



Los Angeles County
Department of Regional Planning



Planning for the Challenges Ahead

August 21, 2008

Bruce W. McClendon FAICP
Director of Planning

TO: Harold V. Helsley, Chair
Leslie G. Bellamy, Vice Chair
Esther Valadez, Commissioner
Wayne Rew, Commissioner
Pat Modugno, Commissioner

FROM: Ms. Alejandrina C. Baldwin, Principal Regional Planning Assistant
Land Divisions Section

**SUBJECT: Proposed Rowland Heights Community Plan Amendment
Project No. 2008-00549-(4)
1920 Brea Canyon Cut-Off Road, Rowland Heights**

**September 3, 2008 Regional Planning Commission Meeting
Agenda Item No. 8-Discussion and Possible Action**

PROJECT BACKGROUND

As you may recall, your Regional Planning Commission ("Commission") conducted a Discussion and Possible Action on July 16, 2008, regarding the initiation of a request for a plan amendment to the Rowland Heights Community Plan ("Plan"), as part of Project No. 2008-00549-(4). The proposed plan amendment is a request to change the current land use designation of U1 (Urban 1-3.2 units per acre maximum) to a new land use designation of U5 (Urban 5 22.1-35.0 units per acre max).

The Plan states that any amendment to the Plan may be initiated only by the Commission or the Board of Supervisors. It also stated that any such proposed amendment shall be reviewed by the Planning Advisory Committee, and discussed at least one advertised community evening meeting held in Rowland Heights.

At the July 16, 2008 public meeting, your Commission instructed the applicant to conduct an informational meeting out in the community regarding the proposed plan amendment. The Commission also indicated that following the applicant's informational meeting, a Commission public hearing in the evening would be scheduled in Rowland Heights to consider the initiation of the Plan Amendment.

On August 14, 2008, the applicant held an informational community meeting at Rowland Heights High School. The meeting consisted of display boards, a power point presentation and a question and answer session. The display boards included architectural illustrations of the proposed project and its location within the community, optional language for the proposed plan amendment, and outlined the environmental process. In addition to similar information displayed on the boards, the power point presentation also included detailed information of the design of the proposed residential units and project, amenities proposed within the project, the projects status within the

Project No. 2008-00549-(4)
Proposed Rowland Heights Community Plan Amendment
September 3, 2008 RPC Meeting

County's processing and public hearing process, and the environmental review status and process for the project.

During the question and answer portion of the meeting, many concerns from the community residents were heard. Concerns voiced included the following: traffic, congested intersections, water availability, existing rural feeling of the community, consistency of proposed density with existing surrounding residential, the existing commercial services not being able to support the proposed density, the possibility of future projects proposed at the new density, pre-established higher density areas within Rowland Heights, height of the residential project, earthquake safety, and open space.

Staff has not prepared an in-depth analysis of the proposed Plan Amendment, as the initiation of the Plan Amendment by the Commission or Board is first required before evaluation of the application request. At this time staff does not seek a decision regarding the merits of this project.

At this time, staff recommends discussion by your Commission regarding the scheduling of an evening public hearing to continue the discussion and consideration of the applicant's request for a Plan Amendment to the Rowland Heights Community Plan.

Suggested Motion: "I move that the Regional Planning Commission hold an evening public hearing in the Rowland Heights community to consider the applicant's request for a Plan Amendment to the Rowland Heights Community Plan, on _____".

ACB:gat

Attachments: Agenda/Notice, Informational flyers, "Responding to Community Concerns" and "Canyon Residences in Rowland Heights"



You Are Invited To Discuss The Canyon Residences Project And Proposed Plan Amendment To The Rowland Heights Community General Plan

Project: A proposed new residential community consisting of high quality multifamily residential units as well as various resident-oriented recreational amenities

Project Address: 1920 Brea Canyon Cut-Off Road, Walnut, CA 91789

Meeting Location: **Rowland High School, Hideout Multipurpose Room
2000 S. Otterbein Avenue, Rowland Heights, CA 91748**

Meeting Date: August 14, 2008 from 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m

Schedule:
6:30 p.m.: Welcome/Opening Comments
6:45 p.m.: Visit informational workstations regarding project and plan amendment
7:30 p.m.: Presentation on Canyon Residences Project and proposed plan amendment
8:00 p.m.: Question and Answer Session
9:00 p.m.: Meeting Ends

Purpose: To learn about the proposed Canyon Residences Project and to discuss a proposed plan amendment to the Rowland Heights Community General Plan

Trammell Crow Residential invites you to participate in a community-wide meeting to be held in Rowland Heights during evening hours to learn about the proposed Canyon Residences Project and to discuss a proposed plan amendment to the Rowland Heights Community General Plan. At the meeting, Trammell Crow Residential will make a presentation about the Canyon Residences Project and proposed plan amendment. Those in attendance will have the opportunity to ask questions about the project and proposed plan amendment.

The proposed project consists of approximately 775 multi-family residential units on a 15.7 acre property located at 1920 Brea Canyon Cut-Off Road in the Rowland Heights community. The project would consist of three different building types, including podium building units, townhomes, and wrap-around buildings, as well as associated recreational amenities.

The Los Angeles County Regional Planning Department has already determined that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is necessary. Los Angeles County is the Lead Agency for the project and will be responsible for the EIR preparation. Los Angeles County also previously held a public scoping meeting on June 19, 2008 to solicit comments from the public as to the content and scope of the EIR that is being prepared.

Trammell Crow Residential has scheduled this community-wide meeting to take place at the **Hideout Multipurpose Room at Rowland High School located at 2000 S. Otterbein Avenue, Rowland Heights, CA 91748 on August 14, 2008 from 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.** Please see the back of this notice for the location of the Hideout Multipurpose Room on the Rowland High School property.

For more information regarding the project, please visit the project website at www.canyonresidences.com. Trammell Crow Residential also has set up an information line for the project at (626) 457-2620.

County Project Case Numbers: Canyon Residences Project: Project No. R2008-00549, General Plan Amendment No. T2008-00004, Conditional Use Permit No. RCUP-T2008-00069, Zone Change No. RZC T2008-00015, Environmental Review No. RENV T2008-00042, Oak Tree Permit No. ROAK T2008-00015



Canyon Residences *in* **Rowland Heights**

A New Community
By Trammell Crow Residential

Trammell Crow Residential is proposing a new, upscale residential community -- the ***Canyon Residences*** in Rowland Heights -- targeted to meet the needs of the growing numbers of young professionals and newly married couples seeking attractive housing options, and for older couples, with family nearby, seeking to downsize from their suburban lifestyle.

- ***Canyon Residences*** is planned for the 15.7 acre site on the southeast corner of Colima Road and Brea Canyon Cutoff, currently the home of the Southlands Church International and the Southlands Schools International.
- The 775 needed new units proposed will include:
 - *An attractive combination of side by side townhomes and upscale apartments, with lush and attractive landscaping, complete with parks and gardens.*
 - *Pools, fitness centers, recreational facilities and numerous other amenities will attract young professionals and young families as well as active "empty nesters".*
- ***Canyon Residences*** will provide a mix of 1, 2, and 3 bedroom high-end, luxury units, incorporating the latest design trends. The community will be comprised of 3 separate housing "villages" containing both outdoor and indoor amenities. All three villages will have views of and access to the park area and all amenities. Each village has been designed to provide a different housing option.
 - ***Canyon Villas.*** *Two three- and four-story buildings above subterranean garages will anchor the north end of the community.*
 - ***Village Townhomes.*** *A 3-story townhome village will be built in the center of the community.*
 - ***The Courtyards.*** *The south end of the community will contain a three- and four-story building with an adjacent, four-story parking structure.*
- The changing dynamics of the housing market have created strong demand for new, attractive and upscale rental housing for those who are taking the last stepping stone before buying a house, and for those who are moving down from their larger suburban family homes.
- The site's current zoning allows for the church and school, as well as housing. The commercial setting at the crossroads of two major boulevards, along with strong housing demand, suggests that the site is ideal for additional housing density. ***Canyon Residences*** can deliver the type of new rental housing the market demands.

Canyon Residences: Smart Growth and Attractive Housing...

with Community Benefits:

- *Developing **Canyon Residences** on this existing commercial corner preserves open space and hillside areas. It's an excellent example of the kind of smart-growth, infill housing that experts throughout the region are urging cities and counties to pursue.*
- *Such highly desired housing, in such a high-demand housing area, will boost residential property values for surrounding neighborhoods and property owners.*
- *Local Rowland Heights businesses will benefit from millions of dollars in annual spending by the new residents, stimulating the local economy.*
- ***Canyon Residences** will result in new state and local tax revenues from state income and sales taxes generated by residents. This, combined with new property tax revenue, will be an important source of revenue for the County, or a future city!*
- ***Canyon Residences** will contribute new revenues in school fees and property taxes that will be beneficial for the Rowland Unified School District.*

Environmental Benefits:

- ***Canyon Residences** will implement design features that incorporate sustainable, green design principles into site design, building construction techniques, and building materials. It also will provide streetscape improvements that will enhance the visual environment of the neighborhood and encourage pedestrian activity.*
- *Traffic studies show that there will be less traffic impacts on the surrounding streets and for the adjacent neighborhood than would otherwise be the case with further commercial development on this site. And, ample off street and on site parking will provide added protections.*

Canyon Residences in Rowland Heights has now begun its public review process, which will enable members of the public to make comments and address concerns. As part of this public process an environmental review also will be conducted.



Trammell Crow Residential (TCR) is an expert in developing attractive, and desirable housing in commercial settings. And, TCR has a long history of working with local communities and neighborhoods in the development of their state of the art, award-winning apartment communities.

TCR
TRAMMELL CROW RESIDENTIAL

Canyon Residences Information Line 626-457-2620

www.canyonresidences.com

Responding to Community Concerns

Trammell Crow Residential (TCR), a locally-oriented developer of upscale residential communities, has proposed a new, upscale residential rental community for Rowland Heights. The new Canyon Residences is planned for the 15.7 acre site on the southeast corner of Colima Road and Brea Canyon Cutoff, currently the home of the Southlands Church International and the Southlands Schools International. Recently, residents of Rowland Heights have been expressing concerns about the project, reflecting a misunderstanding of the project itself, and the positive role it can play in the Rowland Heights community.

CONCERN: *Why is this developer building this big project? We don't need it or want it. There is enough housing here.*

RESPONSE: The Church put its property up for sale in order to enable a relocation to better serve its congregation. While surrounded by intensive commercial uses, and already developed with an intensive institutional use, the site also is well suited for higher density residential use. Trammell Crow Residential is a world class developer of highly desired residential apartment communities targeted to upscale tenants. Demographic studies document that there is a growing number of such desirable tenants in the area. The facts are that the project is consistent in size with the existing and surrounding uses, and the housing it provides is in strong demand. That is why TCR entered into a purchase agreement with the Church to develop this new residential property.

CONCERN: *The developer hasn't listened to anybody, and hasn't shared information with anyone.*

RESPONSE: In fact, the developer has been engaged in a long study and analysis process, first looking at housing demand, then looking at project feasibility, and finally outreaching to the local community. The developer began meeting with Rowland Heights community leaders long before it even submitted a project application to the county, meetings which helped shape the project, including its look and design.

Additionally, TCR first met with the Rowland Heights Coordinating Council in January before it submitted an application. Upon filing an application this Spring, the environmental review process began, with a well-attended Scoping Meeting held in the community to hear concerns regarding potential environmental impacts of the project. The project will undergo an environmental impact study, taking into account issues raised at the Scoping Meeting, which will be presented, along with the project details, in a series of public hearings expected to begin this Fall. Prior to that, TCR plans a number of community meetings and informational mailings to inform the broader Rowland Heights community of the project and its impacts. The public review process will include public hearings held by the Regional Planning Commission before it is presented to the County Board of Supervisors. This process is expected to continue through the first half of next year.

CONCERN: *I moved here for rural atmosphere. This is just too big and dense. There is nothing like it in the area.*

RESPONSE: Canyon Residences is consistent with the intense uses along the major boulevards where it is sited, including the current use, and there are similar residential projects in the Rowland Heights community. According to Real Facts (an apartment tracking service for projects over 100 units), there are several rental, multifamily projects in Rowland Heights that are 100 units or greater in size. Hacienda Gardens, located on South Batson Avenue contains 240 units and was built in 1971. La Serena, located on East Colima, contains 416 units and was built in 1974. Pheasant Ridge, also located on East Colima contains 620 units and was built in 1979.

Unlike those apartment complexes, Canyon Residences will be a different class of residential community targeted to meet the needs of the growing numbers of young professionals and newly married couples seeking attractive housing options, and for older couples, with family nearby, seeking to downsize from their suburban lifestyle.

CONCERN: *It is just too big, will tower over everything, and doesn't fit with the local area. There are farms, animals and woods nearby.*

RESPONSE: Canyon Residences is planned for an already developed site with an intensive institutional use, adjacent to two busy commercial boulevards. It is consistent in size and density for the surrounding uses adjacent to much of the site. But instead of more commercial development – which would generate more traffic – it is providing needed housing. Additionally, developing Canyon Residences on this existing commercial corner preserves open space and hillside areas from residential development to meet the same housing demand. It's an excellent example of the kind of smart-growth, infill housing that experts throughout the region are urging cities and counties to pursue.

CONCERN: *But it's rental housing. It's a fact that with rental housing property values go down and crime goes up.*

RESPONSE: The changing dynamics of the housing market have created strong demand for new, attractive and upscale rental housing for those who are taking the last step before buying a house, and for those who are moving down from their larger single family homes. Canyon Residences will attract the kind of tenants who will become contributing members of the Rowland Heights community. In fact, housing studies document that residential property values within 300 feet of apartment communities of this type experience a similar rate of property value appreciation as other surrounding residential properties. Such highly desired housing, in such a high-demand housing area, will boost residential property values for surrounding neighborhoods and property owners.

CONCERN: *Will there be rent control and low-income tenants?*

RESPONSE: No this project is not a low income project and will not be subject to rent control.

CONCERN: *The traffic in the area is already too much. The traffic study is not comprehensive enough.*

RESPONSE: In fact, a final traffic study has not been completed. This will be part of the environmental review process and will study all surrounding streets and intersections, as well as freeway impacts. Preliminary studies indicate that there will be less traffic

impacts on the surrounding streets and for the adjacent neighborhood than would otherwise be the case with further commercial development on this site. Additionally, it should be remembered that the site is currently a large traffic generator, especially at peak morning hours with school and church use. The traffic study also will compare traffic anticipated from the new project to the traffic already generated by the current use.

CONCERN: *Too many people will live there and there won't be enough parking for residents and guests.*

RESPONSE: Canyon Residences will be providing ample off street and on site parking with 1544 spaces designed to accommodate both residents and visitors in three separate village communities – equating to about 2 stalls per unit, or 1.3 parking spaces per bedroom.

CONCERN: *The project will overwhelm already overcrowded local schools. A study is needed to determine impacts on schools.*

RESPONSE: Canyon Residences will contribute over \$1 million in new revenues in school fees, which, along with new property tax revenues, will be beneficial for the Rowland Unified School District. Additionally, given the demographic mix of the likely tenant base, the project will not significantly impact the local schools. The impact on schools and the benefit to the School District will be part of the public review and approval process.

CONCERN: *The size and density will overwhelm existing services. There is not enough parking at local businesses, nor are there enough recreational facilities. The Post Office, Library, law enforcement are stretched beyond their limit.*

RESPONSE: Canyon Residences will result in new state and local tax revenues from state income and sales taxes generated by residents. This, combined with new property tax revenue, will be an important source of revenue for the county, or a future city. These revenues will go to support the local infrastructure, including parks, recreation, law enforcement and other services. Additionally, local Rowland Heights businesses will benefit from millions of dollars in annual spending by the new residents, stimulating the local economy. Development fees for a project of this size will be about \$10-15 million.

CONCERN: *Fire is a real danger, especially along Brea Canyon Road, Pathfinder Park and others.*

RESPONSE: Canyon Residences will be located away from the hillside and fire danger areas, and is sited in an already developed area along major commercial boulevards. Canyon Residences will include all required, state-of-the-art fire safety construction methods and fire safety procedures for its residents. Additionally, Canyon Residences will result in new revenues to support local fire services.

CONCERN: *We are concerned about the overuse of our existing parks in the vicinity of the development.*

RESPONSE: Canyon Residences will be an attractive combination of side by side townhomes and upscale apartments, with lush and attractive landscaping, complete with park-like areas and gardens. It's recreational and open space amenities will support the recreational needs of its tenants, who will not become a burden to existing park and recreation facilities. The community will include pools, fitness centers, recreational facilities and numerous other outdoor and indoor amenities. All three housing villages will have views of and access to the park-like areas and all amenities.

CONCERN: *The 'green building' plan is bogus. The project is removing trees, using more water, not recycling, and it's not LEEDS certified. There is not enough green space as it is.*

RESPONSE: The new project will include lush landscaping, with the addition of many trees and shrubs and open space areas. Additionally, Canyon Residences will implement design features that incorporate sustainable, green building principles into site design, building construction techniques, and building materials. It also will provide streetscape improvements that will enhance the visual environment of the neighborhood and encourage pedestrian activity.

CONCERN: *All the cumulative impacts haven't been considered and must be studied.*

RESPONSE: The environmental review process will account for all impacts, including cumulative impacts. This study is only now underway, and will become available for public review and comment when completed. Cumulative impacts, including other planned developments, not just in Rowland Heights but neighboring cities as well, will be a part of this study.

CONCERN: *There will be construction impacts on neighbors.*

RESPONSE: Again, all impacts, including construction impacts, will be studied and must be included in the environmental impact study, including measures to mitigate such impacts if necessary. This will become a part of the project's approval process. Truck routes, construction timing, and ways to reduce such impacts on neighbors will all become part of the project's public review and approval process.

CONCERN: *The greatest concern is water. There isn't enough to serve the new development.*

RESPONSE: Canyon Residences has received a will-serve letter from the Walnut Valley Water district. However, a study to demonstrate available water supplies also will be part of the environmental review process. Canyon Residences will have to demonstrate that there is available water supply to serve the development and its residents.

CONCERN: *The community needs more information and education about the project*

RESPONSE: Canyon Residences has only just begun its public review process, which will enable members of the public to make comments and address concerns. As part of this public process an environmental review also will be conducted. This environmental review has only now begun and must be completed before the project can even be considered for approval by the Regional Planning Commission. TCR expects there to be numerous community meetings and public hearings on this project over the next many months providing for ample opportunity to make comments.

Call: 626-457-2620. Visit: www.canyonresidences.com