



History

El Cajon, located in East San Diego County, is a city of over 95,000 residents. El Cajon lies midway between Downtown San Diego on the coast, and the rural mountain and desert communities that comprise the County's vast eastern region.

From early 1800 until the 1950s, El Cajon's historic Downtown served as the social, cultural and business heart of East County. In the years that followed, extensive suburban development eclipsed El Cajon's ability to thrive.

Between the 1950's and the 1990's, the concentration of extensive low-income housing bordering the Downtown District, and the development of malls and urban strip centers drew shoppers and businesses away from El Cajon's inner core. As a result, Downtown El Cajon declined from a once thriving community to one that became listed as "blighted" by the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

In 1996, the City of El Cajon committed itself to transforming the city into a dynamic urban center. This decision was born from the efforts of hundreds of residents and business owners who worked side-by-side with city and county government to create a revitalization plan. What is now known to many as El Cajon CDC created bold and imaginative plans to manage Downtown El Cajon.

In June 2001, El Cajon CDC received certification as a California Main Street community, a program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

El Cajon CDC's offices are located in El Cajon's historic Downtown within a federally designated Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area. In May 2002, El Cajon CDC received certification as a National Main Street Community, making Downtown El Cajon part of the growing national movement to revitalize America's decaying urban centers. Since August 2002, El Cajon CDC has received several Housing and Urban Development designations and is now recognized as a Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) and a Community Based Development Organization (CBDO).