

Escondido council OKs 80-home project

■ New Urban's reputation cited as major factor in council's approval

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ESCONDIDO — When New Urban West officials knocked on the city's door this week with a proposal to build 80 homes in eastern Escondido, the city not only

answered but threw the door wide open in welcome.

Residents, business groups and City Council members alike raved about the Santa Monica-based developer's proposal to build new homes on 133 acres east of Rancho San Pasqual and north of the San Diego Wild Animal Park. No one spoke against the project, called Rancho Vistamonte, and the council approved the plans with a 4-0 vote. Councilman Tom D'Agosta was absent from the council meeting

Wednesday.

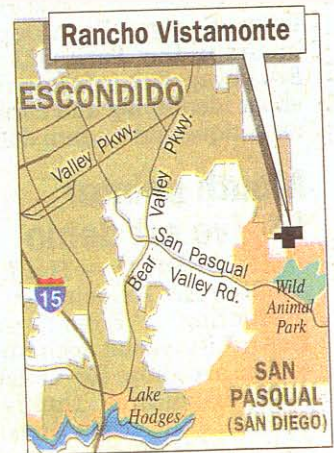
"New Urban West is a proven commodity in this town," said Councilman Ed Gallo. "It proves to be a company that listens to the community and does the right thing. It is the kind of company we need more of."

Councilwoman Marie Waldron said Rancho Vistamonte was such a hit because the developer listened.

"I have never met a developer who wanted to meet and talk about what the city

wanted before even putting together a map," she said. "They really impressed me. And so many people support them. That is a testament to the project here."

The interaction with the community seems to have paid off. New Urban was bolstered by several residents and local business leaders who came to Wednesday's meeting wearing buttons that read, "YES on Rancho



► PROJECT, B-4