



Agua Hedionda South Shore Specific Plan

Voters Guide

Measure A

Special Election

February 23, 2016

www.carlsbadca.gov/voterinfo

This informational brochure was produced by the City of Carlsbad to help voters understand the Agua Hedionda South Shore Specific Plan, which will appear as Measure A on a Feb. 23, 2016, special election ballot. This guide is not intended to expressly advocate either in favor of or against Measure A, rather to provide factual information about its potential effect on Carlsbad land use policies.

About the Vote

Carlsbad voters will have the opportunity to vote on the proposed Agua Hedionda South Shore Specific Plan (known in the community as the 85/15 plan) during a special election Tuesday, Feb. 23, 2016. The question before voters will be:

“Shall Ordinance No. CS-283 of the Carlsbad City Council adopting the Agua Hedionda South Shore Specific Plan (203.4 acres east of the I-5 freeway between the Agua Hedionda Lagoon and Cannon Road), which designates 21.6 acres of additional open space, for a total of 176.7 acres of open space for public access, preservation of natural habitat, and agriculture, along with development of 585,000 square feet of visitor-serving commercial uses on 26.7 acres be adopted?”

If a simple majority (50 percent of the vote plus one) votes yes, the plan will proceed to the California Coastal Commission for consideration. If Measure A fails, the City Council’s decision to approve the plan will be repealed.

Measure A

The Agua Hedionda South Shore Specific Plan was proposed May 12, 2015, by three Carlsbad residents through a citizen-led initiative sponsored by Caruso Affiliated. The plan would change land uses on a 203.4 acre privately owned property located east of I-5, between the south shore of the Agua Hedionda Lagoon and Cannon Road. The major land use changes being proposed are:

- Reduce the amount of land where visitor-serving commercial development is allowed from 48.3 acres to 26.7 acres.
- Increase the amount of land designated as permanent open space from 155.1 acres to 176.7 acres.

The plan includes provisions to guarantee continued strawberry farming and coastal agriculture, preserve natural habitat, and provide publicly accessible trails and open space. The visitor-serving commercial development includes open air shopping, dining, entertainment and recreational uses.

Proposed Land Use Change

Today, 155.10 acres are already designated for open space, and 48.3 acres are designated for visitor-serving commercial development. The proposed Agua Hedionda South Shore Specific Plan would change 21.6 of the 48.3 acres currently designated for commercial use to permanent open space, bringing the total open space land up to 176.7 acres. The remaining 26.7 acres would include visitor-serving commercial uses such as dining and shopping.

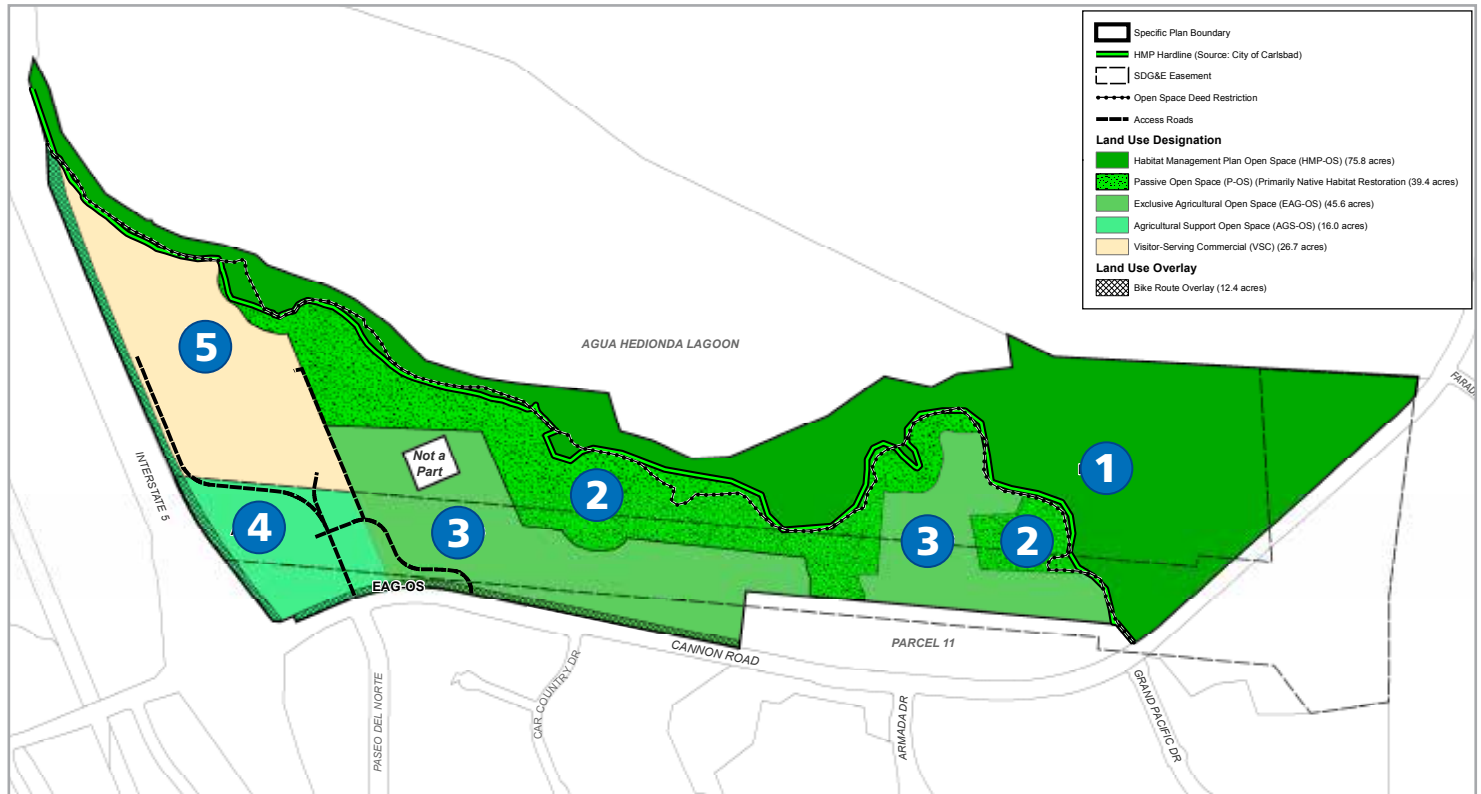
Current Land Use (If Measure A Does Not Pass)



Proposed Land Use (If Measure A Passes)



Measure A Land Use Designations



- 1 Habitat Management Plan Open Space**
Existing conservation area in the city’s Habitat Management Plan. This area is also subject to a California Coastal Commission open space deed restriction, and no development shall occur on delineated wetland, riparian, upland native habitat areas and steep slopes within this area.
- 2 Passive Open Space**
Areas with existing or potential for biological resources. Intended to accommodate permanent natural open space, natural drainage and stream courses, habitat restoration or enhancement, trails, buffers, vista points, picnic areas, limited surface parking for public access and passive recreation uses only, ingress/egress roads with limited lighting, and low-impact recreation uses.
- 3 Exclusive Agricultural Open Space**
Areas that have existing or potential for agriculture resources. Intended to accommodate agricultural production, sales, limited surface parking for agriculture uses and equipment, ingress/egress roads with limited lighting for the benefit of the Specific Plan area. Additionally, classroom/education and interpretive programming related to the area’s cultural and natural resources, trails, vista points, and picnic areas are allowed, provided they do not interfere with the agricultural uses.
- 4 Agricultural Support Open Space**
Intended to accommodate the continuation of coastal agriculture and strawberry farming in an open space setting. Allows for an agricultural farm stand and associated produce sales, farmers market, farm-to-table dining, “you-pick” opportunities and other accessory uses supporting the continuation of coastal agriculture and strawberry farming and its connection to the visitor-serving commercial and exclusive agriculture open space designations.
- 5 Visitor-Serving Commercial**
Allows for up to 585,000 square feet of new visitor-serving retail, shopping, dining, entertainment and recreation uses to accommodate the outdoor shopping, dining and entertainment promenade, and provides a cohesive integration with the adjacent open space and agriculture designations.

Technical Analysis

As allowed under section 9212 of the California Elections Code, on May 19, 2015, the Carlsbad City Council ordered a comprehensive, neutral analysis of the proposed plan. The purpose of the analysis was to provide the public and the city with an impartial planning, policy, economic and environmental review of the plan focusing on whether or not it met city standards.

As allowed under section 9212 of the California Elections Code, on May 19, 2015, the Carlsbad City Council ordered a comprehensive analysis of the proposed plan.

Land Use

The plan was evaluated for compliance with existing land use laws. The findings are shown on the chart below. Some do not apply to the plan. For example, the housing element does not apply because residential development is not allowed. Others will be evaluated at a later time by the California Coastal Commission.

Growth Management Standards

Carlsbad’s Growth Management Program has guided growth and development since 1986, when it was authorized by voters. The program sets standards to make sure Carlsbad has enough parks, libraries, roads, open space and important services to ensure an excellent quality of life for residents.

The Agua Hedionda South Shore Specific Plan was analyzed against each of the 11 performance standards of the city’s Growth Management Program. The analysis found the Agua Hedionda Plan meets or exceeds 10 of the 11 performance standards. The Growth Management Program traffic standards will not be met in the future, regardless of whether or not Measure A is approved. This is due to projected regional traffic increases.

Compliance With City Laws

	Complies	Fails to Comply	Other
General Plan (1994)	✓		
Housing Element*			✓
Draft General Plan (2014)	✓		
Draft Climate Action Plan (2014)	✓		
Zoning Ordinance	✓		
California Coastal Act**			✓
Agua Hedionda Land Use Plan**			✓

*Not applicable. Plan does not directly affect housing.

**California Coastal Commission responsible for determining consistency.

Freeway Improvements Schedule

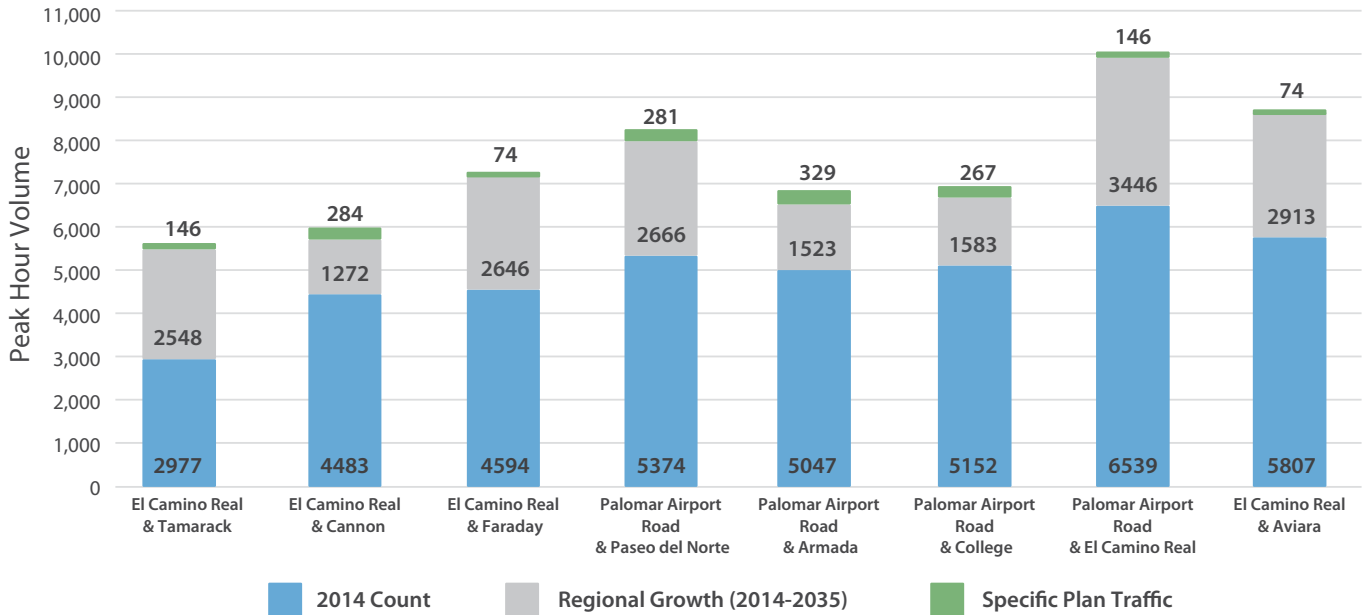
Caltrans is scheduled to make improvements on the section of I-5 in North County beginning in 2016. The first phase includes adding carpool lanes from Lomas Santa Fe Road to Highway 78 and increasing rail service by adding a second set of tracks. This is scheduled for completion around 2020. Then Caltrans would add “express lanes,” which will ensure a reliable and significantly less-congested travel option along I-5. Additional improvements, scheduled to start around 2032, include new and improved onramps, off ramps and lanes at Cannon Road. Measure A requires the developer to contribute funding toward these improvements, and Caltrans has indicated that it will require the developer to execute a mitigation agreement. As a result, the Cannon Road improvements could be started sooner than 2032.

Traffic Findings

By 2035, the plan would not meet the city’s Growth Management Program standard for “circulation” at eight intersections. These intersections will not meet this standard regardless of whether or not the plan is implemented. This is due primarily to projected traffic growth outside of Carlsbad that would affect city streets and intersections. Under the plan, the developer would be required to pay nearly \$10 million for improvements to roads, intersections and traffic signals. These improvements would result in less future traffic congestion at the eight affected intersections, than if the plan were not implemented.

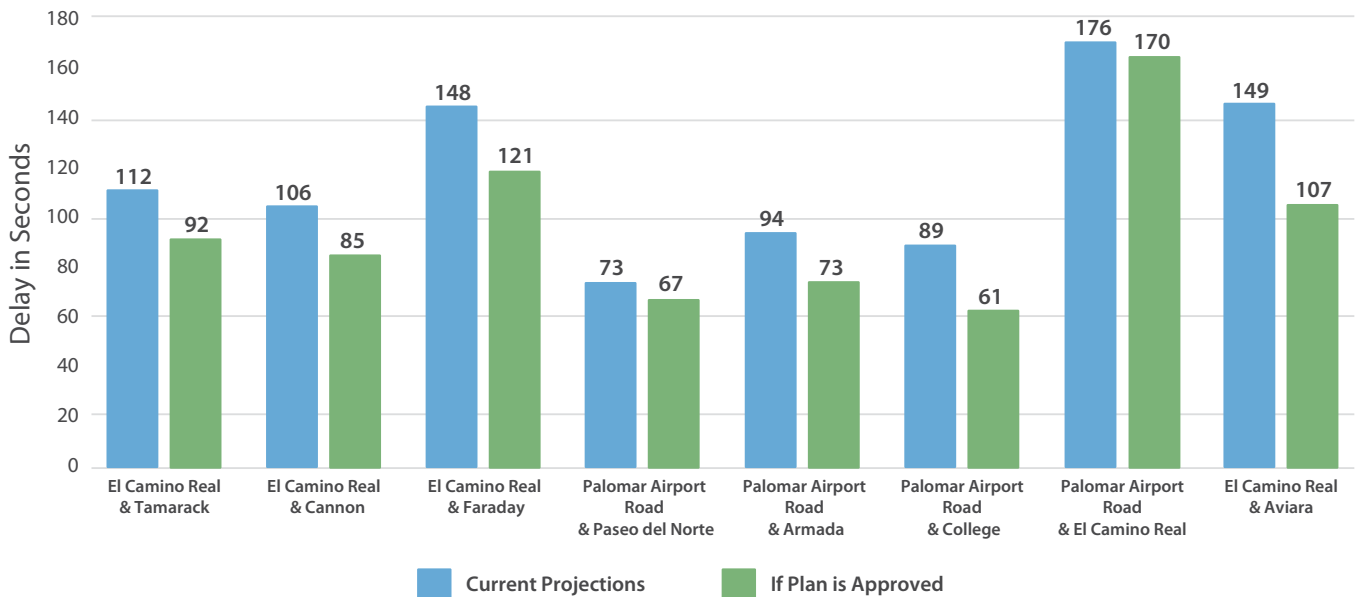
Traffic From Plan Compared to Other Traffic

This chart shows the amount of added traffic generated by the plan compared to the amount of added traffic anticipated from regional growth at eight intersections where growth management standards are not met.



Red Light Wait Times

As part of the plan, the developer is required to pay for improvements to traffic signals at the eight intersections where growth managements standards would not be met in 2035. With these improvements, traffic delays would be less than if the plan and the associated improvements did not happen.





Environmental Findings

Aesthetics	Because development is allowed on a small percentage of the land and due to the plan's 35-foot height limit, the plan is not likely to change the existing visual character for most of the area. Views from surrounding vista points would not be substantially altered or adversely affected.
Agriculture Resources	The plan designates 61.5 acres as permanently protected agricultural land. Revenue from the visitor-serving commercial uses, and/or from private funding, would maintain these lands in agricultural use in perpetuity.
Air Quality	The plan is consistent with the city's General Plan and SANDAG's regional plans but is not consistent with the 2009 Regional Air Quality Strategy for San Diego.
Biological Resources	The plan will not significantly impact covered special status species and sensitive natural communities.
Cultural Resources	Adequate guidance for the handling of previously undiscovered cultural resources is provided.
Geology and Soils	The plan will comply with the City of Carlsbad's building and grading codes and standards.
Greenhouse Gases	The plan is consistent with the City of Carlsbad's Climate Action Plan and General Plan, SANDAG's Sustainable Communities Strategy and California Assembly Bill 32.
Hazards	The plan would be required to adhere to regulations pertaining to transport, use, storage and disposal of hazardous materials. Environmental protection features of the plan address potential presence of hazardous materials in area.
Hydrology and Water Quality	The plan addresses potential impacts to hydrology and water quality and is consistent with city regulations. During the city's grading plan and design approval process the plan would need to adhere to all current water quality regulations.
Land Use and Planning	The plan is complementary and consistent with applicable land use plans and development policies of the city.
Mineral Resources	No mineral resources of economic value to the region have been identified within the plan area.
Noise	The plan is consistent with city noise rules and regulations for construction activities. Long-term operational noise would not result in a substantial increase in ambient noise levels.
Population and Housing	The plan would not impact population and housing.
Public Services	The plan would not impact city's ability to provide public services.
Recreation	The plan is consistent with and meets recreation goals, objectives, policies and standards as outlined in the city's General Plan.
Traffic and Circulation	Due to regional growth, the plan does not fully comply with the Circulation Facilities performance standard. See section on traffic for details.
Utilities	Infrastructure is available to support the plan.
Energy	San Diego Gas & Electric has adequate supply and transmission capability to serve the plan.
Cumulative	Cumulative effects identified mirror those same effects associated with implementation of the plan alone. Similar to environmental impacts that may occur with implementation of the plan, environmental protection features of the plan would address the project's contribution to the broader cumulative effects.



Economic Impact

Net Fiscal Impact	The plan will provide a positive fiscal benefit to city. Projected net fiscal impact is \$2.6 million annually.
Property Tax	The city will receive an estimated \$843,400 in additional property taxes annually once it is implemented.
Sales Tax	The plan will provide an estimated \$2.1 million a year to the city in sales tax revenues once it is implemented.
Business License Tax	The city will receive an estimated \$78,100 in additional business license revenues each year once the plan is implemented.
Primary Fiscal Expenditures	The annual cost to provide city services related to the plan, such as police and fire protection, is estimated at \$653,100.
Tourism Impacts	The plan could generate an increase in transit occupancy tax (hotel tax), but the city does not have a methodology to calculate the amount, so it was not included in city revenue estimates.
Other Fiscal Revenues	There is no direct correlation between other fiscal revenue sources and the plan.
Building Permit/Plan Check/Impact Fees	The total development fees to be paid to the city are estimated at \$11.8 million.
Retail Demand Analysis	Analysis shows there is sufficient demand for additional retail space in the area.
Open Space Public Benefit	The plan will provide a positive open space public benefit with an estimated value between \$10 million and \$16.5 million.



Measure A Compared to Proposition D

In 2006, Carlsbad voters approved Proposition D, which designated 307 acres of land as permanent open space. The boundaries of the Proposition D land are different from the Agua Hedionda South Shore Specific Plan. Proposition D did not include the 48 acres closest to the freeway, which have been designated for visitor-serving commercial development for more than 30 years.

Under Measure A ...

26.7 acres could be developed for visitor-serving commercial uses

61.5 acres of coastal agriculture would be guaranteed to continue indefinitely

Open space guaranteed to be accessible to the public indefinitely

No residential development allowed

Habitat areas would be managed according to scientific standards, at no expense to taxpayers

Allowed uses in the "open space" area more limited (trails, agriculture, etc.)

Cannot be changed or repealed without a public vote for the first 15 years, and all development must conform to the standards outlined in Measure A, without exception. After 15 years, the plan may be changed or repealed by the City Council or a public vote.

Under Proposition D ...

48.3 acres could be developed for visitor-serving commercial uses (these 48 acres were NOT part of Prop D)

Coastal agriculture is encouraged to continue as long as "economically viable for the landowner"

Public access to open space currently prohibited by property owner

No residential development allowed

No management of habitat areas required and no funding provided

Allowed uses in the "open space" area more broad (could include museums, recreation centers, ballfields, etc.)

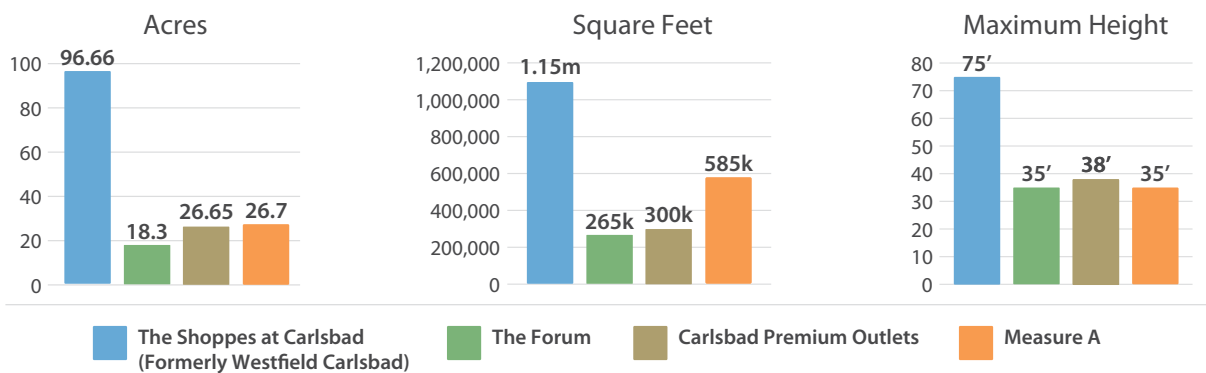
Can only be amended or repealed by a public vote



Size Information

Visitor-serving commercial development is currently allowed on 48.3 acres of the property. If Measure A passes, visitor-serving commercial development would only be allowed on 26.7 acres. Measure A limits the size of the visitor-serving commercial development to a maximum of 585,000 square feet of building area. Current city standards do not place a limit on the maximum square footage allowed on the 48.3 acres.

By comparison, the acreage of the visitor-serving commercial uses in Measure A would be about the same as the Carlsbad Premium Outlets (26.65 acres), more than The Forum (18.3 acres) and about one-fourth of the total acreage of the Shoppes at Carlsbad, formerly Westfield Carlsbad (96.66 acres). Comparing square footage, the maximum square footage allowed under Measure A is about half the square footage of the former Westfield Carlsbad (1,151,092 square feet) and more than Carlsbad Premium Outlets (300,000) and The Forum (265,000). When it comes to height limits, the building heights allowed under Measure A would be capped at 35 feet, the same as The Forum, a little less than Carlsbad Premium Outlets and less than half of the former Westfield mall.



Important Dates

- Jan. 14, 2016** Sample ballots will be mailed to registered voters between Jan. 14, 2016 and Feb. 2, 2016.
- Jan. 25, 2016** First day that vote by mail ballots are available. First day early voting is available at San Diego County Registrar of Voters, 5600 Overland Drive, San Diego. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Feb. 8, 2016** Last day to register to vote for this election. Registration cards are available at the Carlsbad City Clerk's Office, 1200 Carlsbad Village Drive, or at the San Diego County Registrar of Voters, 5600 Overland Drive, San Diego.
- Feb. 16, 2016** Last day to submit written request for vote by mail ballot. You may request a vote by mail ballot by 1) calling the Registrar of Voters at 858-565-5800 and requesting an application; 2) visiting www.sdvote.com and downloading an application; 3) completing your application card on the back of your sample ballot pamphlet; or 4) writing your own request.
- Feb. 17, 2016** Emergency voting in person or pick up will take place between Feb. 17 and Feb. 23, 2016.
- Feb. 23, 2016** **Election Day.** To find your polling location, look on the back cover of your sample ballot pamphlet. You may also call the San Diego County Registrar of Voters at 858-565-5800 or visit www.sdvote.com.

For More Information

Please visit the City of Carlsbad's website at www.carlsbadca.gov/voterinfo or call 760-434-2820.