



# Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning

*Planning for the Challenges Ahead*



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Director of Planning

**NOTICE OF COMPLETION, AVAILABILITY, AND RECIRCULATION OF THE  
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE  
LANDMARK VILLAGE PROJECT  
COUNTY PROJECT NO. 00-196  
STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NO. 2004021002**

**VESTING TENTATIVE TRACT MAP NO. TR53108  
GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT NO. 00-196-(5)  
SUB-PLAN AMENDMENT NO. 00-197-(5)  
SPECIFIC PLAN AMENDMENT NO. 00-198-(5)  
OAK TREE PERMIT NO. 00-196-(5)  
CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 00-196-(5)  
SEA CUP NO. 200500112-(5)  
MODIFICATION TO ADOPTED COUNTY FLOODWAY LIMITS**

The County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning acting in the capacity of Lead Agency under the County Environmental Document Reporting Procedures and Guidelines, Chapter III, Section 304, submits this "Notice of Completion, Availability, and Recirculation" of a Recirculated Draft Environmental Impact Report (RDEIR) for the Landmark Village Project (County Project No. 00-196). The Landmark Village RDEIR (January 2010) has been prepared in accordance with, and pursuant to, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), as amended; Public Resources Code, Sections 21000-21178; and the "Guidelines for California Environmental Quality Act" (State CEQA Guidelines), California Code of Regulation, Title 14, Chapter 3, Sections 15000-15387, especially Section 15088.5. The RDEIR is comprised of Volumes I – XI, as well as a map box. The RDEIR addresses the potential for significant environmental impacts associated with the construction and operation of the proposed Landmark Village Project under CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines cited above. The RDEIR concludes that the proposed project, even with the recommended mitigation measures, will result in: significant residual cumulative biota impacts from the loss coastal sage scrub; short-term project-specific construction noise impacts; short-term project-level construction air quality impacts from VOC, NO<sub>x</sub>, and PM<sub>10</sub>; project-level operation-related emission impacts from CO, VOC, and NO<sub>x</sub>; cumulative impacts caused by omission of VOC, NO<sub>x</sub>, and PM<sub>10</sub>; project-specific and cumulative visual quality impacts; project-specific and cumulative solid waste impacts; and project-specific and cumulative impacts caused by the conversion of prime agricultural land to non-agricultural uses.

## **SUMMARY OF PROPOSED PROJECT AND SITE LOCATION**

The Landmark Village proposed project is the first development phase within the Riverwood Village of the approved Newhall Ranch Specific Plan. The project site is located in western unincorporated Los Angeles County, south and north of the Santa Clara River, south and north of Highway 126 (SR-126), east of the Ventura County/Los Angeles County boundary, and west of Interstate 5 ("I-5"). The proposed project consists of 418 lots with a maximum of 1,444 residential units; 1,033,000 square feet of non-

residential mixed-used space; elementary school; community park; fire station; three private recreational facilities; open space; river trail uses; road and infrastructure improvements; and other amenities. The project site is currently used for agricultural purposes and contains miscellaneous, ancillary sheds for agricultural storage, and dirt roads. Chiquita Canyon Landfill is located to the north of the project site. The project site is not located on any of the lists of sites enumerated under section 65962.5 of the Government Code. Some off-site infrastructure would be within the approved Newhall Ranch River Corridor Special Management Area (SMA)/Significant Ecological Area 23 (River Corridor SMA/SEA 23), containing habitat for the endangered unarmored threespine stickleback and other sensitive species.

## **SUMMARY OF CHANGES TO LANDMARK VILLAGE PROJECT AND EIR**

On January 9, 2008, at the public consent calendar meeting, the Los Angeles County Regional Planning Commission (Commission) considered the Landmark Village project and the associated Draft EIR (November 2006) and Final EIR (November 2007). The Commission adopted a resolution recommending that the Board of Supervisors certify the Landmark Village Final EIR and approved the Landmark Village General/Local/Specific Plan Amendments, findings and conditions for Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 53108 (VTTM 53108), Conditional Use Permits (CUPs), Oak Tree Permit, and other discretionary project approvals. In addition, the Commission recommended that the Board of Supervisors approve CEQA Findings and the Mitigation Monitoring Plan for the proposed Landmark Village project.

Since the January 9, 2008 Commission meetings, the applicant filed a voluntary petition for chapter 11 bankruptcy protection on June 8, 2008. The bankruptcy filing was brought about because LandSource Communities Development, LLC (LandSource), owner of the applicant (Newhall), was unable to reach agreement with its lenders on a plan to modify and restructure its debt, all of which occurred in conjunction with the dramatic, precipitous decline in real estate values in California and throughout the nation. Effective July 31, 2009, the applicant has emerged from bankruptcy as a reorganized entity with the resources and financial flexibility to move forward with the Landmark Village proposed project, which is part of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan, approved by the County's Board of Supervisors on May 27, 2003. Since July 31, 2009, the applicant has worked with County staff on the Landmark Village proposed project and associated updated environmental review.

During this process, the Landmark Village tract map design has not materially changed and there have been no changes made to the tract map development footprint. However, there have been minor changes to the overall project site, including the utility corridor, the siting of the water tank facilities, and modification to the Adobe borrow site within the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan to increase the buffer surrounding a known San Fernando Valley spineflower location. While none of the project site changes are significant, County staff determined that the proposed changes and the passage of time since release of the prior Landmark Village Draft EIR (November 2006) were sufficient reasons to call for a recirculated draft EIR, which would also provide the public and other interested agencies and organizations with the opportunity to comment upon the new or updated information presented in the Landmark Village RDEIR (January 2010). County staff also determined that the entire Landmark Village Draft EIR should be recirculated in a clean format for ease of review. In summary, the prior Landmark Village Draft EIR (November 2006) is being recirculated because of the following changes or revisions: (a) Global Climate Change section has been added; (b) minor refinements were made to the project description; and (c) sections have been updated since circulation of the Landmark Village Draft EIR in November 2006 (*e.g.*,

Biota section has been updated and additional mitigation measures have been added). More specifically, the following new information has been updated or included:

- The school/community park layout was redesigned in response to the Commission's direction;
- The project's potable and non-potable water distribution and the wastewater/sewer systems were slightly modified;
- The Adobe Canyon borrow site boundary was revised to maintain an interim setback of at least 300 feet from any existing spineflower populations in response to comments received on the Draft EIR (November 2006);
- Modifications were made to the Landmark Village utility corridor alignment;
- Existing overhead electrical transmission lines were slightly relocated, and minor modifications were made to the proposed natural gas line distribution system;
- Estimated grading/earthwork volumes were slightly decreased, and information was added concerning phasing of the grading of the project site;
- Updates were made to the regulatory setting subsection of Water Quality, to reflect design specifications related to treatment control Best Management Practices (BMPs) and other project features associated with the proposed project;
- The Biota section was revised to address comments received on the Draft EIR, including comments from California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), and to incorporate the results of recent field surveys and studies;
- Impacts to sensitive animal species such as Coast horned lizard and Southern California rufous-crowned sparrow, that were in some instances considered significant and unavoidable are now reduced to less-than-significant levels by including additional mitigation measures, and further specificity regarding the implementation of habitat restoration and management measures; vegetation also was reclassified to be consistent with the currently used CDFG classification approach.
- In the Traffic/Access section, the cumulative impacts analyses of both arterial and freeway segments were updated;
- The impacts on I-5 were analyzed based on peak-hour directional volumes, and level of service (LOS) calculations were based on volume-density, as recommended by Caltrans, and additional significant impacts were noted and reduced to less-than-significant levels based on new and revised mitigation measures;
- The Water Services section was revised to reflect new developments and other information concerning the availability and reliability of local and statewide water supplies; and
- Public service sections were revised to reflect updated student generation and solid waste information, as well as mitigation fees for sheriff services.

Furthermore, County analysis of the RDEIR shows that impacts are the same as, or less than, the Landmark Village project considered and recommended for approval in January 2008, and there are no modifications that resulted in changes to any significance findings for any of the sections of the RDEIR, with the exception of the Biota and Traffic/Access sections (Sections 4.4 and 4.7, respectively), in which

cases additional mitigation measures were added that further reduced impacts to less-than-significant levels.

## **EIR RECIRCULATION**

The RDEIR (January 2010) has been prepared in accordance with CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines. Consistent with the provisions of section 15088.5(f)(2) of the State CEQA Guidelines, a recirculated draft EIR need only contain the portions of the draft EIR that have been modified, or where a new section was added to the draft EIR. However, County in the capacity as the lead agency has determined that the entire Landmark Village Draft EIR (November 2006) should be entirely replaced by the RDEIR (January 2010), which is being recirculated to enable the County's Board of Supervisors and other interested agencies and parties to evaluate the significant environmental impacts associated with the Landmark Village proposed project. The Landmark Village RDEIR (January 2010) and the Landmark Village Final EIR, Volumes I-V (November 2007), will be part of the "Landmark Village Final EIR," which will be considered by the Board of Supervisors for possible certification. The prior Landmark Village Draft EIR (November 2006) also will be a part of the County's administrative record.

Consistent with State CEQA Guidelines §15088.5(f)(3), the County is sending a copy of this Notice to every agency, person, or organization that commented on the Landmark Village Draft EIR (November 2006). Comment letters submitted on the previously circulated Draft EIR (November 2006) already have been responded to in writing in the Landmark Village Final EIR (November 2007), and need not be resubmitted in conjunction with this RDEIR (January 2010). All additional comments on the RDEIR must be prepared and submitted within the new public comment period, described below.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD AND REVIEWING LOCATIONS**

The public comment period for the RDEIR (January 2010) begins on February 1, 2010, and will continue until March 17, 2010. Written comments must be addressed to Samuel Dea, Supervising Regional Planner, Special Projects, Department of Regional Planning, Room 1362, 320 West Temple Street, Los Angeles, California 90012, Telephone: (213) 974-4808, E-mail: Landmark-Village@planning.lacounty.gov. Written comments received on the RDEIR prior to the close of the public comment period on the proposed project will be considered in the Final EIR.

Upon completion of the public comment period, the Board of Supervisors also will conduct an additional duly noticed public hearing to consider the following actions: certification of the Landmark Village Final EIR, adoption of CEQA findings and plans necessary to certify the Final EIR, and approval of the Landmark Village project approvals, including, but not limited to: Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 53108 (TR53108-(5)); Conditional Use Permit No. 00-196-(5) for off-site grading in excess of 100,000 cubic yards and construction of the off-site water tank; Oak Tree Permit No. 00-196-(5); General Plan Amendment No. 00-196; Sub-Plan Amendment No. 00-197; Specific Plan Amendment No. 00-198; Off-Site Soil Transport Approval (part of CUP No. 00-196 entitlement request); Modification to adopted County Floodway limits; and SEA CUP No. 200500112 for project-level development within the Specific Plan's River Corridor SMA/SEA 23 boundaries.

To ensure public access to the RDEIR, the document can be found at the following website:  
[http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/case/tr\\_53108-rdeir.pdf](http://planning.lacounty.gov/assets/upl/case/tr_53108-rdeir.pdf)

Additionally, copies of the RDEIR, appendices, and related materials are available for public inspection and review at the following libraries:

County of Los Angeles  
Newhall County Library  
22704 West 9<sup>th</sup> Street  
Newhall, CA 91321-2808

County of Los Angeles  
Castaic Library  
27971 Sloan Canyon Rd.  
Castaic, CA 91384

County of Los Angeles  
Canyon County Jo Anne Darcy Library  
18601 Soledad Canyon Road  
Canyon Country, CA 91351-3721

Copies of the RDEIR, appendices, and related materials are also available for public inspection and review Monday through Thursday, 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., at:

County of Los Angeles  
Department of Regional Planning  
Attn: Samuel Dea, Supervising Regional Planner  
Special Projects Section, Room 1362,  
320 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
Fax: (213)626-0434  
E-mail: [Landmark-Village@planning.lacounty.gov](mailto:Landmark-Village@planning.lacounty.gov)

Please submit all written comments on the RDEIR to Samuel Dea, Supervising Regional Planner of the Department of Regional Planning at the above address.