Form-based codes are regulatory, not advisory.

*Source: Smart Growth Network
October 2008*

Specific Plan available
online
www.surfcity-hb.org/departments/planning

DISTRICTS AND SEGMENTS STREET REGULATIONS COMPARISON CHART

	MAIN STREET, FIVE POINTS DISTRICT (Core District)	EDINGER AVE. TOWN CENTER BOULEVARD - BEACH BLVD. (Core District)	BEACH BLVD.- NEIGHBORHOOD BLVD. SEGMENT	BEACH BLVD. NEIGHBORHOOD PARKWAY	
BOOK II 2.5 STREET REGULATIONS					
2.5.1 Street Improvement to Existing Streets					
3) Classic Boulevard	N/A	Required for Edinger Avenue (Town Center Blvd & Town Center Core)	N/A	N/A	
4) Palm Tree Boulevard	N/A	Required for Beach Blvd north of Ellis	Required for Beach Blvd. north of Ellis	N/A	
5) Parkway	N/A	N/A	N/A	Required for Beach Blvd.	
6) Standard Street	Required (Town Center Core & Town Center Neighborhood)	N/A	N/A	N/A	
7) Neighborhood Street	Required except for Edinger Ave. and Main Street	Required except for Edinger and Main Street	Required except for Beach Blvd.	N/A	

STREET/LANDSCAPING/LIGHTING REGULATIONS COMPARISON CHART

		Standard Street (Five Points Core District)	Classic Blvd. (Edinger Ave Corridor)	Palm Tree Blvd. (Beach Blvd. North of Main Street)	Parkway (Beach Blvd. South of Main Street)
BOOK II 2.5 STREET REGULATIONS					
2.5.1 Improvement to Existing Streets					
i) Thoroughfare Configuration	Number of lanes vary	3 through lanes in each direction	3 through lanes in each direction	4 through lanes in each direction	3 through lanes in each direction
ii) Center Median (Landscaping requirement)	not required	Moderately large single species tree.		Palm tree clusters.	Alternating informally shaped verticle clusters of vegetation with low ground cover,
iii) Access Lane Configuration	N/A	45 degree to curb separated from through lanes		N/A	N/A
iv) Access Lane Separator	N/A	9 foot curbed landscape separator located between the thoroughfare and access lanes.		N/A	N/A
v) Pedestrian Zone (type of required light poles)	Min 18 foot wide sidewalk. Lighting: decorative double arm boulevard-scale and pedestrian scale street lighting. Located (18-25 ft above grade) for boulevard-scale and (12-14 ft above grade) for pedestrian scale.	Min 12 foot wide sidewalk. Lighting: Iconic double arm blvd scale (25-30 ft above grade)	Min 18 ft wide sidewalk, Lighting: Iconic double arm Blvd scape along centerline of median (25-30 ft above grade)	Min 6 foot wide sidewalk with 9 foot plant strip, unique double arm ped.-scale street lighting (14 above grade), two tall palm trees	