

RPC MEETING DATE  
January 31, 2007

AGENDA ITEM NO.  
6 a, b, c, d, e, f, g

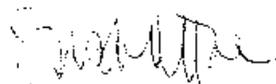
## REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION TRANSMITTAL CHECKLIST

PROJECT NO: 00-196-(5)

CASE NO. Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 53108  
General Plan/Local Plan/Specific Plan Amendment  
Case Nos. 00-196-(5)  
Conditional Use Permit Case No. 00-196-(5)  
Conditional Use Permit Case No. 2005-01121-(5)  
Oak Tree Permit Case No. 00-196-(5)

CONTACT PERSON: Susan Tae

- STAFF REPORT
- DRAFT CONDITIONS
- BURDEN OF PROOF STATEMENT (Zoning or Plan Amendment Requests)
- ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION - Previously submitted
- THOMAS BROTHERS MAP (Identifying Subject Property)
- LAND USE RADIUS MAP
- TENTATIVE TRACT MAP
- EXHIBIT "A" MAP
- PHOTOGRAPHS
- CORRESPONDENCE
- GIS-NET MAP
- APPLICANT: LANDMARK PLANNING NOTEBOOK, JAN 2007
- \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewed By: 



Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning  
 320 West Temple Street, Los Angeles, California 90012  
 Telephone (213) 974-6433

**PROJECT No.** 00-196-(5)  
**TRACT MAP NO.** 53108  
**GPA/LPA/SPA** 00-196-(5)  
**CUP** 00-196-(5), 2005-01121-(5)  
**OTP** 00-196-(5)

RPC MEETING DATE	CONTINUE TO
AGENDA ITEM #6 a,b,c,d,e,f,g	
PUBLIC HEARING DATE January 31, 2007	

<b>APPLICANT</b> Newhall Land and Farming	<b>OWNER</b> Newhall Land and Farming	<b>REPRESENTATIVE</b> Psomas
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**REQUEST "Landmark Village"**  
Tentative Tract Map: 415 lots consisting of 308 single-family, 20 multi-family (11 condominium lots with 282 detached condos, 4 condominium lots with 347 attached condos in 47 buildings, 3 apartment lots with 451 for-lease apartments in 28 buildings, and two condo or for lease lots with 56 units in nine buildings), 14 commercial with 15 for-lease buildings, 10 commercial with no development planned, 12 private driveway, 3 recreation, 2 park, 1 school, 25 open space and 20 open space/desilting basin lots on 292.6 acres  
General/Local/Specific Plan Amendments: To remove "A" Street from the County Master Plan of Highways and SCVAP Circulation Plan, and redesignate from a secondary highway to a local collector street  
Conditional Use Permits: To ensure compliance with the requirements of development within a Significant Ecological Area/Special Management Area, onsite project grading; and offsite project grading and utilities, including water tanks  
Oak Tree Permit: To authorize removal of 67 oak trees (including 10 heritage oaks) and encroachment within the protected zone of 14 oak trees (including three heritage oaks)

<b>LOCATION/ADDRESS</b> North of the Santa Clara River, south of Highway 126, east of Ventura County boundary and west of Interstate 5 ("I-5") Freeway within Newhall Ranch Specific Plan	<b>ZONED DISTRICT</b> Newhall
<b>ACCESS</b> State Route ("SR") Highway 126	<b>COMMUNITY</b> Newhall Ranch: Landmark Village
<b>SIZE</b> 292.6 Gross Acres	<b>EXISTING ZONING</b> SP (Specific Plan)
<b>EXISTING LAND USE</b> Agricultural	<b>SHAPE</b> Irregular
<b>TOPOGRAPHY</b> Slight to steeply sloping	

SURROUNDING LAND USES & ZONING			
<b>North:</b> Single-family residences, water tank/City of Agoura Hills		<b>East:</b> Single-family residences, religious facility and vacant property/City of Agoura Hills	
<b>South:</b> Fire station, single-family residences and vacant property/A-1-20 (Light Agricultural-20 Ac Min Area), A-1-2, A-1-10, O-S (Open Space)		<b>West:</b> Single-family residences and vacant property/A-1-20 (Light Agricultural-20 Ac Min Area) and City of Agoura Hills	

GENERAL PLAN	DESIGNATION	MAXIMUM DENSITY	CONSISTENCY
Newhall Ranch Specific Plan	Portions of RW-09, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34a, 34b, 35, 36, 37	1,444 DU	Yes

**ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS**  
 Draft Environmental Impact Report: Impacts that cannot be mitigated to less than significant include Biota, Visual Qualities, Noise, Air Quality, Solid Waste Disposal and Cumulative Agricultural Resources.

**DESCRIPTION OF SITE PLAN ("Landmark Village")**  
 The tentative map and exhibit "A" depict the residential and commercial mixed-use development. Residential types include single-family homes, detached and attached condominiums, apartments. Also proposed are for sale and lease-only commercial uses. Onsite project grading consists of 209,000 cubic yards of cut and 5,555,400 cubic yards of fill, with 5,346,400 cubic yards of import. Offsite grading will include Adobe Canyon (cut 6,969,000 cubic yards, fill 218,000 cubic yards, export 5,705,700 cubic yards) and Chiquito Canyon (cut 1,019,100 cubic yards, fill 666,300 cubic yards fill, no export). Open space consists of 20 acres with an additional 16-acre public park and an additional approximately 19 acres of open facility open space areas. A minimum 12-foot riding and hiking trail easement is provided along Santa Clara River with additional interpretive/nature trail boardwalk to be maintained by the development's homeowners' association.

**KEY ISSUES**  
 • Public has requested that a continuance be granted for the public comment period to the Draft EIR, requests are for either an additional 30 or 60 days. Original public notice period was for 60 days, and extended once to coincide with the public hearing date  
*(If more space is required, use opposite side)*

**TO BE COMPLETED ONLY ON CASES TO BE HEARD BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

<b>STAFF CONTACT PERSON</b>		
RPC HEARING DATE (S)	RPC ACTION DATE	RPC RECOMMENDATION
MEMBERS VOTING AYE	MEMBERS VOTING NO	MEMBERS ABSTAINING
STAFF RECOMMENDATION (PRIOR TO HEARING)		* (O) = Opponents (F) = In Favor
SPEAKERS* (O) (F)	PETITIONS (O) (F)	LETTERS (O) (F)

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION (Subject to revision based on public hearing)

- APPROVAL  DENIAL
- No improvements \_\_\_ 20 Acre Lots \_\_\_ 10 Acre Lots \_\_\_ 2½ Acre Lots \_\_\_ Sect 191.2
- Street improvements \_\_\_ X \_\_\_ Paving \_\_\_ X \_\_\_ Curbs and Gutters \_\_\_ X \_\_\_ Street Lights
- \_\_\_ X \_\_\_ Street Trees \_\_\_ Inverted Shoulder \_\_\_ X \_\_\_ Sidewalks \_\_\_ Off Site Paving \_\_\_\_\_ ft.
- Water Mains and Hydrants
- Drainage Facilities
- Sewer  Septic Tanks  Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Park Dedication "In-Lieu Fee"

SPECIAL INDIVIDUAL DEPARTMENT CONCERNS

Engineer

Road

Flood

Forester & Fire Warden

Parks & Rec.

Health

Planning

ISSUES AND ANALYSIS

The Draft EIR analyzes potentially significant impacts of the project, and concludes that impacts that cannot be mitigated to less than significant include Biota, Visual Qualities, Noise, Air Quality, Solid Waste Disposal and Cumulative Agricultural Resources.

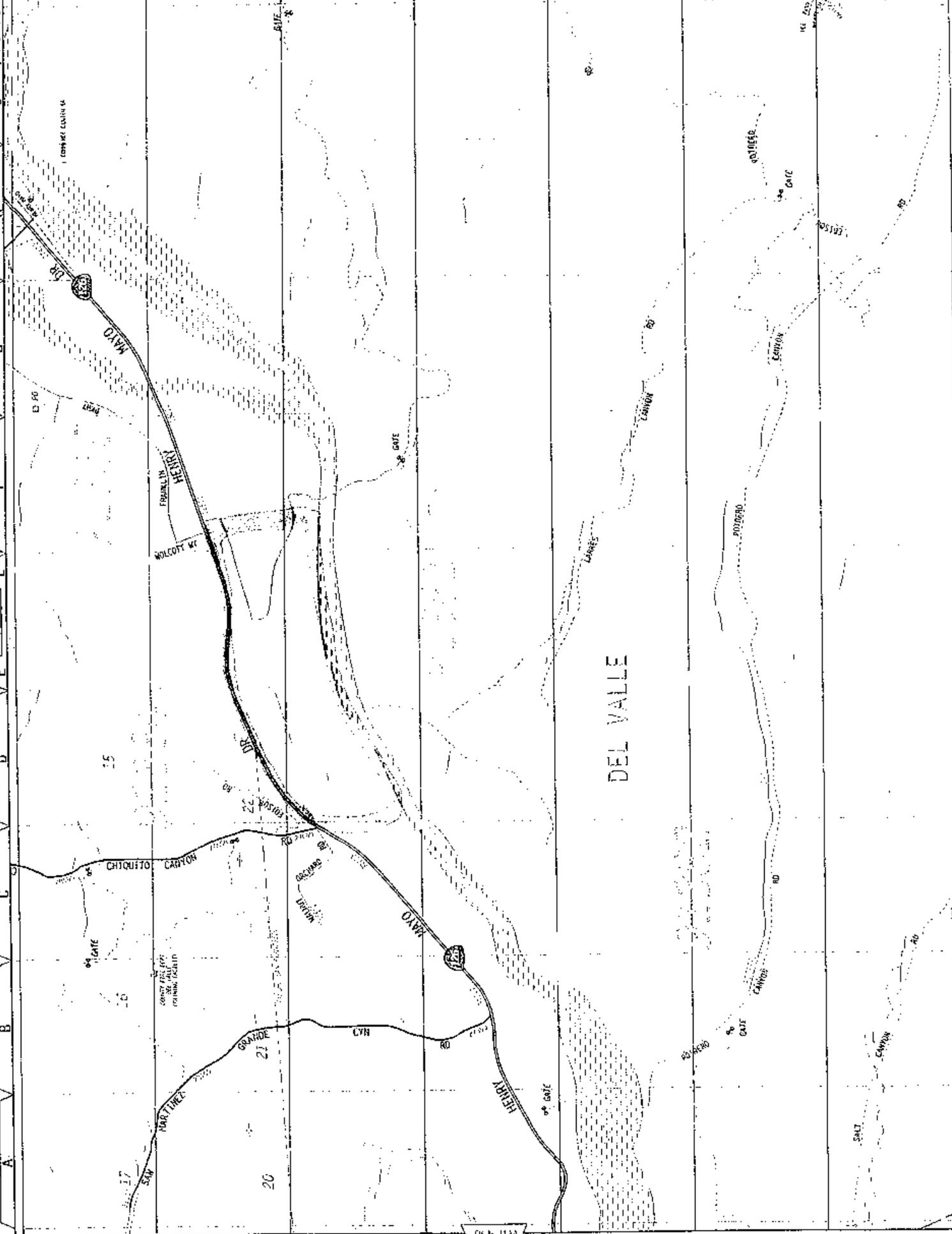
Prepared by: Susan Tae

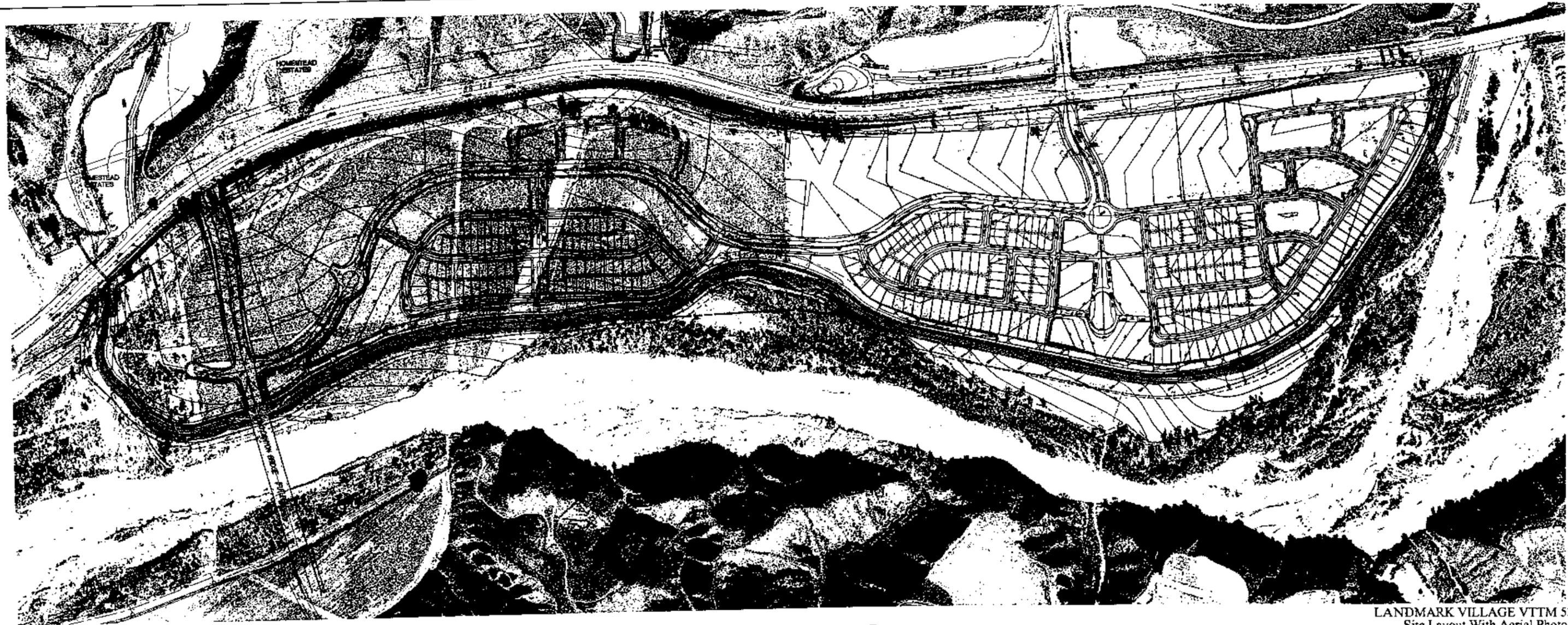
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SEE 4459 MAP

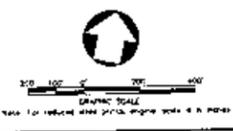
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1 2 3 4 5 6 7





 NEWHALL RANCH.



LANDMARK VILLAGE VTM 53108  
Site Layout With Aerial Photo  
Exhibit

**PSOMAS**

DATE: 04-05-06 REVISED ON:  
JOB No: SHEET 1 OF 1  
#10924-01

**PROJECT NO. 00-196-(5)  
GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT CASE NO. 00-196-(5)  
LOCAL PLAN AMENDMENT CASE NO. 00-196-(5)  
SPECIFIC PLAN AMENDMENT CASE NO. 00-196-(5)  
VESTING TENTATIVE TRACT MAP NO. 53108  
CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT CASE NO. 00-196-(5)  
CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT CASE NO. 2005-01121-(5)  
OAK TREE PERMIT CASE NO. 00-196-(5)**

**STAFF ANALYSIS  
January 31, 2007 REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING**

**PROJECT OVERVIEW**

The applicant, Newhall Land and Farming Company, proposes a 291-acre master-planned neotraditional community development (known as Landmark Village) of a maximum 1,444 residential units and 1,033,000 square feet of nonresidential uses as well as 45 acres of open space, including a 16-acre community park, trail system, and elementary school. This project is within the "Riverwood" village of the adopted Newhall Ranch Specific Plan ("Specific Plan"). This project is the first within the boundaries of the Specific Plan, and located north of the Santa Clara River, south of State Route 126 ("SR-126"), east of the Ventura County boundary, and west of Interstate 5 Freeway.

The proposal requires amendments to the Los Angeles Countywide General Plan ("General Plan") and Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan ("Area Plan") to amend the Master Plan of Highways and Circulation Plan to eliminate "A" Street/Wolcott Road as a secondary highway, and amendment to the Specific Plan to downgrade "A" Street from a secondary highway to a local collector street. The project also requests approval of conditional use permits for compliance with requirements of development within a Significant Ecological Area/Special Management Area ("SEA/SMA"), onsite and offsite project grading and offsite utilities, including water tanks, and transport of materials. An oak tree permit is also required for removal of 67 oak trees (including 10 heritage oaks) and encroachment into the protected zone of 14 oak trees (including three heritage oaks). The applicant also requests a determination of substantial conformance related to shared parking, street widths, front yard setbacks and hillside resources. The Specific Plan includes a procedure for such determinations, and gives authority to the Director of the Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning ("Planning Director") to refer to the Commission for public hearing. Such determinations for substantial conformance may apply to future projects within the Specific Plan boundary.

Access to the subject property is provided by SR-126, with internal access provided by "A" Street as a 'spine' road that provides 110 feet of right-of-way through most of the project. Connections from Highway 126 to "A" Street is provided by major highway Long Canyon Road to the west, and collector Wolcott Road to the east. The Long Canyon Road bridge is part of this project, and will span the Santa Clara River, approximately 1,100 feet in length and 100 feet in width. Two traffic circles, or 'roundabouts,' are also proposed on "A" Street within the development.

Major engineering features associated with the project include bank stabilization along the Santa Clara River and desilting basins and swales. Major offsite improvements include the creation of the utility corridor consisting of sewer trunklines to the future Newhall Ranch Water Reclamation Plan ("WRP") and existing Los Angeles County Sanitation District No. 32 WRP, and water mainline extensions; offsite debris basins and water tanks. Approximately 209,000 cubic yards of cut and approximately 5.5 million cubic yards of fill are proposed for the project, with net export from Adobe Canyon the south at 5,705,700 cubic yards. Offsite grading is also proposed at Chiquito Canyon,

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OAK TREE PERMIT CASE NO. 00-196-(5)

### Staff Report

north of SR-126, with approximately 1 million cubic yards of cut and 866,300 cubic yards of fill and no export.

The Draft Environmental Impact Report ("EIR"), which is a tiered document from the certified Specific Plan EIR, analyzes potentially significant impacts of the project, including Geology and Soils, Hydrology, Water Quality, Bioa, Floodplain Modifications, Visual Qualities, Traffic/Access, Noise, Air Quality, Water Resources, Wastewater Disposal, Solid Waste Disposal, Sheriff Services, Fire Services/Hazards, Education, Parks and Recreation, Libraries, Agricultural Resources, Utilities, Mineral Resources, Environmental Safety and Cultural/Paleontological Resources. Impacts that cannot be mitigated to less than significant include Biota, Visual Qualities, Noise, Air Quality, Solid Waste Disposal and Cumulative Agricultural Resources.

### DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT PROPERTY

Location: The project site is located north of the Santa Clara River, south of SR-126, east of the Ventura County boundary, and west of Interstate 5 Freeway within the Specific Plan and in the Newhall Zoned District. The project is also surrounded by area within the Castaic Area Community Standards District, but is exempt from its provisions.

Physical Features: The subject property is approximately 292.6 acres in size, and consists of four parcels. The total project, including offsite improvements, is approximately 1,044 gross acres in size. The property is irregular in shape with slight to steeply sloping terrain in offsite areas where grading is proposed. The subject property is disturbed by historic and ongoing agricultural activity but contains existing sensitive biological resources and habitat types, including upland scrub habitat and sensitive riparian habitat. The project boundary also includes coastal sage chaparral scrub, live oak woodland, southern cottonwood willow riparian habitat, and wildlife habitat including horned lizards, sparrows, blackbirds, kites, hawks and plovers, jackrabbits, woodrats and mountain lion. The Santa Clara River, which within and south of the subdivision boundary, is also an SEA/SMA.

Access: SR-126 serves as primary access to the site, with connections provided by Long Canyon Road and Wolcott Road to "A" Street that provides main internal access. Numerous public street and private driveways also serve areas within the subdivision from "A" Street.

Services: Domestic water will be provided by Valencia Water Company. Reclaimed water will be provided by either the proposed Newhall Ranch WRP, if operational at the time Landmark Village will be occupied, or the existing Valencia WRP. Sanitary service will be provided by the Sanitation District via the Newhall Ranch WRP, or existing Valencia WRP if the Newhall WRP is not yet operational. Gas utilities will be provided by Southern California Gas Company, and electricity by Southern California Edison Company. The project is within the boundaries of the Castaic School District and the William S. Hart Union High School District. Shopping and employment exist nearby including the Valencia Commerce Center directly north and east of the project. Nearby recreation areas include Magic Mountain Amusement Park and Val Verde Regional Park as well as Castaic Lake Recreation Area.

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### ENTITLEMENTS REQUESTED

General Plan Amendment: The applicant requests a General Plan Amendment to amend the County's Master Plan of Highways to remove "A" Street/Wolcott Road as a secondary highway as local collector streets are not shown.

Local Plan Amendment: The applicant requests to amend the Circulation Plan of the Area Plan to eliminate "A" Street/Wolcott Road as a secondary highway and redesignate as a local collector street.

Specific Plan Amendment: The applicant requests to amend the Specific Plan's Master Circulation Plan to change "A" Street/Wolcott Road from a secondary highway to a local collector street.

Vesting Tentative Tract Map: The applicant requests approval of a vesting tentative tract map to create 415 lots consisting of 308 single-family and 20 multi-family (11 condominium lots with 282 detached condos, 4 condominium lots with 347 attached condos in 47 buildings, 3 apartment lots with 451 for-lease apartments in 28 buildings, and two condo or for lease lots with 56 units in nine buildings) lots [total of 1,444 residential units], 14 commercial lots with 15 for-lease buildings, 10 commercial lots with no development planned (reserved as rail right-of-way), 12 private driveway lots, 3 recreation lots, 2 park lots, 1 school lot, 25 open space lots and 20 open space/desilting basin lots. The applicant requests unit phasing.

Conditional Use Permit: The applicant requests approval of conditional use permits ("CUP") to ensure compliance with the requirements of development within an SEA/SMA and onsite project grading; and offsite project grading and utilities, including water tanks, and transport of materials.

Oak Tree Permit: The applicant requests approval of an Oak Tree Permit to remove 67 oak trees (including 10 heritage oaks), and encroach into the protected zone of 14 oak trees (including three heritage oaks).

While not technically an entitlement, the applicant also requests a determination of substantial conformance with the Specific Plan for shared parking, street widths, front yard setbacks, and offsite transport of materials with conformance with grading and hillside management criteria. Section 5.2.2 of the Specific Plan contains procedures for making substantial conformance determinations, with authority lying with the Planning Director of the Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning ("Regional Planning") and the Director of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works ("Public Works"), with discretion by the Planning Director to refer to a public hearing. While this request for substantial conformance is associated with this project, such determinations for substantial conformance may apply to future projects within the Specific Plan boundary.

### EXISTING ZONING

Subject Property: The subject property is zoned SP (Specific Plan).

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Surrounding Properties: Surrounding zoning is as follows:

North: SP, A-2-2 (Heavy Agricultural – Two Acre Minimum Required Lot Area), A-2-5 (Heavy Agricultural – Five Acre Minimum Required Lot Area), M-1-½ (Restricted Heavy Manufacturing);  
 East: SP, A-2-5, M-1-½, P-R (Parking Restricted) and C-R (Commercial-Recreation);  
 South: SP; and  
 West: SP.

### **EXISTING LAND USES**

Subject Property: The subject property is used for agricultural activity and related storage, and consists of four parcels from the previously approved Newhall Ranch Tentative Parcel Map No. 24500).

Surrounding Properties: Surrounding uses are as follows:

North: SR-126, vacant property, scattered single-family residences, Chiquita Canyon Landfill and business parks;  
 East: Castaic Creek, RV park, and further east light industrial uses, agricultural land and Valencia WRP;  
 South: Santa Clara River and vacant land; and  
 West: Vacant property and agricultural land.

### **PREVIOUS CASE/ZONING HISTORY**

The current SP zoning on the subject property became effective on June 26, 2003, following the adoption of Ordinance No. 2003-0031Z, which established Zone Change Case No. 94-087-(5). The zone change was associated with the Specific Plan.

The Specific Plan was adopted by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors ("Board") on May 27, 2003, along with a general and local (sub-plan) amendments, a conditional use permit and a tentative parcel map. The Specific Plan authorized the development of the approximately 11,963-acre property for 20,885 dwelling units with 423 second units; 629 acres of mixed use development (including 4,101 of the 20,885 units approved); 67 acres of commercial uses; 249 acres of business park land use; 37 acres of visitor-serving uses; 1,010 acres of open area (including 141 acres of community parks and 869 acres of other open areas); 5,159 areas within SMAs; 50 acres within 10 neighborhood parks; a 15-acre lake; public trail system; 18-hole golf course; two fire stations; one public library; one electrical substation; reservation of five elementary schools, one junior high school and one high school site; a 6.8-million gallon per day WRP; and other associated community facilities, such as roads and bridges.

The Specific Plan area is organized in five "villages," with the Landmark project within the "Riverwood" Village. Within the approximately 2,330 acres of Riverwood, 3,210 dwelling units and 234 second units were approved as well as 2,966,000 square feet of nonresidential square footage. The Santa Clara River is also a major Open Area feature within Riverwood.

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A program-level EIR (and project-level for the Newhall WRP) was also certified with adoption of the Specific Plan, which had concluded that the project had significant unavoidable impacts to biological resources, agricultural resources, visual resources, air quality and solid waste disposal. In approving the project, the Board also adopted a Statement of Overriding Considerations that concluded that there were significant overriding public benefits with approval of the project. These included preservation of nearly 1,000 acres of the Santa Clara River and open areas; over 50 miles of trails including the Santa Clara River Trail; provision of improved parks, library and fire station which were 'above and beyond' mitigations required by CEQA; provision of 2,200 affordable homes; and preservation of the River Corridor to retain Santa Clara River's significant riparian vegetation and habitat.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 53108 and Conditional Use Permit Case Nos. 00-196-(5) and 2005-01121-(5) Exhibit "A", dated November 7, 2005, depict a subdivision of 415 lots consisting of single-family, multi-family, commercial, recreation, park, school, open space and open space/public facility lots on 292.6 gross acres. The housing types range from single-family detached and attached homes as well as live-work units. Fourteen (14) commercial lots are also proposed with 15 for-lease buildings, 12 private driveway lots, three recreation lots, two park lots, and one school lot. Ten (10) commercial lots are also proposed with no development planned, and serve as reservation of future right-of-way for Metrolink. Twenty-five (25) open space lots as well as 20 open space/desilting basin lots are also depicted.

### **Residential**

A range of housing types is provided in various clusters within the subdivision. Traditional single-family lots (i.e. one home on each lot) are clustered in three areas along the southern portion of the subdivision: to the west, across from the proposed elementary school, and to the east. These lots have been designed for garage access from the front, and by alley from the back; and range in size from minimum 3,200 square feet to 6,000 square feet.

Multi-family housing is also proposed both as for-lease apartments and for-sale condominiums, and generally in the northern portions of the subdivision and conceptual designs for site layout are depicted on the exhibit maps. Apartments, including 152 senior affordable rental units, are proposed in the western portion, just east of the office and retail center identified in the Specific Plan as the Village Center. Additional condominiums are proposed near the Village Center, north and south of "A" Street as well as north of "A" Street east of the elementary school and near Wolcott Road, with 144 single-family condo units reserved for moderate income (81 to 120 percent of the Los Angeles County median income, adjusted for family size) families between the elementary school and the commercial lots off of Wolcott Road. A total of 1,080 residential units are provided in 357 buildings.

A total of 1,388 dwelling units are provided within the residential lots.

### **Commercial**

The Village Center, as described in the Specific Plan, is located east and west of Long Canyon Road on the western portion of the subdivision. Retail and office are anticipated, with an approximate

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maximum of 1,795,450 square feet as well as 2,958 parking spaces based on estimates of office and retail use. Internal access within the Village Center is proposed by 28-foot wide drive aisles.

Commercial is also proposed near Wolcott Road with an approximate maximum of 762,450 square feet with 490 parking spaces and 26-foot wide drive aisles.

A total of 1,033,000 square feet of office and retail commercial is proposed as well as provision of 3,448 parking spaces for 15 buildings.

#### Commercial – No Development Planned

Ten (10) commercial lots are proposed with no development planned. These reflect future reservation of right-of-way for Metrolink, and are located just south of SR-126 along the northern subdivision boundary, and vary in width from 35 feet to 50 feet in width.

#### Mixed Use

Live/work units are proposed within Lot Nos. 334 and 335 for a total of 56 dwelling units and 255,608 square feet of nonresidential uses. One hundred twelve (112) parking spaces are also provided as part of the residential component along with 30 guest parking spaces.

The project totals a maximum of 1,444 dwelling units throughout the subdivision.

#### Elementary School

A nine-acre elementary school site (Lot No. 345) is depicted in the approximate center of the subdivision property, north of "A" Street, and with 157 parking spaces provided at one parking space per classroom. Actual site designs for the school are to be determined through design workshops with the school district. There is a potential for joint use with the adjacent public park.

#### Parks/Recreation/Open Space

Two park lots are depicted within the subdivision. North of "A" Street, a public park (Lot No. 344) is proposed with active recreation, and potential for joint use with the elementary school. A passive park (Lot No. 337), south of "A" Street, will be owned and maintained by the project's homeowners' association ("HOA"). The passive park will include connections to the Regional River Trail, a 12-foot wide trail that travels along the entire length of the Santa Clara River within this development, as well as drainage and water quality basins that can also serve as additional play areas. A private interpretive trail is also proposed with an outlook point towards the Santa Clara River.

Three private recreation lots (Lot Nos. 330, 336 and 340) are proposed, with proposed improvements with grass play area, swimming pool/tot lot and recreation buildings. A total of 103 onsite parking spaces is also depicted for all three recreation lots.

A total of 45 open space lots are provided, with 25 lots for open space and 20 lots for open space and desilting purposes. These open space lots are depicted along the northern and southern boundaries of the subdivision, adjacent to SR-126 and the Santa Clara River.

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Alternate Site Plans

Alternate site plans are depicted for two areas of the subdivision. One depicts a debris basin (Lot No. 409) where detached condominiums are proposed, off of "T" Drive north of "A" Street. The inclusion of the debris basin would result in a reduction of 20 condominium units.

The other alternate site plan is for Apartment/Condominium Lot No. 349, which depicts 20 additional units from 155 to 175 attached units, in nine buildings, with associated parking increase. Total parking provided, including guest parking, is 394 parking spaces with the 175-unit alternate.

Access and Roads

Long Canyon Road and Wolcott Road are the two points of connection from SR-126 with "A" Street as the main 'spine' collector road through the development. Long Canyon Road is a major highway, and provides at least 119 feet of right-of-way north of "A" Street with bike lanes in both directions of traffic as well as an eight-foot sidewalk and varying center planter widths. SR-126 is expected to be grade-separated (higher) than Long Canyon Road in the future, with the future interchange depicted as five northbound lanes (one left turn dedicated to SR-126, two for thru traffic under SR-126, and two for right turn traffic). Long Canyon Road also spans over the Santa Clara River as an 100-foot wide bridge to be constructed with this project. Wolcott Road is a secondary highway with 106 feet of right-of-way consisting of four travel lanes, a six-foot parkway and six-foot sidewalk on each side, and a 14-foot wide planter in the center. Wolcott Road is also depicted with a future interchange with SR-126. "A" Street is depicted as with a 110-foot wide right-of-way, with varying widths of improvements. At its widest improvements, which is from Long Canyon Road to 200 feet east of Long Canyon Road, seven travel lanes are provided with bike lane on one side, and four feet of parkway and six feet of sidewalk on both sides; no on-street parking would be provided. At its narrowest, two travel lanes with center lane is provided, along with bike lanes on each side, 10-foot-parkway and six-foot sidewalk on one side, and 24 foot-wide swale and eight-foot trail provided on the other side.

Private driveway lots are also proposed within the development, providing internal access in single-family and multi-family neighborhoods between the Village Center and the park/school, with widths ranging from 34 feet to 110 feet wide.

Other features of the local roads within the subdivision are curb extensions, which serve as traffic calming details by narrowing the road to promote slowing down traffic mid-block and at intersections. Roads are depicted at minimum 26 feet wide with mid-block lanes as narrow as 24 feet wide before combining to 62 feet wide.

Grading – Onsite and Offsite

Onsite grading consists of 209,000 cubic yards of cut and 5,555,400 cubic yards of fill.

Offsite project grading is proposed in mainly three locations: Adobe Canyon, Chiquito Canyon and the Santa Clara River. Adobe Canyon is located south of the subdivision on the south side of the Santa Clara River, and will serve as a borrow site for Landmark Village. From Adobe Canyon, approximately 5.7 million cubic yards of earthwork will be moved to Landmark through haul routes that coincide with existing agricultural roads. These are existing river crossings through Santa Clara River, which also crosses the SEA/SMA, which are currently permitted as operational agricultural river crossings permitted by the California Department of Fish and Game. Adobe Canyon is within the

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Specific Plan boundary and offsite transport of materials is one of the factors eligible for a determination of substantial conformance, and being considered as part of the proposal. This borrow site is also within the boundaries of a pending subdivision known as Heritage (Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 060678) currently being reviewed by the Los Angeles County Subdivision Committee ("Subdivision Committee"), and once approved and developed, will not remain as the graded condition depicted for the borrow site.

The Chiquito Canyon grading site proposes approximately 1 million cubic yards of cut and approximately 866,000 cubic yards of fill with no export proposed. Two debris basins are also depicted within the Chiquito Canyon area. This is also within a pending subdivision within the Specific Plan boundary within Heritage, and depicted as a future business park within the Specific Plan.

Grading is also proposed outside the boundaries of the subdivision, and within the Santa Clara River, as part of the project's mitigation and habitat restoration. The dirt that will be removed from the Santa Clara River, will be placed onto the property and the new 'edge' of the Santa Clara River would be created with the bank stabilization efforts.

#### Other offsite Improvements

The project also proposes offsite installation of utility extensions, including water, sanitary sewer, gravity sewer, irrigation, cable, gas, fiber optics and reclaimed water lines. Described as a utility corridor, these lines will extend east to the Valencia WRP (Los Angeles County Sanitation District No. 32) southwest of the SR-126/I-5 interchange, and extend west to the proposed Newhall WRP. Utility lines were approved as part of the Newhall Ranch CUP to be hung from the Long Canyon bridge to provide potable water, reclaimed water, etc. to areas south, and now as part of this project is proposed to be buried under the Santa Clara River to provide permanent utility connections.

The project design has been reviewed by the Los Angeles County Subdivision Committee for technical feasibility and recommended project conditions are attached.

#### **SPECIFIC PLAN CONSISTENCY**

The Newhall Ranch Specific Plan was adopted by the Board on May 27, 2003 which authorized the development of the approximately 11,963-acre property for residential, mixed use, commercial business park, visitor-serving, open area, parks, trails, schools, library, fire stations and infrastructure including roads, bridges and a water reclamation plant. The Specific Plan locates the Landmark Village subdivision within its Riverwood Village, and identifies land uses within each Village with associated acreage, density and/or nonresidential square footage. The Specific Plan also includes exhibits for trails, circulation, resource management, drainage and water quality, water and sewer as well as its land use plan.

The applicant has provided a booklet, titled "Landmark Planning Notebook" ("Notebook") which staff will refer to in discussion of consistency. This Notebook provides the detailed exhibits and tables that update the Specific Plan within the Landmark subdivision boundary, and identify goals and objectives within the Specific Plan that these project features achieve.

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Affordable Housing (Notebook Section 1.7, Page 19)

The Specific Plan also requires affordable housing, with a total of 2,200 affordable units through the Specific Plan area (Specific Plan Section 3.10). These include housing units for Very Low Income households (of which 440 are reserved for seniors), Low Income households, Low Income Affordable, and Moderate Income Affordable; and may be rental, for-sale and any units supported by state, local or private affordable housing assistance. An affordable housing monitoring program is required as the tentative map with the 5,000th unit has already been filed with the County.

Landmark Village proposes 296 affordable units: 144 for-sale homes for moderate income households, and 152 for-rent units for very low income seniors. While the Specific Plan states a reservation of seniors 62 years or older, the definition of "senior citizen" as defined in Civil Code Section 51.3 defines as a person 62 years of age or older, or 55 years of age or older in a senior citizen housing development.

Circulation (Notebook Section 2.1, Pages 21-26)

The applicant has requested amendments to the General Plan and Area Plan as well as the Specific Plan to redesignate "A" Street/Wolcott Road as a local collector street rather than a secondary highway. Traffic studies were performed to indicate that the traffic volume can be accommodated with the main road as a collector, and regional circulation is still ensured despite this change.

"A" Street is depicted in illustrative terms on page 23 of the Notebook, and depict "A" Street with onstreet parking, bike lanes and trails along both sides of the street. Additional photo examples of other road features within Landmark are depicted on page 26 of the Notebook, including 'round points' or roundabouts, curb extensions and rear or alley access.

While the street cross-sections proposed for Landmark are different than what was approved by the Specific Plan, a determination of substantial conformance can be made (see section below for additional information) with respect to these street cross-section differences. These changes are intended to reduce design speed, eliminate cul-de-sacs, introduce traffic-calming features, reduce street widths as pedestrian crossings, and reduce curb cuts.

Trails (Notebook Section 2.2, Pages 27-28)

The Master Plan of Trails within the Specific Plan is general in nature, and detailed trail locations are identified on the subdivision tentative map. These include walkways and parkways along streets, paseos, community trails and the regional river trail, in a hierarchy of trail sizes and functionality. Access points are also identified from the project to the regional river trail system as well as locations for observation and interpretive nature points.

The regional river trail system is depicted in greater detail on the tentative map, and depict both an eight-foot wide County trail outside the subdivision boundary but on top of the bank stabilization, and a 16-foot wide riding and hiking trail that will also serve as the Los Angeles County Flood Control access road, and will be maintained by a Landscape Maintenance District ("LMD").

An interpretive trail is also depicted through private Recreation Lot No. 337 with a lookout point and interpretive nature station.

Resource Management (Notebook Section 2.3, Pages 29-32)

The Specific Plan also identifies viewsheds as a significant resource, and a viewshed exhibit is provided that demonstrates how the subdivision as designed is compatible with the exhibits presented to the Commission as part of the Specific Plan public hearings.

The exhibit on page 30 identifies the viewsheds unaltered by the project, substantially altered by the project development and transportation improvements, and partially altered by the project. The areas substantially altered by development, depicted in purple as B, reflect the Village Center on the western side of the development, and the single-family and mixed use development off of Wolcott Road on the eastern side. By comparison, the original viewshed exhibit depicted on page 29 reflects a larger purple area, indicating that the current analysis depicts a smaller area extent of viewshed impacts than first presented.

Additional viewshed exhibits on pages 31 and 32 depict sound attenuation walls and plexiglass walls that will also affect the viewshed from SR-126, with illustrations are provided on page 32.

The Specific Plan also includes Design Guidelines (Specific Plan Section 4.2) requirements for design review and guidelines for development along SR-126. While specific development details are not available at this time, the project will be required to undergo review for compliance, including design of the community park and building elevation reviews adjacent to SR-126.

Drainage and Water Quality Plan (Notebook Section 2.4, Pages 33-36)

The Specific Plan Master Drainage Plan has been updated to reflect innovative methodologies to meet NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) requirements, and reflects a comprehensive system of flood control and desilting basins to maintain water quality standards.

Open space that also double as open facility basins, are located adjacent to the subdivision boundary and the Santa Clara River to the south, as well as along SR-126 to the north. Additional water quality features such as grass swales and depressed roundabouts, provide additional area for water retention (example photos provided on page 36).

Water Plan (Notebook Section 2.5, Page 37-38)

The Master Water Plan was designed in the Specific Plan for this portion with water main and reclaimed water lines along "A" Street. The Potable and Reclaimed Water Plan on page 38 depicts in greater detail, the infrastructure lines to serve the development. The water mains still run generally along "A" Street, with connections now to residential neighborhoods north and south of "A" Street.

A 2.7 million gallon water tank that is depicted on the Master Water Plan, is depicted within the Chiquito Canyon area. Water tanks are being proposed north of Landmark at Chiquito Canyon within the Valencia Commerce Center, and Round Mountain. The potable tanks are anticipated to be approximately 32 feet high and 152 feet in diameter, with a capacity of 4 million gallons. The reclaimed tanks are anticipated to be 32 feet high, and 132 feet in diameter with a capacity of 3 million gallons.

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Sewer Plan (Notebook Section 2.5, Pages 39-40)

The Master Sewer Plan also depicts sewer infrastructure anticipated, with the sewer line system connecting to the Newhall WRP. A detailed Sewer Plan was prepared for Landmark (page 40) that provides further refinement to the location of sewer main lines. Sewer service and connections is also proposed by two methods. Connection lines are proposed to extend east to the existing Valencia WRP near the SR-126/I-5 interchange if the Newhall WRP is not operational at the time Landmark requires connection. Eventual connection for the Landmark Village development will be the Newhall WRP, which is located further west. Connections for Landmark are shown with both options.

Land Use Plan (Notebook Section 3.1, Pages 41-44)

The Land Use Plan of the Specific Plan depicts development by various land uses, and within the Riverwood Village for this property, is designated for Low-Medium Density, Medium Density, Mixed Use and Commercial as well as River Corridor. As described on page 42, flexibility was built into the Specific Plan to allow for adjustments, transfers and conversions of use, boundaries, square footage, etc. (Specific Plan Section 5.2-5, beginning Page 5-14).

The project proposes conversions as well as boundary adjustments. The Medium Density was adjusted with reduction of 1.3 acres, and the adjacent Low-Medium Density area increased by 12.1 acres. The Commercial area was reduced by 4.2 acres, while 5.8 acres of the Low-Medium Density was converted to Mixed Use. All of these changes are described in a table format on page 44, with exhibits on pages 42 and 43, and reflect that these changes are within the 20 percent adjustment established by the Specific Plan.

The elementary school as well as the community park are part of land use overlays, and are 'flexible' within the Specific Plan with respect to location. The land use overlay adjustments are also permitted by Section 5.2-5 of the Specific Plan with respect to size, quantity and location of public service facilities like parks and schools.

The River Corridor allows for certain uses, with mitigation required as stated in Section 2.6-2 of the Specific Plan. These mitigation requirements include restoration as well as enhancement, and establish requirements for management of this area. Access to the SMA through hiking, equestrian and biking trails is permitted as limited to the trail system itself. Transition areas are also required from where development lies and the Santa Clara River, which is described in greater detail in Section 2.6-2.a.(3).(b), which provides standards for the design of these transition areas. These include provision of a trail between the River Corridor and development, ungrouted rock or buried bank stabilization where required to protect development areas, and minimum 100-foot buffers adjacent to the Santa Clara River. Uses permitted within this buffer include flood control access; sewer, water and utility easements; abutments; and trails and parks; all of which are subject to the CUP provisions for development in an SEA/SMA. Grading guidelines are also provided as well as a long-term management plan.

**SUBSTANTIAL CONFORMANCE**

Section 5.2-2 of the Specific Plan provides a process for making determinations of substantial conformance, with authority lying with the Planning Director and in some cases, the Director of Public

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Works. This section also provides the Planning Director with discretion to refer such substantial conformance to a Commission public hearing.

The applicant requests determinations of substantial conformance for shared parking, street widths, front yard setbacks, and offsite transport of materials with conformance with grading and hillside management criteria.

#### Shared Parking

Parking is discussed in Section 3.7 of the Specific Plan under Development Regulations. Section 3.7-3 also identified parking programs, where joint use or shared parking plans can be requested as part of a substantial conformance review. Such a program was intended to reduce the total number of parking spaces required, and provides findings for such determination.

However, the Specific Plan does not directly address offsite, reciprocal parking, where spaces for a particular use may be provided in the number required, but may not be located on the same parcel of land as the use, and therefore would not meet the County standards for parking provision.

The applicant requests that reciprocal, offsite parking be included within the Joint Use or Shared Parking Plan option provided in the Specific Plan, with same requirements for making findings at such time when the uses are determined and actual parking requirements calculated.

#### Street Widths

The applicant has also requested a determination of substantial conformance for alternative street sections to reflect the intent of the development to be neotraditional, where emphasis is on pedestrian traffic as opposed to automobile traffic. Features in these alternative street sections include traffic calming devices, like chokers, curb extensions, roundabouts, etc.

Such features have been much discussed with Public Works and the Los Angeles County Fire Department ("Fire Department") as well as Regional Planning to ensure that traffic capacity and life/safety issues are still addressed with these alternative street features. These are proposed on "A" Street and internal streets.

#### Front Yard Setbacks

Within the development regulations of the Specific Plan, setbacks for the garage face are provided at 18 feet. The intent is for cars that are parked in the driveway, not block the sidewalk or travel lanes of the street. However, the Specific Plan did not provide in much detail, front yard setbacks for homes where the garage is oriented for a side entrance, or located in the rear of the lot for alley entrance. In these cases, the applicant is requesting that a determination of substantial conformance be made that in these cases, a minimum front yard setback of 10 feet be maintained since driveways will be such that cars parked will not block the street as the intent of the 18-foot setback.

This is a determination of substantial conformance that could apply to all area within the Specific Plan boundary.

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#### Offsite Transport of Materials and Hillside Grading

The Landmark project also proposes offsite transport of materials from the Adobe Canyon borrow site to the Landmark subdivision site. This is proposed to raise the boundary to avoid flooding issues with proximity to the Santa Clara River, and would use two haul routes on an existing agricultural crossing.

Grading for subdivisions with slopes over 25 percent slope, are also required to be consistent with grading and hillside guidelines. The grading that is proposed both in the Adobe Canyon borrow site and Chiquito Canyon, are within areas of the Specific Plan where other development is proposed. Therefore, the grading that will result from that needed for Landmark, will be re-graded to accommodate that proposed for Homestead (TR 060678), a pending subdivision already filed and being reviewed by the County.

While this request for substantial conformance is associated with this project, such determinations for substantial conformance may apply to future projects within the Specific Plan boundary. Draft findings of substantial conformance as proposed by the applicant are attached.

#### GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT / LOCAL PLAN AMENDMENT / SPECIFIC PLAN AMENDMENT

The applicant requests an amendment to the General Plan Master Plan of Highways to delete "A" Street/Wolcott Road as a secondary highway since local collector streets are not shown on this map, and amend the Area Plan Circulation Plan and the Specific Plan Master Circulation Plan to redesignate "A" Street from a secondary highway to a local collector. Based on additional traffic analyses done for Landmark, it was determined that the traffic capacity necessary to serve Landmark Village, can be accommodated using local collector standards as opposed to wider, secondary highway standards, while ensuring a functional regional circulation system.

Within the Specific Plan, the redesignation of "A" Street/Wolcott Road would be modified on the Specific Plan Mobility Plan, Master Circulation Plan and on the accompanying cross-sections.

The applicant must meet the following burden of proof required for a plan amendment:

- A. A need for the proposed General and Local Plan Amendment exists;
- B. The particular amendment proposed is approximate and proper;
- C. Modified conditions warrant a revision to the General Plan and Area Plan; and
- D. Approval of the proposed General Plan Amendment will be in the interest of public health, safety and general welfare and in conformity with good planning practices.

**The applicant's Burden of Proof responses are attached.**

#### CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT

Pursuant to Table 3.4-2 Footnote 16, and Section 5.2-3 of the Specific Plan, and Section 22.56.215 of the Los Angeles County Code ("County Code"), the applicant has requested a CUP, and submitted an

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Exhibit "A", to demonstrate compliance with requirements of development within a SEA, project grading (onsite and offsite), and offsite utilities, including water tanks.

Within the SEA/SMA, the project proposes the following improvements: Long Canyon Road bridge, trails and scenic vista points, bank stabilization, utilities, agricultural wells, riparian mitigation, and Metrolink right-of-way easements.

The Long Canyon Road bridge will cross the Santa Clara River, and is proposed to be 1,100 feet long and 100 feet wide. The bridge crossing itself was approved as part of the adoption of the Specific Plan, where the Board found that given various options for bridge alignments and bridge span alternatives, this was one of three bridge crossings that were approved.

In addition to the standard burden of proof required for a CUP, the applicant must also meet the following burdens of proof required for:

Development within an SEA:

- A. That the requested development is designed to be highly compatible with the biotic resources present, including the setting aside of appropriate and sufficient undisturbed areas; and
- B. That the requested development is designed to maintain water bodies, watercourses, and their tributaries in a natural state; and
- C. That the requested development is designed so that wildlife movement corridors (migratory paths) are left in an undisturbed and natural state; and
- D. That the requested development retains sufficient natural vegetative cover and/or open spaces to buffer critical resource areas from said requested development; and.
- E. That where necessary, fences or walls are provided to buffer important habitat areas from development; and
- F. That roads and utilities serving the proposed development are located and designed so as not to conflict with critical resources, habitat areas or migratory paths.

**The applicant's Burden of Proof responses are attached.**

**OAK TREE PERMIT**

Pursuant to Section 22.56.2050 of the County Code, an oak tree report was submitted by Impact Sciences, Inc. Of the 201 oak trees associated with the project and subject to the Oak Tree ordinance as identified in the June 2006 and updated September 2006 report, 82 trees are included in the associated Oak Tree Permit.

Sixty-seven (67) oak trees, including 10 heritage oaks are proposed to be removed as part of onsite and offsite improvements. Fourteen (14) oak trees, including three heritage oaks are proposed to be encroached within its protected zone due to potential impacts from construction.

Mitigation measures recommended by the County Forester/Fire Warden include replacement of oak tree removals at a rate of 2:1 (and 10:1 for heritage oaks) for a total of 214 mitigation trees. A contribution to the Los Angeles County Oak Forest Special Fund would also be required for any tree that dies within two years as a result of a permitted encroachment. The oak tree report also identified 26 trees which would be candidates for relocation within the Specific Plan boundaries.

Pursuant to Section 22.56.2100 of the County Code, the applicant must meet the following burden of proof:

- A. That the proposed construction of proposed use will be accomplished without endangering the health of the remaining trees subject to this Part 16, if any, on the subject property; and
- B. That the removal or relocation of the oak tree(s) proposed will not result in soil erosion through the diversion or increased flow of surface waters which cannot be satisfactorily mitigated; and
- C. That in addition to the above facts, at least one of the following findings apply:
  1. That the removal or relocation of the oak tree(s) proposed is necessary as continued existence at present location(s) frustrates the planned improvement or proposed use of the subject property to such an extent that:
    - a. Alternative development plans cannot achieve the same permitted density or that the cost of such alternative would be prohibitive, or
    - b. Placement of such tree(s) precludes the reasonable and efficient use of such property for a use otherwise authorized; or
  2. That the oak tree(s) proposed for removal or relocation interferes with utility services or streets and highways, either within or outside of the subject property, and no reasonable alternative to such interference exists other than removal of the tree(s); or
  3. That the condition of the oak tree(s) proposed for removal with reference to seriously debilitating disease or danger of falling is such that it cannot be remedied through reasonable preservation procedures and practices; and
- D. That the removal of the oak tree(s) proposed will not be contrary to or be in substantial conflict with the intent and purpose of the oak tree permit procedure.

**The applicant's Burden of Proof responses are attached.**

### **ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION**

The program-level Specific Plan EIR was certified along with adoption of the Specific Plan and a Statement of Overriding Considerations. The Board found that there were overriding public benefits, and included preservation of nearly 1,000 acres of the Santa Clara River and open areas; over 50 miles of trails including the Santa Clara River Trail; provision of improved parks, library and fire station which were 'above and beyond' mitigations required by CEQA; provision of 2,200 affordable homes; and preservation of the River Corridor to retain Santa Clara River's significant riparian vegetation and habitat. Within the Specific Plan EIR, six alternatives were discussed, and include project designs with reduction in 20, 39, and 68 percent of the development. While the development with 68-percent reduction was identified as the environmentally superior alternative, the Specific Plan was eventually

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adopted by the Board with a revised project and mitigation measures along with certification of the EIR.

In accordance with State and County CEQA guidelines, a project-level Draft EIR, which is tiered from the certified Specific Plan program EIR, was prepared for Landmark Village. The Draft EIR concludes that certain potentially significant impacts are less than significant with implementation of the proposed mitigation measures in the Mitigation Monitoring Program. However, the Draft EIR concludes that the project design and/or suggested conditions will result in certain significant impacts are unavoidable, and cannot be mitigated to less than significant. Copies of the Draft EIR were distributed to the Commission.

Identified potential impacts found to be less than significant with project mitigation, include:

- Geology and Soils
- Hydrology
- Water Quality
- Floodplain Modification
- Traffic/Access
- Environmental Safety
- Cultural/Paleontological Resources
- Utilities
- Mineral Resources
- Water Resources
- Wastewater Disposal
- Sheriff Services
- Fire Protection/Hazards
- Education
- Libraries
- Parks and Recreation

Identified potentially impacts that cannot be mitigated to less than significant, and will result in significant residual and/or cumulative impacts, include:

- Biota
- Visual Quality
- Noise
- Agricultural Resources
- Solid Waste Disposal

Of these impacts that cannot be mitigated to less than significant, Noise is the only factor that was not previously identified and adopted with a Statement of Overriding Considerations as part of the certified Specific Plan program EIR. Noise impacts result from pile-driving of piers, the construction of the Long Canyon Road bridge, and potential impacts to future residents on Landmark Village if bridge construction begins after the subdivision is built and occupied.

Mitigation measures which have been incorporated into the project, and included in the Mitigation Monitoring Program ("MMP"), are listed in the Executive Summary of the Landmark Draft EIR, and include mitigation measures originally prescribed within the Specific Plan EIR.

Four alternatives to the Landmark project are also discussed in the Draft EIR as required by CEQA guidelines. These include: (1) No Project/No Development Alternative; (2) No Project/Future Development; (3) Floodplain Avoidance; and (4) Cluster Design. Each alternative is evaluated for potential impacts and the environmentally superior alternative is identified.

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Within this Draft EIR, the Cluster Alternative No. 4 (Draft EIR dated November 2006, Pages 5.0-20 through 5.0-35) is identified as the environmentally superior alternative. This alternative retains the overall layout of the proposed Landmark Village, except for 106 acres in the most western portion of the property that is to remain for agricultural uses. This would result in a reduction of 507 dwelling units along with 828,000 square feet of commercial space. This Alternative would retain the elementary school and 16-acre community park, and bank stabilization would still be required along the edge of the Santa Clara River. This project would result in the same factors impacted by development, and would increase the impact to water service and water quality.

The technical appendices include geological and geotechnical reports, an air quality analysis, drainage concept, biota report, sensitive plant report, spadefoot toad habitat monitoring report, water supply analysis, noise report, water quality reports, cultural resources assessment, Santa Clara river fluvial study, an archeological survey, and other technical documents supporting the Draft EIR.

The formal public review period for the Draft EIR was for a period of 60 days, from November 20, 2006 to January 22, 2007. A Notice of Public Review Period Time Continuation was also distributed, which extended the Draft EIR public review period up until January 31, 2007 at this time.

All written comments received prior to the close of the public hearing will be considered in the Final EIR. Copies of written correspondence on the Draft EIR, including requests for additional review time, are attached.

### **COUNTY DEPARTMENT AND AGENCY COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Subdivision Committee consists of the Departments of Regional Planning, Public Works, Fire, Parks and Recreation, and Public Health. The Subdivision Committee has reviewed the Tentative Tract and Exhibit "A" maps dated November 7, 2005, and recommends the attached conditions.

Comments and recommendations from County Departments and other agencies consulted during the environmental review process include the California Department of Fish and Game ("Fish and Game"), Regional Water Quality Control Board, Native American Heritage Commission, California Highway Patrol ("CHP"), California Department of Transportation ("Caltrans"), Southern California Association of Governments ("SCAG") as well as City of Santa Clarita and County of Ventura. Other agencies that have provided correspondence include the Castaic Lake Water Agency, Sierra Club, California Water Network, Santa Clarita Organization for Planning and the Environment (SCOPE), Piru Neighborhood Council and Friends of the Santa Clara River.

Most comments received indicate that due to the volume of material associated with this EIR, an additional 30 to 60 days is requested as part of the public review period. The EIR was circulated with an original public review period of 60 days, and has been extended once for an additional nine days to coincide with the Commission public hearing date.

Comments were received from Audobon California that state that insufficient bird surveys were done as part of the Draft EIR along with mischaracterizations of the status, range and impacts to bird species, and lack of specific mitigation measures for maximum feasible mitigation. Comments were

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also received from the SCAG indicating that the Draft EIR analysis is consistent with the Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide (RCPG), as well as from CHP that indicate concerns with increased traffic flow where currently little development exists.

All comments received in response to the Draft EIR are attached and will be incorporated into the Final EIR.

### **LEGAL NOTIFICATION/COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

Approximately five notices of public hearing were mailed to property owners within a 1,000-foot radius of the subject property as well as additional notices to those on the courtesy mailing list for projects in the Newhall and Castaic Canyon Zoned Districts. The public hearing notice was published in The Signal and La Opinion on November 20, 2006. The Draft EIR was available for review at the Newhall Library, Valencia Library and Canyon County Jo Anne Darcy Library beginning November 20, 2006. Project materials, including a tentative tract map, site plan, and recommended conditions, were received at the Newhall Library on December 29, 2006. One large public hearing notice, eight feet wide by four feet high, was posted on the subject property along SR-126 on December 29, 2006. Public hearing materials were also posted on the Department of Regional Planning's website.

The applicant has also presented the project on several occasions to the Castaic Area Town Council. Comments have not yet been received from the Castaic Area Town Council regarding the project.

### **CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED BEFORE PUBLIC HEARING**

Most correspondence received to date, comment on the Draft EIR and request additional time for review. Some comments have been received, and are discussed in summary detail above. Comments have been received in opposition to this project, with several references to the timing of this project with an Environmental Impact Statement (a federal environmental document) for the Santa Clara River. One letter has also been received in favor of the project, with desire expressed to live within this community once developed.

All correspondence received to date has been attached as part of this package.

### **STAFF EVALUATION**

The Newhall Ranch Specific Plan was adopted by the Board on May 27, 2003 after numerous public hearings before the Commission and Board, and through public participation from many organizations and community groups as well as interested individuals and through changes as a result of litigation. Within its boundary, the Specific Plan itself is the comprehensive document to guide future development, with plans, development regulations, design guidelines and implementation procedures.

An EIR was prepared for the Specific Plan, which indicated that certain impacts could not be mitigated to less than significant, and with adoption of the Specific Plan, the Board also adopted a Statement of

**GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT CASE NO. 00-196-(5)**  
**LOCAL PLAN AMENDMENT CASE NO. 00-196-(5)**  
**SPECIFIC PLAN AMENDMENT CASE NO. 00-196-(5)**  
**VESTING TENTATIVE TRACT MAP NO. 53108**  
**CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT CASE NO. 00-196-(5)**  
**CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT CASE NO. 2005-01121-(5)**  
**OAK TREE PERMIT CASE NO. 00-196-(5)**

**Staff Report**

Overriding Considerations as there were overriding public benefits to approval of the project. These included that the project was designed to preserve over nine square miles, including the Santa Clara River; 'buried bank stabilization' as proposed by the City of Santa Clarita, has been incorporated into the project which is above and beyond the requirements of the County's General and Area Plan; the project uses 'livable community' concepts, including the mixed use category to combine commercial with residential and recreational, provide over 50 miles of pedestrian and bicycle trails, provide bus pull-ins, and a park-and-ride facility is planned; and new Water Reclamation Plant will be constructed.

The Specific Plan is adopted for a total maximum of 21,308 dwelling units as well as approximately 5.5 million square feet of nonresidential uses over 11,963.9 gross acres.

Landmark Village is the first subdivision within the Specific Plan, and proposes a maximum of 1,444 dwelling units and 1,033,000 square feet of nonresidential uses on 292 acres. The property proposes single-family, for sale and lease attached and detached multi-family units, mixed use, office and retail commercial, and open space, including trails, parks and neighborhood recreation areas. An elementary school is also proposed as well as fire station (not yet incorporated into the tentative map).

As an implementation tool of the Specific Plan, a subdivision is submitted and evaluated for compliance with the Title 21 of the County Code (Subdivision Ordinance) as well as the California Map Act. Subdivisions are also evaluated for consistency with the Specific Plan, including density within portions of the property, siting of streets and recreation, and parking as necessary to accommodate multi-family and commercial uses as well as other development standards.

In addition, the Specific Plan contains language for determinations of substantial conformance for changes, either approved, approved with conditions or denied, that based on whether it can be found that the request substantially conforms with all applicable provisions of the Specific Plan and County ordinances; will not adversely affect public health, safety and welfare; and will not adversely affect adjacent property. The project seeks determinations of substantial conformance related to offsite reciprocal parking, street widths, front yard setbacks, and offsite transport of materials with conformance with grading and hillside management criteria.

Adjustments to the land use designations are also permitted within the Specific Plan, including conversion of uses and adjustments of boundaries. The project proposes adjustment of the land use boundaries as well as conversion of Low-Medium Density to Mixed Use, which comply with the parameters for such adjustments and conversions as stated in the Specific Plan.

The project also proposed development with the SEA/SMA, the Santa Clara River, including grading, bank stabilization, haul routes, and Long Canyon Road bridge. Long Canyon Road bridge is one of the bridge crossings originally considered by the Board for the Specific Plan, and was approved as part of the Specific Plan in that location. Haul routes are proposed to use existing river crossings that are permitted by the Army Corps of Engineers for agricultural uses. Grading is proposed as habitat restoration as well as bank stabilization to revegetate with native vegetation. One hundred-foot buffers are required to be provided by the Specific Plan, and may include bank stabilization, water quality basins, trails and other public facility related uses.

GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT CASE NO. 00-196-(5)  
 LOCAL PLAN AMENDMENT CASE NO. 00-196-(5)  
 SPECIFIC PLAN AMENDMENT CASE NO. 00-196-(5)  
 VESTING TENTATIVE TRACT MAP NO. 53108  
 CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT CASE NO. 00-196-(5)  
 CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT CASE NO. 2005-01121-(5)  
 OAK TREE PERMIT CASE NO. 00-196-(5)  
 Staff Report

While the EIR concluded that not all impacts from Landmark Village can be mitigated to less than significant, all but one factor was already identified as part of the Specific Plan, and the project was approved with the Statement of Overriding Considerations.

Additional time was requested by many organizations to allow time to further evaluate the project. These included requests for approval timing with an evaluation of an EIS for the Santa Clara River itself.

### **FEES/DEPOSITS**

If approved as recommended by staff, the following shall apply:

#### California Department of Fish and Game:

1. Processing fee of \$875.00 associated with the filing and posting of a Notice of Determination with the County Clerk, to defray the costs of fish and wildlife protection and management incurred by the California Department of Fish and Game.

#### Fire Department:

2. Cost recovery deposit of \$5,000.00 to cover a preconstruction meeting, and subsequent monitoring over a five-year period to determine compliance with the Oak Tree Permit.

#### Department of Regional Planning, Impact Analysis:

3. Deposit of \$3,000.00 to defray the costs of reviewing the subdivider's reports and verifying compliance with the information required by the Mitigation Monitoring Program.

#### Department of Regional Planning, Zoning Enforcement:

4. Cost recovery deposit of \$1,500.00 to cover the cost of 10 recommended zoning enforcement inspections (recommend two a year for a five-year period). Additional funds would be required if violations are found on the subject property.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

The following recommendation is subject to change based on oral testimony or documentary evidence submitted during the public hearing process.

Based on the number of requests for additional time, staff recommends that the Commission continue the public hearing to consider all testimony on the project, including the Draft EIR. Staff also recommends that the Commission formally continue the public review period of the EIR to coincide with the continued date.

GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT CASE NO. 00-196-(5)  
LOCAL PLAN AMENDMENT CASE NO. 00-196-(5)  
SPECIFIC PLAN AMENDMENT CASE NO. 00-196-(5)  
VESTING TENTATIVE TRACT MAP NO. 53108  
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CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT CASE NO. 2005-01121-(5)  
OAK TREE PERMIT CASE NO. 00-196-(5)  
Staff Report

**Suggested Motion:** "I move that the Regional Planning Commission continue the public hearing to allow time for interested parties as they have requested, to continue to allow additional time for review the project and provide comments, and to continue the public comment period for the Draft EIR to coincide with the continued public hearing date of \_\_\_\_\_, 2007."

Attachments:

Draft Conditions  
Conditional Use Permit Burdens of Proof  
Oak Tree Permit Burden of Proof  
Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 53108 - reduced size copy  
Conditional Use Permit Case Nos.001-96 and 2005-01121 Exhibit "A" – reduced size copy  
Land Use Map  
Correspondence  
From Applicant: Landmark Planning Notebook, January 2007

SMT:st  
01/25/07

The following reports consisting of 30 pages are the recommendations of Public Works.

The subdivision shall conform to the design standards and policies of Public Works, in particular, but not limited to the following items:

1. Details and notes shown on the tentative map are not necessarily approved. Any details or notes which may be inconsistent with requirements of ordinances, general conditions of approval, or Department policies must be specifically approved in other conditions, or ordinance requirements are modified to those shown on the tentative map upon approval by the Advisory agency.
2. Easements are tentatively required, subject to review by the Director of Public Works to determine the final locations and requirements.
3. Easements shall not be granted or recorded within areas proposed to be granted, dedicated, or offered for dedication for public streets, highways, access rights, building restriction rights, or other easements until after the final map is filed with the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk's Office. If easements are granted after the date of tentative approval, a subordination must be executed by the easement holder prior to the filing of the final map.
4. In lieu of establishing the final specific locations of structures on each lot/parcel at this time, the owner, at the time of issuance of a grading or building permit, agrees to develop the property in conformance with the County Code and other appropriate ordinances such as the Building Code, Plumbing Code, Grading Ordinance, Highway Permit Ordinance, Mechanical Code, Zoning Ordinance, Undergrounding of Utilities Ordinance, Water Ordinance, Sanitary Sewer and Industrial Waste Ordinance, Electrical Code, and Fire Code. Improvements and other requirements may be imposed pursuant to such codes and ordinances.
5. All easements existing at the time of final map approval must be accounted for on the approved tentative map. This includes the location, owner, purpose, and recording reference for all existing easements. If an easement is blanket or indeterminate in nature, a statement to that effect must be shown on the tentative map in lieu of its location. If all easements have not been accounted for, submit a corrected tentative map to the Department of Regional Planning for approval.

6. Adjust, relocate, and/or eliminate lot lines, lots, streets, easements, grading, geotechnical protective devices, and/or physical improvements to comply with ordinances, policies, and standards in effect at the date the County determined the application to be complete all to the satisfaction of Public Works.
7. Prior to final approval of the tract map submit a notarized affidavit to the Director of Public Works, signed by all owners of record at the time of filing of the map with the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk's Office, stating that any proposed condominium building has not been constructed or that all buildings have not been occupied or rented and that said building will not be occupied or rented until after the filing of the map with the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk's Office.
8. Place standard condominium/residential planned development/commercial planned development/Landscape Maintenance District notes on the final map to the satisfaction of Public Works. The formation of the Landscape Maintenance District for all median and parkway landscaping must be approved by the Department of Parks and Recreation.
9. Place standard lease purpose only notes on the final map to the satisfaction of Public Works.
10. Label driveways and multiple access strips as "Private Driveway and Fire Lane" and delineate on the final map to the satisfaction of Public Works.
11. Reserve reciprocal easements for drainage, ingress/egress, utilities, and maintenance purposes, etc., in documents over the private driveways and delineate on the final map to the satisfaction of Public Works.
12. If unit filing occurs, reserve reciprocal ingress and egress easements in documents over the private driveways and delineate on the final map to the satisfaction of Public Works.
13. Furnish Public Works' Street Name Unit with a list of street names acceptable to the subdivider. These names must not be duplicated within a radius of 20 miles.
14. A Mapping & Property Management Division house numbering clearance is required prior to approval of the final map.

15. Design the boundaries of the unit final maps to the satisfaction of the Departments of Regional Planning and Public Works.
16. The first unit of this subdivision shall be filed as Tract No. 53108-01, the second unit, Tract No. 53108-02, ..... and the last unit, Tract No. 53108.
17. A final tract map must be processed through the Director of Public Works prior to being filed with the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk's Office.
18. Prior to submitting the tract map to the Director of Public Works for examination pursuant to Section 66442 of the Government Code, obtain clearances from all affected Departments and Divisions, including a clearance from the Subdivision Mapping Section of the Land Development Division of Public Works for the following mapping items; mathematical accuracy; survey analysis; and correctness of certificates, signatures, etc.
19. Quitclaim or relocate easements running through proposed structures.
20. A final guarantee will be required at the time of filing of the final map with the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk's Office.
21. Show open space note and dedicate residential construction rights over the open space lots.
22. If all possible, modify the boundaries of the open space lots or add additional open space lots to include the airspace easements for sight distance to the satisfaction of the Department of Regional Planning and Public Works.
23. Permission is granted to record large lots (20-acre or more) parcel map as shown on the insert map provided full street right of way and slope easements are dedicated along the latest IEC approved alignments on Route 126 (Henry Mayo Drive) and Long Canyon Road to the satisfaction of the Department of Public Works. In addition, make an offer of private and future right of way and dedicate slope easements along all remaining interior streets on alignments to the satisfaction of Public Works. This permission is contingent on deletion of the secondary highway south of and parallel to SR 126 from the County Highway Plan.

24. Within 30 days of the approval date of this land use entitlement or at the time of first plan check submittal, the applicant shall deposit the sum of \$2,000 (Minor Land Divisions) or \$5,000 (Major Land Divisions) with Public Works to defray the cost of verifying conditions of approval for the purpose of issuing final map clearances. This deposit will cover the actual cost of reviewing conditions of approval for Conditional Use Permits, Tentative Tract and Parcel Maps, Vesting Tentative Tract and Parcel Maps, Oak Tree Permits, Specific Plans, General Plan Amendments, Zone Changes, CEQA Mitigation Monitoring Programs and Regulatory Permits from State and Federal Agencies (Fish and Game, USF&W, Army Corps, RWQCB, etc.) as they relate to the various plan check activities and improvement plan designs. In addition, this deposit will be used to conduct site field reviews and attend meetings requested by the applicant and/or his agents for the purpose of resolving technical issues on condition compliance as they relate to improvement plan design, engineering studies, highway alignment studies and tract/parcel map boundary, title and easement issues. When 80% of the deposit is expended, the applicant will be required to provide additional funds to restore the initial deposit. Remaining balances in the deposit account will be refunded upon final map recordation.

Prepared by <sup>HW</sup> Henry Wong

tr53108L-rev9 doc

Phone (626) 458-4915

Date 12-29-2005



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS  
LAND DEVELOPMENT DIVISION  
SUBDIVISION PLAN CHECKING SECTION  
DRAINAGE AND GRADING UNIT

TRACT NO. 53108

REV TENTATIVE MAP DATED 11/07/05  
EXHIBIT MAP 11/07/05

**DRAINAGE CONDITIONS**

1. Provide drainage facilities to remove the flood hazard and dedicate and show necessary easements and/or right of way on the final map. This is required to the satisfaction of the Department of Public Works prior to the filing of the final map.
2. Place a note of flood hazard on the final map and delineate the areas subject to flood hazard. Show and label all natural drainage courses. Dedicate to the County the right to restrict the erection of buildings in the flood hazard area. This is required to the satisfaction of the Department of Public Works prior to the filing of the final map.
3. A hydrology study for design of drainage facilities is required. Hydrology study must be submitted and approved prior to submittal of improvement plans. This is required to the satisfaction of the Department of Public Works prior to the filing of the final map.
4. Provide fee title lot for debris basins/inlets to the satisfaction of the Department of Public Works.
5. A maintenance permit is required from the State Department of Fish and Game, the Corps of Engineers, and the State Water Resources Control Board for debris basins with a minimum capacity of 5,000 cubic yards. This is required to the satisfaction of the Department of Public Works prior to the filing of the final map.
6. Notify the State Department of Fish and Game prior to commencement of work within any natural drainage course. If non-jurisdiction is established by the Department of Fish and Game, submit a letter of non-jurisdiction to Public Works (Land Development Division).
7. Contact the State Water Resources Control Board to determine if a Notice of Intent (NOI) and a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) are required to meet National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) construction requirements for this site.
8. Contact the Corps of Engineers to determine if a permit is required for any proposed work within the major watercourse. Provide a copy of the 404 Permit upon processing of the drainage plans. If non-jurisdiction is established by the Corps of Engineers, submit a letter of non-jurisdiction to Public Works (Land Development Division).
9. This site is located in Zone "A" per the Federal Flood Insurance Rate Map. Public Works, Watershed Management Division (626) 458-4322, should be contacted to obtain procedures for revising the flood insurance rate map once the storm drain facilities are constructed. Encroachment into FEMA Zone "A" is not permitted prior to obtaining a Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR) from FEMA.
10. Comply with the requirements of the Drainage Concept / Standard Urban Stormwater Mitigation Plan (SUSMP) plan which was conceptually approved on 11/29/06 to the satisfaction of Public Works.
11. Prior to recordation of the final map, form an assessment district to finance the future ongoing maintenance and capital replacement of all SUSMP devices/systems. The developer shall cooperate fully with Public Works in the formation of the assessment district. SUSMP devices/systems may include, but are not limited to, catch basin inserts, debris excluders, biotreatment basins, vortex separation type systems, and other devices/systems for stormwater quality.
12. Prior to recordation of the final map, the developer shall deposit the first year's total assessment based on the engineers estimate as approved by Public Works. This will fund the first year's maintenance after the facilities are accepted. The second and subsequent years assessment will be collected through the property tax bill.



County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
GEOTECHNICAL AND MATERIALS ENGINEERING DIVISION  
GEOLOGIC REVIEW SHEET  
900 So. Fremont Ave., Alhambra, CA 91803  
TEL. (626) 458-4925

DISTRIBUTION  
1 Geologist  
1 Soils Engineer  
1 GMED File  
1 Subdivision

TENTATIVE TRACT MAP 53108  
SUBDIVIDER Newhall Land & Farming Co. / Newhall Ranch Co.  
ENGINEER Psomas  
GEOLOGIST & SOILS ENGINEER Allan Seward

TENTATIVE MAP DATED 11/7/05 (Revision)  
LOCATION Newhall Ranch  
REPORT DATE 2/10/01, 9/27/00 (00-1702R-4)

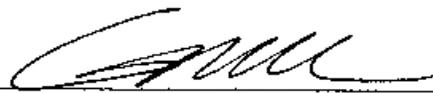
**TENTATIVE MAP FEASIBILITY IS RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL. PRIOR TO FILING THE FINAL LAND DIVISION MAP, THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS MUST BE FULFILLED:**

- The final map must be approved by the Geotechnical and Materials Engineering Division (GMED) to assure that all geotechnical factors have been properly evaluated.
- A grading plan must be geotechnically approved by the GMED. This grading plan must be based on a detailed engineering geology report and/or soils engineering report and show all recommendations submitted by them. Reports must address grading shown on sheet 5 of the Tentative Map. It must also agree with the tentative map and conditions as approved by the Planning Commission. If the subdivision is to be recorded prior to the completion and acceptance of grading, corrective geologic bonds will be required.
- All geologic hazards associated with this proposed development must be eliminated,  
or  
delineate restricted use areas, approved by the consultant geologist and/or soils engineer, to the satisfaction of the Geology and Soils Sections, and dedicate to the County the right to prohibit the erection of buildings or other structures within the restricted use areas.
- A statement entitled: "Geotechnical Note(s), Potential Building Site: For grading and corrective work requirements for access and building areas for Lot(s) No(s) \_\_\_\_\_, dated \_\_\_\_\_ refer to the Soils Report(s) by \_\_\_\_\_."
- The Soils Engineering review dated 12/28/05 is attached.

**TENTATIVE MAP IS APPROVED FOR FEASIBILITY. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS APPLICABLE TO THIS DIVISION OF LAND:**

- This project may not qualify for a waiver of final map under section 21.48.140 of the Los Angeles County Title 21 Subdivision Code.
- The subdivider is advised that approval of this division of land is contingent upon the installation and use of a sewer system.
- Geology and/or soils engineering reports may be required prior to approval of building or grading plans.
- Groundwater is less than 10 feet from the ground surface on lots \_\_\_\_\_
- The Soils Engineering review dated \_\_\_\_\_ is attached.

Prepared by



Geir R. Mathisen

Reviewed by \_\_\_\_\_

Date 12/6/05

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS  
GEOTECHNICAL AND MATERIALS ENGINEERING DIVISION

SOILS ENGINEERING REVIEW SHEET

Address: 900 S. Fremont Ave., Alhambra, CA 91803  
Telephone: (626) 458-4925  
Fax: (626) 458-4913

District Office 8.2  
Job Number LX001129  
Sheet 1 of 1

Tentative Tract Map 53108  
Location Newhall Ranch  
Developer/Owner Newhall Land and Farming Company  
Engineer/Architect Psomas  
Soils Engineer Allen E. Seward  
Geologist Same as above

DISTRIBUTION:  
 Drainage  
 Grading  
 Geo/Soils Central File  
 District Engineer  
 Geologist  
 Soils Engineer  
 Engineer/Architect

Review of:

Revised Tentative Tract Map Dated By Regional Planning 11/7/05

Previous review sheet dated 8/31/05

ACTION:

Tentative Map feasibility is recommended for approval, subject to conditions below.

REMARKS:

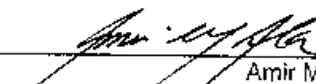
At the grading plan stage:

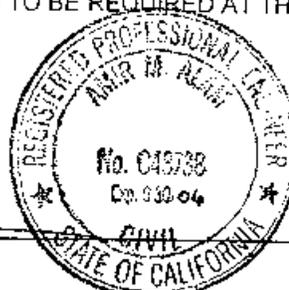
1. Provide geotechnical report addressing all the offsite grading shown on the Tentative Map.
2. Submit two sets of grading plans to the Soils Section for verification of compliance with County codes and policies.

NOTE TO PLAN CHECKER / APPLICANT:

ANY EXTENSIVE REVISIONS TO THE PROPOSED GRADING DETERMINED TO BE REQUIRED AT THE GRADING STAGE FOR THE OFFSITE AREA MAY REQUIRE A REVISED TENTATIVE TRACT MAP.

Reviewed by

  
Amir M. Alam



Date 12/28/05

**NOTICE:** Public safety, relative to geotechnical subsurface exploration, shall be provided in accordance with current codes for excavations, inclusive of the Los Angeles County Code, Chapter 11.48, and the State of California, Title 8, Construction Safety Orders.

P:\Amir\53108Tent

The subdivision shall conform to the design standards and policies of Public Works, in particular, but not limited to the following items:

1. A minimum centerline curve length of 100 feet shall be maintained on all local streets. A minimum centerline curve radius of 100 feet shall be maintained on all cul-de-sac streets. Reversing curves of local streets need not exceed a radius of 1,500 feet, and any curve need not exceed a radius of 3,000 feet.
2. The minimum centerline radius is 350 feet on all local streets with 64 feet of right of way and on all the streets where grades exceed 10 percent.
3. Compound curves are preferred over broken-back curves. Broken-back curves must be separated by a minimum of 200 feet of tangent (1,000 feet for multi-lane highways or industrial collectors). If compound curves are used, the radius of the smaller curve shall not be less than two-thirds of the larger curve. The curve length of compound curves shall be adjusted to exceed a minimum curve length of 100 feet, when appropriate.
4. Curves through intersections should be avoided when possible. If unavoidable, the alignment shall be adjusted so that the proposed BC and EC of the curve through the intersection are set back a minimum of 100 feet away from the BCR's of the intersection.
5. Reversing curves and compound curves through intersections should be avoided when possible. If unavoidable, the minimum centerline radius of reversing curves and compound curves through intersections shall comply with design speeds per the Subdivision Plan Checking Section's "Requirements for Street Plans" and sight distances.
6. The minimum centerline radius on a local street with an intersection street on the concave side shall comply with design speeds per the Subdivision Plan Checking Section's "Requirements for Street Plans" and sight distances.
7. The centerline of all local streets shall be aligned without creating jogs of less than 150 feet. A one-foot jog may be used where a street changes width from 60 feet to 58 feet of right of way.
8. Provide minimum landing area of 100 feet for local collectors, 50 feet for local access roads, and 25 feet for cul-de-sacs at a maximum 3 percent grade on all "tee" intersections.

9. The central angles of the right of way radius returns shall not differ by more than 10 degrees on local streets.
10. At tee intersections involving local streets, the maximum permissible grade of the through street across the intersection is 10 percent. For intersections involving multi-lane highways, the maximum permissible grade of the through street is three percent. For 4-legged intersections, the maximum permissible grade of the through street is 8 percent.
11. Provide intersection sight distance for a design speed of:
  - a. 70 mph or to the satisfaction of Public Works and Caltrans on SR-126 (westerly direction) from Long Canyon Road;
  - b. 60 mph (650 feet) on Long Canyon Road from the commercial driveway serving Lot 351/353 (northerly direction) and from the commercial driveway serving Lot 367/368(southerly direction);
  - c. 45 mph (465 feet) on "A" Street from the commercial driveway serving lot 352 (easterly direction, looking towards the center of the through lane on the northerly side of "A" Street east of Long Canyon Road); from the commercial driveway serving lots 367/375 (easterly direction); from the commercial driveway serving lots 374/375 (westerly direction), if a left-turn movement is proposed; from the park driveway serving lot 344 (easterly direction); from the school driveway lot 345 (easterly direction); from "L" Street (westerly direction); from "N" Street (both directions);
  - d. 30 mph (310 feet) on "C" Street from "D" Street (southwesterly direction); on "F" Street from "D" Street (easterly direction); on "J" Street from "K" Street (westerly direction); on "N" Street from the westerly intersection with "Q" Street (easterly direction); on "O" Street from "N" Street (southerly direction); on "O" Street from the easterly intersection with "Q" Street (southwesterly direction); on "Q" Street from the westerly intersection with "N" Street (northerly direction); and on "Q" Street from the easterly intersection with "N" Street (northwesterly direction).

Line of sight shall be within right of way or dedicate airspace easements to the satisfaction of Public Works. Additional grading may be required. With respect to the position of the vehicle at the minor road, the driver of the vehicle is presumed to be located 4 feet right of centerline and 10 feet back the top of curb (TC) or flow line (FL) prolongation. When looking left, we consider the target to be located at the center of the lane nearest to the parkway curb. We use 6 feet from TC as a conservative rule, in the case of pop outs we use 6 feet from TC of the travel lane. When looking right, the target is the center of the lane nearest to the centerline or from the median TC (when present). We use 6 feet from centerline or from the median TC as a conservative rule.

12. Provide standard property line return radii of 13 feet at all local street intersections, including intersection of local streets with planned highways (those on the County Highway Plan), 27 feet where all planned highways intersect or where one of the roads serves a commercial or industrial development, or to the satisfaction of Public Works.
13. Dedicate vehicular access rights on SR-126, unless the Department of Regional Planning requires the construction of a wall. In such cases, complete access rights shall be dedicated.
14. Dedicate right of way to the satisfaction of Public Works and Caltrans a minimum of 70 feet from the latest approved centerline on Henry Mayo Drive (SR-126). The proposed 140-foot typical section of Henry Mayo Drive (SR-126) is conditionally approved. Approval is contingent on the traffic study demonstrating that the projected traffic volumes do not exceed the capacity of this roadway. If so, provide additional right of way for additional lanes, exclusive left-turn lanes, exclusive right-turn lanes, and transition improvements to the satisfaction of Public Works and Caltrans. The cross sections and lane configurations as shown are not necessarily approved and are still subject to review and approval to the satisfaction of Public Works.
15. Make an offer of future right of way and provide slope easements at the future Henry Mayo Drive (SR-126) / Long Canyon Road Interchange and Henry Mayo Drive (SR-126) / Wolcott Road Interchange to the satisfaction of Public Works.
16. Design all affected intersections and driveway entrances along Long Canyon Road and Wolcott Road to be compatible with vertical approaches to the future grade separations at the Henry Mayo Drive (SR-126) interchanges and at the Santa Clara River to the satisfaction of Public Works.

17. The Newhall Ranch Specific Plan also included a secondary highway through this tract (south of and parallel to SR-126). The deletion of this future highway requires the filing of a highway plan amendment through the IEC. For more information, please contact Barry Witler at (626) 458-4351.
18. Dedicate right of way a minimum of 57 feet (no parking, on street bike lane) from the latest approved centerline on Long Canyon Road per P-265(PW) to the satisfaction of Public Works.
  - a. Long Canyon Road within this tract is a major highway added to the County Highway Plan through the adoption of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan. The applicant shall prepare an alignment for Long Canyon Road and obtain Public Works approval. An exception for a 60 mph design speed for Long Canyon Road within Tract 53108 must be approved by Public Works. For more information, please contact Barry Witler at (626) 458-4351.
  - b. Approval is contingent on the traffic study demonstrating that the projected traffic volumes do not exceed the capacity of this roadway. If so, provide additional right of way for exclusive left-turn lanes, exclusive right-turn lanes, and transition improvements on Long Canyon Road.
  - b. The cross sections and lane configurations as shown are not necessarily approved and are still subject to review and approval to the satisfaction of Public Works.
  - c. Permission is granted to use modified street sections on Long Canyon Road subject to review and approval to the satisfaction of Public Works. The proposed 114-foot typical sections are conditionally approved with a median width of 14 feet and pavement on each side of the raised median at least 42 feet wide between curbs.
  - d. Dedicate additional right of way on Long Canyon Road in the vicinity of the bridge to provide full-width sidewalk with 8 feet of clearance on the bridge."
  - e. Maintain a minimum of 8 feet wide parkway on Long Canyon Road.
  - f. Establish a landscape maintenance district, subject to the approval of the Department of Parks and Recreation, for the purpose of maintaining the landscaped medians and parkways (if applicable) on Long Canyon Road.

19. Dedicate 110 feet of right of way on "A" Street from Long Canyon Road to Wolcott Road for design speed of 45 mph to the satisfaction of Public Works.
  - a. Approval is contingent on the traffic study demonstrating that the projected traffic volumes do not exceed the capacity of this two-lane roadway. If so, provide additional right of way for additional lanes, exclusive left-turn lanes, exclusive right-turn lanes, and transition improvements.
  - b. The cross sections and lane configurations as shown are not necessarily approved and are still subject to review and approval to the satisfaction of Public Works.
  - c. Permission is granted to use modified street sections along "A" Street from Long Canyon Road to Wolcott Road subject to review and approval to the satisfaction of Public Works. The proposed 110-foot typical sections of "A" Street are conditionally approved with a median width of 14 feet and pavement on each side of the raised median at least 30 feet wide between curbs to accommodate one travel lane, a striped bike lane, and a parking lane.
  - d. Maintain a minimum of 12 feet wide parkway on "A" Street.
  - e. The details of the sidewalks, landscaping, and swales in the parkway are not necessarily approved. Establish a landscape maintenance district, subject to the approval of the Department of Parks and Recreation, for the purpose of maintaining the landscaped medians and parkways on "A" Street.
  
20. Dedicate right of way 53 feet from the centerline on Wolcott Road from Henry Mayo Drive (SR-126) to "A" Street for design speed of 45 mph to the satisfaction of Public Works.
  - a. Approval is contingent on the traffic study demonstrating that the projected traffic volumes do not exceed the capacity of this two-lane roadway. If so, provide additional right of way for exclusive left-turn lanes, exclusive right-turn lanes, and transition improvements.
  - b. The cross sections and lane configurations as shown are not necessarily approved and are still subject to review and approval to the satisfaction of Public Works.

- c. Permission is granted to use modified street sections on Wolcott Road. The proposed 106-foot street section on Wolcott Road is conditionally approved. Design the cross sections for Wolcott Road to provide lane configurations: with a median width of 14 feet and pavement on each side of the raised median at least 26 feet curb to curb (no parking, no bike lane), 32 feet curb to curb (on street parking, no bike lane), or 31 feet curb to curb (no parking, on street bike lane) and parkway width to the satisfaction of Public Works. Provide standard lane configurations based on cross sections for a secondary highway in accordance with Section 21.24.065 of the Subdivision Ordinance proposed cross sections and/or based on the approved traffic study to the satisfaction of Public Works.
  - d. The details of the sidewalks and landscaping in the parkway are not necessarily approved. Establish a landscape maintenance district, subject to the approval of the Department of Parks and Recreation, for the purpose of maintaining the landscaped medians and parkways on Wolcott Road.
21. Dedicate additional right of way at all proposed roundabout locations to the satisfaction of Public Works.
22. Dedicate the right to restrict vehicular access on Long Canyon Road, Wolcott Road and "A" Street. All proposed driveway locations, driveway widths, median setbacks, and median openings as shown on the tentative map are not necessarily approved and are still subject to review and approval to the satisfaction of Public Works.
23. Dedicate right of way 42 feet from centerline including a standard cul-de-sac bulb on "Y" Street for a design speed of 45 mph to the satisfaction of Public Works. If required, provide additional right of way at the intersection with Long Canyon Road to the satisfaction of Public Works.
24. Dedicate right of way 32 feet from centerline on "A" Street from Wolcott Road to "D" Street.
25. Dedicate right of way 29 feet from centerline on "A" Street from "D" Street to "C" Street, "B" Street, "C" Street, "D" Street, "E" Street, "F" Street, "G" Street, "H" Street, "I" Street, "J" Street, "K" Street, "L" Street, "M" Street, "N" Street, "O" Street, "Q" Street, and "Z" Street.
26. Permission is granted to use the 58-foot modified local street section with 34 feet in roadway width with parking allowed on both sides of the street.

27. Dedicate additional right of way for standard knuckles and standard cul-de-sac bulbs to the satisfaction of Public Works.
28. Construct curb, gutter, base, pavement, and sidewalk on all streets and highways (except SR-126.) to the satisfaction of Public Works.
29. Construct improvements along the property frontage on Henry Mayo Drive (SR-126) to the satisfaction of Caltrans.
30. Construct additional pavement on Henry Mayo Drive (SR-126) as may be determined necessary to mitigate project impacts to provide exclusive right-turn lanes, left-turn lanes, and transitions at entrance street intersections to the satisfaction of Public Works and Caltrans.
31. Obtain an encroachment permit from Caltrans for all improvements along Henry Mayo Drive (SR-126).
32. Plant street trees on all local streets and highways (except SR-126).
33. Construct the pedestrian bridge over Henry Mayo Drive (SR-126) to the satisfaction of Public Works and Caltrans. The foundation of the pedestrian bridge shall be located outside of the road right of way.
34. Construct a slough wall outside the street right of way when the height of the slope is greater than five feet above the sidewalk and the sidewalk is adjacent to the street right of way. The wall shall not impede any required line of sight.
35. Construct drainage improvements (and parkway drains, if needed) and offer easements needed for street drainage or slopes to the satisfaction of Public Works. Where streets or highways are located within flood hazard areas or subject to inundation, provide adequate freeboard and slope protection to the satisfaction of Public Works. Construct adequate embankment protection along any sections of highways or streets located within flood plain boundaries or subject to inundation. Adequate freeboard shall also be provided.
36. Underground all existing service lines and distribution lines that are less than 50 KV and new utility lines to the satisfaction of Public Works and Southern California Edison. Please contact Construction Division at (626) 458-3129 for new location of any above ground utility structure in the parkway.

37. Install postal delivery receptacles in groups to serve two or more residential lots.
38. Provide and install street name signs prior to occupancy of buildings.
39. Prior to final map approval, enter into an agreement with the County franchised cable TV operator (if an area is served) to permit the installation of cable in a common utility trench to the satisfaction of Public Works, or provide documentation that steps to provide cable TV to the proposed subdivision have been initiated to the satisfaction of Public Works.
40. Comply with the following street lighting requirements:
  - a. Provide street lights on concrete poles with underground wiring within the tract boundaries on all streets and highways including Henry Mayo Drive (SR-126) to the satisfaction of Public Works and Caltrans. Submit street lighting plans as soon as possible for review and approval to the Street Lighting Section of the Traffic and Lighting Division. For additional information, please contact the Street Lighting Section at (626) 300-4726.
  - b. The proposed development, or portions thereof, are not within an existing Lighting District. Annexation and assessment balloting are required. Upon tentative map approval, the applicant shall comply with conditions listed below in order for the Lighting District to pay for the future operation and maintenance of the street lights. The Board of Supervisors must approve the annexation and levy of assessment (should assessment balloting favor levy of assessment) prior to filing of the final subdivision maps for each area with the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk.
    - (1) Request the Street Lighting Section to commence annexation and levy of assessment proceedings.
    - (2) Provide business/property owner's name(s), mailing address(es), site address, Assessor Parcel Number(s), and Parcel Boundaries in either Microstation or Auto CADD format of territory to be developed to the Street Lighting Section.
    - (3) Submit a map of the proposed development including any roadways conditioned for street lights that are outside the proposed project area to Street Lighting Section. Contact the Street Lighting Section for map requirements and with any questions at (626) 300-4726.

- c. The annexation and assessment balloting process takes approximately ten to twelve months to complete once the above information is received and approved. Therefore, untimely compliance with the above will result in a delay in receiving approval of the street lighting plans or in filing the final subdivision map for recordation. Information on the annexation and the assessment balloting process can be obtained by contacting Street Lighting Section at (626) 300-4726.
  - d. For acceptance of street light transfer of billing, the area must be annexed into the Lighting District and all street lights in the development, or the current phase of the development, must be constructed according to Public Works approved plans. The contractor shall submit one complete set of "as-built" plans. Provided the above conditions are met, all street lights in the development, or the current phase of the development, have been energized, and the developer has requested a transfer of billing at least by January 1 of the previous year, the Lighting District can assume responsibility for the operation and maintenance of the street lights by July 1 of any given year. The transfer of billing could be delayed one or more years if the above conditions are not met.
41. Prepare detailed 1" = 40' scaled signing and striping plans for Henry Mayo Drive (SR-126), Long Canyon Road, Wolcott Road, "Y" Street, and "A" Street within or abutting this subdivision to the satisfaction of Public Works and Caltrans.
  42. Prepare detailed 1" = 40' scaled signing and striping plans for all off-site intersections affected by this subdivision as indicated in the attached letter dated December 9, 2004 from our Traffic and Lighting Division to the satisfaction of Public Works and Caltrans.
  43. As indicated in the attached letter dated December 9, 2004 from our Traffic and Lighting Division, install traffic signals (both on-site and off-site) for all signalized intersections and prepare 1" = 20' scaled traffic signal plans to the satisfaction of Public Works. If required, provide additional right of way to the satisfaction of Public Works.
  44. Comply with the mitigation measures (including off-site improvements) identified in the attached December 9, 2004 letter from our Traffic and Lighting Division to the satisfaction of Public Works. It shall be the sole responsibility of the subdivider to acquire the necessary off-site right of way and/or easements.

45. If needed, the location of the driveway to Lot 352 and the southerly driveway to Lot 354 on "Y" Street shall be relocated to reflect the conceptual plan to the satisfaction of Public Works.
46. Setback the raised median nose a minimum of 20 feet from the right of way within private driveway and fire lanes on all lots to the satisfaction of Public Works.
47. Setback the raised median noses a minimum of 20 feet on all streets to the satisfaction of Public Works.
48. Provide adequate spacing (minimum of 50 feet) on the northerly driveway to Lot 354 between the right of way and the first curb opening to the parking area for buildings A and B (shown on Exhibit Map Sheet 7 of 12) to the satisfaction of Public Works.
49. Permission is granted to record large lots (20 acre or more) parcel map as shown on the insert map provided full street right of way and slope easements are dedicated along the latest approved alignments on Henry Mayo Drive (SR-126) and Long Canyon Road to the satisfaction of Public Works. In addition, make an offer of private and future right of way and dedicate slope easements along all remaining interior streets (including Wolcott Road) on alignments to the satisfaction of Public Works. This permission is contingent on deletion of the secondary highway south of and parallel to SR-126 from the County Highway Plan.
50. Permission is granted to use modified street cross-sections as shown on the tentative map to the satisfaction of Public Works. However, the subdivider may elect to construct standard and/or alternate street cross section to the satisfaction of Public Works. If alternate street cross sections are proposed, construct additional sidewalk pop-out along the property frontage on all applicable streets in the vicinity of any above ground utilities to meet current ADA requirements to the satisfaction of Public Works.
51. All site plans shall be reviewed and approved by Public Works prior to final approval.

52. Additional comments/requirements:

- The street profiles along Long Canyon Road and Wolcott Road showing the vertical approach to the proposed interchanges, the at-grade intersections at SR-126 (Henry Mayo Drive), and at the Santa Clara River (Long Canyon Road only) as shown on the tentative map are not necessarily approved. The design and construction on Long Canyon Road and Wolcott Road must be compatible with the ultimate improvements on SR-126 and the Santa Clara River (Long Canyon Road only) to the satisfaction of Public Works.

*HW*  
Prepared by Timothy Chen  
tr53108r-rev9.doc

Phone (626) 458-4915

Date 12-29-2005



# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

*"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"*

900 SOUTH FRUHMONT AVENUE  
ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91803-1331  
Telephone: (626) 458-5100  
www.ladpw.org

ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO  
P.O. BOX 1460  
ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91802-1460

IN REPLY PLEASE  
REFER TO FILE T-4

December 9, 2004

Mr. Daryl Zerfass  
Austin-Foust Associates, Inc.  
2020 North Tustin Avenue  
Santa Ana, CA 92705-7827

Dear Mr. Zerfass:

**RIVER VILLAGE  
TENTATIVE TRACT NO. 53108  
TRAFFIC IMPACT ANALYSIS (SEPTEMBER 28, 2004)  
CASTAIC JUNCTION AREA**

As requested, we have reviewed the above-mentioned document. The project is located in the unincorporated County of Los Angeles area of Castaic Junction. The project site is bounded by State Route (SR) 126 to the north, the Santa Clarita River to the south, and the Castaic Creek to the east.

The proposed project, River Village, is the first phase of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan (NRSP). The NRSP has been approved for approximately 21,000 residential dwelling units. River Village consists of the development of 591 single-family detached dwelling units, 398 condominium units and 455 apartments units for a total of 1,444 residential dwelling units; a 750 student elementary school; a 20.9-acre public park; and 1,040,000 square feet of commercial uses. The project is estimated to generate approximately 41,880 vehicle trips daily, with 2,910 and 4,160 vehicle trips during the a.m. and p.m. peak hours, respectively. The document addresses the project in three development phases: 2007 for Phase I, 2008 for Phase II, and 2010 for Phase III. Phase I consists of 500 residential units. Phase II consists of the remaining residential units, the elementary school, 100,000 feet of commercial uses, and the public park. Phase III consists of the balance of the commercial uses for 940,000 square feet.

**FILE COPY**

Mr. Darly Zerfass  
December 9, 2004  
Page 2

We have received a separate technical report for the proposed west and east roundabouts for the intersections of Driveway – Tentative Tract No. 53018, Lots 373 and 374; and Wolcott Road; both at "A" Street – Tentative Tract No. 53108, respectively. We will provide additional comment on the roundabouts, as we complete our review of the submitted report.

We generally agree with the traffic impact analysis and require the following traffic impact mitigation measures with the project approval. The traffic impact analysis shall be revised to be consistent with mitigation measures contained in this letter.

- The main access for River Village will be provided from SR-126 via the existing intersections of Wolcott Way and Chiquito Canyon Road. Future phases of the NRSP will provide access to and from south via Long Canyon Road. Unless an updated long range study is prepared which demonstrates that the intersections will adequately handle the area buildout traffic as at grade intersections, adequate road right of way shall be reserved for future grade separated interchanges at these two locations, as approved in the NRSP.
- The study is based on the Santa Clarita Valley Consolidated Traffic Model and assumes the following roadway improvements will be in place with Phase I of the project. In accordance with our Traffic Impact Analysis Report Guidelines (TIARG), these improvements shall be made a condition of approval for the project to be in place prior to issuance of any building permit(s) for Phase I of the project.
  - Reconstruct the Golden State (I-5) Freeway/SR-126 Freeway interchange by adding access to eastbound SR-126 from southbound I-5, access to southbound I-5 from westbound SR-126, direct access to northbound I-5 from westbound SR-126, and widening bridge to 8 lanes.
  - Construct Newhall Ranch Road segment between Vanderbilt Way and Copper Hill Drive/Rye Canyon Road.
- The traffic signals shall be installed at the following intersections. The design and the construction of the traffic signals shall be the sole responsibility of the project. The signals shall be in place at their ultimate design locations prior to the issuance of any building permit(s) for the indicated phase of the project to the satisfaction of Public Works.

Mr. Dary Zerfass  
December 9, 2004  
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Phase I: Wolcott Way at Henry Mayo Drive (SR-126)

Phase II: Chiquito Canyon Road and Long Canyon Road (Future) at Henry Mayo Drive (SR-126)

Phase III: Long Canyon Road at "Y" Street and "A" Street (TT 53108)

- The traffic generated by the project alone will significantly impact the following intersections. The following improvements shall be the sole responsibility of the project and be a condition of approval to be in place prior to the issuance of any building permit(s) for the indicated phase. Detailed striping and signal modification plans must be submitted for review and approval.

#### **PHASE I**

##### Wolcott Way at Henry Mayo Drive (SR-126)

North approach: One left-turn lane, one through lane, and an exclusive right-turn lane (convert shared left-turn/through lane to through lane).

South approach (future): One left-turn lane, one through lane, and an exclusive right-turn lane (add one left-turn lane, convert shared left-turn/through/right-turn lane to through lane and add an exclusive right-turn lane).

Design and install traffic signals to the satisfaction of Public Works.

##### School Middle Driveway/"A" Street at "A" Street (TT 53108)

The projects shall be responsible for the preparation of traffic signal design plans and securing adequate funds with Public Works for the full construction of the signals. The intersection will be monitored for the installation of the signals once the school is fully occupied with 750 students.

Mr. Darly Zerfass  
December 9, 2004  
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Chiquito Canyon Road and Long Canyon Road (Future) at Henry Mayo Drive (SR-126)

North approach: One left-turn lane and one shared through/right-turn lane (convert shared left-turn/through lane to left-turn lane and exclusive right-turn lane to shared through/right-turn lane).

East approach: One left-turn lane, two through lanes, and an exclusive right-turn lane (add one left-turn lane and convert shared left-turn/through lane to through lane).

South approach (future): One left-turn lane, one through lane, and an exclusive right-turn lane (add one left-turn lane, convert shared left-turn/through/right-turn lane to through lane and add an exclusive right-turn lane).

**PHASE II**

Wolcott Way at Henry Mayo Drive (SR-126)

East approach: Two left-turn lanes, two through lanes, and an exclusive right-turn lane (add second left-turn lane, convert shared through/right-turn lane to through lane and add an exclusive right-turn lane).

South approach (future): One left-turn lane, one through lane, and two exclusive right-turn lanes (add second exclusive right-turn lane from Phase I).

West approach: One left-turn lane, two through lanes, and an exclusive right-turn lane (convert through/right-turn to through lane and add an exclusive right-turn lane).

Modify traffic signals to the satisfaction of Public Works.

**PHASE III**

Golden State (I-5) Freeway Southbound Ramps at Henry Mayo Drive (SR-26)

East approach: Three through lanes and a free right-turn lane (add third through lane).

Modify traffic signals to the satisfaction of Public Works.

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December 9, 2004  
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Wolcott Way at Henry Mayo Drive (SR-126)

West approach: One left-turn lane, three through lanes, and an exclusive right-turn lane (add third through lane).

Modify traffic signals to the satisfaction of Public Works.

Chiquito Canyon Road and Long Canyon Road (Future) at Henry Mayo Drive (SR-126)

North approach: One left-turn lane, one through lane, and an exclusive right-turn lane (convert shared through/right-turn lane to through lane and add an exclusive right-turn lane).

East approach: Two left-turn lanes, two through lanes, and an exclusive right-turn lane (add second left-turn lane).

South approach (future): One left-turn lane, two through lanes, and two exclusive right-turn lanes (add second through lane and second exclusive right-turn lane).

Modify traffic signals to the satisfaction of Public Works.

- The cumulative traffic generated by the project and other related projects will significantly impact the following intersections. The project shall contribute its proportionate share of the cost for the following mitigation measures. Detailed striping and/or signal modification plans must be prepared to determine the feasibility of the recommended mitigation measures and cost estimate of each mitigation measure.

Golden State (I-5) Freeway Southbound Ramps at Henry Mayo Drive (SR-126)

North approach: Two left-turn lanes, one shared left-turn/through lane, and an exclusive right-turn lane (add one shared left/right-turn lane).

East approach: Four through lanes and one free right-turn lane (add fourth through lane).

Mr. Darly Zerfass  
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West approach: Four through lanes and one free right-turn lane (add third and fourth through lanes).

Modify traffic signals to the satisfaction of Public Works.

The project's total pro-rata share is 38.3 percent. The project may elect to pay by phase as each phase gets recorded: Phase I = 8.3 percent, Phase II = 8.1 percent and Phase III = 21.9 percent.

Golden State (I-5) Freeway Northbound Ramps at Henry Mayo Drive (SR-126)

East approach: Three through lanes and one free right-turn lane (add third through lane).

South approach: Three left-turn lanes and an exclusive right-turn lane (add third left-turn lane).

West approach: Four through lanes and one free right-turn lane (add third and fourth through lanes).

Modify traffic signals to the satisfaction of Public Works.

The project's total pro-rata share is 20.8 percent. The project may elect to pay by phase as each phase gets recorded: Phase I = 4.7 percent, Phase II = 4.0 percent, and Phase III = 12.1 percent.

Wolcott Way at Henry Mayo Drive (SR-126)

North approach: Two left-turn lanes, one through lane, and an exclusive right-turn lane (add second left-turn lane).

East approach: Two left-turn lanes, three through lanes, and an exclusive right-turn lane (add third through lane).

West approach: Two left-turn lanes, three through lanes, and an exclusive right-turn lane (add second left-turn lane).

Modify traffic signals to the satisfaction of Public Works.

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The project's total pro-rata share is 62.1 percent. The project may elect to pay by phase as each phase gets recorded: Phase I = 12.2 percent, Phase II = 19.3 percent, and Phase III = 30.6 percent.

Commerce Center Drive at Henry Mayo Drive (SR-126) Interchange

Pay the project's total pro-rata share for the construction of interchange of 33.8 percent. The project may elect to pay by phase as each phase gets recorded: Phase I = 6.6 percent, Phase II = 9.1 percent, and Phase III = 18.1 percent.

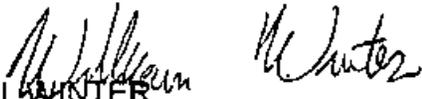
- The developer shall coordinate with and notify the Castaic Union School District (CUSD) that traffic circulation plan and the drop-off/pick-up procedures shall be prepared and submitted to Traffic and Lighting Division for review and approval. We recommend a mechanism for enforcement and levying of noncompliance penalties be included in the plan. The CUSD shall prepare informational packets containing the approved drop-off/pick-up procedures and provide to the parents/guardians of students of the school. The recordation of the phase containing Lot 345 where the school is proposed shall be withheld until the student drop-off/pick-up procedures, the informational packets or brochures, and the revised school site plan have been received and approved by Public Works.
- A determination shall be made regarding whether the project has a significant impact on the adjacent I-5 Freeway. Caltrans shall be consulted to obtain their written concurrence with the California Environmental Quality Act level of significance determination. These written comments from Caltrans shall be submitted to Public Works for review and approval.

If you have any questions regarding the traffic analysis and mitigation measures, please contact Mr. Suen Fei Lau of our Land Development Review Section at (626) 300-4820; for questions regarding striping and signing plans, please contact Mr. Sam Richards of our Land Development Review Section at (626) 300-4842; for questions regarding parking restrictions and drop-off/pick-up procedures/program/plan, please contact Ms. Guifa Sheik of our Traffic Investigation Section at (626) 300-4712.

Mr. Daryl Zerfass  
December 9, 2004  
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Very truly yours,

DONALD L. WOLFE  
Interim Director of Public Works

  
WILLIAM J. WINTER  
Assistant Deputy Director  
Traffic and Lighting Division

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*see on*

cc: Castaic Union School District (Beverly W. Silsbee)  
Department of Regional Planning (Daryl Koutuik)

bc: Building and Safety  
Land Development (Wittler)  
Traffic and Lighting (Richards, Sheik)

The subdivision shall conform to the design standards and policies of Public Works, in particular, but not limited to the following items:

1. The subdivider shall install and dedicate main line sewers and serve each building/lot with a separate house lateral or have approved and bonded sewer plans on file with Public Works.
2. The outlet for the proposed sewer system for any unit map must be accepted for public use prior to recordation, otherwise the unit map in question must have approved and bonded sewer plans for the outlet system extending downstream to public sewer on file with Public Works.
3. The tentative map must conform with the approved master sewer area study PC 11812as (currently in plancheck with Public Works). If the system appurtenances and maintenance responsibilities shown on the tentative map do not match those detailed in the approved study, a revised map is required to the satisfaction of Public Works.
4. Prior to recordation of the first unit map a new sanitation district must be formed to operate and maintain all regional sewer facilities associated with this project including but not limited to pump stations, forcemain and gravity trunk lines, and treatments plants. The subdivider shall provide the initial funding for the setup and operation of this district to the satisfaction of Public Works.
5. Prior to recordation of the first unit map the subdivider shall install and dedicate required regional sewer infrastructure or have approved and bonded sewer plans on file with the Newhall Ranch Sanitation District to the satisfaction of Public Works.
6. Prior to recordation of the first unit map the subdivider shall acquire all regulatory permits necessary for the construction of both local and regional sewer facilities.
7. The subdivider shall submit an area study to Public Works to determine if capacity is available in the proposed sewerage system servicing this land division. The approved sewer area study shall remain valid for two years after initial approval of the tentative map. After this period of time, an update of the area study shall be submitted by the applicant if determined to be warranted by Public Works.
8. If the proposed sewer system shown on the tentative map is found to have insufficient capacity, upgrade the proposed sewerage system (both on and off-site) to the satisfaction of Public Works.

9. Construct regional sewer pump stations to the satisfaction of the Newhall Ranch Sanitation District.
10. Easements are required, subject to review by Public Works to determine the final locations and requirements.
11. Provide any necessary off-site easements to construct the off-site sewer improvements to the satisfaction of the Newhall Ranch Sanitation District. It shall be the sole responsibility of the subdivider to acquire the necessary easements.

*HW*

Prepared by Nathan Howells

Phone (626) 458-4921

Date Rev. 06-19-2006

tr53108s-rev9(rev'd 06-19-06).doc

The subdivision shall conform to the design standards and policies of Public Works, in particular, but not limited to the following items:

1. A "Written Verification" and supporting documents from the water supplier to indicate the availability of a "Sufficient Water Supply" as required per Section 66473.7 of the Subdivision Map Act (SB 221) shall be provided to the satisfaction of the Department of Regional Planning and Public Works prior to filing any map.
2. A water system maintained by the water purveyor, with appurtenant facilities to serve all buildings/lots in the land division, must be provided. The system shall include fire hydrants of the type and location (both on-site and off-site) as determined by the Fire Department. The water mains shall be sized to accommodate the total domestic and fire flows.
3. There shall be filed with Public Works a statement from the water purveyor indicating that the water system will be operated by the purveyor, and that under normal conditions, the system will meet the requirements for the land division, and that water service will be provided to each building/lot.
4. Easements shall be granted to the County, appropriate agency or entity for the purpose of ingress, egress, construction and maintenance of all infrastructures constructed for this land division to the satisfaction of Public Works.
5. Submit landscape and irrigation plans for each open space in the land division, with landscape area greater than 2,500 square feet, in accordance with the Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance.
6. Depict all line of sight easements on the landscaping and grading plans.

*HW*

Prepared by Zach Hartjes

Phone (626) 458-4921

Date 12-27-2005



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

FIRE DEPARTMENT

5823 Rickenbacker Road
Commerce, California 90040

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S.TAE

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WATER SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS - UNINCORPORATED

Subdivision No. 53108 Tentative Map Date 7-November-05, Ex. A

Revised Report yes

- Checkboxes for fire flow requirements, hydrant installation, and fire department approval conditions.

Comments: Detached condo's. The required fire flow for, public fire hydrants at this location is 1500 gallons per minute at 20 psi for a duration of 2 hours, over and above maximum daily domestic demand. 2 Hydrant(s) flowing simultaneously may be used to achieve the required fire flow. Single family dwellings. The required fire flow for public fire hydrants at this location is 1250 gallons per minute at 20 psi for a duration of 2 hours, over and above maximum daily domestic demand. 1 Hydrant(s) flowing simultaneously may be used to achieve the required fire flow.

All hydrants shall be installed in conformance with Title 20, County of Los Angeles Government Code and County of Los Angeles Fire Code, or appropriate city regulations. This shall include minimum six-inch diameter mains. Arrangements to meet these requirements must be made with the water purveyor serving the area.

By Inspector Anna Masi Date 21-Mar-06

# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

## FIRE DEPARTMENT

5823 Rickenbacker Road  
Commerces, California 90040



### CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL FOR SUBDIVISION - UNINCORPORATED

Subdivision: 53108 Map Date 7-November-05, Ex. A

C.U.P. 00-196 Vicinity Salt Canyon

- FIRE DEPARTMENT HOLD** on the tentative map shall remain until verification from the Los Angeles County Fire Dept. Planning Section is received, stating adequacy of service. Contact (323) 881-2404.
- Access shall comply with Title 21 (County of Los Angeles Subdivision Code) and Section 902 of the Fire Code, which requires all weather access. All weather access may require paving.
- Fire Department access shall be extended to within 150 feet distance of any exterior portion of all structures.
- Where driveways extend further than 150 feet and are of single access design, turnarounds suitable for fire protection equipment use shall be provided and shown on the final map. Turnarounds shall be designed, constructed and maintained to insure their integrity for Fire Department use. Where topography dictates, turnarounds shall be provided for driveways that extend over 150 feet in length.
- The private driveways shall be indicated on the final map as "Private Driveway and Firelane" with the widths clearly depicted. Driveways shall be maintained in accordance with the Fire Code.
- Vehicular access must be provided and maintained serviceable throughout construction to all required fire hydrants. All required fire hydrants shall be installed, tested and accepted prior to construction.
- This property is located within the area described by the Fire Department as "Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone" (formerly Fire Zone 4). A "Fuel Modification Plan" shall be submitted and approved prior to final map clearance. (Contact: Fuel Modification Unit, Fire Station #32, 605 North Angeleno Avenue, Azusa, CA 91702-2904, Phone (626) 969-5205 for details).
- Provide Fire Department or City approved street signs and building access numbers prior to occupancy.
- Additional fire protection systems shall be installed in lieu of suitable access and/or fire protection water.
- The final concept map, which has been submitted to this department for review, has fulfilled the conditions of approval recommended by this department for access only.
- These conditions must be secured by a C.U.P. and/or Covenant and Agreement approved by the County of Los Angeles Fire Department prior to final map clearance.
- The Fire Department has no additional requirements for this division of land.

Comments: See additional comment sheets.

By Inspector: Jana Masi Date 21-Mar-06

Land Development Unit – Fire Prevention Division -- (323) 890-4243, Fax (323) 890-9783



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
FIRE DEPARTMENT

5823 Rickenbacker Road  
Commerce, California 90040

LAND DEVELOPMENT UNIT REQUIREMENTS

ADDITIONAL PAGE

SUBDIVISION NO. **53108**

PAGE NO. **1**

- 1 Tentative map page 1  
A. A second means of vehicular access shall be provided to Highway 126 prior to the building permit issuance of the 150 unit.
- 2 Exhibit "A". All structures shall be places such that vehicular access is provided to within 150' of all exterior walls. Said access shall be verified during further design review and / or architectural plan review for building permit clearance.
- 3 Exhibit "A", sheet 4  
A. The retail / commercial associated with the Village Green access shall not exceed a maximum height of 35', as measured to the top of the roof structure.
- 4 Exhibit "A", sheet 9. The School and Park sites access shall be further reviewed for compliance at which time the final design plans are submitted for building permit clearances or C.U.P. review.

By Inspector: Janua Mass

Date: 21-Mar-06



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
"Creating Community Through People, Parks and Programs"

Russ Guiney, Director

December 28, 2005

Mr. Paul McCarthy  
Supervising Regional Planner  
Land Divisions/Research  
Department of Regional Planning  
320 West Temple Street, Room 1346  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Mr. McCarthy:

**RIVER VILLAGE - VESTING TENTATIVE TRACT MAP (VTTM) 53108  
CONDITIONS OF MAP APPROVAL  
Regional Planning Map dated November 7, 2005  
December 29, 2005 Subdivision Committee Meeting**

The Department's Conditions of Map Approval are listed below for the 1,444-residential unit River Village subdivision ("the project").

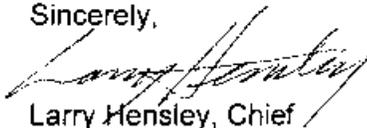
1. The basic Quimby park land obligation is **11.34** net acres of park land. This obligation will be fulfilled by the Developer conveying fee title to Lot 344 to the County as an improved "public park" (9.74-acre community park) in accordance with the conceptual plan and cost estimate enclosed in Developer's February 23, 2004, submittal to the Department; a 6.39-acre private park in Lot 337; recreational centers in lots 330 (0.82 net acres), 336 (3.44 net acres), and 340 (0.97 net acres), and a 3.10 net acre trail easement. If a shared recreational use arrangement for the public park is sought by Castaic School District (District), the recreational improvements on the shared use area (either park property or school district property) shall be visible from 'A' Street (River Village Drive) and the parking lot perpendicular to 'A' Street for the Department to approve the shared use area.
2. Developer may elect to receive Quimby credit for *Specific Plan* park improvements to the public park by giving the Department written notification thirty (30) days prior to Developer's Notice of Construction Commencement for the public park, in which case Developer shall pay prevailing wage to construct the park improvements and submit quarterly statements of costs for the Department's review and approval following the same submittal schedule specified for submitting building permit reports.
3. Developer shall receive a **24.46** Quimby land credit for the net acreage provided for the public park and private parks/recreational areas, and other recreational acreage permitted by the *Specific Plan* as shown in attached Specific Plan Table 5.4-2 ("Park and Recreation Improvement Summary") and sub-table for Local Park Acres Provided (Column D) prepared for Tract 53108. No Quimby credit will be given for improvements to private parks/recreational areas.

4. A carry forward of the **13.12**-acre surplus Quimby credit from River Village to any other approved subdivision within the Newhall Ranch *Specific Plan* Area shall not result in a reimbursement to developer from County's Quimby funds or a return by County to developer of any public park land previously conveyed to County for developer's Newhall Ranch *Specific Plan* Area Quimby obligation.
5. Developer shall complete construction of the public park and convey it to the County by the time building permits are obtained for two-thirds of the residential units within the River Village subdivision (i.e., when 963 residential units are permitted). Developer shall submit quarterly reports to the Department that identify for each unit map within River Village the number of residential units for which building permits were issued for the quarter and cumulative to date, and which relate the number of residential units to owner, building number, building type (e.g., single family home, condominium, apartment) and lot number. The quarterly reports are due on the first County business day of January, April, July, and October of each year building permits are issued for River Village. This reporting requirement applies for the actual number and type of dwelling units constructed and for the duration of build out permitted by the approved tentative map. Failure to provide the Department with a report will result in the Department requesting the Department of Public Works to withhold further issuance of building permits for River Village until the respective report is received.
6. Prior to the Department clearing the final map for River Village, Developer shall enter into a Multiple Agreement and post Faithful Performance and Labor & Materials bonds with the Department for Developer's *Specific Plan* park improvements in accordance with updated cost estimates for said improvements.
7. Prior to County accepting title to the public park, a Landscape Lighting and Assessment District (LLAD) shall be created for the mutual benefit of Developer and the County to maintain and operate the park. When LLAD maintenance areas are planned on private, fee simple lots, LLAD easements must be recorded prior to clearance of final (unit) maps by the Department.
8. Developer is responsible for developing the public park in accordance with the *Specific Plan* park improvement plans approved by the Department, at no cost to the County, using standard construction activities and responsible contractors licensed by the State of California to perform this type of work. Sole responsibility for completion of the park improvements, and payment of all costs incurred, lies with Developer.
9. Developer shall obtain, coordinate and pay for all studies, permits, fees and agency inspections required to design and build the park and shall provide one (1) copy of all studies, permits, inspection reports, and written approvals to the Department's representative. Design and construction of the parks shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations.
10. Developer shall provide County with certification that all public park playgrounds within River Village meet American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) and United States Consumer Product Safety Commission (USCPSC) standards.

11. Developer (or developer's design consultant) shall submit to the Department, public park plans and specifications for review and approval during the design development stage, fifty percent (50%), ninety percent (90%), and one hundred percent (100%) stages of completion of construction documents and, concurrent with the final grading plan submittal to the Department of Public Works, a grading plan (scale: 1 inch = 40 feet or as required by the Department) and specifications, including all grading, drainage, irrigation and planting improvements, utility locations and sizes required under County ordinances. The respective stage of each submittal shall be clearly labeled on the drawings. Plan submittals shall be made by giving the Department three (3) sets of drawings and a CD-ROM containing the drawings in AutoCad 2000 format. The Department shall have twenty-one (21) County business days from receipt of any construction document submittal to review and approve it; if the Department does not respond within said time period, the submittal shall be deemed approved by the Department. Any corrections or changes made by County during review of one stage shall be incorporated into a revision of the current drawings and specifications and resubmitted for County's approval of said stage prior to permission by County for Developer to proceed with the next stage.
12. Developer shall provide the Department with written Notice of Construction Commencement for the park site. The Construction Phase is defined as the period of time from said notice to the date the Department issues its Notice of Acceptance of Completed Park Improvements, inclusive of the 90-day plant establishment period.
13. Developer shall designate and identify a construction manager who will oversee construction of the public park. Developer's construction manager shall communicate by providing written documentation via facsimile or mail to County's representative and abide by County's requirements and direction to ensure acceptable park completion. The construction manager shall provide County with reasonable access to the public park sites and the park improvements for inspection purposes and at a minimum, shall initiate and coordinate the following inspections and approvals during the course of construction with not less than two County business days advanced notice of any request for inspection or approval: (1) contractor orientation/pre-construction meeting; (2) construction staking and layout; (3) progress/installation inspections to be scheduled on a weekly basis or as required to insure conformance with construction documents; (4) any and all required permit inspections; (5) irrigation mainline and equipment layout; (6) irrigation pressure test; (7) irrigation coverage test; (8) weed abatement after abatement cycle, to review degree of kill; (9) plant material approval; (10) plant material/Hydroseed/pre-maintenance inspection; (11) substantial completion and commencement of maintenance period; (12) final walk through and acceptance. Continued work without inspection and approval shall make Developer and its subcontractors solely responsible for any and all expenses incurred for required changes or modifications. County reserves the right to reject all work not approved in conformance with this condition.
14. During the construction period, the construction manager shall maintain a critical path method (CPM) schedule that shall be updated on a biweekly basis and available to the County for review.

15. Upon completing public park construction, Developer shall notify the Department in writing by submitting a Notice of Completion of Park Construction. Within thirty (30) days after receipt of said notice, County shall inspect the park and reasonably determine whether or not the park improvements have been constructed in accordance with the construction documents, and to a level of quality and workmanship for the Department to issue its Notice of Acceptance of Completed Park Improvements. If park construction is unacceptable, within fifteen (15) County business days after inspection, County shall provide Developer with a list of items that need to be corrected, after receipt of said list, in order for Department to issue its Notice of Acceptance of Completed Park Improvements, or issuance of said notice will be delayed until the items on the list are corrected.
16. Developer shall provide Department with two (2) sets of record drawings, maintenance manuals, and irrigation controller charts upon Department's Notice of Acceptance of Completed Park Improvements. These documents shall also be submitted on CD-ROM with the drawings in AutoCad 2000 format.
17. Developer shall convey the public park by recordable grant deed showing the fee vested with the County of Los Angeles, and free of all encumbrances except those that do not interfere with the use of the property for park or recreational purposes. Developer's designated title company shall provide the County with an ALTA title policy and shall record the park deed simultaneously to County's execution of a Certificate of Acceptance, and shall deliver the recorded deed to the Chief Administrative Office Real Estate Division, Property Management Section, 222 South Hill Street, Third Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90012.
18. Any major change proposed by the Developer to the public park location, shape, or size (not more than 2 acres variance) from the approved tentative tract or parcel map, shall be deemed a revision of the tentative tract or parcel map and shall require the filing of an amended or a revised map, as described in subsection B of Section 21.62.030 of the Los Angeles County Code.

Sincerely,



Larry Hensley, Chief  
Planning Division

LH:JB (Newhall Ranch: 53108 River Village\_12.28.05 rpd)

Attachments (2)

- c: Keith Herren, Newhall Land  
Carlos Brea, CAO Real Estate Division  
Parks and Recreation (Gil Lopez, Larry Hensley, Kathleen Ritner, Les Seidman)



**LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**



**PARK OBLIGATION REPORT**

Tentative Map #	53108	DRP Map Date: 11/07/2005	SCM Date: / /	Report Date: 12/29/2005
Park Planning Area #	35A	NEWHALL / VALENCIA		Map Type: REV. (REV RECD)

Total Units  = Proposed Units  + Exempt Units

Sections 21.24.340, 21.24.350, 21.28.120, 21.28.130, and 21.28.140, the County of Los Angeles Code, Title 21, Subdivision Ordinance provide that the County will determine whether the development's park obligation is to be met by:

- 1) the dedication of land for public or private park purpose or,
- 2) the payment of in-lieu fees or,
- 3) the provision of amenities or any combination of the above.

The specific determination of how the park obligation will be satisfied will be based on the conditions of approval by the advisory agency as recommended by the Department of Parks and Recreation.

Park land obligation in acres or in-lieu fees:

ACRES:	11.34
IN-LIEU FEES:	\$2,977,215

Conditions of the map approval:

See attached December 29, 2005 letter to Paul McCarthy, Supervising Regional Planner, Land Division Research, Department of Regional Planning for Conditions of Tentative Map Approval.

The park obligation for this development will be met by:

The dedication of 9.74 acres for public park purposes.  
Provide 14.72 acres for private park purposes.

Trails:

See also attached Trail Report. CASTAIC CREEK AND SANTA CLARA RIVER TRAILS.

See Conditions of the map approval above.

Contact Patrocenia T. Sobrepeña, Departmental Facilities Planner I, Department of Parks and Recreation, 510 South Vermont Avenue, Los Angeles, California, 90020 at (213) 351-5120 for further information or an appointment to make an in-lieu fee payment.

For information on Hiking and Equestrian Trail requirements contact Trail Coordinator at (213) 351-5135.

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
James Barber, Advanced Planning Section Head



**LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**



**PARK OBLIGATION WORKSHEET**

Tentative Map #	<b>53108</b>	DRP Map Date:	<b>11/07/2005</b>	SMC Date:	<b>/ /</b>	Report Date:	<b>12/29/2005</b>
Park Planning Area #	<b>35A</b>		<b>NEWHALL / VALENCIA</b>			Map Type:	<b>REV. (REV RECD)</b>

The formula for calculating the acreage obligation and or in-lieu fee is as follows:

**(P)people x (0.003) Goal x (U)nits = (X) acres obligation**

**(X) acres obligation x RLV/Acre = In-Lieu Base Fee**

- Where:
- P =** Estimate of number of People per dwelling unit according to the type of dwelling unit as determined by the 2000 U.S. Census\*. Assume \* people for detached single-family residences; Assume \* people for attached single-family (townhouse) residences, two-family residences, and apartment houses containing fewer than five dwelling units; Assume \* people for apartment houses containing five or more dwelling units; Assume \* people for mobile homes.
  - Goal =** The subdivision ordinance allows for the goal of 3.0 acres of park land for each 1,000 people generated by the development. This goal is calculated as "0.0030" in the formula.
  - U =** Total approved number of Dwelling Units.
  - X =** Local park space obligation expressed in terms of acres.
  - RLV/Acre =** Representative Land Value per Acre by Park Planning Area.

Total Units **1,444** = Proposed Units **1,444** + Exempt Units **0**

	People*	Goal 3.0 Acres / 1000 People	Number of Units	Acre Obligation
Detached S.F. Units	3.23	0.0030	590	5.72
M.F. < 5 Units	2.29	0.0030	403	2.77
M.F. >= 5 Units	2.11	0.0030	451	2.85
Mobile Units	1.74	0.0030	0	0.00
Exempt Units			0	
<b>Total Acre Obligation =</b>				<b>11.34</b>

Park Planning Area = **35A NEWHALL / VALENCIA**

Goal	Acre Obligation	RLV / Acre	In-Lieu Base Fee
@(0.0030)	11.34	\$262,541	<b>\$2,977,215</b>

Lot #	Provided Space	Provided Acres	Credit (%)	Acre Credit	Land
	Trails	3.10	100.00%	3.10	Private
330	Private Rec. Center	0.82	100.00%	0.82	Private
336	Private Rec. Center	3.44	100.00%	3.44	Private
337	Private Park	6.39	100.00%	6.39	Private
340	Private Rec. Center	0.97	100.00%	0.97	Private
344	Park Area	9.74	100.00%	9.74	Public
<b>Total Provided Acre Credit:</b>				<b>24.46</b>	

Acre Obligation	Public Land Crdt.	Priv. Land Crdt.	Net Obligation	RLV / Acre	In-Lieu Fee Due
11.34	9.74	14.72	<b>(13.12)</b>	\$262,541	<b>(3,444,538)</b>

**DEVELOPMENT PLAN**  
**2.8 RECREATION AND OPEN AREA**

**TABLE 2.8-1**

**PRELIMINARY PARK PROGRAM**  
**Newhall Ranch Specific Plan**

**ESTIMATED QIMBY REQUIREMENTS**

Description/Category	Units		Avg. Hsehd Size		Assessment Factor		Obligation in Acres
Detached	9,305	x	3.17	x	0.003	=	88
Attached	11,580	x	2.38	x	0.003	=	83
Second Units	423	x	2	x	0.003	=	3
Total:	21,308						174

**ESTIMATED QIMBY CREDITS**

Description/Category	Land			Improvements			Total Acreage
	Acres	Credit %	Qimby Acres	Imp Cost PSF	Improv. Costs	Acre Equiv.	
<b>Parks:</b>							
Neighborhood Parks <sup>(1)</sup>	50	100%	50	2.50	5,445,000	45	95
Community Parks <sup>(1)</sup>							
Active Area	58	100%	58	2.50	6,316,200	52	110
Passive Area	123	50%	62				62
Lake <sup>(1)</sup>	15	100%	15				15
Subtotal, Parks <sup>(1),(2)</sup>	246		185		11,761,200	97	282
<b>Trails:</b>							
Regional River Trail	16	100%	16				16
Community Trails	39	100%	39	2.50	4,247,100	35	74
Local Trails (in Open Area)	13	(acreage included below)		1.00	566,280	5	5
Unimproved Trails (in High Country)	13	(acreage included below)		1.00	561,792	5	5
Subtotal, Trails	81		55		5,375,172	45	100
<b>Major Open Areas:</b>							
Golf Course	180	0%	0			0	0
High Country SMA <sup>(3)</sup>	4,185	50%	2,093			0	2,093
River Corridor SMA <sup>(3)</sup>	975	10%	98			0	98
Community Open Area <sup>(3)</sup> (Excl. Oak Valley Community Park)	869	10%	87			0	87
Subtotal, Major Open Areas	6,209		2,278			0	2,278
<b>TOTAL CREDIT PROVIDED</b>							<b>2,660</b>
Qimby Requirements							174
Excess							2,486

<sup>(1)</sup> County ordinance allows credit for improvements, land or a combination of both.

<sup>(2)</sup> Parks such as private recreation centers (including improvements) within neighborhoods are also eligible for credit but cannot be quantified at this level of planning.

<sup>(3)</sup> Credit for the River Corridor SMA and Open Area is calculated using a worst-case factor of 10%, which is lowest percent specified in the County ordinance. The County ordinance provides for a greater level of credit pending on slope ranging from a low of 10% to a high of 100%. In order to receive credit for land which has slope greater than 3%, the Director of Parks and Recreation must find that special circumstances exist that would make the acceptance of such land in the public interest. The Director may also give more credit than specified in the ordinance if it is found that a site contains exceptional visual, biotic or other natural resources. Such a case is the High Country SMA, which is exceptionally rich in both natural resources and recreational opportunities, and has been calculated at 50% credit.

**TABLE 5.4-2  
PARK AND RECREATION IMPROVEMENTS SUMMARY**

RIVERWOOD	DEDICATION REQUIREMENTS			LOCAL PARK IMPROVEMENTS			Surplus (Deficit) (F - C)
	A Total Units	B Population Factor	C Local Park Requirement (A x B x .003)	D Local Park Acres Provided	E Local Park Improvements (\$)	F Total Acres Provided D+(E/126,000)	
1. Tract No. 53108 (River Village)							
A. Single-Family Detached Residences	590	3.23	5.72				N/A
B. Single-Family Attached Residences and Multi-Family with less than 5 Units/Building	403	2.29	2.77				N/A
C. Multi-Family with 5 or more Units/Building	451	2.11	2.85				N/A
<b>Tract No. 53108 Total</b>	<b>1,444</b>		<b>11.34</b>	<b>24.46</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>24.46</b>	<b>13.12</b>
<b>VILLAGE TOTAL</b>	<b>1,444</b>		<b>11.34</b>	<b>24.46</b>	<b>\$ 0.00</b>	<b>24.46</b>	<b>13.12</b>

TRACT NO. 53108 (RIVER VILLAGE) COLUMNS "D" AND "E" DETAIL							
Lot No.	Unit Map	Phase No.	Category	Local Park Acres	Percent Credit	Local Park Acres Provided	Local Park Improvements (\$)
337			Private Park	6.39	100%	6.39	
344			Community Park	9.74	100%	9.74	
336			River Recreational Area	3.44	100%	3.44	
340, 330			Private Recreational Area	1.79	100%	1.79	
			West Recreation Center	0.97		0.97	
			East Recreation Center	0.82		0.82	
310-317, 392-402			River Trail	3.10	100%	3.10	
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>24.46</b>		<b>24.46</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>



THOMAS L. GARTHWAITE, M.D.  
DIRECTOR and CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER

FRED LEAF  
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

JONATHAN E. FIELDING, M.D., M.P.H.  
Director of Public Health and Health Officer

**Environmental Health**  
ARTURO AGUIRRE, Director

**Bureau of Environmental Protection**  
Mountain & Rural/Water, Sewage & Subdivision Program  
5050 Commerce Drive, Baldwin Park, CA 91706-1423  
TEL (626)430-5380 · FAX (626)813-3016  
[www.lapublichealth.org/eh/progs/envirp.htm](http://www.lapublichealth.org/eh/progs/envirp.htm)

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Gloria Molina  
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Fifth District

December 28, 2005

RFS No. 05-0031528

Tract Map No: 53108

Vicinity: Del Valle

Tentative Tract Map Date: November 7, 2005 (9<sup>th</sup> Revision)

The Los Angeles County Department of Health Services' conditions of approval for **Vesting Tentative Tract Map 53108** are unchanged by the submission of the revised map. The following conditions still apply and are in force:

1. Potable water will be supplied by the **Valencia Water Company**, a public water system, which guarantees water connection and service to all lots.
2. Sewage disposal will be provided through the public sewer and wastewater treatment facilities of the **Newhall Ranch Water Treatment Plant** as proposed.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at (626) 430-5380.

Respectfully,

Becky Valenti, E.H.S. IV  
Mountain and Rural/Water, Sewage, and Subdivision Program

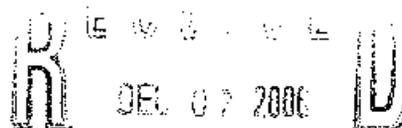


# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

## FIRE DEPARTMENT

1320 NORTH EASTERN AVENUE  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90063-3294  
(323) 890-4330

P. MICHAEL FREEMAN  
FIRE CHIEF  
FORESTER & FIRE WARDEN



December 4, 2006

Daniel Fierros, Regional Planning Assistant  
Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning  
Impact Analysis Section  
320 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. Fierros:

### **OAK TREE PERMIT #00-196, LANDMARK VILLAGE (RIVER VILLAGE) PROJECT, TM #53108**

We have reviewed the "Request for Oak Tree Permit #00-196. The project is located south of State Route 126 near the intersection of Chiquito Canyon Rd., north of the Santa Clara River and west of Interstate 5. The Oak Tree Report is accurate and complete as to the location, size, condition and species of the Oak trees on site. The term "Oak Tree Report" refers to the document on file by Impact Sciences the consulting arborist, dated June, 2006.

**We recommend the following as conditions of approval:**

#### **OAK TREE PERMIT REQUIREMENTS:**

1. This grant shall not be effective until the permittee and the owner of the property involved (if other than the permittee), have filed at the office of the Department of Regional Planning their affidavit stating that they are aware of and agree to accept all conditions of this grant.

Unless otherwise apparent from the context, the term "permittee" shall include the applicant and any other person, corporation or other entity making use of this grant.

#### SERVING THE UNINCORPORATED AREAS OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY AND THE CITIES OF:

AGOURA HILLS	BRADBURY	CUDAHY	HAWTHORNE	LA MIRADA	MALIBU	POMONA	SIGNAL HILL
ARTESIA	CALABASAS	DIAMOND BAR	HIDDEN HILLS	LA PUENTE	MAYWOOD	RANCHO PALOS VERDES	SOUTH EL MONTE
AZUSA	CARSON	DUARTE	HUNTINGTON PARK	LAKEWOOD	NORWALK	ROLLING HILLS	SOUTH GATE
BALDWIN PARK	CERRITOS	EL MONTE	INDUSTRY	LANCASTER	PALMDALE	ROLLING HILLS ESTATES	TEMPLE CITY
BELL	CLAREMONT	GARDENA	INGLEWOOD	LAWNDALE	PALOS VERDES ESTATES	ROSEMEAD	WALNUT
BELL GARDENS	COMMERCE	GLENDORA	IRWINDALE	LOMITA	PARAMOUNT	SAN DIMAS	WEST HOLLYWOOD
BELLFLOWER	COVINA	HAWAIIAN GARDENS	LA CANADA FLINTRIDGE	LYNWOOD	PICO RIVERA	SANTA CLARITA	WESTLAKE VILLAG
			LA HABRA				WHITTIER

2. The permittee shall, prior to commencement of the use authorized by this grant, deposit with the County of Los Angeles Fire Department a sum of \$5000. Such fees shall be used to compensate the County Forester to cover expenses incurred while inspecting the project to determine the permittee's compliance with the conditions of approval.

The above fees provide for one (1) pre-construction meeting required to determine fencing placement in order to secure the protected zone of all remaining Oak trees, inspection of temporary fencing prior to the commencement of any construction and a subsequent five (5) year monitoring period requiring inspections until the conditions of approval have been met.

The Director of Regional Planning and the County Forester shall retain the right to make regular and unannounced site inspections.

3. Before commencing work authorized or required by this grant, the consulting arborist shall submit a letter to the Director of Regional Planning and the County of Los Angeles Fire Department, Forestry Division stating that he or she has been retained by the permittee to perform or supervise the work, and that he or she agrees to report to the Director of Regional Planning and the County Forester any failure to fully comply with the conditions of the grant.

The arborist shall submit at the end of each year an annual monitoring report. The report shall include a diagram showing the exact number and locations of all mitigation trees planted and describe their health, planting dates, any mortality and mitigation timeframe relating to permit compliance.

4. The permittee shall arrange for the consulting arborist or a similarly qualified person to maintain all remaining Oak trees on the subject property that are within the zone of impact as determined by the County Forester for the life of the Oak Tree Permit or the Conditional Use Permit.
5. The permittee shall install temporary chain-link fencing, not less than four (4) feet in height, to secure the protected zone of all remaining Oak trees on site to be determined prior to any grading. The fencing shall be determined and installed prior to grading or tree removal, and shall not be removed without approval of the County Forester. The term "protected zone" refers to the area extending five (5) feet beyond the dripline of the Oak tree (before pruning), or fifteen (15) feet from the trunk, whichever is greater.

6. Copies of the Oak Tree Report, Oak tree map, mitigation planting plan and conditions of approval shall be kept on the project site and available for review. All individuals associated with the project as it relates to the Oak resource shall be familiar with the Oak Tree Report, Oak tree map, mitigation planting plan and conditions of approval.

**PERMITTED OAK TREE REMOVAL AND ENCROACHMENT:**

7. This grant allows the removal of a total of sixty-seven (67) Oak trees. Sixty-three (63) trees are of the Oak genus (*Quercus agrifolia*) numbered : 8, 9, 10, 51, 60, 61, 63, 64, **83\***, 84, 248, 249, 250, 335, 336, 337, **338\***, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, **344\***, 345, 346, 347, 348, **349\***, 350, 351, **352\***, 354, 355, 356, **357\***, 396, 397, 398, 400, 401, **492\***, 594, 1588, 1589, 1590, 1592, 1594, 1596, 1598, 3073, **4003\***, 4016, 4017, 4018, 4019, 4022, 4025, 4026, 4027, 4028, 4055, 4056, 4057. Four (4) trees are of the of the genus (*Quercus lobata*) numbered **87\***, 1587, **1597\***, and 1591 on the applicants site plan and Oak tree report. A total of ten (10) of these trees to be removed are identified as **Heritage\*** (in bold with an asterisk\*), having a diameter greater than 36 inches.

This grant allows encroachment within the protected zone of fourteen (14) trees of the Oak genus identified as Tree Numbers: 92, 93, 98, 99, 100, 439, 448, **488\***, **489\***, 498, **503\***, 592, 1605, 4007 on the applicant's site plan map and Oak Tree Report. Three (3) of these trees are identified as **Heritage\***. Trenching, excavation, or clearance of vegetation within the protected zone of an Oak tree shall be accomplished by the use of hand tools or small hand-held power tools. Any major roots encountered shall be conserved to the extent possible and treated as recommended by the consulting arborist.

8. In addition to the work expressly allowed by this permit, remedial pruning intended to ensure the continued health of a protected Oak tree or to improve its appearance or structure may be performed. Such pruning shall include the removal of deadwood and stubs and medium pruning of branches two (2) inches in diameter or less in accordance with the guidelines published by the National Arborist Association. Copies of these guidelines are available from the County of Los Angeles Fire Department, Forestry Division. In no case shall more than 20% of the tree canopy of any one (1) tree be removed.
9. Except as otherwise expressly authorized by this grant, the remaining Oak trees shall be maintained in accordance with the principles set forth in the publication, "Oak Trees: Care and Maintenance", prepared by the County of Los Angeles Fire Department, Forestry Division. A copy of the publication is enclosed with these conditions.

**MITIGATION TREES:**

10. The permittee shall provide mitigation trees of the Oak genus at a rate of two to one (2:1) trees for each tree removed and at a rate of ten to one (10:1) for each Heritage tree removed for a total of 214 mitigation trees.
11. Each mitigation tree shall be at least a 15-gallon specimen in size and measure one (1) inch or more in diameter one (1) foot above the base. Free form trees with multiple stems are permissible; the combined diameter of the two (2) largest stems of such trees shall measure a minimum of one (1) inch in diameter one (1) foot above the base.
12. Mitigation trees shall be at a ratio consistent with the species of Oaks removed for a total of one hundred ninety (190) *Quercus agrifolia* and twenty four (24) *Quercus lobata* of indigenous varieties grown from a local seed source.
13. Mitigation trees shall be planted within one (1) year of the permitted Oak tree removals. Additional mitigation trees shall be planted within one (1) year of the death of any tree, which results from its permitted encroachment. Mitigation trees shall be planted either on site or at an off-site location approved by the County Forester. Alternatively, a contribution to the County of Los Angeles Oak Forest Special Fund may be made in the amount equivalent to the Oak resource loss. The contribution shall be calculated by the consulting arborist and approved by the County Forester according to the most current edition of the International Society of Arboriculture's "Guide for Plant Appraisal."
14. The permittee shall properly maintain each mitigation tree and shall replace any tree failing to survive due to a lack of proper care and maintenance with a tree meeting the specifications set forth above. The five-year maintenance period will begin upon receipt of a letter from the permittee or consulting arborist to the Director of Regional Planning and the County Forester indicating that the mitigation trees have been planted. The maintenance period of the trees failing to survive five (5) years will start anew with the new replacement trees. Subsequently, additional monitoring fees shall be required.
15. All mitigation Oak trees planted as a condition of this permit shall be protected in perpetuity by the Los Angeles County Oak Tree Ordinance once they have survived the required maintenance period.

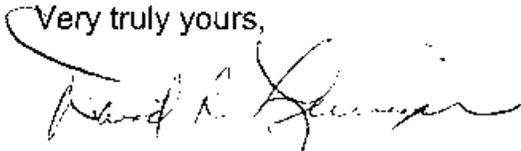
**NON-PERMITTED ACTIONS AND VIOLATIONS:**

16. Encroachment within the protected zone of any additional tree of the Oak genus on the project site is prohibited.
17. Should encroachment within the protected zone of any additional tree of the Oak genus on the project site not permitted by this grant result in its injury or death within two (2) years, the permittee shall be required to make a contribution to the Los Angeles County Oak Forest Special Fund in the amount equivalent to the Oak resource damage/loss. Said contribution shall be calculated by the consulting arborist and approved by the County Forester according to the most current edition of the International Society of Arboriculture's "Guide for Plant Appraisal."
18. No planting or irrigation system shall be installed within the dripline of any Oak tree that will be retained.
19. Utility trenches shall not be routed within the protected zone of an Oak tree unless the serving utility requires such locations.
20. Equipment, materials and vehicles shall not be stored, parked, or operated within the protected zone of any Oak tree. No temporary structures shall be placed within the protected zone of any Oak tree.
21. Violations of the conditions of this grant shall result in immediate work stoppage or in a notice of correction depending on the nature of the violation. A time frame within which deficiencies must be corrected will be indicated on the notice of correction.
22. Should any future inspection disclose that the subject property is being used in violation of any one of the conditions of this grant, the permittee shall be held financially responsible and shall reimburse the County of Los Angeles Fire Department, Forestry Division for all enforcement efforts necessary to bring the subject property into compliance.

Mr. Daniel Fierros  
December 4, 2006  
Page 6

If you have any additional questions, please contact this office at (323) 890-4330.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David R. Leininger". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and "L".

DAVID R. LEININGER, CHIEF, FORESTRY DIVISION  
PREVENTION BUREAU

DRL:es

Enclosure



# OAK TREES: Care and Maintenance

This Oak Tree Care and Maintenance Guide offers basic information and practical guidelines aimed at the preservation and continued health and survival of oak trees in the residential landscape.

Increasing pressure for development is changing the oak woodland of Los Angeles County. Heritage oaks which once survived in open rolling hills are now being preserved or replanted and incorporated into the community.

How do we protect these trees during the planning and development process, and ensure their survival once they are in the home garden?

### The Oak Tree

Oak Trees in the residential landscape often suffer decline and early death due to conditions that are easily preventable. Damage can often take years to become evident, and by the time the trees show obvious signs of disease it is usually too late to help.

Improper watering, especially during the hot summer months, and disturbance to critical root areas are most often the causes. This booklet will provide guidelines on where these critical areas lie and ways to avoid disturbing them, as well as information on long-term care and maintenance of both natural and planted oaks. Lists of additional resources for more information and demonstration areas to visit are also included.

## The Oak Tree Ordinance

The Los Angeles County Oak Tree Ordinance has been established to recognize oak trees as significant historical, aesthetic, and ecological resources. The goal of the ordinance is to create favorable conditions for the preservation and propagation of this unique and threatened plant heritage. By making this part of the development process, healthy oak trees will be preserved and maintained.

The Los Angeles County Oak Tree Ordinance applies to all unincorporated areas of the County. Individual cities may have their own ordinances, and their requirements may be different.

### Permit Requirements:

Under the Los Angeles County Ordinance, a person shall not cut, destroy, remove, relocate, inflict damage, or encroach into the *protected zone* (see text) of any ordinance sized tree of the oak tree genus without first obtaining a permit.

Damage includes but is not limited to :

- Burning
- Application of toxic substances
- Pruning or cutting
- Trenching
- Excavating
- Paving
- Operation of machinery or equipment
- Changing the natural grade

Chapter 22.56.2050: Oak Tree Permit Regulations, Los Angeles County, Adopted: August 20, 1982. Amended: September 13, 1988.

For more information about the County Oak Tree Ordinance, visit the Forestry Division's website at:

[http://lacofd.org/Forestry\\_folder/otordin.htm](http://lacofd.org/Forestry_folder/otordin.htm)

Or contact:

Department of Regional Planning  
320 W. Temple Street, 13th floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90012-3284  
(213) 974-6411  
TDD: (213) 617-2292  
<http://planning.co.la.ca.us>

## Types of oaks commonly found in Los Angeles County:

Many kinds of oak trees are native to Los Angeles County. A few of the more common ones are shown below, but *all* oak trees are covered by the Oak Tree Ordinance.

Older oaks which have thrived under the natural rainfall patterns of dry summers and wet winters often can't handle the extra water of a garden setting. These trees must be treated with special care if they are to survive.

Those oaks that have been planted into the landscape or sprouted naturally tend to be more tolerant of watered landscapes. These vigorous young trees may grow 1½ to 4 feet a year in height under good conditions. Once established these trees would benefit from the same special care outlined in this guide.



### Valley Oak

QUERCUS LOBATA

LARGE DECIDUOUS TREE 60'-75' HIGH, BROADLY SPREADING 50'-80' WIDE.

LEAVES: DEEP GREEN, 3"-4" LONG; PAPER-LIKE TEXTURE WITH DEEP ROUNDED LOBES ON THE LEAF EDGE.

TENDS TO FAVOR VALLEY BOTTOMS; FOR THIS REASON THE VALLEY OAK HAS DISAPPEARED FROM THE LANDSCAPE MORE RAPIDLY, IMPACTED SEVERELY BY AGRICULTURE AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT.



### Coast Live Oak

QUERCUS AGRIFOLIA

LARGE EVERGREEN TREE WITH A BROAD, ROUND SHAPE AND LARGE LIMBS. 50'-70' HIGH, 35'-80' WIDE.

LEAVES: GLOSSY GREEN, 1"-3" LONG; SPINY, ROUNDED, AND HOLLY-LIKE BUT DISTINCTLY CUPPED OR CURLED UNDER AT THE EDGES.



### Interior Live Oak

QUERCUS WIGLIZENII

EVERGREEN TREE 30'-75' HIGH OR A SHRUB 8'-10' HIGH IN CHAPARRAL AREAS. HAS A FULL, DENSE ROUNDED SHAPE, NOT BROAD WITH LARGE LIMBS LIKE A COAST LIVE OAK. THEY TEND TO GROW IN CLUMPS RATHER THAN AS A SINGLE TREE.

LEAVES: DARK GREEN, 1"-4" LONG. EDGES EITHER SMOOTH OR SPINY, BUT ALWAYS FLAT - NOT CURLED UNDER.

### OTHER COMMON OAKS:

CALIFORNIA BLACK OAK: QUERCUS KELLOGGII

CANYON LIVE OAK: QUERCUS CHRYSOLEPIS

ENGELMANN OAK: QUERCUS ENGELMANNII

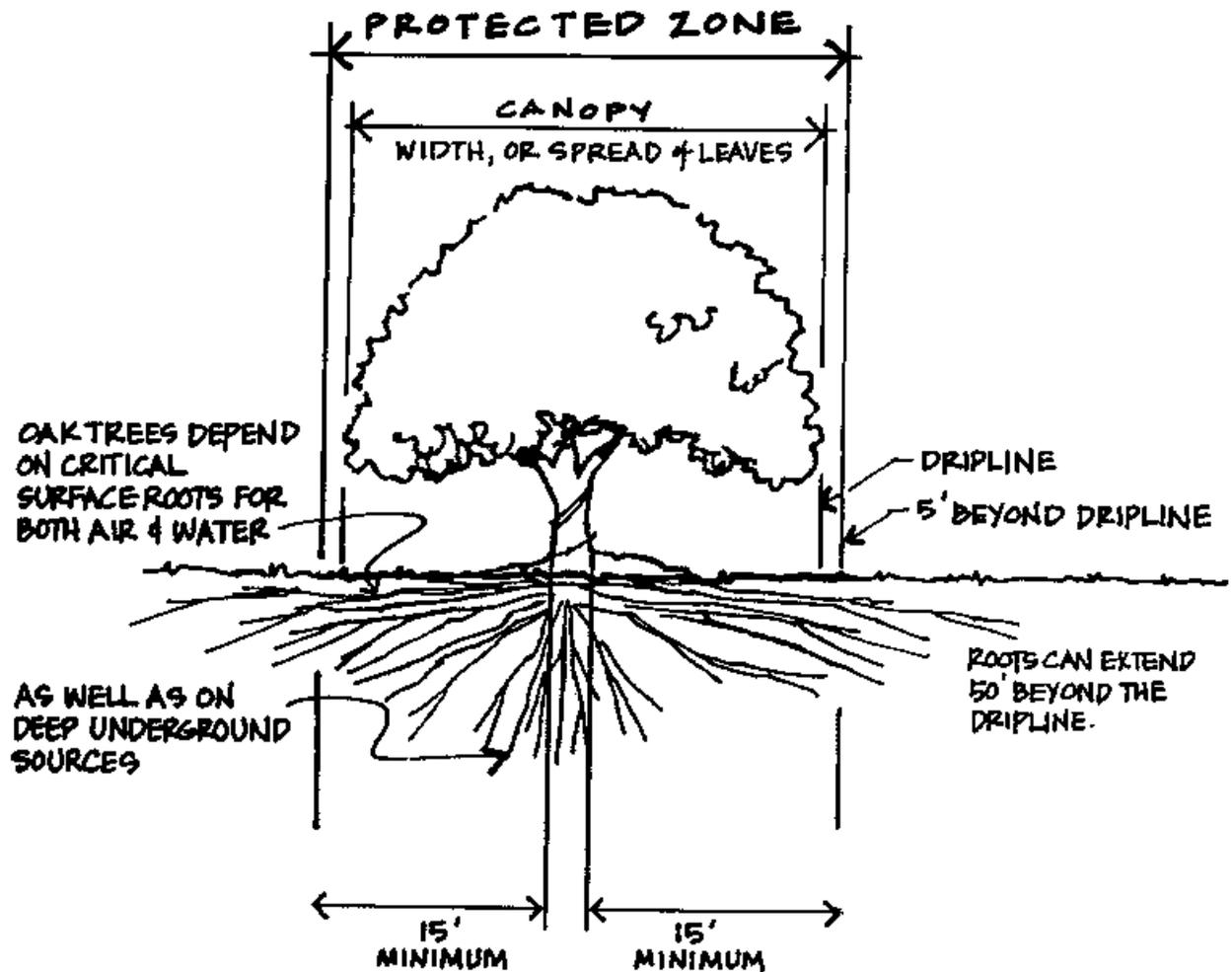
# THE PROTECTED ZONE

The *protected zone* defines the area most critical to the health and continued survival of an oak tree. Oaks are easily damaged and very sensitive to disturbances that occur to the tree or in the surrounding environment.

The root system is extensive but surprisingly shallow, sometimes radiating out as much as 50 feet beyond the spread of the tree leaves, or canopy. The ground area at the outside edge of the canopy, referred to as the *dripline*, is especially important: the tree obtains most of its surface water and nutrients here, and conducts an important exchange of air and other gases.

The protected zone is defined in the Oak Tree Ordinance as follows:

“The Protected Zone shall mean that area within the dripline of an oak tree and extending there from to a point at least 5 feet outside the dripline or 15 feet from the trunk, whichever distance is greater.”



# CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY WITHIN THE PROTECTED ZONE

## Changes in Grade

Any change in the level of soil around an oak tree can have a negative impact. The most critical area lies within 6' to 10' of the trunk: no soil should be added or scraped away. Water should drain away from this area and not be allowed to pond so that soil remains wet at the base.

Retaining walls designed to hold back soil above or below an existing tree should be avoided if at all possible, especially within the protected zone. These types of structures cause critical areas at the dripline to be buried, or require that major roots be severed. Water trapped at the base of the tree could lead to root rot or other impacts, and to the decline and premature death of a highly valued landscape tree.

Construction activities outside the protected zone can have damaging impacts on existing trees. Underground water sources can be cut off due to falling water tables, or drainage may be disrupted.

## Trenching

Digging of trenches in the root zone should be avoided. Roots may be cut or severely damaged, and the tree can be killed.

If trenches must be placed within the protected zone, utilities can be placed in a conduit, which has been bored through the soil, reducing damage to the roots. Insist that as many utilities as allowed be placed in a single trench, instead of the common practice of digging a separate trench for each individual line.

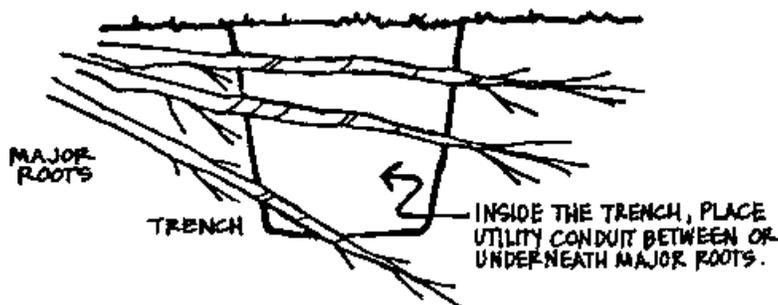
Trenching can also be accomplished using hand tools or small hand held power equipment to avoid cutting roots. Any roots exposed during this work should be covered with wet burlap and kept moist until the soil can be replaced.

## Soil Compaction and Paving

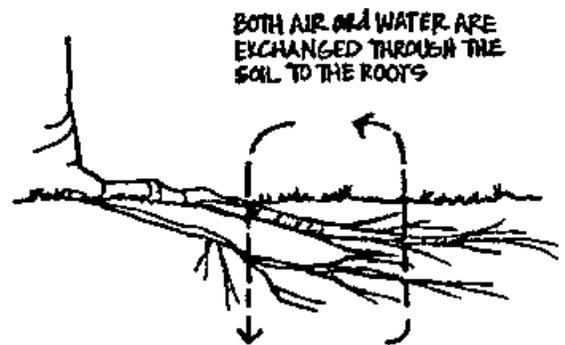
The roots depend upon an important exchange of both water and air through the soil within the protected zone. Any kind of activity that compacts the soil in this area blocks this exchange and can have serious long-term negative effects on the tree.

If paving material must be used, some recommended surfaces include brick paving with sand joints, or ground coverings such as wood chips (note the advantages of natural materials for providing nutrients under *mulching*).

## TRENCHING



## SOIL COMPACTION



# MAINTENANCE

## Watering

The key is prevention – **do not over water**. Improper watering is often overlooked as the cause of tree death because it can take years for the damage to show. Once the tree shows obvious signs of decline, it is often too late to correct the problem.

The seasonal weather pattern for this region is one of dry summers and winter rain. Oak trees are naturally drought tolerant and adapted to this cycle. If the tree is vigorous and thriving it should not require any additional water.

If the natural source of surface or underground water has been altered, some supplemental water may be necessary, but proceed with caution. The goal of any watering schedule for oak trees should be to supplement natural rainfall and it should occur only when the tree would normally receive moisture. This might be in the winter, if rains are unusually late, or in spring if rainfall has been below normal levels.

Over watering, especially during the summer months, causes a number of problems which can lead to decline and eventual death of the tree. It creates ideal conditions for attacks of Oak Root Fungus by allowing the fungus to breed all year. In addition, both evergreen and deciduous oaks grow vigorously in the spring and naturally go dormant in the summer. Extra water only encourages new tip growth which is subject to mildew. Oaks need this period of rest.

Newly planted oaks may need supplemental watering during their first few summers. After they become established water should be applied according to the previous guidelines.

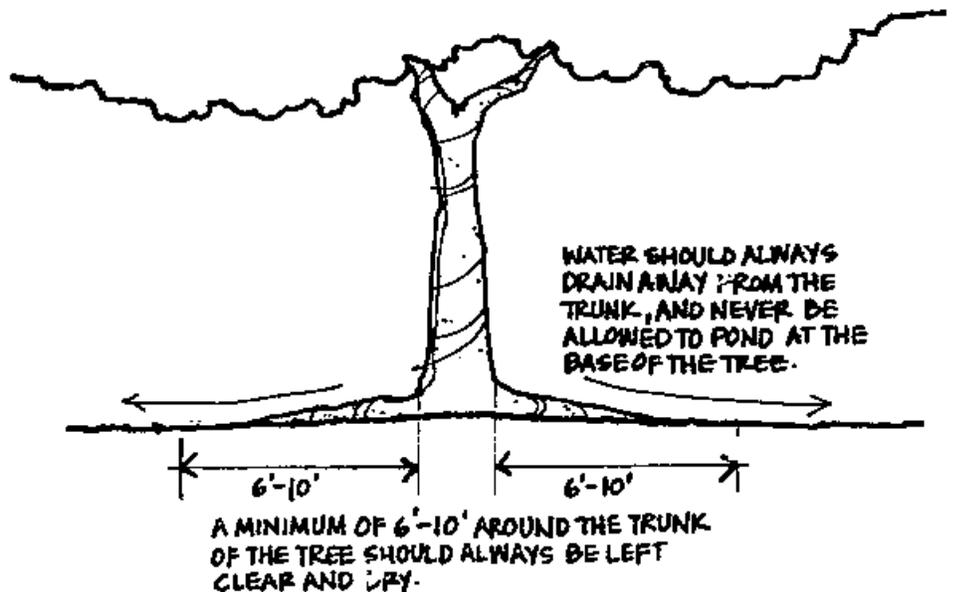
## Pruning

For oak trees the periodic removal of dead wood during periods of tree dormancy should be the only pruning needed. Any cutting of green wood opens scars that could allow the entry of organisms or disease.

Before pruning obtain the advice of a certified arborist or other professional and consult the local city or county where the tree is located to find out what regulations apply. Pruning of both live and dead wood can sometimes require a permit.

## Mulching

Leaf litter from the tree is the best mulch and should be allowed to remain on the ground within the protected zone. Crushed walnut shells or wood chips can be used, but the oak leaves that drop naturally provide the tree with a source of nutrients. Avoid the use of packaged or commercial oak leaf mulch which could contain Oak Root Fungus. Redwood chips should not be used due to certain chemicals present in the wood.



## Disease and Pests

Trees that are stressed, especially because of improper watering practices, are prone to certain diseases and attacks by pests.

The most damaging of these diseases is the Oak Root Fungus *Armillaria mellea*. Occurring naturally in the soil, the fungus thrives under wet conditions and dies back in the summer when soils dry out. This is why summer watering of oaks can be a deadly practice. As noted in the watering guidelines, wet soil in the summer allows the fungus to grow all year. As the population grows, their natural food sources are depleted and they begin feeding on oak tree roots. The fungus does not require an open wound in the tree to gain entry.

Indications of the fungus include:

- die back of branches or tips.
- honey colored fungus at or near the root crown.
- white fan-like fungus between wood and bark.
- the presence of black, shoestring-like growths in the soil.

Once the tree begins to show obvious signs of infection treatment is generally ineffective. The best treatment is to *avoid* the conditions that lead to Oak Root Fungus infections.

Pit Scale, Oak Moth, and other pests: any significant changes in leaf color, branch die back, presence of black sooty materials on leaves or other changes should be noted. Seek the advice of a professional forester, arborist, farm advisor or other expert before the application of any pesticides on an oak tree.

## Planting Underneath Oaks

The natural leaf litter is by far the best ground cover within the protected zone. If plants must be placed, the following guidelines should be followed:

There should be no planting within a minimum 6 to 10 feet of the trunk.

Avoid plants that require any supplemental water once established.

Choose plants suited for "dry shade." Those listed in the box below offer some good choices. To see some examples of how these plants have been used under oaks refer to the Additional Resources section on the following page.

### PLANTS TO CONSIDER:

Plant Name	Description
<i>Arctostaphylos densiflora</i> 'Howard McMinn' Manzanita	3' high, 6' wide. Toughest of available forms. Whitish-pink flowers.
<i>Arctostaphylos edmundsii</i> Little Sur Manzanita	1-2' high, 4-5' wide. Tolerant of full shade.
<i>Arctostaphylos hookeri</i> Monterey Carpet Manzanita	1-2' high, spreading to 12' wide by rooting branches. White to pink flowers.
<i>Ceanothus griseus horizontalis</i> Carmel Creeper	Less than 2 1/2' tall, low & creeping. Clusters of small blue flowers.
<i>Heuchera spp.</i> Coral Bells	2-4' mound. Flowers on an upright stem 2-3' high and spotted with red or pink.
<i>Mahonia aquifolium compacta</i> Oregon Grape	2-4' high, spreading by underground roots. Bright yellow flower clusters.
<i>Ribes viburnifolium</i> Evergreen or Catalina Currant	2-3' high, spreading to 12' wide. Flowers pink to red in small clusters.

### NOTES:

Before deciding on plants, check a source such as the *Sunset Western Garden Book* to determine which plants will grow in your area.

When choosing shade tolerant plants, consider that the ground under the south side of the tree will get more sunlight while the northern side will tend to remain more deeply shaded.

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES and Places to Visit

## Public Agencies

**County of Los Angeles Fire Department**  
Prevention Bureau, Forestry Division  
5823 Rickenbacker Road, Rm #123  
Commerce, CA 90040-3027  
(323) 890-4330  
<http://lacofd.org/forestry.htm>

**University of California**  
Integrated Hardwood Range Management Program  
163 Muirford Hall, Berkeley, CA 94720-3114  
<http://danr.ucop.edu/ihmp>

## Private Organizations

**The Theodore Payne Foundation**  
10459 Tuxford Street  
Sun Valley, CA 91352-2126  
(818) 768-1802  
[www.theodorepayne.org](http://www.theodorepayne.org)

**California Native Plant Society**  
1722 J Street, Suite 17  
Sacramento, CA 95814-3033  
(916) 447-2677  
[www.cnps.org](http://www.cnps.org)

**The California Oak Foundation**  
1212 Broadway, Suite 810  
Oakland, CA 94612-1810  
(510) 763-0282  
[www.californiaoaks.org](http://www.californiaoaks.org)

## Arboretums and Botanic Gardens

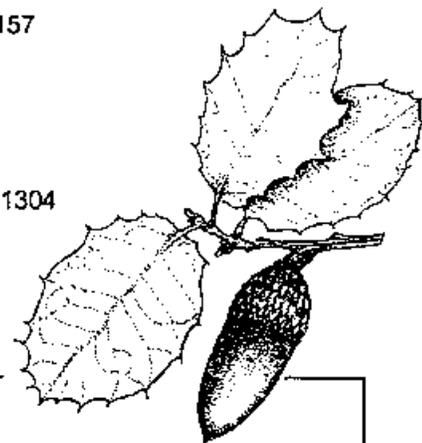
**Los Angeles County Arboreta and Botanic Gardens**  
301 N. Baldwin Ave.  
Arcadia, CA 91007-2697  
(626) 821-3222  
[www.arboretum.org](http://www.arboretum.org)

**Los Angeles County South Coast Botanic Garden**  
26300 Crenshaw Blvd.  
Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA 90274-2515  
(310) 544-6615  
[www.southcoastbotanicgarden.org](http://www.southcoastbotanicgarden.org)

**Los Angeles County Descanso Gardens**  
1418 Descanso Drive  
La Canada-Flintridge, CA 91011-3102  
(818) 949-4200  
[www.descansogardens.org](http://www.descansogardens.org)

**Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden**  
1500 North College  
Claremont, CA 91711-3157  
(909) 625-8767  
[www.rsabg.org](http://www.rsabg.org)

**The Lummis Home**  
200 E. Avenue 43  
Los Angeles, CA 90031-1304  
(213) 222-0546



## Publications

*Compatible Plants Under and Around Oaks.* Bruce W. Hagen... [et al]. The California Oak Foundation. 2000.

*Growing California Native Plants.* Marjorie G. Schmidt, Univ. California Press. 1981.

*Illustrated Guide to the Oaks of the Southern Californian Floristic Province.* Fred M. Roberts. FM Roberts Publications. 1996.

*Living Among the Oaks: A Management Guide for Landowners.* University of California Integrated Range Management Program. 1995.

*Oaks of California.* Bruce M. Pavlik...[et al]. Cachuma Press & the California Oak Foundation. 1995.

*Proceedings of the Fifth Symposium on Oak Woodlands: Oaks in California's Changing Landscape.* GTR PSW-GTR-184. Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2001.  
Available from the University of California Integrated Hardwood Range Management Program.

*Regenerating Rangeland Oaks in California.* University of California Integrated Range Management Program. 2001.



## County of Los Angeles Fire Department Forestry Division

### County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors

Gloria Molina, First District  
Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, Second District  
Zev Yaroslavsky, Third District  
Don Knabe, Fourth District  
Michael D. Antonovich, Fifth District

### County of Los Angeles Fire Department

P. Michael Freeman, Fire Chief

Brush Clearance Unit  
605 N. Angeleno Avenue  
Azusa, CA 91702-2904  
(626) 969-2375

Camp 17  
6555 Stephens Ranch Road  
La Verne, CA 91750-1144  
(909) 593-7147

Environmental Review Unit  
12605 Osborne Street  
Pacoima, CA 91331-2129  
(818) 890-5719

Fire Plan/Interpretive Unit  
12605 Osborne Street  
Pacoima, CA 91331-2129  
(818) 890-5783

Fuel Modification Unit  
605 N. Angeleno Avenue  
Azusa, CA 91702-2904  
(626) 969-5205

Henninger Flats Forestry Unit  
2260 Pinecrest Drive  
Altadena, CA 91001-2123  
(626) 794-0675

Lake Hughes Forestry Unit  
42150 N. Lake Hughes Road  
Lake Hughes, CA 93532-9706  
(661) 724-1810

Malibu Forestry Unit  
942 N. Las Virgenes Road  
Calabasas, CA 91302-2137  
(818) 222-1108

San Dimas Forestry Unit  
1910 N. Sycamore Canyon Road  
San Dimas, CA 91773-1220  
(909) 599-4615

Saugus Forestry Unit  
28760 N. Bouquet Canyon Road  
Saugus, CA 91390-1220  
(661) 296-8558

Vegetation Management Unit  
12605 Osborne Street  
Pacoima, CA 91331-2129  
(818) 890-5720

**GENERAL PLAN, SANTA CLARITA VALLEY AREA AND SPECIFIC PLAN  
AMENDMENT  
BURDEN OF PROOF**

Request

Newhall Land is requesting an amendment to the Los Angeles County General Plan, the Santa Clarita Valley Area-wide Plan (SCVAP), and the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan to modify the existing "secondary highway" designation for the "A" Street/Wolcott Road (also referred to as the Franklin Avenue extension), located between Long Canyon Road and SR-126, within the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan, which was approved by the County on May 27, 2003. The proposed amendment would reclassify "A" Street/Wolcott Road from a secondary highway to a collector street, and result in the removal of "A" Street/Wolcott Road from the General Plan's "Master Plan of Highways," since collector streets are not shown on this policy map. The proposed amendment would also result in the removal of "A" Street/Wolcott Road from the Circulation Plan of the SCVAP and would modify the street's designation on the approved Newhall Ranch Specific Plan's "Mobility Plan," on the Specific Plan's "Master Circulation Plan" exhibit, and on accompanying cross-sections.

The requested amendment is necessary to achieve a street designation that is safest, most consistent with, and most appropriate for the level of permitted development and anticipated circulation requirements under the "Traditional Neighborhood Development" (TND) land-use plan for the Landmark Village development within the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan. Since the street's original classification as a secondary highway, changes in circumstances have occurred to render the existing street classification inappropriate, unnecessary, and potentially unsafe for the current type and level of development proposed.

Background

In 1994, Newhall Land filed its entitlement application for the future development of Newhall Ranch, including the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan (NRSP), with the Department of Regional Planning (DRP). Among the entitlement applications submitted concurrently with the NRSP were requests for amendments to the Los Angeles County General Plan, the SCVAP, and the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan, to establish what is now referred to as "A" Street/Wolcott Road as a secondary highway within the future Landmark Village community. At the time, the secondary highway designation was appropriate based on the projected future traffic demands on this street segment. The Specific Plan proposed a maximum of 24,700 residential dwelling units and a total of approximately 5.7 million square feet (sf) of non-residential development within Newhall Ranch. Of those totals, 1,750 dwelling units and 1 million sf of non-residential floor-area were proposed for the portion of Newhall Ranch adjacent to and containing the proposed "A" Street and Wolcott Road. This Newhall Ranch community, referred to as "Landmark Village," is the area within Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 53108.

Based on the proposed development for Landmark Village (1,750 dwelling units and 1 million sf of non-residential uses) and Newhall Ranch overall, future traffic volumes on "A" Street/Wolcott Road were projected to equal approximately 30,000 average daily trips (ADTs). (Austin-Foust

Associates, *Newhall Ranch Traffic Analysis*, July 1996.) This level of traffic warranted designation of the street as a secondary highway, which provides traffic capacities of 32,000 ADT's.

In October 1996, the Regional Planning Commission held its first meeting regarding the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan and directed Newhall Land to reduce the overall scale and intensity of proposed development. Newhall Land revised the Specific Plan to provide for a reduced number of proposed dwelling units and a lower level of non-residential development. In December 1997, the Regional Planning Commission approved the NRSP with the scaled-back development proposal. The Board of Supervisors further reduced the level of development permitted by the Specific Plan during its reviews in 1998 and 2003.

As a result of these changes to Newhall Ranch, the approved Specific Plan now permits a maximum of up to 20,885 residential dwelling units and a maximum of 5.5 million square feet of non-residential uses. This represents a reduction of approximately 15 percent from the 24,700 dwelling units originally proposed, and a decrease of approximately 3 percent in permitted non-residential development from that originally requested in 1994. For the Landmark Village community of Newhall Ranch, the maximum number of residential units was reduced from 1,750 dwelling units to a maximum of up to 1,444 dwelling units. This represents a reduction of approximately 17 percent in permitted residential development. (There was no change to the permitted non-residential development at Landmark Village.)

In addition to the general reduction in the scale of development and number of permitted residential units and non-residential floor-area, another significant change in circumstances has occurred since the development plan was first submitted in 1994 that warrants a "downgrading" of "A" Street/Wolcott Road from a secondary highway to a collector street classification. In its more detailed development plan for Landmark Village prepared following approval of the Specific Plan, Newhall Land has chosen a TND land-use plan for Landmark Village, which emphasizes pedestrian safety, comfort and the concept of "walkability." In summary, the land plan has been developed so that key community features, such as parks, schools and shopping, are within a reasonable walking distance from most homes. In order for the land plan to be effective, streets must be designed to promote pedestrian safety and prevent excessive traffic (including "cut-through" traffic) and unsafe vehicle speeds. In fact, the failure to appropriately match street design to the land plan could result in increased risk of accidents, greater public liability, and degraded pedestrian safety.

As part of this TND approach, the intended function and design of "A" Street/Wolcott Road, has changed over the years. "A" Street/Wolcott Road was originally conceived as an arterial highway extension of Franklin Avenue, in the Commerce Center area northeast of Landmark Village, connecting with Long Canyon Road. Under the TND approach, the function of "A" Street/Wolcott Road would be limited to providing connectivity between Landmark Village neighborhoods and from the local streets to the arterial highway system. In this way, "A" Street/Wolcott Road would discourage "cut-through" traffic as an alternative to SR-126. The street design was adjusted to match this shift in intended function. The alignment was made curvilinear, lengthening the total roadway distance; traffic-calming design features such as a

periodic landscaped median, curb bulb-outs, and on-street parking were incorporated; and modern roundabouts are proposed.

With the reduced scale of development permitted by the revised NRSP and the shift in the street's intended function as part of the TND land plan, projected traffic volumes on "A" Street/Wolcott Road may now be accommodated by a collector street, which has a capacity of approximately 10,000 ADT. Traffic volumes on "A" Street/Wolcott Road are projected to be less than 10,000 ADT's for all but a short segment on the west end, which is proposed to be served by a higher-capacity, four-lane section providing adequate capacity. (Austin-Foust Associates, *Landmark Village Traffic Impact Analysis*, October 2003.)

In summary, a change in street classification for "A" Street/Wolcott Road from a four-lane secondary highway to a collector street is appropriate and warranted because of the reduction in proposed development, the implementation of a TND land-use plan, and the resulting decrease in projected traffic volumes. Projected traffic volumes would be adequately served by a collector street designation, and the existing secondary highway designation would provide unnecessarily excessive capacity. Furthermore, requiring the secondary highway could result in the potential for increased vehicular speeds under the proposed TND land plan, while the collector street would be the appropriate context-sensitive designation.

#### Justification

Due to the changes in circumstances since the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan and accompanying entitlements were first filed and approved, as detailed above, the existing secondary highway street classification is no longer appropriate for "A" Street/Wolcott Road. In addition to the justification provided above, the following four responses must be demonstrated in the affirmative in support of this request for a General Plan/Specific Plan Amendment.

#### Response No. 1

*A need for the proposed General Plan Amendment exists because:*

The proposed General Plan/Specific Plan Amendment is necessary and appropriate to provide a street classification that corresponds with the projected level of traffic demand, while at the same time providing a safe pedestrian environment consistent with the adjacent land-use plan. Without the requested General Plan/Specific Plan amendment, the street classification would require that "A" Street/Wolcott Road be improved to provide excessive capacity, with more than three times the capacity (32,000 ADT's) of the projected future volumes (fewer than 10,000 ADT's). In addition, requiring "A" Street/Wolcott Road to be built to secondary highway standards while its functional use is as a collector street providing connectivity between neighborhoods and the local street system would result in the potential for unsafe conditions, including increased frequency of accidents, increased severity of injury and property damage/loss, and the potential for increased public liability. These safety and liability risks of maintaining the secondary highway designation in lieu of the requested collector street classification are discussed in more detail in Response No. 4, below.

## Response No. 2

*The particular amendment proposed is appropriate and proper because:*

As noted above, the requested collector street designation, with a capacity of approximately 10,000 ADT's, is appropriate for the projected traffic demand of fewer than 10,000 ADT's. In addition, the collector street designation is the most appropriate choice in the context of the proposed TND land-use plan for Landmark Village. The TND land-use plan places importance on pedestrian safety and comfort, as community uses, such as schools, recreation, and shopping, are located within walking distance of most residences. The higher-speed, higher-volume secondary highway would be inconsistent with the land-use plan as well as providing traffic capacity far in excess of projected demand.

## Response No. 3

*Modified conditions warrant a revision to the County of Los Angeles General Plan because:*

As discussed above, the following are the key changes in circumstances that result in the need for the requested General Plan/Specific Plan Amendment:

1. The level of permitted development, including the number of homes and the amount of proposed non-residential floor-area, has been scaled back significantly from the original Newhall Ranch proposal, in general, and in Landmark Village, specifically.
2. Following approval of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan, Newhall Land selected a "Traditional Neighborhood Development" land-use plan for Landmark Village, which would change the intended function of "A" Street/Wolcott Road from a secondary highway – as originally planned, providing a connection from Commerce Center, on the northeast, to the western portion of Landmark Village and areas of Newhall Ranch to the south – to a collector street intended to provide internal connectivity within Landmark Village only, between neighborhoods and connecting to the local street system. The change in intended street function, as implemented in the curvilinear street design with traffic-calming features, would eliminate "cut-through" traffic. The TND land-use plan would also reduce the number of vehicle trips generated from the project, by encouraging residents to walk to near-by destinations.
3. The reduced level of permitted development, combined with the selection of a "TND" land-use plan, have significantly reduced the projected traffic levels on "A" Street/Wolcott Road. The projected traffic levels on "A" Street/Wolcott Road were originally estimated at approximately 30,000 ADT's, which required a secondary highway classification. Under the proposed Landmark Village development, the projected traffic levels have been significantly reduced to approximately 10,000 ADT's or less, which justifies the change in classification from a secondary highway to a collector street.

Response No. 4

*Approval of the proposed General Plan Amendment will be in the interest of public health, safety, and general welfare and in conformity with good planning practices because:*

Approval of the requested General Plan/Specific Plan Amendment will result in significant contributions to the public health, safety and general welfare, including the following:

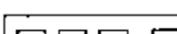
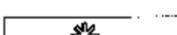
1. The requested collector street classification will result in safer conditions when compared to the existing secondary highway designation.
  - a. Based on research compiled by Newhall Land (*Traditional Neighborhood Development at Landmark Village, Newhall Ranch: The Role of Alternative Street Design in Traditional Neighborhood Development, Volumes I and II*, November, 2001; March, 2002), the number of traffic accidents would be reduced with the requested street designation, as demonstrated below.
  - b. In addition, as noted in the research referenced above, accident severity would also be diminished. Injuries to both motorists and pedestrians would be less severe under the requested street classification, generating fewer fatalities and less-severe injuries.
    - i. Motor vehicle accidents are the leading cause of accidental death in California, and 20 percent of accidents involve pedestrians. (*Dangerous by Design: Pedestrian Safety in California*, Surface Transportation Policy Project, and September 2000.)
    - ii. The second-leading cause of death for California children (ages 5-12) is pedestrian fatality. (*Ibid.*)
    - iii. There is a direct correlation between roadway width and vehicle speeds. (*Residential Street Typology and Injury Accident Frequency*, Swift, 2001.)
    - iv. Slower vehicle speeds result in greater stopping distance, a lower frequency of accidents, and reduced severity of injury from the smaller number of resulting accidents. (*Traditional Neighborhood Development Street Design Guidelines*, Institute of Transportation Engineers, October, 1999.)
2. By enhancing the pedestrian environment, the requested street classification would promote a healthier community.
  - a. The less-intrusive collector street classification would contribute toward the TND's goal of promoting walking as an alternative to driving to community destinations. For example, safe streets would allow children to walk to neighborhood schools. Studies show that walkable communities promote their residents' health. ("Healthy Neighborhood Streets – The Key to Stronger Communities", *On Common Ground*, Winter 2002.)
  - b. The safer, more comfortable pedestrian environment would also promote walking, jogging, bicycling and other recreational opportunities.

3. The requested street classification would promote the general welfare with enhanced property benefits:
  - a. Property owners would benefit from less property damage and fewer injuries associated with motor-vehicle accidents, as noted above.
  - b. Property owners could benefit from alternative financing programs provided to TND communities; such as the “location-efficient mortgage”<sup>1</sup> that recognizes the benefits of a safe and walkable community.
  - c. Studies show that property values are enhanced in “smart growth” communities such as a TND, when compared with the values of homes in conventional subdivisions. (Smart Growth Gateway, [www.smartgrowthgateway.org](http://www.smartgrowthgateway.org).)
4. The requested amendment is consistent with good planning practices.
  - a. This request is consistent with the following American Planning Association’s “Principals for Smart Growth:”
    - i. Create walkable neighborhoods;
    - ii. Foster distinctive, attractive places with a strong sense of place;
    - iii. Provide a variety of transportation choices; and
    - iv. Take advantage of compact building design.
  - b. This request is consistent with the following “Ahwahnee Principles,” developed by the Local Government Commission to promote livable communities:
    - i. Community size should be designed so that housing, jobs, daily needs and other activities are within easy walking distance of each other;
    - ii. As many activities as possible should be located within easy walking distance of transit stops;
    - iii. Streets, pedestrian paths and bike paths should contribute to a system of fully-connected and interesting routes to all destinations. Their design should encourage pedestrian and bicycle use by being small and spatially defined by buildings, trees and lighting; and by discouraging high speed traffic; and
    - iv. The community design should help conserve resources and minimize waste.

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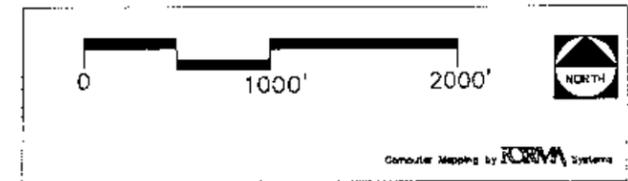
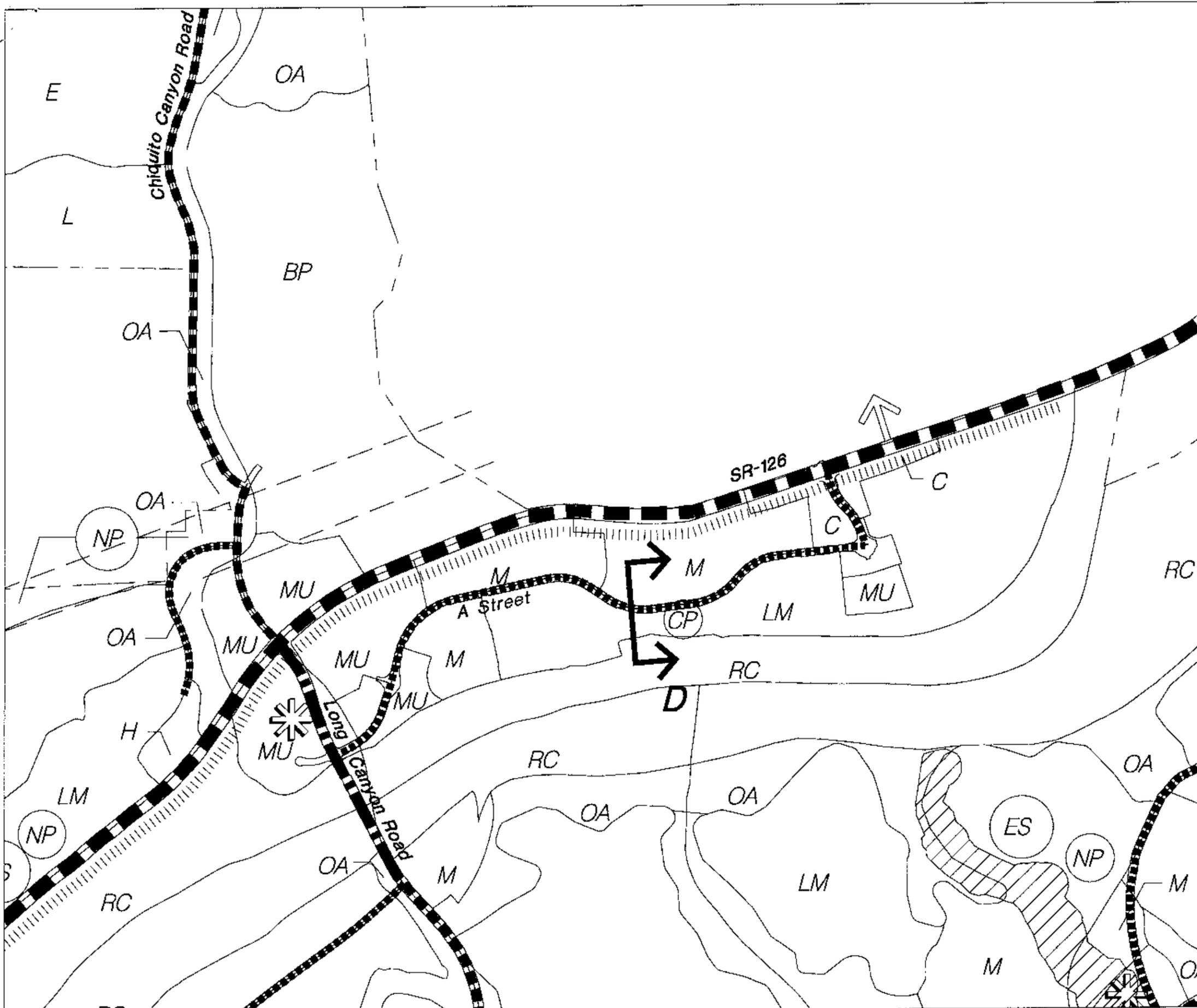
<sup>1</sup> The Location Efficient Mortgage®, (LEM) is a mortgage that helps people become homeowners in location efficient communities. These are convenient neighborhoods in which residents can walk from their homes to stores, schools, recreation, and public transportation. People who live in location efficient communities have less need to drive, which allows them to save money (with greater financial resources available for housing costs) and improves the environment for everyone. The LEM combines a low down payment, competitive interest rates, and flexible criteria for financial qualification to allow more people to own the home of their dreams. For additional information, please refer to [www.locationefficiency.com](http://www.locationefficiency.com).

**LEGEND**

-  STATE HIGHWAY
-  MAJOR HIGHWAY
-  SECONDARY HIGHWAY
-  COLLECTOR
-  POSSIBLE FUTURE COLLECTOR ALIGNMENT
-  BUS PULL-IN

Note:

'A' Street is proposed to be downgraded to a Collector Street as shown on Tentative Tract Map 53108 (see Typical Street Section).



**LANDMARK VILLAGE - A STREET  
 PROPOSED MASTER CIRCULATION PLAN**

**CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT**  
**BURDEN OF PROOF**  
**FOR (1) DEVELOPMENT WITHIN**  
**A SIGNIFICANT ECOLOGICAL AREA**  
**AND (2) UTILITIES**  
**VTTM 053108**

**i. Background**

Newhall Land is proposing to develop Landmark Village (formerly River Village), a 291-acre master planned neo-traditional community, located within the "Riverwood" village of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan. The Specific Plan was approved by the County's Board of Supervisors on May 27, 2003. The Landmark Village project is designed to include a broad spectrum of residential housing, commercial development, institutional services, a community park, and other open space areas, consistent with the approved Specific Plan. The proposed project will implement a portion of the approved Specific Plan through development of 1,444 dwelling units and approximately 1,000,000-square feet of non-residential uses.

Newhall Ranch Program-Level SEA CUP No. 94-087-(5)

The County's Board of Supervisors approved a program-level Significant Ecological Area Conditional Use Permit ("SEA CUP"), SEA CUP No. 94-087-(5), in conjunction with the Board's approval of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan on May 27, 2003.

CUP No. 94-087-(5) approved: (a) adjustments to the existing boundaries of SEA 23, consistent with General Plan policies requiring the protection of natural resources within SEAs; and (b) Specific Plan development within SEA 23 boundaries. The approved SEA boundary adjustments were found to be consistent with the adopted Specific Plan, which established a Specific Plan designation of "Special Management Area" ("SMA") over the adjusted SEA 23 boundaries. Although the adjusted boundaries within SEA 23 were identified as the "River Corridor SMA" in the adopted Specific Plan, the underlying SEA 23 designation remains in effect.

In approving CUP No. 94-087-(5), the Board specifically found that the proposed development under the approved Specific Plan was consistent with the adopted General Plan for the area (CUP, 43). The Board also found that the Specific Plan adjusted the existing SEA 23 boundaries by removing a limited amount of acreage for development from the existing SEA; however, the existing SEA nevertheless remained in a viable and largely natural condition (CUP, 18-21, 43). In addition, the Board found that the proposed development within SEA 23 conformed to the General Plan SEA "design compatibility criteria" (CUP, 21-36, 43).

Furthermore, the Board found that the Specific Plan is sensitive to, and compatible with, the biotic resources of SEA 23 (CUP, 43). In addition, the Board found that the Specific Plan development will not:

- (a) Adversely affect the health, peace, comfort, or welfare of persons residing or working in the surrounding area; or
- (b) Be materially detrimental to the use, enjoyment, or valuation of property of other persons located in the vicinity of the site; or
- (c) Jeopardize, endanger, or otherwise constitute a menace to the public health, safety, or general welfare (CUP, 43-44).

The Board also found that the Specific Plan site is adequate in size and shape to accommodate the yards, walls, fences, parking and loading facilities, landscaping, and other development features prescribed in the Zoning Ordinance, or as otherwise required in order to integrate said uses within the uses in the surrounding areas (CUP, 44).

Finally, the Board found that the Specific Plan site is adequately served:

- (a) By highways or streets of sufficient width and improved as necessary to carry the kind and quantity of traffic such use would generate; and
- (b) By other public or private service facilities as are required (CUP, p. 44).

Based on the above findings, the Board approved CUP No. 94-087-(5) subject to various adopted conditions (CUP, 45).

#### Landmark Village Project-Level SEA CUP

As part of the Landmark Village project approvals, Newhall Land is requesting a project-level SEA CUP for proposed development associated with Landmark Village within SEA 23 in order to ensure consistency with both the adopted Specific Plan and approved program-level CUP No. 94-087-(5).

The proposed Landmark Village project site is approximately 291 acres in size. Of the 291 acres about 14 acres lie within SEA 23 and is designated as Open Area. Except for a portion of the approved Long Canyon Road Bridge alignment, the acreage within the SEA (14 acres) is designated as Open Area. Although some of SEA 23 contains sensitive riparian habitat, none of the proposed development areas is within this habitat.

### Overview of the County's Significant Ecological Areas

This section provides information regarding the general background of the County's designated SEAs, and the constraints imposed by the County on development within SEAs, including the Newhall Ranch SEA 23.

The "Significant Ecological Area" designation is one of several land use classifications set forth in the Land Use Element of the Los Angeles County General Plan. SEA classification generally identifies lands having important biological resources. The classification includes habitats of rare and endangered species, sites with critical fish and wildlife values, relatively undisturbed areas of typical natural habitat and regionally scarce biotic resources. The intent of the General Plan is to preserve and enhance SEAs, to the extent possible, for the benefit of present and future County residents.

The purpose underlying SEA land use classification is to preserve SEA resources in an ecologically viable state. Several General Plan policies reflect that intent.

Other factors governing implementation of the General Plan's SEA goals and objectives include the County's ability to accurately identify areas of SEA resource value, the availability of financial and other resources necessary to support preservation, restoration and enhancement efforts, and the competing priorities between resource preservation and other critical public needs. The County's Zoning Ordinance further acknowledges that it is not the purpose of SEA designation to preclude development within SEAs, but rather to ensure, to the extent possible, that such development maintains and, where possible, enhances SEA biotic resources while allowing limited controlled development within SEAs.

### SEA General Plan Development Process

Recognizing the resource values at stake and the constraints imposed by competing priorities and objectives, the General Plan seeks to provide a process for reconciling specific conflicts between proposed land uses and the preservation of identified SEAs. The General Plan does not, however, suggest that this can be accomplished by applying a single set of regulatory standards to all SEAs. Instead, the General Plan recognizes that measures necessary to preserve and enhance SEAs will vary depending upon the nature of the resource values present and the degree of threat implied by potential incompatible development. Within this context, the General Plan sets forth SEA compatible land uses and identifies SEA design compatibility criteria to guide specific land use decisions.

As stated above, the General Plan identifies certain uses, which are compatible with SEAs by definition, and certain uses that may be compatible. However, the General Plan notes that it "has not attempted to identify, in other than the most general terms, appropriate use types and intensities within significant ecological areas." Therefore, in order to determine whether a development proposal, in fact, is compatible with a particular SEA, the General Plan requires that the proposal be reviewed for compliance with certain "design compatibility criteria." The design criteria are as follows:

- (a) That the requested development is designed to be highly compatible with the biotic resources present, including the setting aside of appropriate and sufficient undisturbed areas;
- (b) That the requested development is designed to maintain waterbodies, watercourses, and their tributaries in a natural state;
- (c) That the requested development is designed so that wildlife movement corridors (migratory paths) are left in an undisturbed and natural state;
- (d) That the requested development retains sufficient natural vegetative cover and/or open areas to buffer critical resource areas from said requested development;
- (e) That where necessary, fences or walls are provided to buffer important habitat areas from development; and
- (f) That roads and utilities serving the proposed development are located and designed so as not to conflict with critical resources, habitat areas or migratory paths.

#### Newhall Ranch Specific Plan

The Newhall Ranch Specific Plan requires that a conditional use permit be filed pursuant to Section 22.56.215 (A)(1) of the County Zoning Code for all development proposed within an SMA (SEA).

#### Zoning Ordinance SEA Development Process

The General Plan requirement that development proposed within an SEA comply with the foregoing "design compatibility criteria" is implemented through provisions of the Los Angeles County Zoning Code. Pursuant to Section 22.56.215(A)(1) of the Code, an applicant must obtain a conditional use permit "prior to the issuance of any building or grading permits, approval of a minor land division or subdivision, or the commencement of any construction or enlargement

of any building or structure on a lot or parcel, which is in or partly in an area designated in the County General Plan and related maps as a significant ecological area."

The General Plan also requires that an application for a SEA conditional use permit undergo an "SEA Performance Review." This process involves review of the application by an appointed Significant Ecological Area Technical Advisory Committee ("SEATAC"). SEATAC reviews the application and accompanying biological resources report for its adequacy, and recommends conditions and guidelines for final project design. Considering the recommendations of SEATAC, the Los Angeles County Regional Planning Commission then takes action upon the proposed development plan.

Pursuant to the General Plan, the Regional Planning Commission recommendation for approval of proposed development within an SEA must be accompanied by a finding that the proposed development is sensitive to, and compatible with, the biotic resources identified in the permit application materials. If the Commission cannot make such a finding, it may deny the project, request a revised development plan, or approve and forward the proposal, together with a statement of overriding considerations, to the Board of Supervisors for further review and action.

### Description of SEA 23

The Specific Plan River Corridor SMA (SEA 23) was approved in consideration of the resource values present in the Santa Clara River. The value of the SEA 23 is derived from the riparian habitats and associated species located within its boundaries, and the function of the SEA 23 as a regional wildlife corridor. The SEA 23 also includes habitat for the unarmored threespine stickleback, a state and federally listed endangered species, and other sensitive aquatic and riparian species known to occur within the Specific Plan site. Under the Specific Plan, some development is allowed within the boundaries of SEA 23, including but not limited to trails, wildlife preserves, scenic turnouts, agricultural operations, utilities necessary for public health and welfare, interpretive displays, vista points, and oil and gas operations. Under CUP No. 94-087-(5) three bridge crossings over the river were approved, including the Long Canyon Road Bridge, bank stabilization along portions of the SEA 23, and development on mostly agricultural land within the SEA 23.

## **II. Proposal**

Consistent with the approved Specific Plan and program-level CUP No. 94-087-(5), Newhall Land proposes project-level improvements within SEA 23. The proposed improvements requested are as follows:

- (a) Long Canyon Road Bridge;

- (b) Trails and scenic vista path;
- (d) Bank stabilization;
- (e) Utilities (storm drain outlets, water quality basins, and utilities);
- (f) Agricultural wells;
- (g) Riparian mitigation sites;
- (h) Off-site transport of materials associated with grading; and
- (i) Metrolink right-of-way easement

### Long Canyon Road Bridge

In conjunction with the Specific Plan approvals, CUP No. 94-087-(5) approved three elevated highway bridge crossings over the Santa Clara River, including the general alignment for Long Canyon Road Bridge (as well as Commerce Center Drive and San Martinez Grande Road). The number and general location of the bridge crossings were established in order to minimize impacts to sensitive habitat and species within SEA 23, and to minimize major access points to SR-126. Each of the bridge crossings is an extension of an existing road, creating a functional regional circulation system.

As part of the approval of CUP No. 94-087-(5), the County's Board of Supervisors found that the three bridge crossings were essential for a functional circulation system to serve the Specific Plan area and the region, and that the bridges were necessary to advance many of the County's goals and policies related to transportation, land use, and other issues of public interest (CUP, 33-34). The Board also considered and rejected a series of bridge alignment and bridge span alternatives in approving the three crossings via the Specific Plan and related CUP No. 94-087-(5). Each bridge crossing was found to comply with the County's engineering requirements, and to be strategically located and designed to provide maximum transportation effectiveness, while minimizing impacts to critical resources, habitat areas and animal movement paths in riparian corridor areas (CUP, 36-37).

Newhall Land is proposing to construct the Long Canyon Road Bridge component of the approved Specific Plan, as part of the Landmark Village project. Long Canyon Road Bridge will span the width of the Santa Clara River, equating to a roadway segment of approximately 1,100 feet in length and 100 feet in width. The highway bridge crossing is designated as a major

highway until it reaches the south side of the bridge, pursuant to the approved Specific Plan and the County Master Plan of Highways (south of the Santa Clara River, Long Canyon Road is designated as a secondary highway.)

Long Canyon Road Bridge will have 3 lanes of traffic in each direction. It will be designed to meet Department of Public Works standards and include curbs, gutters, sidewalks and a median. Support for the bridge will involve construction of concrete piers to be located within SEA 23. Abutments will be constructed on each side of the river.

Bank stabilization to reduce scour potential of the bridge is proposed along the perimeter of the abutments. The areas of bank stabilization are within SEA 23. Bridge construction will temporarily disturb the riverbed during grading, recompaction and construction. Vegetation along the riverbank and within the river itself will be removed and replaced. After construction, the riverbed will be returned to its natural state with the exception of the concrete supports and bridge abutments. Excavations will be designed to minimize riverbed disturbance, while satisfying the structural requirements of construction. The abutments have been designed to avoid significant riparian impacts.

The introduction of the bridge abutments into the Santa Clara River would have some restriction on flows during a capital flood. The placement of stabilization along the bridge abutments would reduce vegetation and, combined with the restriction of flows by the presence of the abutments, would increase the velocities of water traveling under the bridge. These increases are local in nature and are found immediately at the bridge abutments. Within 200 feet downstream of the bridge, capital storm velocities return to that experienced under the existing conditions of the river.

Newhall Land is authorized to continue the maintenance and operation of existing agricultural river crossings by the California Department of Fish and Game under an *"Agreement for Routine Maintenance Activities."* As part of the Landmark Village development, highway crossings over the Santa Clara River will be restricted to one location (Long Canyon Road Bridge), significantly less than the number of existing agricultural crossings, which are permitted to continue under applicable regulations. In addition, by elevating each bridge crossing, impacts to biotic resources within the SEA 23 are substantially minimized.

### Trails

As part of the approved Specific Plan, the County's Board of Supervisors adopted the Newhall Ranch Master Trails Plan, Exhibit 2.4-5, which encompasses a comprehensive system of trails throughout the Specific Plan area, and provides potential connection points to regional trail systems within

the Santa Clarita Valley. The approved Master Trails Plan includes the following hierarchy of trails:

- (a) Regional River Trail;
- (b) Community Trails;
- (c) Local Trails;
- (d) Pathways; and
- (e) Unimproved Trails.

Of the approved trails, the Regional River Trail, located on the north side of the Santa Clara River and extending from the Castaic Creek to the western Specific Plan boundary, represents an important recreational feature of the approved Specific Plan, allowing both active and passive enjoyment of the Santa Clara River through the design of a combined pedestrian/bicycle/equestrian trail.

At the project-level, the Landmark Village development proposes several trails, consistent with the approved Specific Plan. The first includes a portion of the Regional River Trail, which spans and follows the southern boundary of the Landmark Village site. The Regional River Trail includes an improved pedestrian and bicycle route which offers view opportunities along the edge of the river. An equestrian trail will also be provided as a separate dirt trail approximately 3-5 feet from the improved trail. Newhall Land is also proposing a scenic vista path, permitted under the Specific Plan that consists of a 2,500-linear foot loop of nature path below the central portion of the Landmark Village site. The exact location, width, and construction material of the path will be determined after biological surveys have been conducted and the Department of Fish and Game as well as other resource agencies have been consulted.

### Utilities

- *Utility Lines*

Landmark Village is an area disconnected from existing developable areas making utility extensions necessary. Utilities planned to serve the Landmark Village project may include, but not be limited to, water, sanitary sewer, gravity sewer, force main, irrigation, cable, gas, fiber optics and reclaimed water lines.

The utility courses will stretch from Los Angeles County Sanitation District No. 32, located directly southwest of the SR-126/I-5 Interchange, to the proposed

Water Reclamation Plant to be located approximately 1.6 miles west of the proposed project. It is unknown at this time the exact route the utilities will take across Landmark Village. However, it is necessary that the utility easements cross SEA 23 at two points beyond the geographic limits of Landmark Village: both east and west of the project directly south of the SR-126 right of way.

Utility lines including potable water, reclaimed water, communications systems ducts, electrical power, natural gas and sanitary sewer lines may also be hung from the Long Canyon Road Bridge, which crosses the SEA, to provide water to areas south of Landmark Village.

- *Water Quality Basins*

Consistent with the program-level CUP No. 94-087-(5), the Landmark Village project proposes installation of water quality basins and vegetated treatment swales located within the project and along the southern portion of the site. These basins and swales will be designed to capture first flush storm water (i.e., the first 0.75 inches of runoff) and non-storm water urban runoff from the developed areas within the Landmark Village project. These water quality basins and swales will be designed to the specifications of the County's Department of Public Works and the state Regional Water Quality Control Board. After treatment, water run-off will be conveyed through a closed or open channel to the river. This conveyance system will be within SEA 23. Water quality basins and swales will either be maintained by the Department of Public Works or a Landscape Maintenance District.

Clean sediment, periodically removed from debris basins located at the interface of undeveloped land areas where drainages have not entered the developed portions of the site, may be placed into the river area as approved by the various regulatory agencies. Necessary permits from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, State Department of Fish and Game, and the Regional Water Quality Control Board to allow for such placement of sediment, prior to construction of any development that contemplates debris basins or bank stabilization.

- *Storm Drain Outlets*

There are five proposed storm drain outlets to be installed within SEA 23. Each storm drain easement is approximately 25 feet in width and lies along the southern VTTM boundary. The easements barely jut out southerly from the VTTM into SEA 23 buffer zone. The easements do not extend beyond the width of the swath proposed for bank stabilization.

### Bank Stabilization

The approved Specific Plan contemplated installation of bank stabilization along the Santa Clara River. The environmental effects of the bank stabilization were thoroughly assessed at the program level in the Newhall Ranch Final Additional Analysis, which was certified by the County's Board of Supervisors on May 27, 2003. At the project-level, the Landmark Village development includes limited bank stabilization to protect the project from erosion during capital storm events.

The design of the bank stabilization will be required to conform to the standards of the Department of Public Works. A total of approximately 10,620 lineal feet of bank stabilization will be required as part of the proposed project. The stabilization material will consist primarily of buried soil cement to minimize visual intrusion and to resist scouring. In limited instances, grouted rip-rap or concrete gunite will be installed at bridge abutments and other transition areas.

The bank stabilization along portions of the southern boundary of the project site will be designed and constructed to retain the river's significant riparian vegetation and habitat, to allow the river to continue to function as a regional wildlife corridor, and to provide flood protection pursuant to Los Angeles County standards.

### Agricultural Wells

There are eleven existing agricultural wells. As a part of Landmark Village development, six (6) are proposed to remain although some may be relocated. Each water well will be 10,000 square-feet in land area.

### Potential Riparian Mitigation Sites

Mitigation for impacts as a result of the Landmark Village development on riparian resources will include restoration of riparian habitat and may include enhancement activities. The general areas in which riparian mitigation activities may take place are shown on attached Newhall Ranch Specific Plan Exhibit 2-6.3, Candidate Riparian Restoration/Enhancement Areas.

Under the Specific Plan "Wildlife, nature, forest and marine preserves" use type is a permitted land use designation within SEA 23. Habitat restoration and enhancement associated with the Landmark Village development may consist of revegetation and/or rehabilitation of native plant communities on sites that have had the habitat removed due to past activities such as agricultural or oil and natural gas operations. Unavoidable impacts to riparian resources shall be minimized through project design, and then mitigated by the implementation of a revegetation and/or rehabilitation plan.

The restoration mitigation areas located within SEA 23 shall be in areas that have been disturbed by previous uses or cases. Mitigation shall be conducted only on sites where soils, hydrology, and microclimate conditions are suitable for riparian habitat. The candidate areas are comprised almost entirely of disturbed areas; therefore, after restoration, the sites can be considered “new” sensitive habitat within SEA 23. The goal is to increase habitat patch size and connectivity with other existing habitat patches while restoring habitat values that will benefit sensitive species.

Restoration of riparian habitats within SEA 23 shall use plant species native to the Santa Clara River. Cuttings or seeds of native plants shall be gathered within SEA 23 or purchased from nurseries with local supplies to provide good genetic stock for the replacement habitats.

Per the Specific Plan, four sites associated with the Landmark Village development have been determined to be conceivable “Candidate Riparian Restoration areas”. One is located adjacent to the northeast corner of the project, just south of SR-126 and is approximately two acres in size. The second area and the largest of the four sites, approximately 16 acres and is located south of the western portion of the project. A potential 2.4-acre site lies south of the eastern portion of the project. These sites generally hug the boundary of the VTTM resulting in no obstruction to the riverbed. A last site lies just west of the project and continues to run west, south of SR-126.

#### Off-site Transport of Materials in Conjunction with Permitted Grading

There are two transport routes that are proposed to cross SEA 23, both of which coincide with operational agricultural river crossings permitted by the California Department of Fish and Game. Off-site transport of materials shall comply with all applicable requirements of other County departments and other governmental agencies.

#### Metrolink Right-of-Way Easement

In order to provide future residents in the Santa Clarita Valley (including Newhall Ranch) with alternative modes transportation, a Metrolink rail system line is proposed. The right-of-way easement for the line will vary from 35 feet to 50 feet in width and will run parallel to SR-126 extending east and west from the project. The easement will cross SEA 23 at two points beyond the geographic limits of Landmark Village: both east and west of the project directly south of the SR-126 right of way.

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT  
BURDEN OF PROOF

As part of the program CUP No. 94-087-(5), which was approved on May 27, 2003, the County's Board of Supervisors already determined that development within the Specific Plan SEA 23 met the County's requirements for issuance of a conditional use permit within a significant ecological area. Accordingly, the purpose for this section of the application is to show that the Landmark Village development is consistent with the approved Newhall Ranch Specific Plan, including the previously approved program CUP No. 94-087-(5). These uses specifically include trails, riparian restoration areas, storm drain outlets, water quality basins, utilities, proposed agricultural wells, Long Canyon Road Bridge, bank stabilization, the off-site transport of grading material, and the Metrolink easement. In addition, the applicant is concurrently requesting under this application, that the County permit publicly-owned and maintained uses necessary for the maintenance of the public health, convenience or general welfare ("public improvements") within the SEA 23 land designation. Substantiation is demonstrated by the following facts:

A. *That the requested use at the location will not:*

1. *Adversely affect the health, peace, comfort or welfare of persons residing or working in the surrounding area, or*

The County's Board of Supervisors already determined that the approved Specific Plan, including CUP No. 94-087-(5), will not "adversely affect the health, peace, comfort or welfare of persons residing or working in the surrounding area." Therefore, at the project-level, the pertinent question is whether the Landmark Village development is consistent with the approved Specific Plan and CUP No. 94-087-(5). If consistent, and absent any significant change in the Specific Plan or its circumstances, the Landmark Village development should necessarily satisfy the above SEA CUP requirement.

As part of the Landmark Village development, the Long Canyon Road Bridge component of the approved Specific Plan will be constructed. By allowing construction of the Long Canyon Road Bridge, a component of the Specific Plan's traffic circulation system will be implemented. This component will provide another traveling route for automobile traffic, which minimizes congestion and reduces traffic trip time for residents and visitors of the Newhall Ranch community. Under the Specific Plan, the Long Canyon Road Bridge was contemplated to be the primary elevated bridge crossing for the central portions of the Newhall Ranch community. It will provide the

necessary connection to SR-126 and direct access to the business park uses north of SR-126. As a result, the bridge will provide an important link between future residential areas south of the river and employment opportunities to the north. In addition, the bridge will provide an alternate route for residents and others to reach destinations both within and outside of the Specific Plan.

The Newhall Ranch land uses have been designed using a village concept, with higher intensity uses clustered into village centers. This land use arrangement promotes the reduction of vehicle miles traveled by permitting more people to live near shopping, services and recreation. Bridge crossings significantly reduce the travel distances between these village centers and the other commercial uses north of the river. As a result, the bridges improve traffic flow and efficiency and reduce automobile vehicle miles traveled. The Landmark Village development and the proposal to construct the Long Canyon Road Bridge are consistent with the above Specific Plan design objectives.

Specifically, Landmark Village will be designed utilizing compact development, which will minimize impacts on the environment when compared to lower density, scattered development. A significant environmental benefit associated with traditional neighborhood design is that it consumes less land than conventional suburban development, but it accommodates roughly the same amount of development. By focusing the proposed development within Landmark Village in less sensitive areas, the proposed development will avoid or minimize impacts on sensitive habitat associated with the river than may occur under a low density development alternative. It also prevents the fragmentation of wildlife habitat, reduces stormwater runoff, and conserves open space areas.

The Landmark Village development will also implement a portion of the Regional River Trail, along with other local trails contemplated by the approved Specific Plan. The location of the Regional River Trail and the other local trails is consistent with the Specific Plan, minimizes impacts to SEA 23, avoids conflicts with vehicles and is consistent with existing trail alignments in the Santa Clarita Valley.

The Specific Plan approved bank stabilization within SEA 23. The Landmark Village development would implement a portion of the approved bank stabilization along the southern boundary of the project site. The bank stabilization would be constructed, consistent with the requirements of the approved Specific Plan. The portion of the bank stabilization that will be part of the Long Canyon Road Bridge abutment represents a health and safety benefit to the public as it provides a base for the elevated bridge, which is designed to accommodate Long Canyon Road, a major highway designated

on the Mobility Plan of the approved Specific Plan and on the County's Master Plan of Highways.

The Landmark Village development will include installation of water quality basins, storm drain outlets and utility crossings (collectively, public improvements). These proposed improvements will be designed to minimize impacts to sensitive habitat and resources associated with the river. The improvements will also be designed to promote the health, safety and welfare of persons residing or working in the Landmark Village development.

The proposed restoration mitigation areas located within SEA 23 shall be in areas that have been disturbed by previous uses or activities. Candidate areas are comprised almost entirely of disturbed area; therefore, after restoration, the sites can be considered "new" sensitive habitat with SEA 23. The goal is to increase habitat patch size and connectivity with other existing habitat patches while restoring habitat values that will benefit sensitive species.

2. *Be materially detrimental to the use, enjoyment or valuation of property of other persons located in the vicinity of the site, or*

The County's Board of Supervisors already determined that the approved Specific Plan, including CUP No. 94-087-(5), will not "be materially detrimental to the use, enjoyment or valuation of property of other persons located in the vicinity of the site." The Landmark Village development implements a portion of the approved Specific Plan. The project-level development proposed within SEA 23 as part of the Landmark Village development is considered consistent with the approved Specific Plan. Accordingly, the Landmark Village development is not anticipated to be "detrimental" to the use, enjoyment or valuation of property or persons located in the vicinity of the project site. In fact, the proposed Landmark Village development would promote healthy living by offering an environment and infrastructure that would entice people outdoors. The interconnectivity of walking, hiking, equestrian and biking trails will allow residents to enjoy Newhall Ranch's topographic variety, mountain ranges, open vistas, and valleys.

3. *Jeopardize, endanger, or otherwise constitute a menace to the public health, safety or general welfare; and*

The County's Board of Supervisors already determined that the approved Specific Plan, including CUP No. 94-087-(5), will not "jeopardize, endanger, or otherwise constitute a menace to the public health, safety or general welfare." The Landmark Village development will provide improvements within SEA 23, consistent with the approved Specific Plan. The proposed project site is adequate to accommodate the improvements requested within

SEA 23, as discussed above. The proposed improvements are adequate in size and shape to accommodate all development features and standards required by the County.

- B. *That the proposed site is adequate in size and shape to accommodate the yards, walls, fences, parking, and loading facilities, landscaping and other development features prescribed in this Title 22, or as is otherwise required in order to integrate said use with the uses in the surrounding area;*

The County's Board of Supervisors already determined that the approved Specific Plan, including CUP No. 94-087-(5), satisfied the above requirements. The Landmark Village development will provide improvements within SEA 23, consistent with the approved Specific Plan. The proposed site is adequate for the improvements requested within SEA as discussed above. The applicant is not seeking any variances or exceptions to the County's development standards that may affect SEA 23.

- C. *That the proposed site is adequately served:*

1. *By the highways or streets of sufficient width, and improved as necessary to carry the kind and quantity of traffic such use would generate, and*

The County's Board of Supervisors already determined that the approved Specific Plan, including CUP No. 94-087-(5), is adequately served by highways and streets of sufficient width, and improved as necessary to carry the kind and quantity of traffic contemplated by the approved Specific Plan land uses. Consistent with the Specific Plan, the Landmark Village development will include a project-level circulation plan depicting the streets and highways required to accommodate the traffic generated by the proposed project. This project-level circulation plan is an integral part of the overall Landmark Village development, and has been designed to implement a number of the Specific Plan's circulation objectives. These objectives include improving the internal and external trips by future residents; providing opportunities for using alternative modes of transportation; and providing an aesthetically pleasing environment, while achieving the above mobility/circulation objectives.

Residents, bicyclists, hikers, equestrians, visitors and others will have close view of SEA 23. However, as noted above, mitigation measures and conditions of approval are in place to prevent harmful intrusion within SEA 23, thereby protecting its unique habitat value. No public or private service facilities are required or associated with development that will occur within the SEA 23.

2. *By other public or private service facilities as are required.*

The County's Board of Supervisors already determined that the Specific Plan site is adequately served by other public improvements and private service facilities, and that the Specific Plan itself will provide additional public and private service facilities as part of the Newhall Ranch community. Accordingly, the Board approved both the Specific Plan and CUP No. 94-087-(5). At the project level, as part of the Landmark Village development, the applicant will verify that capacity is available for all appropriate public and/or private service facilities to meet the needs of the proposed project. If deficiencies are identified, it is expected that, as part of the project, the applicant would be required to mitigate such impacts. Therefore, it is expected that, with appropriate conditions of approval, the proposed site will be adequately served by all required public and/or private service facilities.

ADDITIONAL BURDEN OF PROOF  
FOR SEA FINDINGS  
SECTION 22.56.215 F.2

The County's Board of Supervisors already determined that the approved Specific Plan, including CUP No. 94-087-(5), conformed with the General Plan's SEA six "design compatibility criteria." Presented below are the six design compatibility criteria, along with a summary substantiating both the Specific Plan's conformity with such criteria, as well as Landmark Village's conformity at the project level.

- 1. That the requested development is designed to be highly compatible with the biotic resources present, including the setting aside of appropriate and sufficient undisturbed areas.**

**Specific Plan Summary**

The County's Board of Supervisors already found that the Specific Plan and CUP No. 94-087-(5) met Design Compatibility Criterion No. 1, above. In summary, the Board found that the Specific Plan is considered highly compatible with the biotic resources present within the boundaries of the SEA 23 for the following reasons:

- (a) The Specific Plan set aside appropriate and sufficient undisturbed sensitive habitat areas within the existing boundaries of SEA 23;
- (b) The Specific Plan retained SEA 23 in a largely natural state;
- (c) Only a relatively small amount of sensitive habitat (*i.e.*, one acre, or 0.08 percent of the existing SEA) was redesignated for non-residential land uses;
- (d) The impacted areas would be fully mitigated;
- (e) The river would still be sufficiently wide (and in certain locations widened) to accommodate the County's Capital Flood and still retain the sensitive riparian vegetation;
- (f) Winter storm runoff would still continue to open its own channels through the river vegetation, flowing in a natural, non-invasive manner and preserve the meandering characteristics of the streambed;
- (g) The tributary canyons and bluffs on the south side of the river would still be preserved and provide an additional 444 acres (including 415 acres of undisturbed land), which would be dedicated to Open space areas adjacent to the river; and

- (h) Due to implementation of the Specific Plan, the amount of sensitive riparian habitat found in the existing SEA 23 would increase by approximately five acres and an additional 192 acres of additional sensitive habitat areas adjacent to the SEA 23 would be permanently preserved.

The Newhall Ranch Final Additional Analysis, Section 2.3, also addressed potential impacts due to channelization and bank hardening. Based on that analysis, the Board of Supervisors found that no significant increases in velocity, erosion or sedimentation would occur in the river; and, therefore, biotic resources present within the existing boundaries of SEA 23 would not be significantly impacted.

### **Landmark Village Summary**

At the project level, the Landmark Village development within SEA 23 is designed to be highly compatible with biotic resources present within that corridor, including setting aside an appropriate and sufficient amount of undisturbed area, consistent with the approved Specific Plan. The project-level development proposed within SEA 23 includes the planned and approved Long Canyon Road Bridge abutments and piers. In addition, the project proposes to implement a portion of the approved Regional River Trail and other planned local trails. The proposed project will also include water quality basins and associated conveyance lines, utility crossings, storm drain outlets, and riparian mitigation sites. These proposed improvements were contemplated by the approved Specific Plan. The vast majority of SEA 23 will be left in a natural state, consistent with the Specific Plan.

2. **That the requested development is designed to maintain water bodies, watercourses, and their tributaries in a natural state.**

### **Specific Plan Summary**

The County's Board of Supervisors already found that the Specific Plan and CUP No. 94-087-(5) met Design Compatibility Criterion No. 2, above. In summary, the Board found that the Specific Plan has been designed to maintain waterbodies, watercourses, and their tributaries in a natural state. As indicated above, the Board also found that no significant increases in velocity, erosion, or sedimentation would occur in the river because of the Specific Plan. During most storm events, the velocity and depth of the river would remain unchanged from current conditions, since the course of the river is able to meander without being constrained by bridge abutments or bank protection. It is only in the infrequent, 50- to 100-year event where small increases in depth or velocity will occur at certain locations along the river. In making these findings, the Board

relied on the Newhall Ranch Final Additional Analysis, Section 2.3, which provided a detailed analysis of the Specific Plan impacts to the floodplain areas within the site, including the depth and velocity of water flow in the Santa Clara River. Based on that analysis, the Board found that the Specific Plan's projected river flow increases did not significantly affect the water flow in the river.

### **Landmark Village Summary**

As contemplated by the approved Specific Plan, Long Canyon Road Bridge will require the placement of abutments and piers in the river area; however, the effect of each bridge crossing, including Long Canyon Road Bridge, was thoroughly assessed in the Newhall Ranch Final Additional Analysis, Section 2.3, Floodplain Modifications. At the project level, the environmental analysis will further address the bridge abutments and piers to further assess impacts, if any, to the river corridor.

As contemplated by the approved Specific Plan, the Landmark Village development will include bank stabilization, but only where necessary to protect development from erosion. Bank stabilization is proposed to be ungrouted rock in all areas except at outlet structures, access ramps, and bridge abutments where it is expected that grouted rock or reinforced concrete will be required to meet Los Angeles County Department of Public Works standards. Alternative materials to rip rap for bank stabilization, including buried soil cement, will be considered by the Department of Public Works Flood Control section. Bank stabilization specifications will be further developed as part of the environmental review process for the Landmark Village development.

- 3. That the requested development is designed so that wildlife movement corridors (migratory paths) are left in an undisturbed and natural state.**

### **Specific Plan Summary**

The County's Board of Supervisors already found that the Specific Plan and CUP No. 94-087-(5) met Design Compatibility Criterion No. 3, above. In summary, the Board found that under the Specific Plan, SEA 23 would continue to function as a wildlife movement corridor because the Specific Plan design retained both the riparian vegetation in the river and the natural flow of the water without the need for periodic vegetation clearing. The Board also found that the Specific Plan showed a substantially reduced level of impact to sensitive riparian habitat along the Santa Clara River (the originally proposed 103 acres of impact was reduced to approximately one acre). The Board further found that the Specific Plan resulted in an increase of five acres in the amount of sensitive riparian

habitat along the river, and that the Specific Plan established transition areas to separate SEA 23 from the urban uses identified in the Land Use Plan. In addition, the Board found that the three bridges over the river would be sufficiently high as to allow the continued use of the river by animals for movement east to west along and within the river route, and that lighting controls would ensure that SEA 23 would continue to function as a wildlife movement corridor. The Board also found that Section 2.5 (Public Services and Facilities Plan) and Section 2.6 (Resources Management Plan) of the Specific Plan provide objectives and conceptual plans for preserving the river and Salt Canyon in a natural and undisturbed state. Finally, the Board found that the Newhall Ranch Final EIR and Additional Analysis addressed impacts and imposed mitigation measures for the identified impacts that would occur. As a condition of approval, the Board also required the applicant to conserve in perpetuity approximately 1,517 acres of the Salt Creek watershed in Ventura County, adjacent to the Specific Plan site, which enhances the Specific Plan's compatibility with animal movement in the region.

Moreover, the Board found that the tributaries (Castaic, San Martinez, and Chiquito Canyon Creeks) to the Santa Clara River within SEA 23 would all be maintained and preserved in a largely natural state with soft bottoms pursuant to Section 2.5 (Public Services and Facilities Plan) and Section 2.6 (Resources Management Plan) of the Specific Plan. Furthermore, the Board found that the remainder of these tributaries outside SEA 23 but within the Specific Plan were designated open space areas and preserved in a largely natural state.

The Board also found that the Salt Canyon area of the Specific Plan served as a wildlife movement corridor, and that the limited development proposed within SEA 23 would not have any impact upon this wildlife movement area. As indicated above, the Board required the applicant to dedicate 1,517 acres of the Salt Creek watershed in Ventura County, adjacent to the Specific Plan site, in perpetuity, thereby enhancing the Specific Plan's compatibility with animal movement in the region.

In addition, the Board noted that Caltrans had completed the widening of SR-126 from Fillmore in Ventura County to the I-5 freeway in Los Angeles County. As part of that widening project, major north/south animal movement undercrossings were installed under SR-126 at three locations. In addition, three additional larger undercrossings exist along SR-126 within the Specific Plan area at locations where bridges and culverts were constructed over secondary tributary stream courses. Because the undercrossings were designed to facilitate north/south wildlife movement, and because the three undercrossings within the Specific Plan site are of sufficient size to accommodate north/south wildlife movement, the Board found that north/south connectivity across the Santa Clara River will not

be significantly impacted. The Board's findings were supported by the Newhall Ranch Final Additional Analysis, Section 2.2, Salt Creek Corridor.

### **Landmark Village Summary**

Consistent with the approved Specific Plan, for the most part, animal migratory paths within the SEA 23 will be left in an undisturbed, natural state. Again, the exception will be at the Long Canyon Road Bridge abutment and pier locations. All construction-related impacts of proposed development within the SEA 23 will be further assessed as part of the environmental review process for the Landmark Village development with mitigation measures imposed as appropriate.

Other proposed development within SEA 23 – (trails, storm drain outlets, water quality basins, utility lines, agricultural wells, Long Canyon Road Bridge, bank stabilization, and off-site transport of grading materials) – will have a de minimus impact on migratory pathways, and the riparian mitigation areas will actually prove to provide beneficial cover for migratory animals.

- 4. That the requested development retains sufficient natural vegetative cover and/or open spaces to buffer critical resource areas from said requested development.**

### **Specific Plan Summary**

The County's Board of Supervisors already found that the Specific Plan and CUP No. 94-087-(5) met Design Compatibility Criterion No. 4, above. In summary, the Board found that the Specific Plan retained sufficient natural vegetative cover and open space areas to buffer critical resources found in SEA 23 from the proposed development shown in the Specific Plan. Furthermore, the Board found that implementation of the Specific Plan would result in the direct preservation of 1,390 acres of land along the Santa Clara River Corridor within the boundaries of the Specific Plan area. In addition, the Board found that the Specific Plan incorporated an extensive buffer area to protect critical resources within SEA 23.

### **Landmark Village Summary**

Consistent with the approved Specific Plan, the requested development within Landmark Village will retain sufficient natural vegetative cover and/or open space areas to complement SEA 23. As part of the Landmark Village development, a setback or buffer zone will be established along the southern boundary of the project site to protect sensitive habitat along the SEA 23. Furthermore, the vegetation within

portions of the setback or buffer zone will be restored and/or enhanced to increase habitat values when compared to existing conditions.

- 5. That where necessary, fences or walls are provided to buffer important habitat areas from development.**

#### **Specific Plan Summary**

The County's Board of Supervisors already found that the Specific Plan and CUP No. 94-087-(5) met Design Compatibility Criterion No. 5, above. In summary, the Board found that the discussion of Design Compatibility Criterion No. 4, above, described how the Specific Plan incorporated vegetative cover and open space areas to buffer critical resources from the proposed uses in the Specific Plan. In addition to these features, the Board found that the Specific Plan also buffered habitat from proposed uses through development regulations and design guidelines. As indicated in Chapter 4 of the Specific Plan, future residential subdivisions and commercial development constructed within the Specific Plan area must include fences or walls that will preclude access to sensitive resources within SEA 23. As each tract or parcel map is submitted to the County, it must be reviewed to determine whether proposed uses substantially comply with the standards, regulations, and guidelines of the Specific Plan, including those pertaining to fencing and walls to ensure that they buffer important SEA 23 habitat areas from development.

#### **Landmark Village Summary**

Consistent with the approved Specific Plan, the Landmark Village development proposes fences and walls to protect significant habitat within the SEA 23. In addition, other mitigation measures and conditions of approval will be adopted to ensure the protection of sensitive biotic resources within the SEA 23 (e.g., shielding of illumination). The locations of the designated fences and walls and their relation to the SEA 23 will be further assess during the environmental review process for the Landmark Village development.

- 6. That roads and utilities serving the proposed development are located and designed so as not to conflict with critical resources, habitat areas or migratory paths.**

#### **Specific Plan Summary**

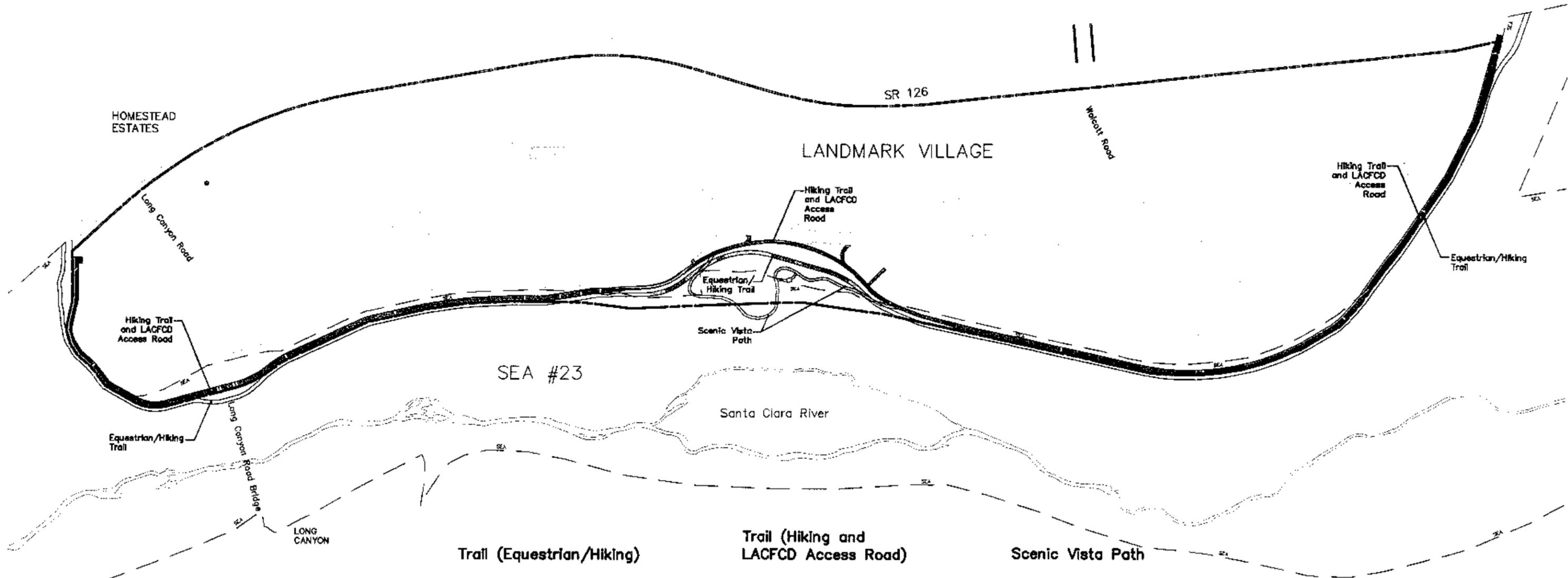
The County's Board of Supervisors already found that the Specific Plan and CUP No. 94-087-(5) met Design Compatibility Criterion No. 6, above. In summary, the Board found that the Specific Plan proposed the construction of three bridges and several utility lines across the Santa

Clara River, within the existing SEA 23. Utilities serving the proposed Specific Plan, where feasible, would be incorporated with the river bridges.

The Board also found that the bridge crossings would have support columns in the riverbed, but the crossings are elevated structures so as to reduce impacts on river vegetation and sensitive species and to allow species that move along the river course to continue to use existing resources. Moreover, the Board found that the elevated bridge crossings would ultimately replace the existing at-grade agriculture crossings, which would minimize the amount of direct disturbance to the riverbed and its environs. Based on the assessment provided in the Newhall Ranch Final Additional Analysis, Section 2.4, SEA General Plan Consistency, the Board concluded that the roads and utilities serving the Specific Plan were located and designed so as not to conflict with critical resources, habitat areas or migratory paths.

### **Landmark Village Summary**

Consistent with the approved Specific Plan, at the project level, the Landmark Village development will design and locate project roads and utilities so as not to conflict with critical resources, habitat areas or migratory paths. The vast majority of roadways and utilities serving Landmark Village are removed far to the north of SEA 23 and has no impacts on it. The number and location of the bridge crossings were established by the Specific Plan in part to minimize impacts on SEA 23 and other sensitive resources. As part of the Landmark Village development, the Long Canyon Road Bridge crossing will be implemented. All other roads within the Landmark Village development are designed to parallel SEA and loop back to the planned Long Canyon Road Bridge crossing, or to SR-126. All roads used by daily vehicular traffic are outside SEA 23. Only minor encroachment from trails and public improvements encroach within the SEA. The roads and utilities serving the Landmark Village development will be further assessed as part of the environmental review process for the proposed project.

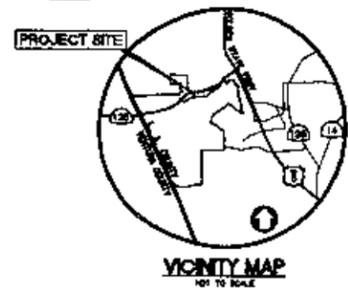


**Legend**

- Project Boundary
- SEA #23 Boundary - 2003
- Santa Clara River

Trail (Equestrian/Hiking)	Trail (Hiking and LACFCD Access Road)	Scenic Vista Path
8300 sf 2 Areas Inside SEA/Inside Tract	97,275 sf 2 Areas Inside SEA/Inside Tract	4775 sf 3 Areas Inside SEA/Inside Tract
104,150 sf 2 Areas Inside SEA/Outside Tract	No Areas Inside SEA/Outside Tract	2835 sf 1 Area Inside SEA/Outside Tract
21,320 sf 2 Areas Outside SEA/Inside Tract	88,700 sf 3 Areas Outside SEA/Inside Tract	8805 sf 2 Areas Outside SEA/Inside Tract
4,220 sf 1 Area Outside SEA/Outside Tract	625 sf 1 Area Outside SEA/Outside Tract	No Areas Outside SEA/Outside Tract

Note: Trail and path widths as shown are exaggerated and not to scale. Boundaries and Rights of Way are for illustrative Purposes only. Area calculations are approximate. Location which is shown is meant to be illustrative and not precise. The exact location will be determined at a later date after additional biological studies are conducted and in consultation with DFG and other resource agencies.



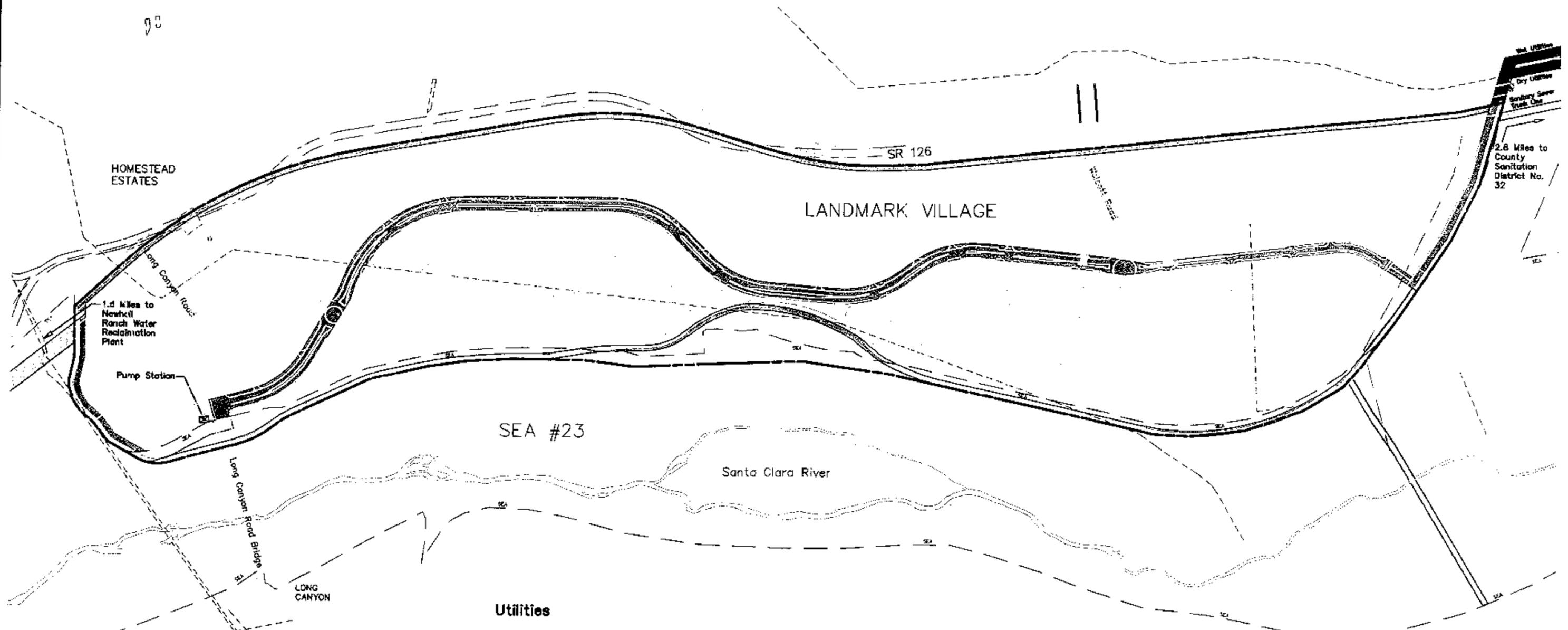
Landmark Village at  
**NEWHALL RANCH**



VTTM 53108  
SEA ENCROACHMENT  
EXHIBIT  
TRAILS AND  
PATHS

**PSOMAS**

DATE: 03-20-04 REVISED ON: 03/21/05  
JOB No: 1NRC010700 SHEET 1 OF 7

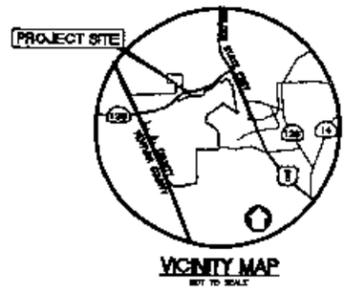


**Legend**

- Project Boundary
- SEA #23 Boundary - 2003
- Santa Clara River

- Utilities**
- 258,825 sf 3 Area Inside SEA/Inside Tract
  - 5 Areas Inside SEA/Outside Tract
  - 1,282,225 sf 5 Areas Outside SEA/Inside Tract
  - 4 Areas Outside SEA/Outside Tract

**Note:** Boundaries and Rights of Way are for Illustrative Purposes only. Area calculations are approximate. Area acreages outside the limits of this drawing are not included. Utility locations shown are potential locations and meant to be illustrative and not precise. Utilities may include, but not limited to, water, sewer, storm drains, electrical, gas, cable, and fiber optic lines.



Landmark Village at  
**NEWHALL RANCH.**

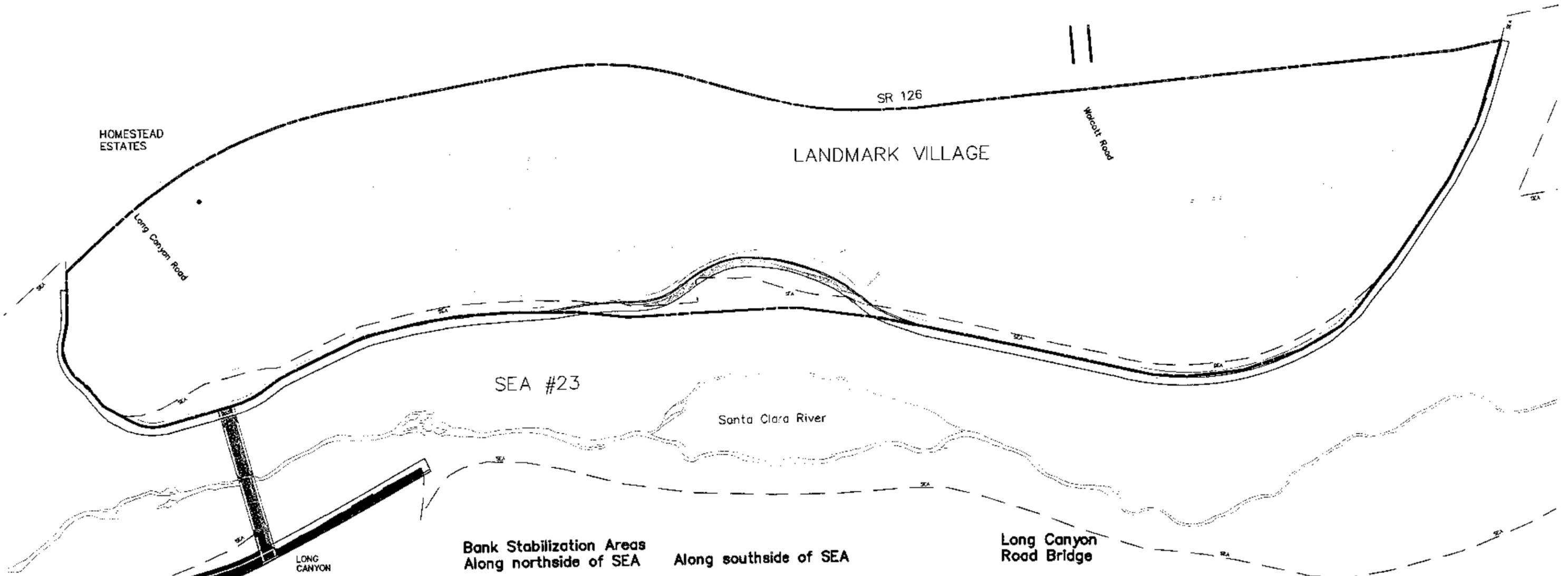


VTTM 53108  
SEA ENCROACHMENT  
EXHIBIT  
LOCATION OF  
UTILITIES

**P S O M A S**

DATE: 03-20-04 REVISED ON: 03/21/05  
JOB No: INRC010700 SHEET 2 OF 7

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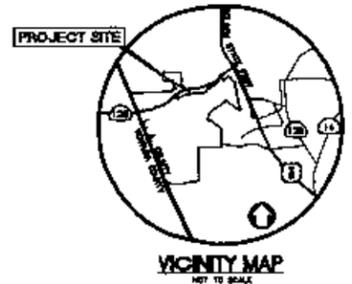


**Legend**

-  Project Boundary
-  SEA #23 Boundary - 2003
-  Santa Clara River

Bank Stabilization Areas Along northside of SEA	Along southside of SEA	Long Canyon Road Bridge
 41,400 sf 3 Areas Inside SEA/Inside Tract	No Areas Inside SEA/Inside Tract	 22,000 sf 1 Area Inside SEA/Inside Tract
 475,675 sf 2 Areas Inside SEA/Outside Tract	308,675 sf 2 Areas Inside SEA/Outside Tract	 83,725 sf 1 Area Inside SEA/Outside Tract
 96,400 sf 3 Areas Outside SEA/Inside Tract	No Areas Outside SEA/Inside Tract	 No Areas Outside SEA/Inside Tract
 No Areas Outside SEA/Outside Tract	283,600 sf 4 Areas Outside SEA/Outside Tract	 15,125 sf 1 Area Outside SEA/Outside Tract

Note: Boundaries and Rights of Way are for illustrative purposes only. Area calculations are approximate and include areas outside of the limits of this drawing. Location which is shown is meant to be illustrative and not precise.



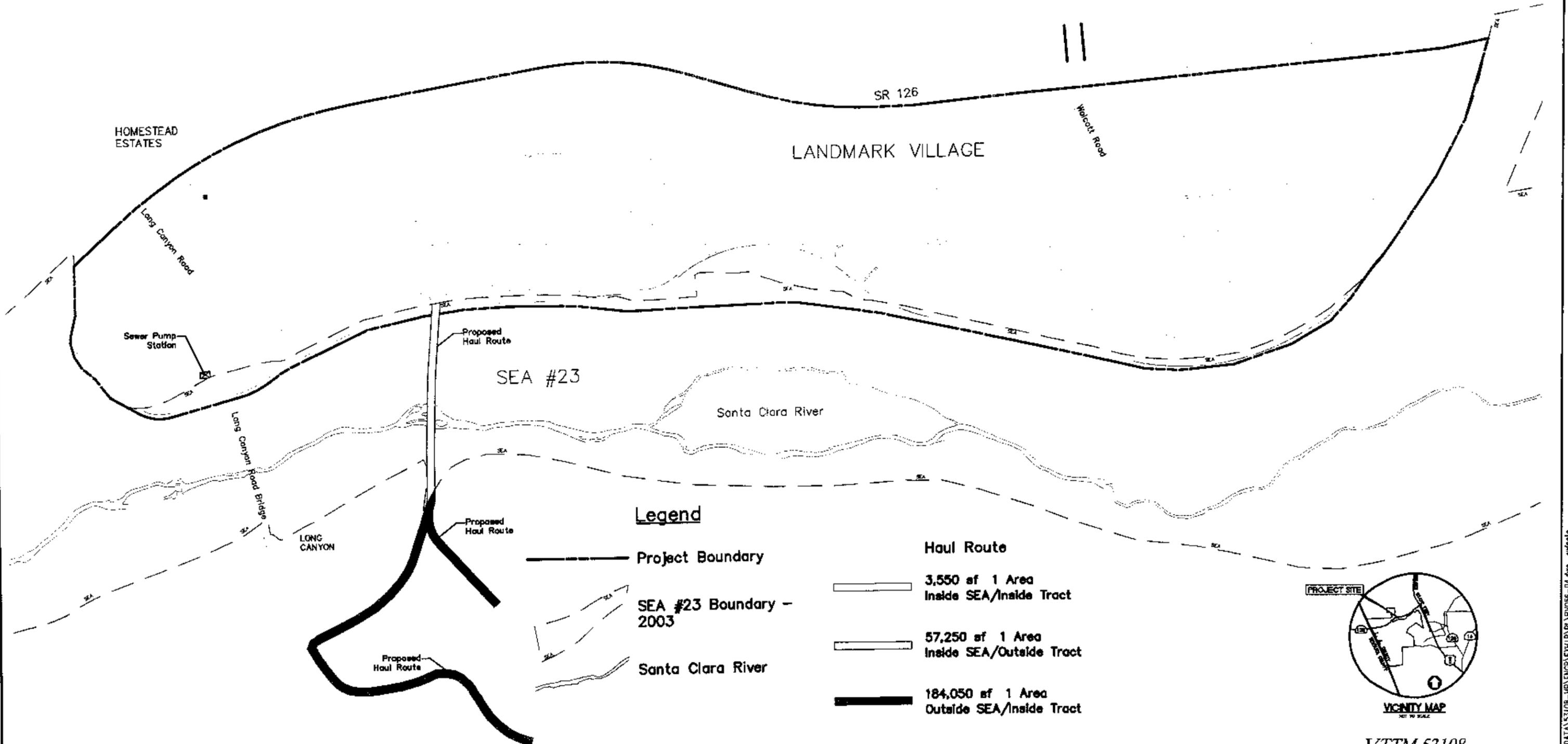
Landmark Village at  
**NEWHALL RANCH.**



VTTM 53108  
SEA ENCROACHMENT  
EXHIBIT  
BANK STABILIZATION AND  
LONG CANYON ROAD BRIDGE

**PSOMAS**

DATE: 03-20-04 REVISED ON: 03/21/05  
JOB No: INRC010700 SHEET 3 OF 7



**Legend**

-  Project Boundary
-  SEA #23 Boundary - 2003
-  Santa Clara River
- Haul Route**
-  3,550 sf 1 Area Inside SEA/Inside Tract
-  57,250 sf 1 Area Inside SEA/Outside Tract
-  184,050 sf 1 Area Outside SEA/Inside Tract

Zone 1A  
Water Tank -  
Long Canyon  
(20 MG)

**Note:** Haul Route widths as shown are exaggerated and not to scale. Area calculations are approximate and assume a 50 foot width. Locations which are shown are meant to be illustrative and not precise. Boundaries and Rights of Way are for illustrative purposes only.

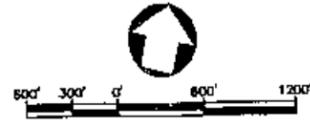


**VTTM 53108**  
**SEA ENCROACHMENT**  
**EXHIBIT**  
**HAUL ROUTE**

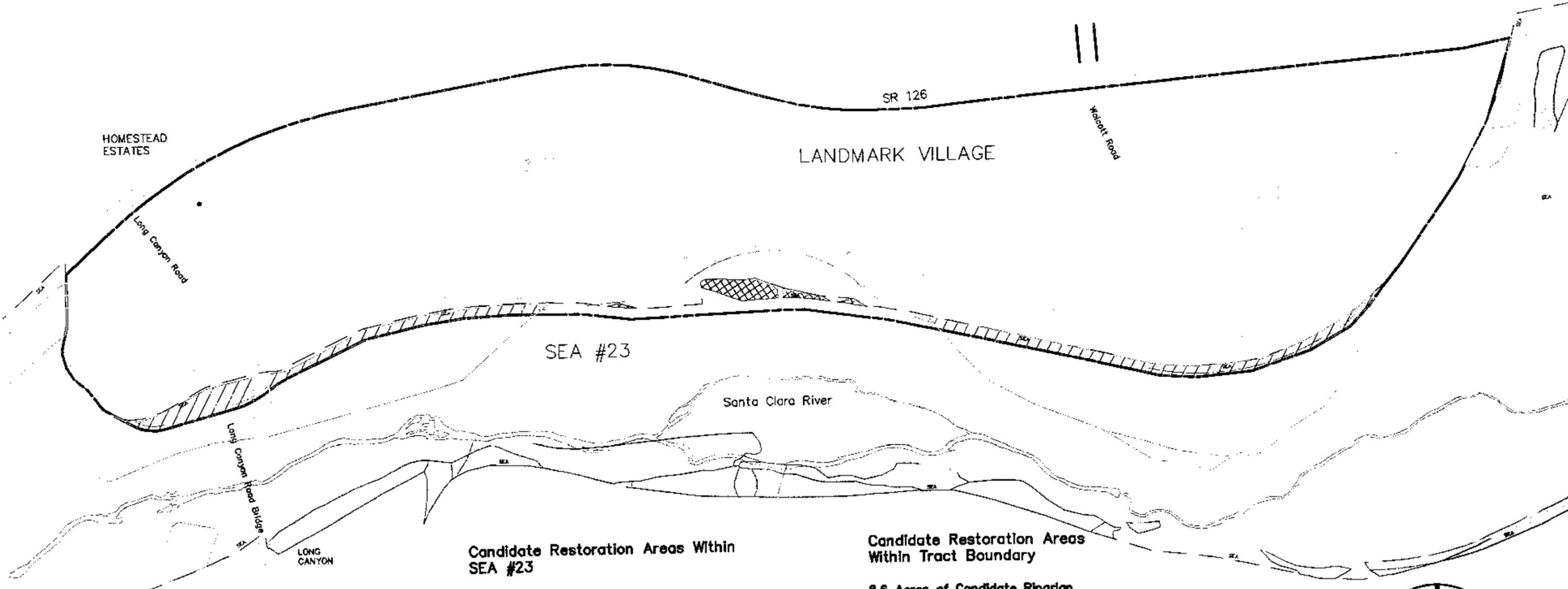
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JOB No: 1NRC010700 SHEET 4 OF 7

Landmark Village at  
**NEWHALL RANCH.**

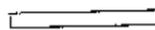
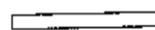
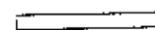


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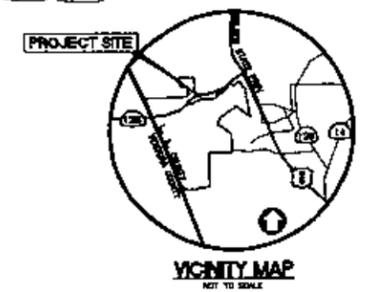
**Legend**

-  Project Boundary
-  SEA #23 Boundary - 2003
-  Santa Clara River

- Candidate Restoration Areas Within SEA #23**
-  87 Acres of Candidate Riparian Restoration/Enhancement Areas
  -  108 Acres of Sensitive Habitat Redesignated from Residential and Non-Residential Land Uses to Proposed SEA #23
  -  14 Acres of Sensitive Habitat Added to Proposed SEA #23
  -  Water Course

- Candidate Restoration Areas Within Tract Boundary**
-  8.6 Acres of Candidate Riparian Restoration/Enhancement Areas Within Tract Boundary
  -  1.5 Acres of Sensitive Habitat Redesignated from Residential and Non-Residential Land Uses to Proposed SEA #23 Within Tract Boundary
  -  No Areas of Sensitive Habitat Added to Proposed SEA #23 Within Tract Boundary

Note: Not all of Candidate Restoration Areas outside of the Tract Boundary are shown. Boundaries and Rights of Way are for Illustrative Purposes only. Area calculations are approximate and include Candidate Restoration Areas outside of the limits of this drawing. Locations of Candidate Restoration Areas are meant to be illustrative and precise location may shift based on more detailed, future biological surveys.

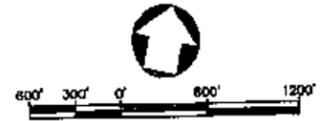


VTTM 53108  
SEA ENCROACHMENT  
EXHIBIT  
CANDIDATE  
RESTORATION AREAS

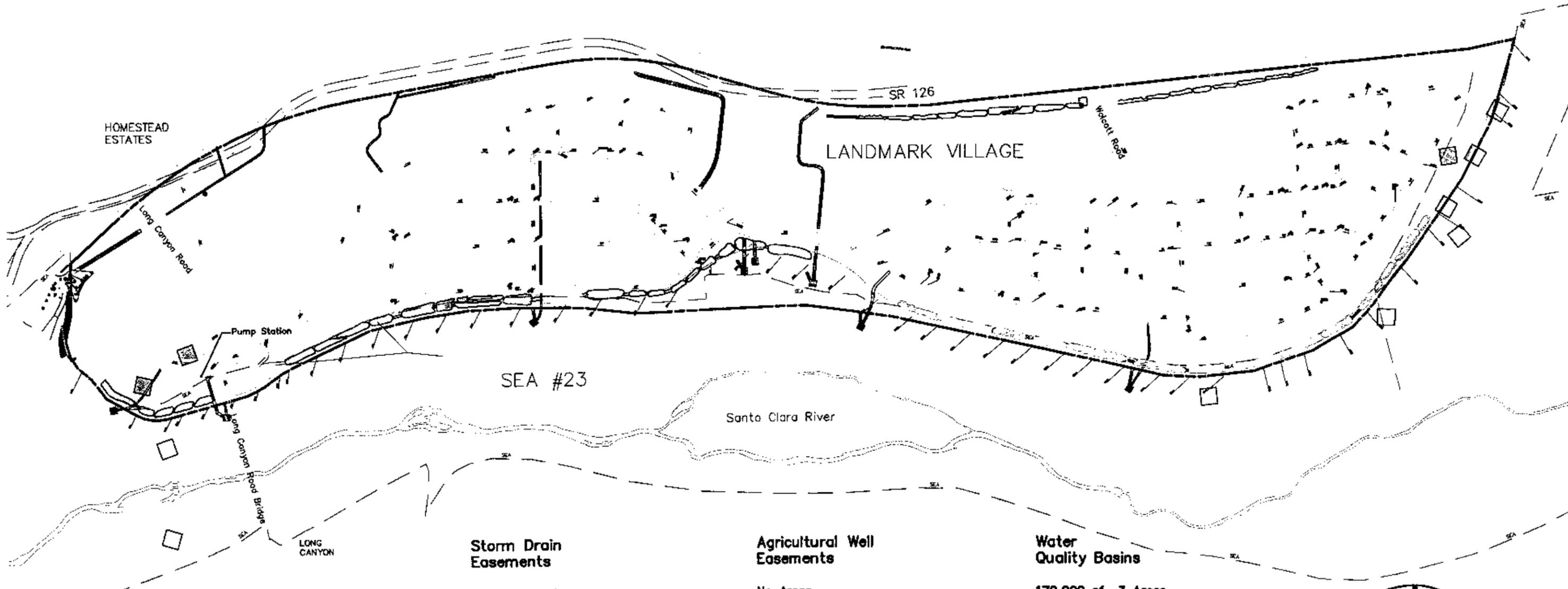
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DATE: 03-20-04 REVISED ON: 03/21/05  
JOB No: 1NRC010700 SHEET 5 OF 7

Landmark Village at  
**NEWHALL RANCH.**



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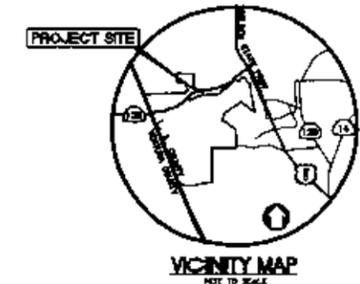


**Legend**

- Project Boundary
- SEA #23 Boundary - 2003
- Santa Clara River

Storm Drain Easements	Agricultural Well Easements	Water Quality Basins
5325 sf 5 Areas Inside SEA/Inside Tract	No Areas Inside SEA/Inside Tract	179,000 sf 3 Areas Inside SEA/Inside Tract
17,500 sf 5 Areas Inside SEA/Outside Tract	70075 sf 8 Areas Inside SEA/Outside Tract	No Areas Inside SEA/Outside Tract
99,500 sf 16 Areas Outside SEA/Inside Tract	42,450 sf 7 Areas Outside SEA/Inside Tract	50,000 sf 3 Areas Outside SEA/Inside Tract
No Areas Outside SEA/Outside Tract	No Areas Outside SEA/Outside Tract	No Areas Outside SEA/Outside Tract

Note: Easement widths as shown are exaggerated and not to scale. Boundaries and Rights of Way are for illustrative purposes only. Area calculations are approximate. Locations which are shown are meant to be illustrative and not precise.



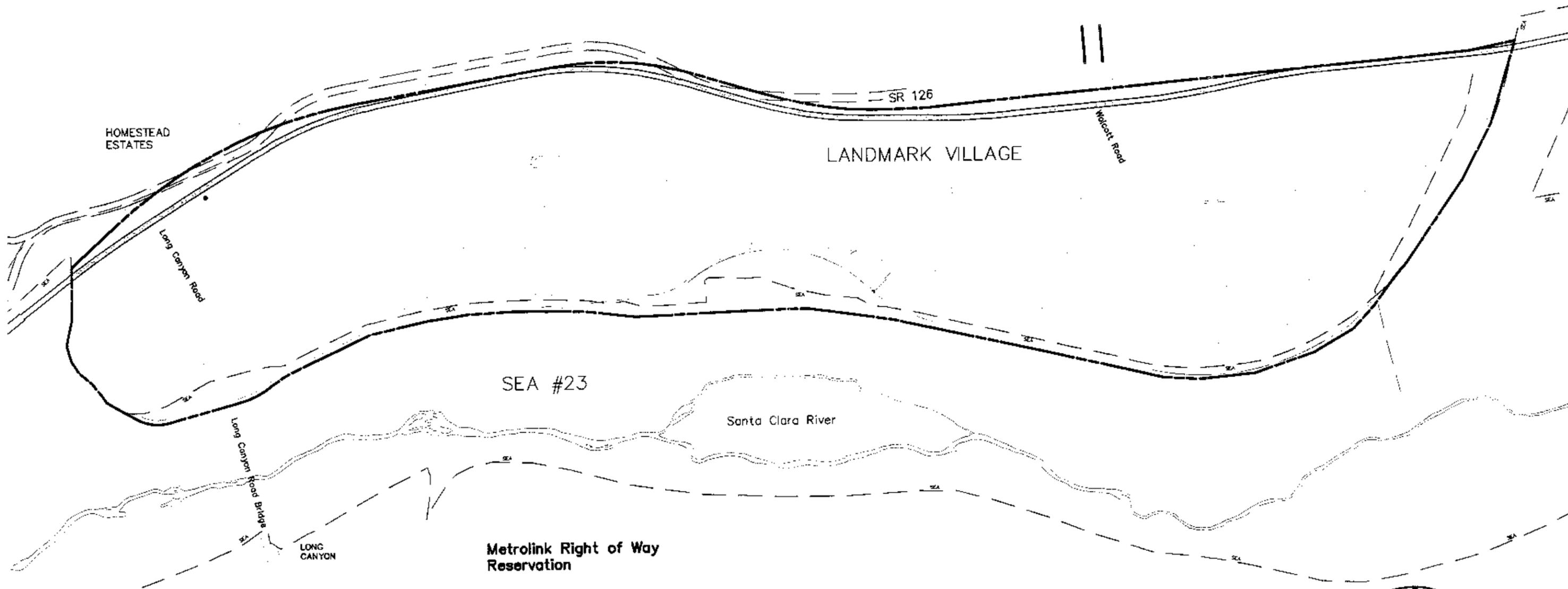
Landmark Village at  
**NEWHALL RANCH.**



VTTM 53108  
SEA ENCROACHMENT  
EXHIBIT  
STORM DRAINS, AG WELLS AND  
WATER QUALITY BASINS

**PSOMAS**

DATE: 03-20-04 REVISED ON: 03/21/05  
JOB No: 1NRC010700 SHEET 6 OF 7



**Legend**

- Project Boundary
- SEA #23 Boundary - 2003
- Santa Clara River

- Metrolink Right of Way Reservation**
- No Areas Inside SEA/Inside Tract
  - 3 Areas Inside SEA/Outside Tract
  - 1 Areas Outside SEA/Inside Tract
  - 3 Areas Outside SEA/Outside Tract

**Note:** Reservation width as shown is exaggerated and not to scale. Area counts are approximate and include areas outside the limits of this drawing. Boundaries and Rights of Way are for illustrative purposes only. Reservation location shown is potential location and meant to be illustrative and not precise.



Landmark Village at  
**NEWHALL RANCH**



VTTM 53108  
**SEA ENCROACHMENT  
EXHIBIT  
METROLINK RIGHT OF WAY  
RESERVATION**

**PSOMAS**

DATE: 03-20-04 REVISED ON: 03/21/05  
JOB No: 1NRC010700 SHEET 7 OF 7

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**CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT**  
**BURDEN OF PROOF**  
**FOR (1) OFF-SITE TRANSPORT OF MATERIALS,**  
**(2) GRADING OF DEBRIS BASINS, AND**  
**(3) GRADING FOR THE WIDENING OF SR-126.**  
**VTTM No. 053108**

Background

In order to implement the development of Landmark Village (formerly River Village), it will be necessary to import fill material from Adobe Canyon. It will also be necessary to grade for debris basins in Chiquito Canyon and grade for the widening of SR-126.

Newhall Land Company will need a net import of 6 million cubic yards of fill material from a potential borrow site (see "Proposed Adobe Canyon Borrow Site Haul Route" exhibit). The borrow site that has been identified, is located at Adobe Canyon about 4,000 feet south of SR 126, which is south of Landmark Village, south of the Santa Clara River, and east of the planned future Long Canyon Road.

There are two proposed haul routes for exporting the fill material from Adobe Canyon (see *Proposed Borrow Site Haul Route* exhibit). Newhall Land would arrange for the material to be exported via truck or scraper from two distinct locations within the borrow site. The two haul routes would then merge onto an existing agricultural crossing that would cross the Santa Clara River and enter Landmark Village. The first proposed haul route begins toward the center of the borrow site and travels west to the existing agricultural crossing. The second proposed haul route begins in the northwest corner of the borrow site and merges on to the existing agricultural crossing, which then heads north into Landmark Village (see exhibit).

It will also be necessary to grade the debris basins in Chiquito Canyon north of SR-126 concurrently with the grading required for the widening of SR-126 so as to avoid wiping out the debris basins within Chiquito Canyon from the grading of SR-126 that would occur in the future (see "Chiquito Canyon/SR-126 Grading" exhibit). The grading for the debris basins in Chiquito Canyon and the widening of SR-126 combined will involve 1,019,000 cubic yards of raw cut. The net volume (after shrinkage) of 866,000 cubic yards will be placed as fill in accordance with County Ordinance requirements in three designated locations as indicated on the exhibit.

Under the Implementation Procedures of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan (Section 5.2 g), the "off-site transport of materials" is addressed through the Substantial Conformance process. As such, the following information is required:

- *Name and address of all persons owning all or any part of the property from which such material is proposed to be removed and to which it is proposed to be transported:*

The property owner of the borrow site and fill site is Newhall Land Company. The property owner's mailing address is:  
23823 Valencia Boulevard,  
Valencia, CA 91355-2194,

- *The names and address of the person or person who will be conducting the operations proposed:*

No grading contractor has been selected by Newhall Land Company.

- *The ultimate use of the property:*

As more fully described in other entitlement applications, Landmark Village is planned as a mixed-use, neo-traditional development.

Section 5.2 d of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan requires that the Planning Director make the following findings in approving a request for Substantial Conformance:

- *The request substantially conforms with all applicable provisions of the Specific Plan and Los Angeles County ordinances which do not conflict with the Specific Plan.*

The Landmark Village site must be elevated in order to avoid flood issues. Raising the site will occur by importing fill material from the borrow site location. The request to transport material to Landmark Village in order to implement the project is consistent with the mixed-use development planned for Landmark Village as articulated in the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan. By making the site ready for development, the importation of fill will allow Landmark Village to be developed in a manner consistent with all requirements of the Specific Plan (e.g., planned uses, densities, infrastructure, parks, trails, etc.).

The (revised) Specific Plan was approved by the Board of Supervisors in 2003. The proposed grading operation is consistent with planned grading operations as depicted in the Specific Plan [see enclosed exhibit – Figure 1.0-14 (Conceptual Grading Plan)].

- *The request will not adversely affect public health and safety.*

Inasmuch as the borrow site (Adobe Canyon), import site (Landmark Village), grading sites, and transport routes are not located in any inhabitable area, there will be no adverse impacts on the public's health or safety. Before material is physically removed from the borrow site location, a soils engineer will be engaged to ensure that no slope failures will occur due to the removal of material.

- *The request will not adversely affect adjacent property.*

Adjacent property is all owned by Newhall Land Company, so no other property owner would be adversely impacted by the grading operation or transportation of fill material. Even so, there will be an on-site engineer during operations to ensure that grading does not negatively affect Newhall Land Company's adjacent ownership (e.g., causing unanticipated landslides). When the Board of Supervisors approved the (revised) Newhall Ranch Specific Plan in 2003, many grading mitigation measures were adopted that addressed aesthetics, noise, air quality (fugitive dust), re-compaction and stabilization (buttress fills, shear keys) to ensure that no property would be adversely affected.

- A. *That the requested use at the location proposed will not:*
1. *Adversely affect the health, peace, comfort or welfare of persons residing or working in the surrounding area.*

Ultimately, the use of the property is the development of the community of Landmark Village. This development requires a net importation of 6 million cubic yards of fill material in order to protect the future inhabitants from potential flooding. The development will also require the grading for the debris basins in Chiquito Canyon, north of SR-126. Along with the grading for the debris basins, it will be necessary to assume the required grading for the widening of SR-126 concurrently so as to not have conflicting grading operations. The grading that is required for the widening of SR-126 is necessary to accommodate the increased traffic capacity that will result from the development of Landmark Village. Therefore, contrary to having an adverse impact, the proposed grading operations will be beneficial to the future residents and businesses at Landmark Village.

The (revised) Specific Plan was approved by the Board of Supervisors in 2003. The proposed grading operation is consistent with planned grading operations as depicted in the Specific Plan (see enclosed exhibit – Figure 1.0-14 (Conceptual Grading Plan)).

Operationally, any potential adverse effects that may arise at the grading sites, borrow site or transport routes will be addressed by incorporating recommendations from the soils engineer that address unstable slope conditions, and flag-men to facilitate truck traffic.

2. *Be materially detrimental to the use, enjoyment or valuation of property of others persons located in the vicinity of the site.*

The grading operations will be temporary in nature. Potential noise and traffic conflicts will be addressed in the Landmark Village environmental impact report, and measures will be proposed to mitigate these impacts. Properties most likely to be impacted – those adjacent to the borrow sites - are owned by the project proponent, Newhall Land Company. The applicant's soils engineer and the County Department of Public Works will ensure that slopes at the borrow sites are engineered for stability and that appropriate erosion control measures are in place.

3. *Jeopardize, endanger or otherwise constitute a menace to the public health, safety or general welfare.*

The off-site transport of fill material necessary for Landmark Village will not be a menace to the community because mitigation measures (e.g., flag-men) will be required to ensure the safe flow of traffic. The placement of the fill material at Landmark Village has been reviewed by the Department of Public Works (DPW) in connection with the review of grading and geotechnical report filed with VTTM No. 53108. DPW is satisfied that there is no danger to the public health, safety or general welfare. That is, grading is consistent with County ordinances and the recommendations and design requirements of County approval of the aforementioned geotechnical report.

When the Board of Supervisors approved the (revised) Newhall Ranch Specific Plan in 2003, many grading mitigation measures were adopted that addressed aesthetics, noise, air quality (fugitive dust), re-compaction and stabilization (buttress fills, shear keys) to ensure that no property would be adversely affected.

- B. *That the proposed site is adequate in size and shape to accommodate the yards, walls, fences, parking and loading facilities, landscaping and other development features prescribed in this Title 22, or as is otherwise required in order to integrate said use with the uses in the surrounding area.*

The borrow site is adequate in size to allow for the removal and export of fill material without incurring any physical constraints. The location is not for

development purposes and, therefore, there is no issue relative to yards (setbacks), walls, fences, parking and loading facilities. Grading operations sites will conclude with adequate erosion control (to include landscaping) to ensure that the site is not left in a state that would otherwise be unsafe.

The recipient site – Landmark Village – will be in compliance with all the development standards required by the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan.

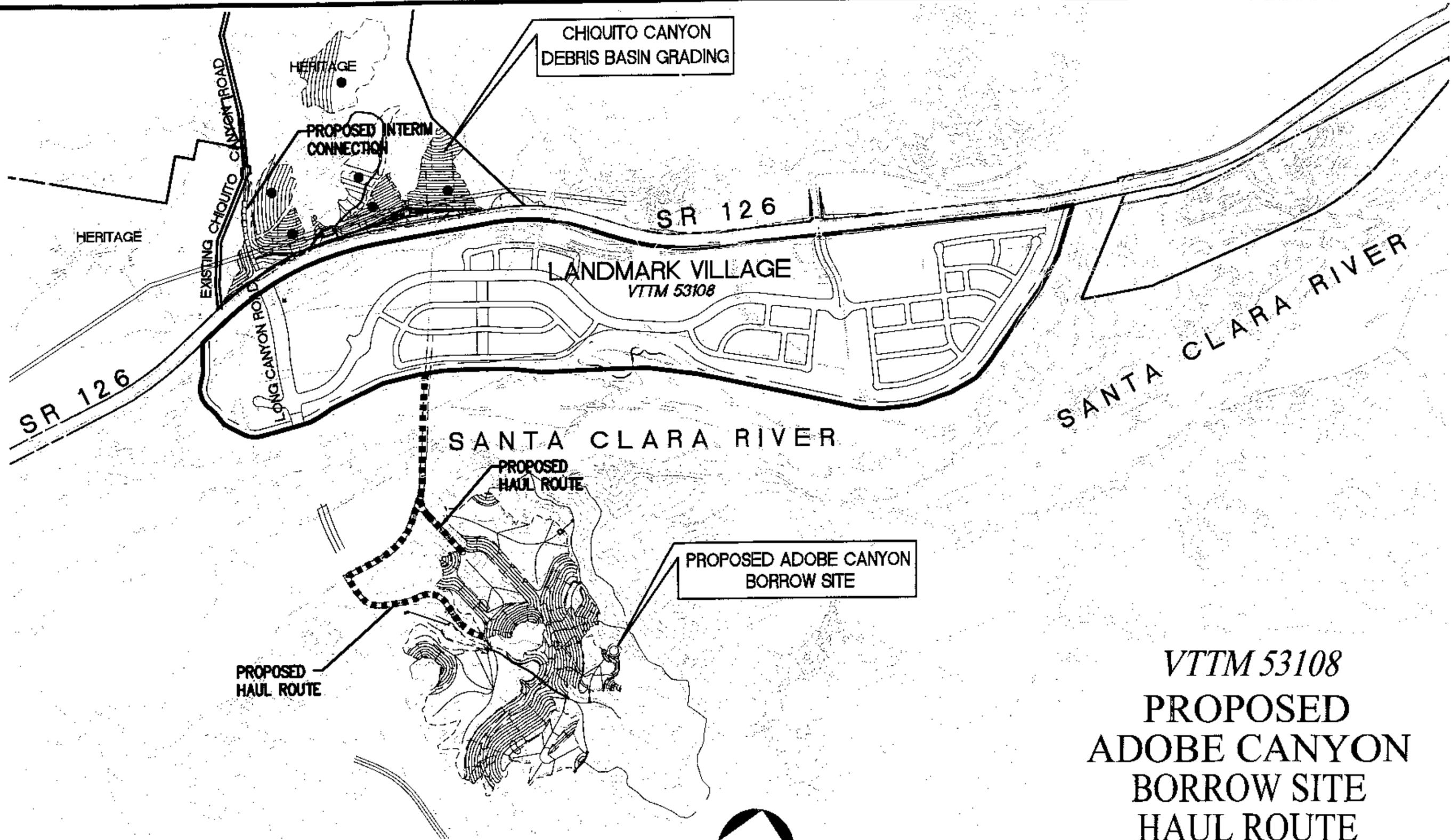
*C. That the proposed site is adequately served:*

- 1. By highways or streets of sufficient width and improved as necessary to carry the kind and quantity of traffic such use would generate.*

The borrow site will be adequately served by the two haul routes between the proposed Adobe Canyon borrow site and Landmark Village as shown in "Proposed Adobe Canyon Borrow Site Haul Route" exhibit and by the proposed interim connection between SR-126 and existing Chiquito Canyon Road. Landmark Village will have a sufficient circulation network to meet the operational demands of the future community.

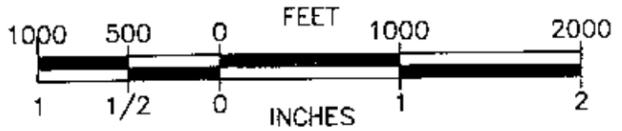
- 2. By other public or private service facilities as are required.*

No service facilities are required at the borrow site. Landmark Village will be adequately served by public and/or private facilities. These will include not only traditional infrastructure such as sewers, storm drains, and streets, but also an elementary school, parks, and shopping.



**LEGEND**

----- PROPOSED HAUL ROUTE



*VTTM 53108*  
**PROPOSED  
 ADOBE CANYON  
 BORROW SITE  
 HAUL ROUTE**

**PSOMAS**

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## **CONDITIONAL USE PERMITS**

### **Burden of Proof Off-site Water Tanks**

**VTTM 53108**

#### **Background**

The proposed project, Landmark Village, is a master planned residential community located within the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan area. The community primarily consists of single-family and multi-family residences (including condominiums, duplexes and apartments), mixed-use/commercial development, parks, and open space. Facilities and infrastructure to support the proposed project consist of roads, trails, drainage improvements and flood protection (including buried bank stabilization within the Santa Clara River), potable and reclaimed water systems - including water tanks - and a sanitary sewer system.

To serve Landmark Village, there are two (2) proposed water tanks for reclaimed water and two (2) tanks for potable water located outside the Landmark Village project boundary (but within the NRSP area). These proposed tanks are subject to conditional use permits per Section 22.24.150 of the Los Angeles County Municipal Code.

The proposed potable and reclaimed water tank system is consistent with, and implements the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan's approved Conceptual Backbone Water Plan (Exhibit 2.5-2 of the Draft EIR). Consistent with the NRSP, the retail potable water will be provided by the Valencia Water Company. The proposed tanks will be located on three separate sites, outside the boundaries depicted on the Landmark Village tentative tract map. The sites have been selected based on the water pressure zones that have been established near the project site. The multiple tank system is necessary to ensure an adequate source of supply and storage to maintain the system's reliability, safety, and efficiency and it also provides for flexibility in the ultimate location of necessary tanks.

Two of the proposed water tanks for reclaimed water are to be located north of Landmark Village in Chiquito Canyon. This location was selected due to its natural elevation and remoteness to the project area. This area will be able to accommodate the two water tanks that would also be able to share water lines. The site would require approximately a one-acre pad to be graded for each tank. The tanks are anticipated to be 32' in height, and 132' in diameter with a capacity of 3 million gallons. The treated water will be pumped from the existing County Water Reclamation Plant (WRP) 32 located near Interstate-5 just south of Highway SR-126. The reclaimed water to be stored in the proposed tanks will be available to the community of Landmark Village and beyond for specified irrigation and firefighting purposes. In addition to the two proposed new tanks, there is a third possible reclaimed water tank location. An existing water tank located near the treatment plant by Interstate-5 just south of Highway SR-126 may be determined to be an appropriate location for the future reclaimed tank. Although it is an existing tank

originally intended for potable water, minor improvements will be necessary in order to upgrade the waterline system that connects to it.

The two water tanks for potable water are proposed to be located north of Landmark Village as well. The first tank is proposed to be located in Chiquito Canyon just south of the two proposed reclaimed water tanks mentioned above. The second tank is proposed to be located west of Commerce Center Drive, just north of an existing potable water tank that currently serves the Valencia Commerce Center located nearby. These locations were selected due to its natural elevation and remoteness to the project area. The tanks will each require approximately a one-acre graded pad area. The tanks are anticipated to be approximately 32' in height and 152' in diameter with a capacity of 4 million gallons.

## Findings

### A. That the requested use at the location proposed will not:

- 1) Adversely affect the health, peace, comfort or welfare of persons residing or working in the surrounding area, or
- 2) Be materially detrimental to the use, enjoyment or valuation of property of other persons located in the vicinity of the site, or
- 3) Jeopardize, endanger or otherwise constitute a menace to the public health, safety or general welfare.

The proposed water tanks in Landmark Village will not adversely affect the health, peace, comfort or welfare of persons residing or working in the surrounding area. Rather, the proposed water tanks will serve the needs of residents of Landmark Village as well as other surrounding Newhall Ranch developments. The potable water tanks will be able to service the communities with safe and quality drinking water. Even more, the reclaimed water will significantly contribute to water conservation as it will be able to offer treated water for irrigation and firefighting purposes.

The proposed water tanks will not be materially detrimental to the use, enjoyment or valuation of property of other persons located in the vicinity of the site. The two locations for the proposed potable water tanks have been strategically selected to consider a natural elevation that would provide adequate water service in an efficient manner as well as minimize any possible negative impacts from the communities. The locations are located so that they may adequately serve Landmark Village in addition to its surrounding communities. In addition, the proposed site for the second potable water tank located west of Commerce Center Drive already contains an existing water tank that serves the Valencia Commerce Center. The sites for the reclaimed water tanks have also been selected to consider efficiency of service as well as the visual impacts from the residents in the community. The two new reclaimed water tanks are to be located in Chiquito Canyon just north of the proposed potable water tank.

The proposed water tanks will not jeopardize, endanger or otherwise constitute a

menace to the public health, safety or general welfare. Rather, they are necessary for provision of a necessary resource. The potable tanks will provide quality drinking water, a necessary resource and the reclaimed water tanks will assist in potable water conservation by using reclaimed water for irrigation and other purposes.

**B. That the proposed site is adequate in size and shape to accommodate the yards, walls, fences, parking and loading facilities, landscaping and other development features prescribed in this Title 22, or as is otherwise required in order to integrate said use with the uses in the surrounding area.**

The three sites for the proposed tanks are adequate in size and shape to accommodate the two water tanks. As mentioned above, the sites have been selected after careful consideration of impacts to neighboring communities as well as taking advantage of the natural elevation that provide for an efficient delivery system minimizing the aid of pumps and other machinery. Each site will require a one-acre graded pad, approximately. The requests for the necessary off-site grading and improvements related to the water tanks have been included in an accompanying request for a conditional use permit. The tanks do not require any parking or loading spaces, although there will be vehicular access to the tanks should any future maintenance be required. The tanks will be hidden from view by a 30-foot berm surrounding them. By sinking the tanks into the landscape and berming the edge, the water tanks will be fully integrated with the surrounding area and have minimal visual impact.

The water tank options have been discussed in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and are depicted on the tentative tract map (VTTM) 53108. The proposed project would be developed in conformance with all applicable County Codes including, but not limited to, the Subdivision Code, Grading Code, Building Codes and all required mitigation measures.

**C. That the proposed site is adequately served:**

- 1) By highways or streets of sufficient width and improved as necessary to carry the kind and quantity of traffic such use would generate, and**
- 2) By other public or private service facilities as are required.**

The three sites will take access from public/private streets. Since two of the three sites – west of Commerce Center Drive and the site near the County WRP 32 – contain existing tanks, minor improvements will be necessary to upgrade access from public/private roads to the graded across for each tank.. The proposed site for the one proposed potable and two proposed reclaimed tanks in Chiquito Canyon will require new construction vehicular access to each of the graded pad areas.

Landmark Village has been designed to be in conformance with the approved the Mobility Plan (Section 2.4) of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan, which provides for a hierarchy of highways and streets that will provide a safe and efficient circulation system. The residential communities will be directly served by a system of public,

“private and future” streets and private drives, which meet Department of Public Works and Fire Department access criteria.

Highway and street widths and standards will be reviewed and approved by the County's Subdivision Committee, which would specify conditions of approval for the subdivision. In addition, a traffic modeling study will be completed using the methodology and standards specified by Los Angeles County, and utilizing the Los Angeles County/City of Santa Clarita Consolidated Traffic Model. The traffic studies for the project will be incorporated into the Draft EIR. The project would conform to all conditions of approval for VTTM 53108, as well as to all required mitigation measures.

No other public or private services are necessary for the tanks.

# Request for OAK TREE PERMIT



Los Angeles County DEPARTMENT OF  
320 West Temple Street, Los Angeles, Ca, 90012

## Regional Planning

NOTE: It is the applicant's responsibility to notify the Planning Director of any change of the principals involved in this case prior to the completion of processing.

CONCURRENT CASES: \_\_\_\_\_

VTTM 53108 / Oak Tree Permit 00-196

### APPLICANT

Name  
Newhall Land  
Address  
23823 Valencia Blvd.  
City  
Valencia, CA 91355  
Telephone  
(661) 255-4217

### PROPERTY OWNER

Name  
Newhall Land  
Address  
23823 Valencia Blvd.  
City  
Valencia, CA 91355  
Telephone  
(661) 255-4217

### OWNER'S AUTHORIZATION:

I certify that I am the owner of the herein described property and permit the application to file this request

Location (i.e. address or general description of location) and legal description of property in question: (use additional sheets as necessary) Generally south of State Route 126 & north of the Santa Clara River.  
Legal description: PARCELS 14, 15, 16, 17 OF PARCEL MAP 24500-01 PMB 29.3-34 / 67, RECORDS OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY.

How many oak trees will be cut, removed, relocated, damaged or will have encroachments into their protected zone? 67 will be removed and 14 may be subject to damage. (81 trees total will require an Oak Tree Permit

How many oak trees will remain? 120

Will trees be replaced? Yes. If yes, indicate the proposed size, type, location (indicate on site plan) and schedule planting. Oak trees removed will be replaced by a tree of the same species at a ratio of 2:1.

Schedule of planting is to be determined.

### BURDEN OF PROOF

Submit additional sheets describing how the following findings will be satisfied.

- A That the proposed construction or proposed use will be accomplished without endangering the health of the remaining trees subject to this Part 16, if any, on the subject property, and
- B That the removal or relocation of the oak tree(s) proposed will not result in soil erosion through the diversion or increased flow of surface waters which can not be satisfactorily mitigated, and
- C That in addition to the above facts at least one of the following findings apply:
  1. That the removal of oak tree(s) proposed is necessary as continued existence at present location(s) frustrates the planned improvement or proposed use of the subject property to such an extent that:
    - a Alternate development plans cannot achieve the same permitted density or that the cost of such alternative would be prohibitive, or
    - b Placement of such tree(s) precludes the reasonable and efficient use of such property for a use otherwise authorized, or
  - 2 That the oak tree(s) proposed for removal or relocation interfere with utility service or streets and highways either within or outside of the subject property and no reasonable alternative to such interference exists other than removal of the tree(s), or
  3. That the oak tree(s) proposed for removal, with reference to seriously debilitating disease or danger of falling, is such that it cannot be remedied through reasonable preservation procedures and practice.
  4. That the removal of the oak tree(s) proposed will not be contrary to or be in substantial conflict with the intent and purpose of the oak tree permit procedure.

**Oak Tree Permit 00-196**  
**Project Description and Burden of Proof**  
**VTTM No. 53108**  
**Landmark Village**

In connection with Vesting Tentative Tract Map 53108, an oak tree permit is requested to remove or possibly impact a total of 81 oak trees. There are a total of 201 oak trees within the Landmark Village Planning Area (which includes Landmark Village VTTM 53108, all proposed grading limits and the area within 200 feet of the proposed grading line). Of the total 201 oak trees that were surveyed, 67 trees are proposed to be removed, 14 may be impacted from operations occurring within the protective zone of the tree, and the remaining 120 oak trees will not be impacted.

The following matrix summarizes the number, location and proposed action for each tree:

Oak Tree Survey Matrix

Landmark Village	Removed	Impacted	No Impacts	Total
Heritage Oaks	10	3	15	28
Non-Heritage Oaks	57	11	105	173
Total	67	14	120	201

- A. That the proposed construction or proposed use will be accomplished without endangering the health of the remaining trees subject to this Part 16, if any, on the subject property.

Implementation of Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 53108 will not endanger the health of the 120 remaining oak trees (15 of which are heritage oak trees) located within the Landmark Village Planning Area. Mitigation measures and preservation guidelines have been established for the 14 oak trees proposed to be subject to temporary impacts, as well as for the 120 trees that will remain (e.g. fencing).

The applicant proposes to preserve and protect the remaining 120 oak trees within the impacted area. Protective fencing will be provided and placed at the limits of the protective zone for individual or group of oak trees within the Landmark Village Planning Area. This protective measure will remain in place until construction is completed. To ensure full protection of the health of these trees, no encroachment will occur within the protected zones per §22.56.2060 of Los Angeles County Code.

In addition, equipment damage to any parts of the remaining trees shall be avoided during project construction and development. No storage, dumping or temporary structures shall be permitted within the protective zone of any remaining oak tree.

- B. That the removal or relocation of the oak tree(s) proposed will not result in soil erosion through the diversion or increased flow of surface waters which can not be satisfactorily mitigated.

The proposed removal of 67 oak trees and the impact to 14 oak trees will not result in any additional soil erosion through diversion or increased flow of surface waters, which cannot be satisfactorily mitigated through on-site drainage control measures that shall be implemented with the project.

The proposed project incorporates the Landmark Village drainage and water quality plan which is designed to both protect development and control the drainage and pollutants. The features of this plan are intended to blend into the community as an extension of the landscaping. All drainage entering and originating within the project area will be collected and controlled by the constructed drainage system to ensure no increase in site erosion.

Any grading that will occur beyond the actual tract map border in association with grading to yield import material for the development will follow the recommendations of the soils engineer to avoid soil erosion.

- C. That in addition to the above facts at least one of the following findings apply:
- 1) That the removal of oak tree(s) proposed is necessary as continued existence at present location(s) frustrates the planned improvement or proposed use of the subject property to such an extent that:
    - a. Alternate development plans cannot achieve the same permitted density or that the cost of such alternative would be prohibitive and,
    - b. Placement of such tree(s) precludes the reasonable and efficient use of such property for a use otherwise authorized.

Most of the trees proposed for removal and to be impacted are located in areas where fill will be taken for importation to Landmark Village. The project applicant identified these sites as a source of fill material because the impacts to oak trees were less than alternative locations.

- 2) That the oak tree(s) proposed for removal or relocation interfere with utility service or streets and highways either within or outside of the subject property and no reasonable alternative to such interference exists other than removal of the tree(s).

Not applicable.

- 3) That the oak tree(s) proposed for removal, with reference to seriously debilitating disease or danger of falling, is such that it cannot be remedied through reasonable preservation procedures and practice.

Not applicable.

- 4) That the removal of the oak tree(s) proposed will not be contrary to or be in substantial conflict with the intent and purpose of the oak tree permit procedure.

The proposed removal of 67 trees and impact to 14 trees will not be contrary to, or be in substantial conflict with, the intent and purpose of the oak tree permit procedure as mitigation measures will be implemented to offset the removals. The grading required for geotechnical stability, access and site balance is necessary to develop the property in the most efficient manner. Without the grading and fill import, the site cannot be developed to the density permitted by the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan. No reasonable alternative to such interference exists other than the removal of the trees.

The applicant has taken great care in identifying export sites to minimize the number of trees which need to be removed in the development process. The applicant recognizes the significance of oak trees as historical, aesthetic and ecological resources that enhance the value of property and character of the communities in which they exist.

The applicant is committed to maintaining the healthy condition of all oak trees to be retained. For each tree removed, a minimum of two (2), 15-gallon replacement trees will be planted, resulting in a greater number of oak trees on site. These replacement trees shall be located at areas consistent with the proposed design plan and as directed by the County Forester. The project proposes to provide several areas designated for tree replacement.



**The Landmark Village Planning Area Oak Tree Report  
Los Angeles County, California**

**Prepared for:**

The Newhall Land and Farming Company  
23823 Valencia Boulevard  
Valencia, California 91355

**Prepared by:**

Impact Sciences, Inc.  
803 Camarillo Springs Road, Suite A  
Camarillo, California 93012  
(805) 437-1900

**September 2006**

## 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

➤ Total Number of Ordinance-Size Oak Trees Surveyed	201
➤ Total Number of Oak Trees Planned for Removal	67
➤ Total Number of Oak Trees That May be Encroached Within the Protective Zone	14
➤ Total Number of Oak Trees That Would Not be Removed or Encroached, but Occur within 200 Feet from Grading Limit Line	120
➤ Total Number of Oak Trees That Would Require a Los Angeles County Oak Tree Permit (Removed + Encroached)	81

All oak trees surveyed within the Landmark Village Planning Area are displayed on attached engineering plans prepared by Psomas Engineering (Sheets 1, 2, and 3) and an aerial photograph showing the limits of the Onion Field Bank Stabilization prepared by Impact Sciences. All exhibits show oak trees occurring within the proposed grading limits and within 200 feet of the grading limit line. Table 2 on page 14 of this report lists the type of project-related impact that may occur to each oak tree, and identifies on which sheet each tree is located.

## 2.0 INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to the Los Angeles County Oak Tree Ordinance, removal or damage of any tree of the oak genus (*Quercus*) that is 25 inches in circumference (8 inches in diameter), or has a combined trunk circumference of any two trunks of at least 38 inches (12 inches in diameter), as measured 4.5 feet above the mean natural grade (i.e., diameter at breast height [dbh]), is unlawful without a permit (Ordinance 88-0157 1, 82-0168 2, Section 22.56.2050, 1988). Damage is defined as any act causing or tending to cause injury to the root system or other parts of an oak tree, including, but not limited to, burning, application of toxic substances, operation of equipment or machinery, paving, changing of natural grade, and trenching or excavating (i.e., encroached) within the protective zone (the area within the dripline of an oak tree and extending therefrom to a point at least 5 feet outside the dripline, or 15 feet from the trunk[s] of a tree, whichever distance is greater) of an oak tree.

### 2.1 Purpose

As required by the County of Los Angeles and pursuant to Section 22.56.2090 of the Los Angeles County Code, the purpose of this oak tree report is to provide information to the County on oak trees that may be removed or damaged by the development of the Landmark Village Planning Area. The parameters used to evaluate each tree that was surveyed are described on the following pages under heading 2.0, METHODS. A spreadsheet showing data collected for each oak tree surveyed is provided in Appendix A.

**Offsite Improvements**  
**Vesting Tentative Tract Map 53105**  
(Newhall Ranch - Landmark Village)

1. Los Angeles County Sanitation District trunk sewer located westerly to connect with Newhall Ranch Water Reclamation Plant
2. Water main extension to Valencia Water Company storage tanks and existing pipe system
3. Sewer force main easterly to Los Angeles County Sanitation District 32 Water Reclamation Plant
4. Borrow site in Adobe Canyon in order to import earth per Conditional Use Permit 200500112
5. Pedestrian Bridge located at SR-126 (northwest of project)
6. Debris Basin north of SR-126 located in Chiquito Canyon

Note: Specific details of offsite improvements may be found in the applications, Planner's Notebook or Newhall Ranch Specific Plan.

DRAFT

MEMORANDUM

TO: Newhall Ranch Specific Plan Project File  
FROM: James E. Hartl, AICP, Director of Planning  
SUBJECT: Substantial Conformance Interpretation Pertaining to Alternate Street Sections  
DATE: ( )

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Initial Date

**Background**

Section 2.4 (Mobility Plan) of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan addresses the required street cross-sections for the hierarchy of the Newhall Ranch roadway system. Specifically, Section 2.4 requires that local street cross-sections shall be consistent with Chapter 21 of the County Subdivision Code, and that collector street cross-sections be consistent with Exhibit 2.4-4 of the Specific Plan.

***Specific Issue: Alternate Street Sections in Landmark Village***

Within Landmark Village, Newhall Land Company proposes to create a neo-traditional development (TND). Unlike more conventional subdivisions, TND communities reflect a return to traditional neighborhoods that pervaded the urban landscape prior to World War II, and before new suburban developments became automobile dependent.

TNDs are designed for walkability and mixed-use, and they typically have a main street, rectangular street grid section, and common open space. Because TNDs stress pedestrian orientation over automobile usage, the streets in these communities are narrower in width than conventional subdivisions and have other traffic calming features (e.g., chokers, neck-downs, traffic circles, speed tables).

In order to implement the TND street design criteria, beginning in 2000, Newhall Land Company began a dialogue with representatives of the Regional Planning Department, Public Works Department and Fire Department to ensure that the proposed alternative street cross-section design for the low-volume local streets and Landmark Village's one collector street ("A" Street) would continue to meet the needs of these departments, particularly as the proposed design related to traffic capacity and life/safety issues. In the ensuing period of time, a number of meetings have occurred, and an agreement between Newhall Land Company and the aforementioned County departments has been reached

with is reflected in the alternative local street and collector street cross-sections which are illustrated as an attachment to this memorandum.

**Conclusion**

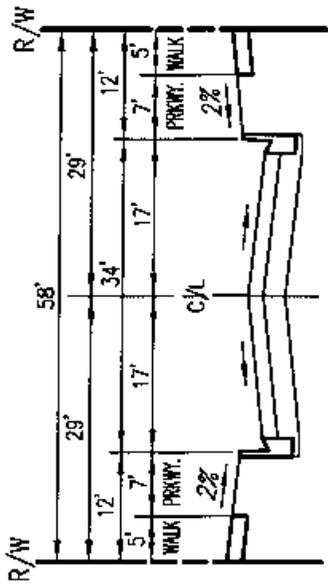
Under the provisions of Substantial Conformance (Section 5.2) of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan, "Adjustments to the plans contained in Chapter 2, Development Plan, such as the Master Circulation Plan, any of the roadway sections (emphasis added), the Master Trails Plan, any of the trails sections, the Conceptual Backbone Water, Sewer, and Drainage Plans the Conceptual Grading Plan, or the Recreation/Open Area Plan which do not change the requirements of providing adequate infrastructure"...are eligible for the Substantial Conformance entitlement process.

Inasmuch as the affected County departments have concluded that the alternative street sections are comparable to those street sections that would otherwise be required by the Specific Plan, or by reference the County Subdivision Code, as the Planning Director, I have determined, pursuant to Section 5.2.d of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan that:

- (1) The proposed alternative street sections substantially conform with all applicable provisions of the Specific Plan and the County ordinances which do not conflict with the Specific Plan, and
- (2) The proposed sections will not adversely affect public health and safety and will not adversely affect adjacent property.

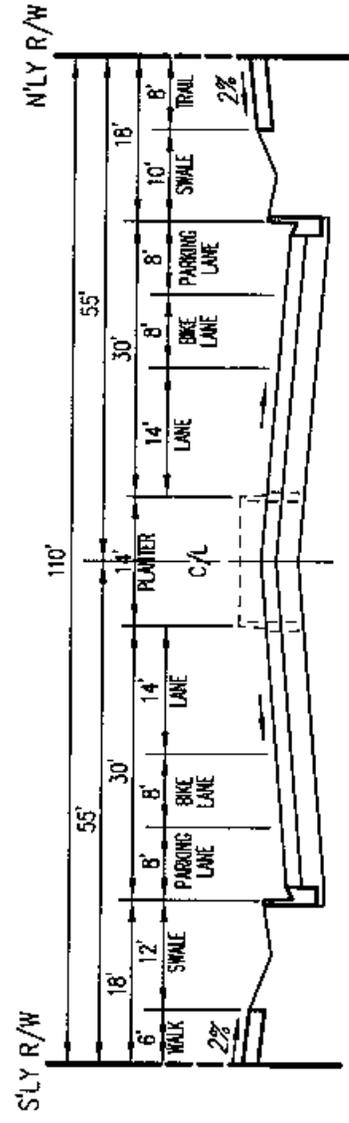
The abovementioned determination shall be applicable to Landmark Village only.

- Enclosures:
- (1) Alternative (proposed) street cross sections
  - (2) Memorandum summarizing the agreement with the Fire Department and the Department of Public Works



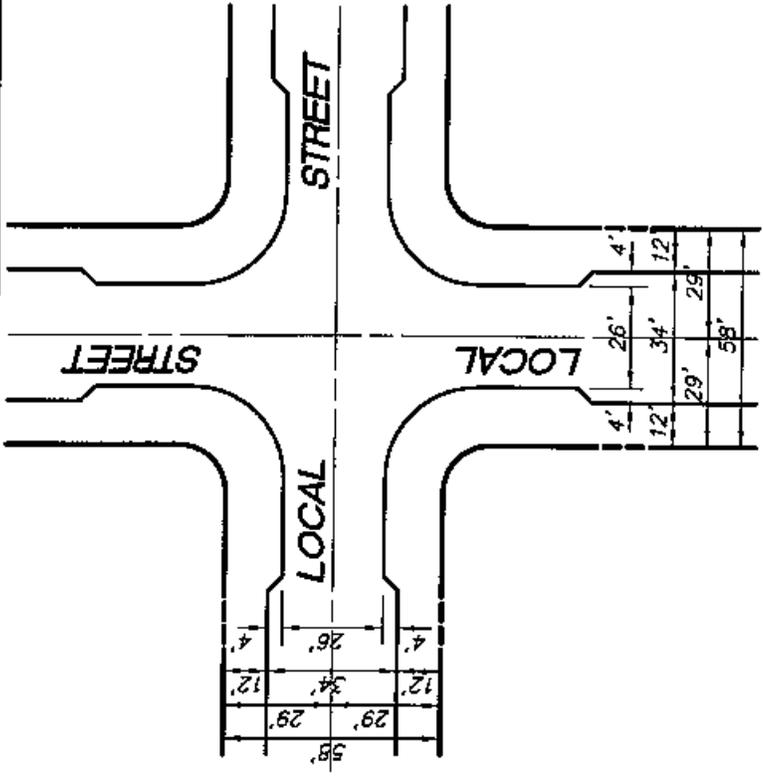
**TYPICAL LOCAL STREET SECTION (58' R/W)**

*Local Access - 30 MPH Design Speed*

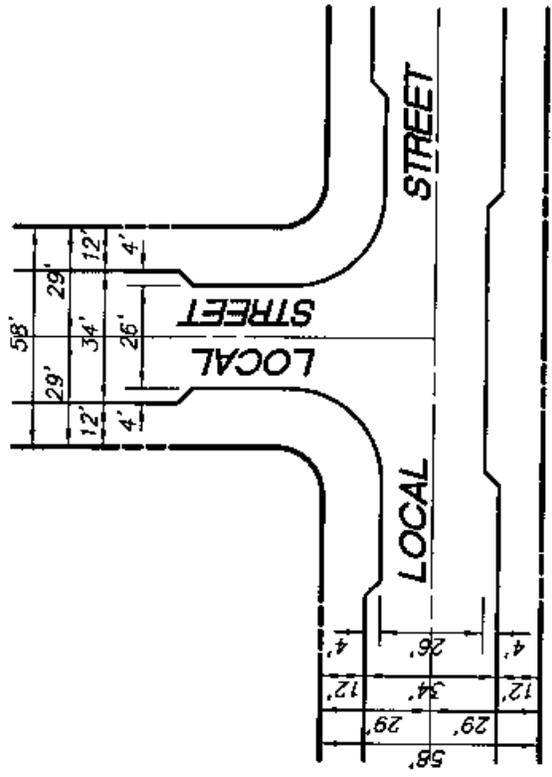


**TYPICAL STREET SECTION (110' R/W)**

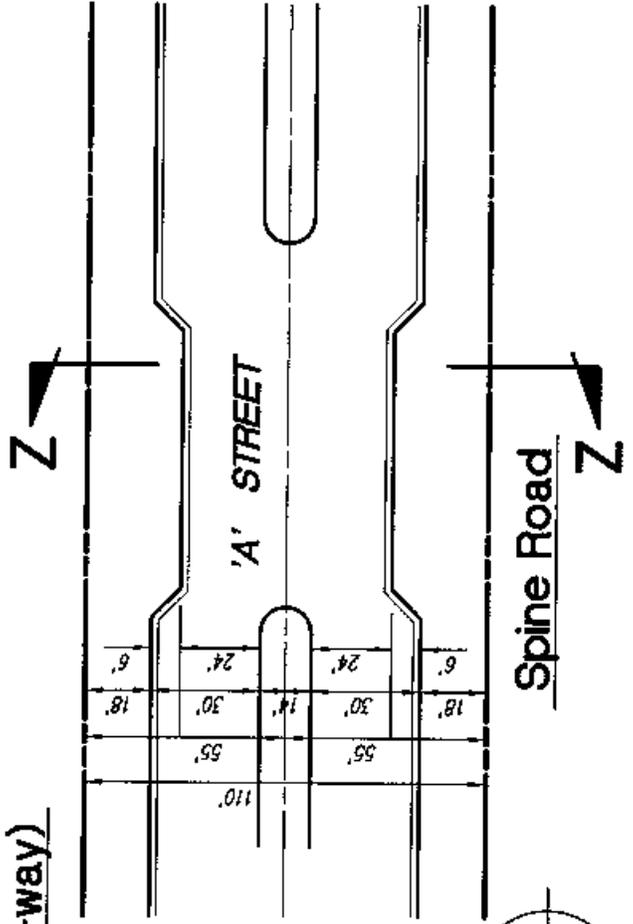
*"A" STREET (Spine Road Collector)  
From 1st Roundabout to Wolcott Road  
Local Access - 45 MPH Design Speed*



Local Street Intersection (4-way)



Local Street Intersection (3-way)



6

TYPICAL DETAIL

NOT TO SCALE

DRAFT

MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Newhall Ranch Specific Plan Project File  
**FROM:** Bruce McClendon FAICP, Director of Planning  
**SUBJECT:** Substantial Conformance Interpretation Pertaining to Shared Parking  
**DATE:** January 23, 2007

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Initial* *Date*

---

**Background**

Section 3.7 (Parking Regulations) of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan specifies the regulations which govern motor vehicle parking. These regulations require parking facilities of sufficient capacity to discourage traffic congestion and provide safe and convenient facilities for motorists and pedestrians. Section 3.7 (3) (a) and (b) describe the provisions for Joint Use and Shared Parking Plan and Senior Community and/or Handicapped Parking Plans.

*Specific Issue: Interpretation of the provisions of Section 3.7 pertaining to shared parking to include off-site and reciprocal parking*

**Off-Site, Reciprocal Parking**

Development within the boundaries of the Specific Plan will include a variety of multi-family residential units expected to be designed to incorporate parking to serve residents and guests in convenient locations. The specific design may show parking which is not located on the same lot as the residential unit it serves, but instead on an adjacent lot or in a nearby parking structure or lot.

Development within the boundaries of the Specific Plan will also include commercial development designed in a variety of ways. Commercial development is anticipated to include mixed use areas, commercial centers and individual commercial lots. The specific design for the commercial uses may depict parking on adjacent lots or within parking structures.

Allowing flexibility in parking location will result in the conservation of land and promotion of efficient land use and provide convenience for future residents and patrons.

**Parking Program**

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Section 3.7 of the Specific Plan establishes regulations for the preparation of a Parking Program to provide an alternative to standard parking requirements. Provisions for enforcement of parking requirements and reciprocal agreements for ensuring off-site reciprocal parking be permanently maintained would be included in the Parking Program to be approved prior to the issuance of building permits.

### **Conclusion**

Under the provisions of Substantial Conformance (Section 5.2) of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan, "approval of a parking program, pursuant to Section 3.7 of paragraph 3" is eligible for the Substantial Conformance review process.

Inasmuch as the requested interpretation of shared parking is consistent with the provisions found in Title 22 for approval of a parking permit and as the approval of a parking program will provide the same assurances as conditions of approval typically applied to parking permits, as the Planning Director, I have determined, pursuant to Section 5.2.d of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan that:

- (1) The interpretation of shared parking is applicable to off-site and reciprocal parking designs and substantially conforms with all applicable provisions of the Specific Plan and the County ordinances which do not conflict with the Specific Plan, and
- (2) The interpretation of shared parking will not adversely affect public health and safety and will not adversely affect adjacent property.

The abovementioned determination shall be applicable to development within the boundaries of the Specific Plan.

DRAFT

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Newhall Ranch Specific Plan Project File  
County of Los Angeles

**FROM:** James E. Hartl, AICP, Director of Planning

**SUBJECT:** Substantial Conformance Interpretation pertaining only to  
**Front Setback for Single-Family Residences**  
Newhall Ranch Specific Plan Area

**DATE:** September 23, 2003

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Initial*                      *Date*

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### **Background**

As Newhall Ranch Company is proceeding with design of its initial Tract Map, an interpretation issue relative to setbacks has arisen and they have requested early input as it is fundamental to their planning and lotting. Although the Specific Plan is the broad governing document for the implementation of specific Tract Map level details, much is left to the Planning Director's discretion in interpreting the intent of the Plan's development standards, and allowing for progressive product innovation.

*Specific Issue: Front Setbacks for Single-Family Detached Homes in Low (L), Low Medium (LM), and Medium (M)*

### **Front Yard Setbacks**

The Newhall Ranch Development Standards are set forth on Table 3.4-1 of the Specific Plan (see attached). The intent of the required minimum 18-foot front yard setback is to avoid blocking of sidewalks by vehicles parked in driveways. (The Specific Plan requires 18-foot garage setback for front entry garage and 10-foot garage setback for side entry garages.)

Consistent with this intent is a standard 10-foot main structure front yard setback and a variable garage setback per the individual conditions set forth below:

Mr. James E. Hartl, AICP, Director of Planning  
County of Los Angeles  
September 23, 2003  
Page 2

### **Front Entry and Side Entry Garage Setbacks**

The Specific Plan is explicit in requiring an 18-foot minimum front setback for a conventional front entry garage (see Note 4 on Site Development Standards Matrix, Table 3.4-1) and requiring a 10-foot minimum front setback for a side entry garage. Exhibits 'A' and 'B' respectively demonstrate those front setbacks specified by the Specific Plan for Low, Low Medium, and Medium detached residences.

The Specific Plan is silent, however, on front yard setbacks for detached residential products featuring recessed garages and alley-loaded garages.

### **Recessed Garage Setbacks**

Since the 18-foot front yard setback was intended to provide an adequate area for parking a vehicle in the driveway access to a garage in order to prevent the blocking of the sidewalk, it seems logical that the 18-foot setback should be applied to all front loading garages (flush conventional or recessed). Exhibit 'C' demonstrates this type product. Note that to de-emphasize the garage door, only the garage structure is subject to the 18-foot setback and the living area may remain at the 10-foot front yard setback as required by the Specific Plan. This encourages port cochere type products which improve the streetscape.

### **Alley Loaded Garage Setbacks**

Due to the fact that no blockage of the sidewalk is in question the intent of the Specific Plan is clear that the front yard setback should be 10-feet in this case (see Exhibit 'D'). Although a rear yard setback is not required for garages with alley access, a minimum distance of 26 feet is required between the garage entrance and the opposite side of the alley.

### **Site Development Standards Matrix**

The attached Table 3.4-1 Site Development Standards Matrix (Revised) has been amended by adjusting the matrix and notes to include the clarifications to front setbacks as discussed and demonstrated above. Namely, a 10-foot minimum front yard setback for the main structure and a garage setback determined by product type which is set forth in Notes to Table 3.4-1.

DRAFT

Mr. James E. Hartl, AICP, Director of Planning  
County of Los Angeles  
September 23, 2003  
Page 3

### **Conclusion**

Under the provisions of Substantial Conformance (Section 5.2) of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan, "modification of development standards contained in Table 3.4 (Site Development Standards)" are eligible for the Substantial Conformance review process.

Inasmuch as this analysis has described the instances where interpretation of the front setback requirement as it pertains to recessed and alley-loaded garages clarifies the intent of the Specific Plan and will facilitate the processing of individual Tentative Tract Maps and is in conformance with the intent of the Specific Plan, as the Planning Director, I have determined, pursuant to Section 5.2.d of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan that:

- (1) The proposed front setbacks for single family detached homes in Low (L) , Low Medium (LM) and Medium (M) designations substantially conform with all applicable provisions of the Specific Plan and the County ordinances which do not conflict with the Specific Plan, and
- (2) The proposed setbacks will not adversely affect public health and safety and will not adversely affect adjacent property.

DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS  
3.4 SITE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

TABLE 3.4-1  
REVISED SITE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS MATRIX  
Newhall Ranch Specific Plan

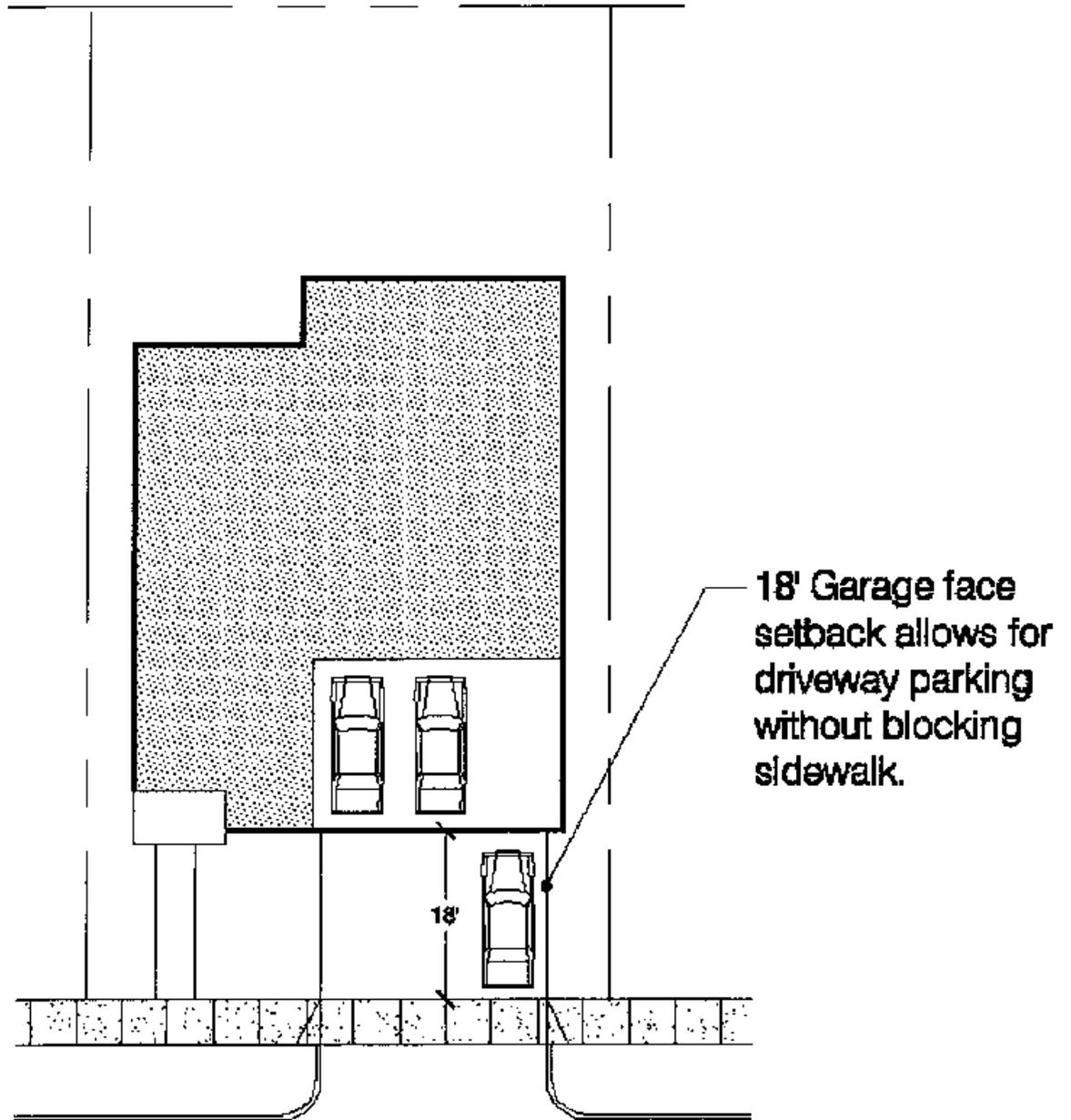
RESIDENTIAL SITE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS						
LAND USE DESIGNATIONS <sup>1</sup>	MINIMUM LOT AREA (Sq. Ft.)	REQUIRED SETBACKS <sup>2, 17</sup>			MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHTS <sup>2</sup>	
		Front Yard <sup>2</sup> (Main Structure)	Side Yard <sup>2</sup> (Each Side)	Rear Yard <sup>2</sup>		
ESTATE (E)	20,000	30' Min <sup>3</sup>	15' Min	30' Min	35'	
LOW RESIDENTIAL (L)	7,500	18' Min <sup>4</sup>	5' Min <sup>11</sup>	20' Min <sup>6,7</sup>	35'	
LOW-MEDIUM RESIDENTIAL (LM)	Detached	2,500	18' Min <sup>4, 14</sup>	5' Min <sup>5, 8, 11, 15, 16</sup>	10' Min <sup>6,7</sup>	35'
	Attached	2,500	18' Min <sup>4, 14</sup>	0 <sup>9, 11, 15, 16</sup>	10' Min <sup>6,7</sup>	35'
MEDIUM RESIDENTIAL (M)	Detached	2,500	18' Min <sup>4, 14</sup>	5' Min <sup>5, 8, 11, 15, 16</sup>	10' Min <sup>6,7</sup>	45'
	Attached	N/A	10' Min <sup>14</sup>	0 <sup>9, 11, 15, 16</sup>	10' Min <sup>6,7</sup>	45'
HIGH RESIDENTIAL (H) AND MIXED-USE (MU) RESIDENTIAL	N/A	10' Min	0 <sup>9, 11</sup>	10' Min <sup>6,7</sup>	55'	

NON-RESIDENTIAL SITE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS			
LAND USE DESIGNATIONS <sup>1</sup>	LOT REQUIREMENTS <sup>12</sup>		MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT <sup>2</sup>
	Maximum Site Coverage <sup>10</sup>	Minimum Front Setback	
MIXED-USE (MU) COMMERCIAL	No Max	No Min <sup>13</sup>	55'
COMMERCIAL (C)	50%	20'	45'
BUSINESS PARK (BP)	50%	20'	45'
VISITOR SERVING (VS)	50%	20'	35'

MAJOR OPEN AREAS SITE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS		
LAND USE DESIGNATIONS <sup>1</sup>	REQUIRED MINIMUM SETBACKS FROM PROPERTY LINE	MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT <sup>2</sup>
OPEN AREA (OA)	50'	35'
RIVER CORRIDOR SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREA (RC)	50'	25'
HIGH COUNTRY SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREA (HC)	50'	25'

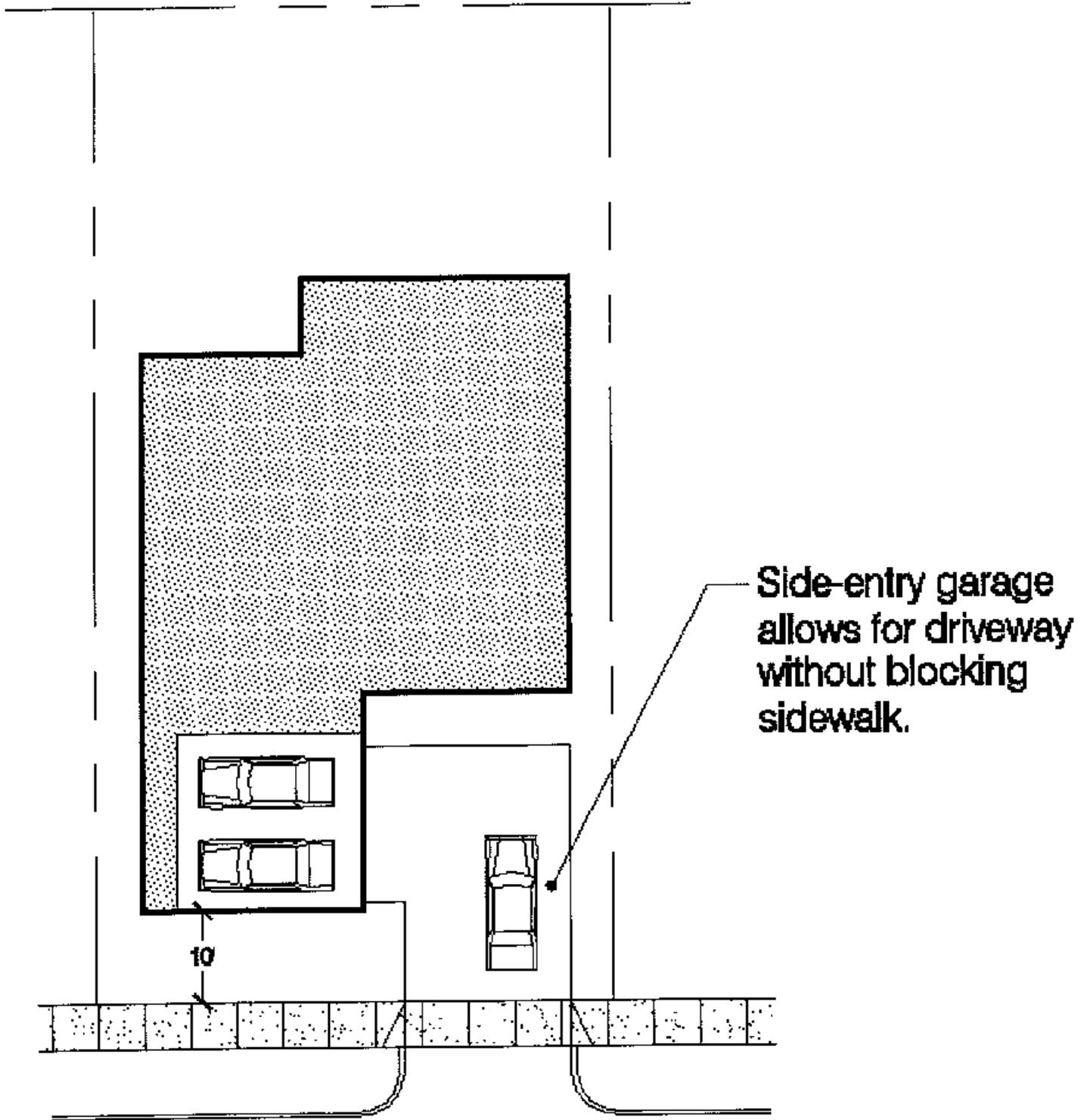
- NOTES
- Other uses including *land use overlays* such as schools, churches, park facilities, non-residential public or private facilities, and residential/commercial conversions are subject to the site development standards of the *land use designation* in which they are found.
  - A defined term — see glossary definition and/or related exhibit for full description of requirement.
  - Front Entry Garage: 30' min.  
Side Entry Garage: 15' min.
  - Front Entry Garage: 18' min.  
Side Entry Garage: 10' min.
  - Zero Side Yard Lot configuration is permitted.
  - Except where there is a detached *Second Unit*, structure, and/or garage, where 5' minimum setback is allowed from this structure.
  - No garage setback requirement for alley access.
  - 10' minimum aggregate for two adjacent lots (e.g., 5' and 5', or 3' and 7', or 0 and 10').
  - 10' minimum building to building separation.
  - A minimum of 10 percent of the lot area excluding required parking shall be landscaped.
  - 10' minimum adjacent to public street.
  - 20' minimum side and rear yard setback is required when building is adjacent to a different *land use designation* or a public road.
  - 20' minimum is required when building fronts on a public road.
  - 15' minimum for clustered single-family detached and attached buildings.
  - 6' minimum for clustered single-family detached and attached buildings when one side of two adjacent buildings has no windows.
  - 12' minimum for clustered single-family detached and attached buildings when kitchen/family area faces toward zero lot line building with no windows.
  - If at the time building permits are issued, the County's setback standards in place at that time are more stringent than those contained in the Site Development Standards Matrix, the more stringent standards shall apply.

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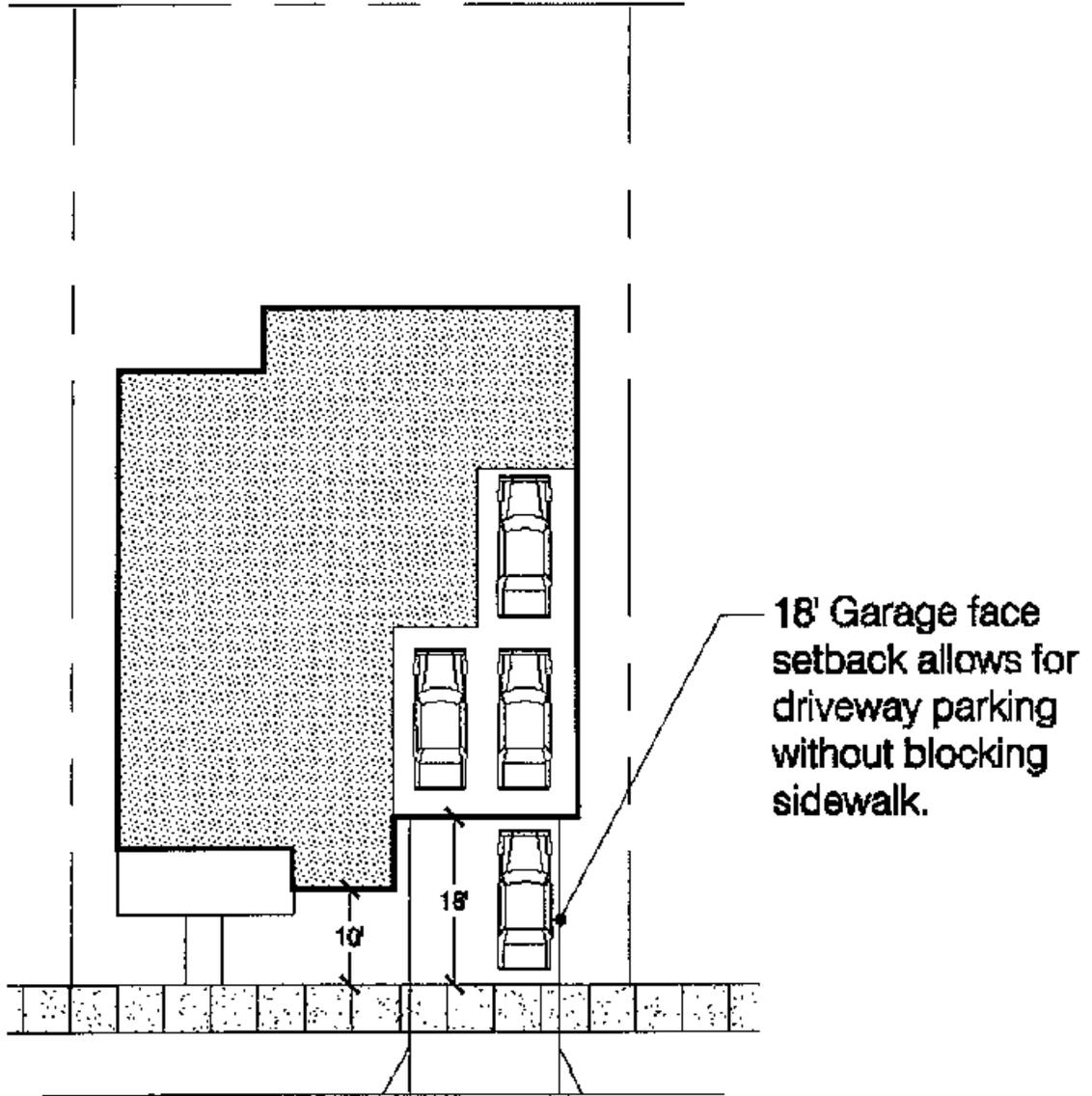
**18' Garage face setback allows for driveway parking without blocking sidewalk.**

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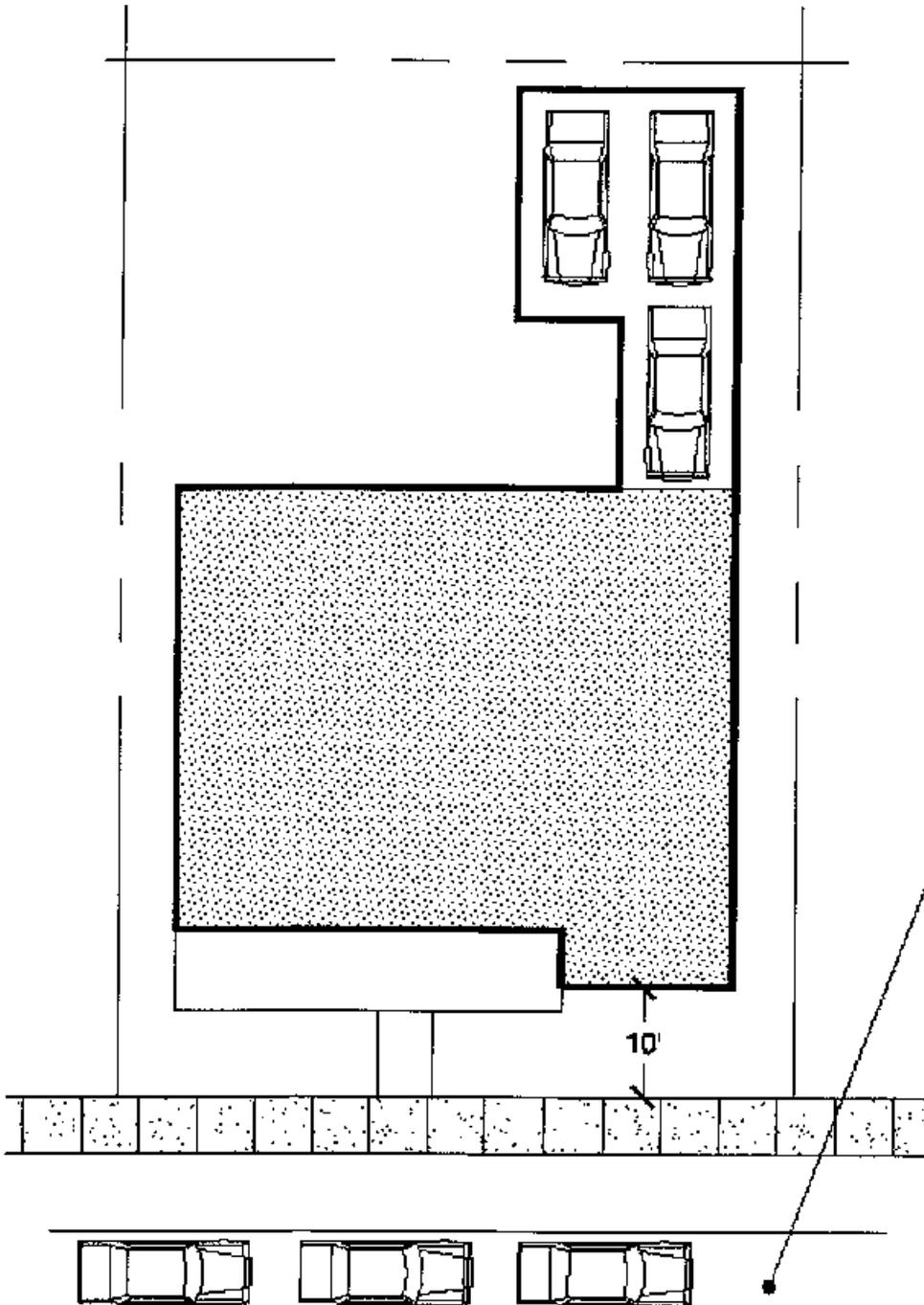


Side-entry garage allows for driveway without blocking sidewalk.

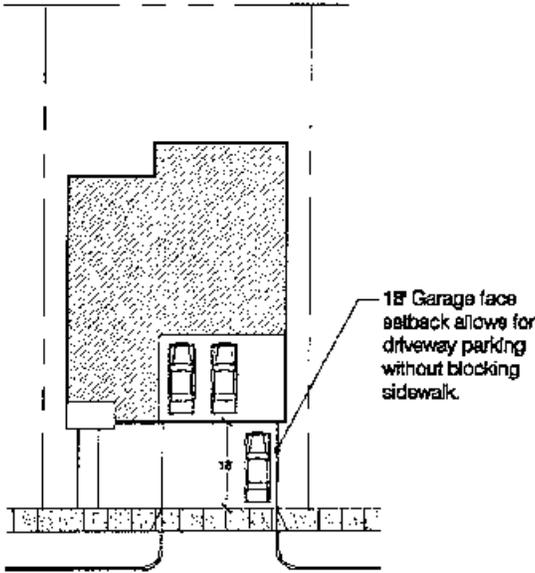
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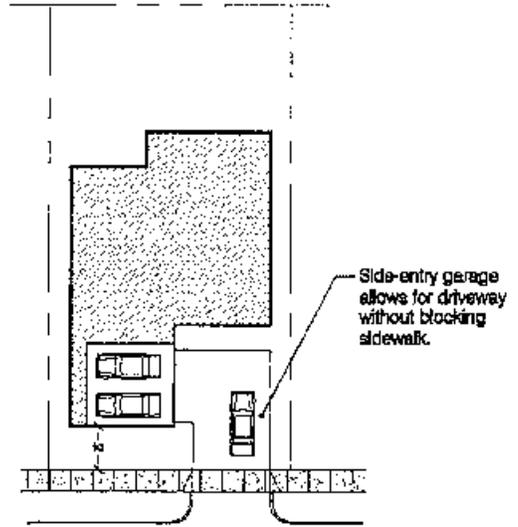
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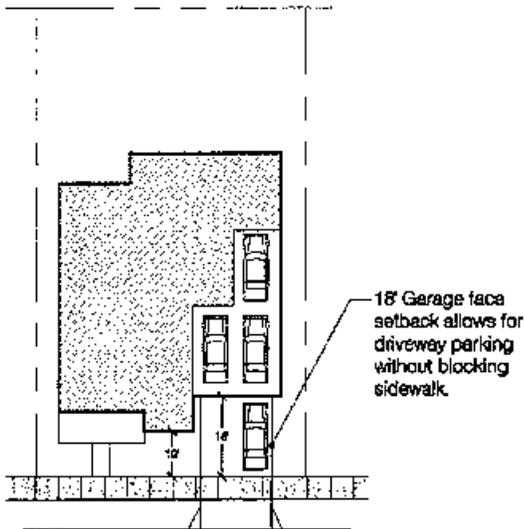
Driveway parking replaced by increased street parking due to lack of curb cuts.



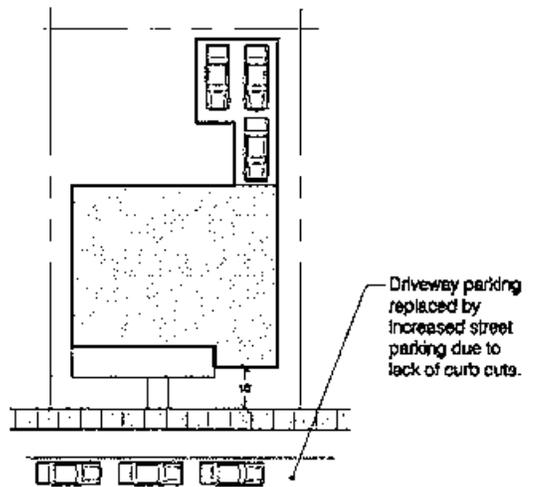
**Conventional Front Entry Garage**



**Side Entry Garage**



**Recessed Front-Loading Garage**



**Alley-Loaded Garage**

~~DRAFT~~

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Newhall Ranch Specific Plan Project File  
**FROM:** Bruce McClendon, FAICP, Director of Planning  
**SUBJECT:** Substantial Conformance Interpretation Pertaining to Off-Site Transport of Materials in Conjunction with Permitted Grading Projects and Conformance with Grading and Hillside Management Guidelines

**DATE:** ( )

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Initial*                      *Date*

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**Background**

Section 5.2(Implementation Procedures) of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan provides for a determination of substantial conformance for transport of materials within the boundaries of the Specific Plan in conjunction with a permitted grading operation and also for determination of conformance with grading and hillside management guidelines for subdivisions having an average slope of 25% or greater in those areas to be graded .

***Specific Issue:            Transport of Grading Materials from the identified borrow site of Adobe Canyon to Landmark Village and Determination of Conformance with Grading and Hillside Management Criteria.***

In order to implement the development of Landmark Village it will be necessary to import fill material from Adobe Canyon to elevate the site and avoid flooding issues. Newhall Land Company will need a net import of 6 million cubic yards of fill material from the identified Adobe Canyon borrow site.

There are two proposed haul routes for exporting the fill material from Adobe Canyon. The two haul routes would then merge onto an existing agricultural crossing that would cross the Santa Clara River and enter Landmark Village. The first proposed haul route begins toward the center of the borrow site and travels west to the existing agricultural crossing. The second proposed haul route begins in the northwest corner of the borrow site and merges on to the existing agricultural crossing, which then heads north into Landmark Village.

The grading operations in Adobe Canyon and Landmark Village have been designed to minimize impacts to the extent feasible. Oak trees which are removed by grading operations will be mitigated. Any erosion control requirements will be met and significant ridgelines are not impacted.

**Conclusion**

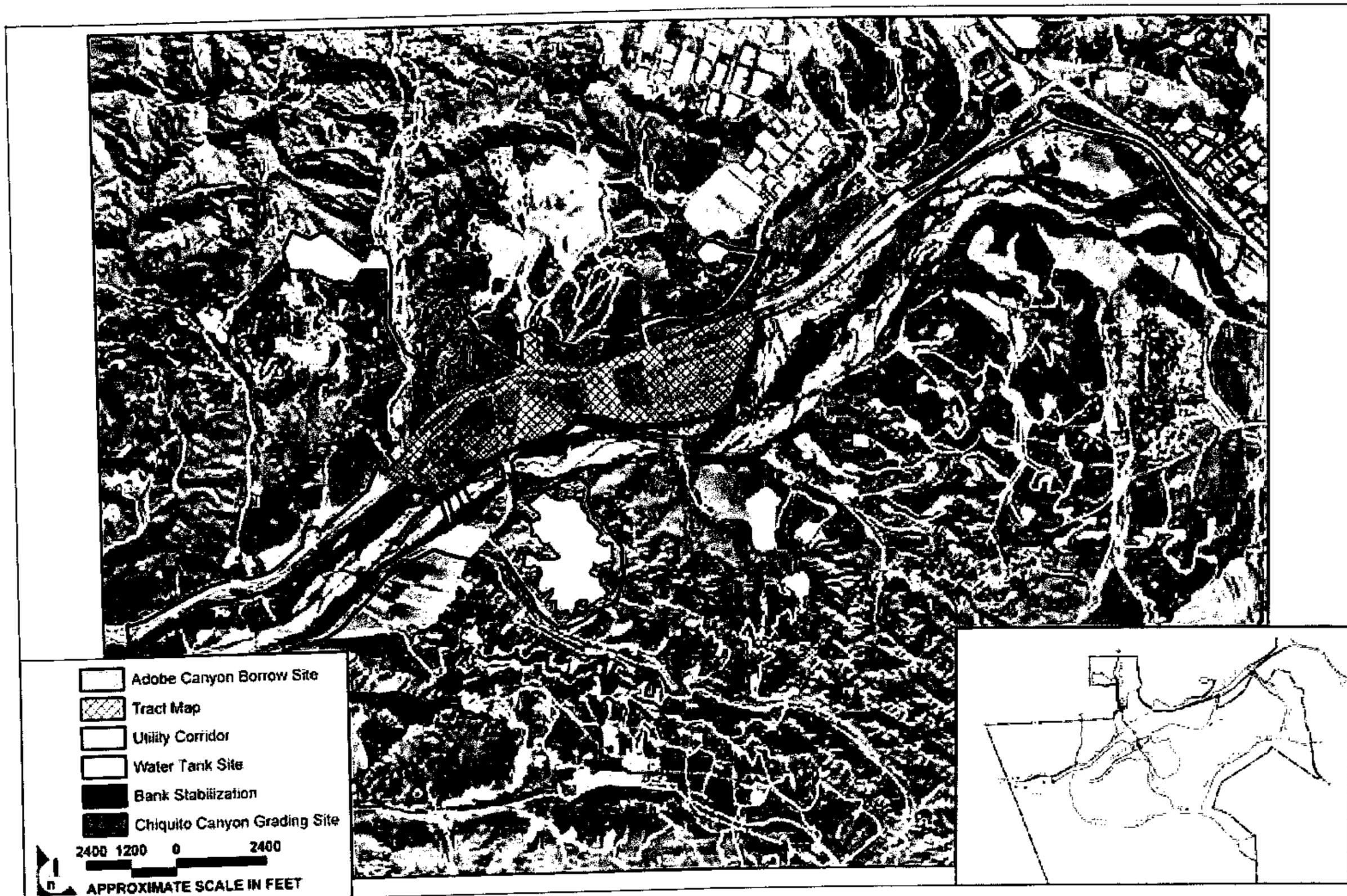
Under the provisions of Substantial Conformance (Section 5.2) of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan, "subdivisions having an average slope of 25% or greater in those areas to be graded for determination of conformance as to grading and hillside guidelines and approval of transport materials within the boundaries of the Specific Plan"...are eligible for the Substantial Conformance entitlement process.

Inasmuch as the grading operations have been designed to minimize impacts to the extent feasible and that the transport routes for hauling of grading materials from the Adobe Canyon borrow site to Landmark Village follow existing agricultural roads to limit impacts to the Santa Clara River, as the Planning Director, I have determined, pursuant to Section 5.2.d of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan that:

- (1) The proposed haul routes to transport grading materials from Adobe Canyon to Landmark Village are in substantial conformance with all applicable provisions of the Specific Plan and the County ordinances which do not conflict with the Specific Plan, grading has been designed to minimize impacts; and
- (2) The proposed haul routes and grading operations which are not located near existing residences or occupied properties will not adversely affect public health and safety and will not adversely affect adjacent property.

The abovementioned determination shall be applicable to Landmark Village only.

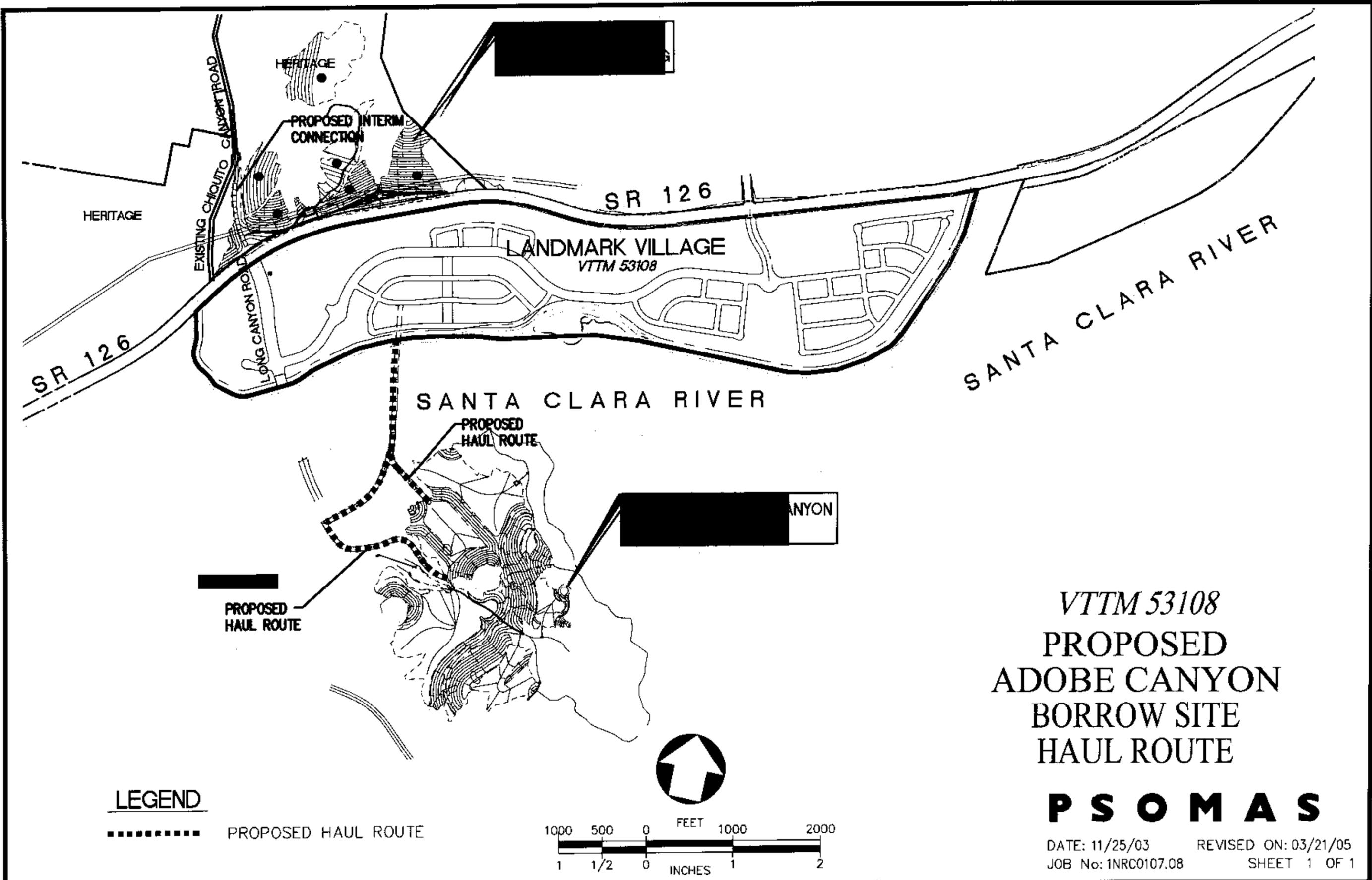
Enclosures: (1) Haul Route Exhibits



SOURCE: Inland Sources, Inc. February 2002

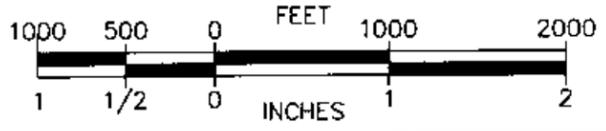
FIGURE 1.0-33

Off-Site Improvements



**LEGEND**

----- PROPOSED HAUL ROUTE



VTTM 53108  
**PROPOSED  
 ADOBE CANYON  
 BORROW SITE  
 HAUL ROUTE**

**PSOMAS**

DATE: 11/25/03      REVISED ON: 03/21/05  
 JOB No: 1NRC0107.08      SHEET 1 OF 1

Plotted: 03/21/05 14:48:18 V:\Newhoff\PROJECTS\53108-MP\ENGR\EXHIB\PL\RV045-01.dwg ewinata

**LANDMARK VILLAGE**

**TR 53108**

**CORRESPONDENCE**



Carolee K. Krieger  
*president*

December 11, 2006

Dorothy Green  
*secretary*

Attention: County of Los Angeles  
Department of Regional Planning

Joan Hartmann  
*treasurer*

RE: Landmark Village

Malinda Chouinard  
*director*

We understand that you released the above document recently and wanted to let you know that we did not receive a copy.

Yvon Chouinard  
*director*

We believe this must have been an oversight by your consultant as we consistently received notification and review copies of your project documents and wish to continue to do so. Please make sure we are on your notification list.

Michael Jackson  
*director*

Lloyd G. Carter  
*director*

Also, please send us a copy of this document.

Tom Stokely  
*director*

Thank you,

*Carolee Krieger*  
 Carolee Krieger, President  
 808 Romero Canyon Road  
 Santa Barbara, CA 93108

TR53108



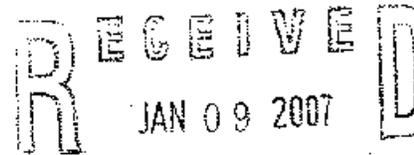


## Friends of the Santa Clara River

660 Randy Drive, Newbury Park, California 91320-3036 • (805) 498-4323

January 6, 2007

Mr. Daniel Fierros  
Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning  
Impact Analysis Section, Room 1348  
320 West Temple St.  
Los Angeles, CA 90012



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Los Padres Chapter*

### Surfrider Foundation

Audubon Society  
*Ventura Chapter*

Ventura County  
Environmental  
Coalition

Wishoyo  
Foundation

Re: Request for Extension of EIR Comment Period - Newhall Ranch,  
Landmark Village (County Project No. 00-196)

Dear Mr. Fierros,

It will be very difficult for Friends of the Santa Clara River to complete its review and comment on the subject document by January 22, 2007. This EIR is a very large document covering multiple complex issues and was released over the year-end holiday period, a busy and hectic time of year.

Non-profit groups such as ours who wish to provide comments first have to find enough resources to cover compensation of experts, so that our comments can be substantive and meaningful. This funding process is, in itself, time-consuming.

Extending the comment period will in no way delay the developer since the project cannot begin until a separate review process underway with the California Department of Fish and Game and the Army Corps of Engineers is concluded, which will involve release of a separate EIS/EIR on the entire project. Also, it seems to us very advisable for the Landmark Village comment period to be kept open until after the release of this EIS/EIR, as it will raise several other issues to be addressed that likely will require additional mitigation that should be considered in the Landmark Village review process.

We therefore request that the comment period on the subject document be extended for an additional 60 days, to March 23, 2007.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Ron Bottorff, Chair

21721 Septo St. #120  
Chatsworth, CA 91311  
January 11, 2007

10  
JAN 16 2007  
10

Mr. Daniel Fierros  
Los Angeles County Regional Planning Dept.  
320 W. Temple St.  
Los Angeles, CA 90013

Re: Newhall Ranch, Landmark Village (Project No. 00-196-(5))  
Request for Extension of EIR Comment Period

Dear Mr. Fierros

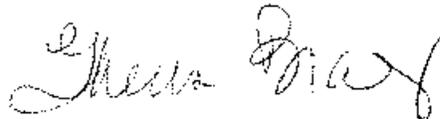
I would like an extension of the comment period for review of the EIR. I would also like to be given notification of where I can locate a copy for review. I understand that they are often available at County Libraries. Please let me know if this is in fact the case. My phone number is (818) 349-8889 and (818) 593-9223.

I understand that the Environmental Quality Act is a partnership that requires public participation to provide you with information in order that the best project for both the developer and the community will result from the planning process. Therefore, I hope that the County will consider extending the comment period.

I understand that an EIS will also be required for this project. It would therefore be sensible to allow time for both to be reviewed thoroughly and in conjunction with one another. The EIS has not yet been released. I believe that this process should not precede the release of that document because impacts identified and mitigated in that EIS may very well affect the design of the project before you.

Thus, I request that the comment period be extended to 120 days, ending March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2007. I thank you in advance for ensuring that this project receives the thorough public review that it deserves.

Sincerely,



Theresa Brady



**SIERRA  
CLUB**  
FOUNDED 1892

**Angeles Chapter**

3435 Wilshire Boulevard  
1-8-07 Suite 320  
Los Angeles, CA 90010-1904

Mr. Daniel Fierros  
Los Angeles County Regional Planning Dept.  
320 W. Temple St.  
Los Angeles, CA 90013

(213) 387-4287 phone  
(213) 387-5383 fax

www.angeles.sierraclub.org

Re: Newhall Ranch, Landmark Village Project No. 00-196-(5)  
Request for Extension of EIR Comment Period to 120 days

RECEIVED  
R JAN 09 2007

Dear Mr. Fierros

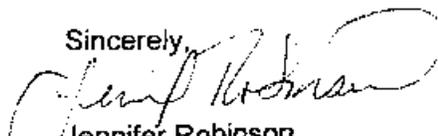
Thank you for providing the Sierra Club with a CD of the Landmark Environmental documents comprising nine volumes and maps. We are concerned that we will be unable to provide you with comments by the close of the comment period due to this EIR's large size. Also, its release over the holiday period when the Sierra Club offices were closed for several weeks and many of our volunteers were not available has made review difficult.

We believe it is in the County's best interest that the Club is provided adequate opportunity to provide you with information in order to ensure that broad public trust issues will be addressed.

We also request that the County not move forward with this project until the EIREIS for the Santa Clara River is released. That document will have a substantial impact on the configuration of this project because of impacts identified and mitigated for the required federal and state permits.

Therefore, we request that the comment period be extended to 120 days, ending March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2007. We thank you in advance for ensuring that this project receives a thorough public review.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Robinson  
Conservation Coordination  
Angeles Chapter



January 22, 2007

Mr. Daniel Fierros  
Los Angeles County  
Department of Regional Planning  
320 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012



Re: Draft Environmental Impact Report for Landmark Village (SCH No. 2004021002)

Dear Mr. Fierros,

The Castaic Lake Water Agency (CLWA) has reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Report for Landmark Village (Draft EIR) and will submit comments prior to the close of the public hearing on the project as set forth in the "Notice of Completion and Availability" and as provided by Section 21177 of the Public Resources Code. We understand that the public hearing on the Draft EIR is presently scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, January 31, 2007. If the hearing is to be continued, please advise us at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Jeff Ford  
Water Resources Planner

Cc: Michael Hurley, Water Resources Manager  
Valerie Pryor, Administrative Services Manager

**DIRECTORS**

E.G. "JERRY" GLADBACH  
DEAN D. EFSTATHIOU  
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DAN MASNADA

**GENERAL COUNSEL**

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website address: www.clwa.org

**Fierros, Daniel**

**From:** Jeff Ford [jford@clwa.org]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 16, 2007 10:17 AM  
**To:** Fierros, Daniel  
**Cc:** Meneses, Frank  
**Subject:** Extension of the Public Review Period for the Landmark Village Draft Environmental Impact Report  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Red

Dear Mr. Fierros:

The Castaic Lake Water Agency (CLWA) has reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Report for Landmark Village (SCH No. 2004021002) and respectfully requests an extension of the public review period on the document for at least 30 days. CLWA makes this request in light of the complicated nature of the project description and its relation to the Program EIR for the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan. CLWA would like adequate time to make meaningful comments and, given the substantial nature of the project, CLWA staff may want to present possible comments on the project to its Board of Directors, which would not meet again until after the close of comments on January 22, 2007. Therefore, we feel that an extension in the review period is warranted and we understand that similar requests for extension are being made by other agencies.

Sincerely,

*Jeff Ford  
Water Resources Planner  
Castaic Lake Water Agency  
27234 Bouquet Canyon Road  
Santa Clarita, CA 91350  
Phone: (661) 513-1281  
Fax: (661) 513-1202  
email: jford@clwa.org*



# california water network

1/20/07

**Carolee K. Krieger**  
*president*

**Dorothy Green**  
*secretary*

**Joan Hartmann**  
*treasurer*

**Lloyd G. Carter**  
*director*

**Malinda Chouinard**  
*director*

**Yvon Chouinard**  
*director*

**Jim Edmondson**  
*director*

**Michael Jackson**  
*director*

**Huey Johnson**  
*director*

**Linda Mitrovich**  
*director*

**Tom Stokely**  
*director*

Attention: Daniel Fierros  
LA County Regional Planning Department  
320 W. Temple St.  
LA, CA 90012  
Fax: (213) 217-5108

Re: Landmark Village Environmental Impact Report SCH No.  
20040021002

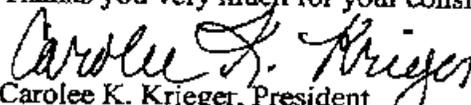
On February 26, 2004, C-WIN requested that we be provided with all CEQA documents being circulated for review in the Santa Clarita Valley because of our concern over the adequacy of the State Water Project to supply new development in this high growth area.

The County has most graciously consistently complied with this request until now. Regretfully, we did not receive the Landmark EIR until January 19, 2007. The close of comment period as stated in the cover letter is January 22, 2007. It is not possible for us to provide you with an in depth analysis of this voluminous document in only 3 days.

We remain concerned about the adequacy of the water supply in Santa Clarita Valley and therefore would like to submit timely comments that will be circulated in the final EIR.

Therefore, we request that the comment period be extended by 60 days to give us sufficient time to review the EIR and provide you with our comments, concerns and suggestions.

Thanks you very much for your consideration.

  
Carolee K. Krieger, President

**Fierros, Daniel**

---

**From:** Scott P. Harris [spharris@dfg.ca.gov]  
**Sent:** Monday, January 08, 2007 8:45 AM  
**To:** Fierros, Daniel  
**Subject:** Landmark Village DEIR Review

Daniel,

The Department of Fish and Game is requesting a 30 day extension from the closing date of public comments on the Landmark Village DEIR for lead agency consideration of Department comments. Staff availability and volume of review materials is making it problematic for the Department's timely review. Thank you for your consideration.

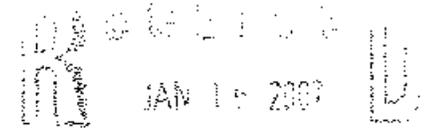
Scott Harris  
Associate Wildlife Biologist  
Department of Fish and Game  
626/797-3170



# TriCounty Watchdogs

*watchdogs monitor, demand, and inform  
in the Los Angeles and Ventura Counties*

Mr. Daniel Fierros  
Los Angeles County Regional Planning Dept.  
320 W. Temple St.  
Los Angeles, CA 90013



**Date 1/13/07**

TriCounty Watchdogs  
1667 Steinhoff Rd  
Brazier Park  
California 93225  
[www.tcwtdogs.org](http://www.tcwtdogs.org)

Re: Newhall Ranch, Landmark Village (Project No. 00- 196-(5)  
Request for EIR and Extension of Comment Period

Dear Mr. Fierros

We hereby request a CD copy of the Environmental Impact Report for this project. Because of the excessive length of the report, we also ask that the comment period be extended.

Sincerely,

Jan de Leeuw, Executive Board, TCW

## SCOPE

Santa Clarita Organization for Planning and the Environment

TO PROMOTE, PROTECT AND PRESERVE THE ENVIRONMENT, ECOLOGY  
AND QUALITY OF LIFE IN THE SANTA CLARITA VALLEY

POST OFFICE BOX 1182, SANTA CLARITA, CA 91386



1-3-07

Mr. Daniel Fierros  
Los Angeles County Regional Planning Dept.  
320 W. Temple St.  
Los Angeles, CA 90013

RECEIVED  
JAN 08 2007

Re: Newhall Ranch, Landmark Village (Project No. 00-196-(5))  
Request for Extension of EIR Comment Period

Dear Mr. Fierros

We are in receipt of the nine volumes Environmental Impact Report for this project and have begun our review. However, it appears that we will be unable to provide you with a thorough public review of this document by the close of the comment period due to the EIR's excessive size and its release over the holiday period.

As you may know, we are an all-volunteer group that provide comments on the accuracy and completeness of environmental documents for projects as a service to the public. We understand that the Environmental Quality Act is a partnership that requires public participation to provide you with information in order that the best project for both the developer and the community will result from the planning process. Therefore, we hope that the County will consider our limitations in this instance.

We also believe that this request will not interfere with the course of review for this project. The project will require an EIR/EIS for required permits affecting the Santa Clara River. That document has not yet been released. We believe that this process should not proceed the release of that document because impacts identified and mitigated for those federal and state permits may very well affect the design of the project before you.

Thus, we request that the comment period be extended to 120 days, ending March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2007. We thank you in advance for ensuring that this project receives the thorough public review that it deserves.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lynne Plambeck". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Lynne Plambeck  
President

*President*  
John Van de Kamp

*President Emeritus*  
Sage Sweetwood

*First Vice President*  
Bill Yeates

*Senior Vice President*  
Kevin Johnson

*Secretary/Treasurer*  
Bill Center



*Regional Vice Presidents*  
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Dorothy Green  
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Rick Frank  
Rick Hawley  
Doug Linney  
David Mogavero  
Lyoni Sadler  
Teresa Villegas

RECEIVED  
JAN 10 2007

January 5, 2007

Mr. Daniel Fierros  
Los Angeles County Regional Planning Department  
320 W. Temple St.  
Los Angeles, CA 90013

Re: Request for Extension of EIR Comment Period for Newhall Ranch, Landmark Village [County Project No. 00-196-(5)]

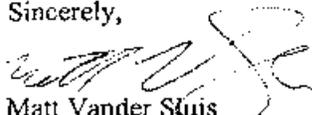
Dear Mr. Fierros

The Planning and Conservation League requests that the Los Angeles County Regional Planning Department extend the public comment period for the Newhall Ranch Landmark Village Project [County Project No. 00-196-(5)] to allow all interested parties adequate time to assess and respond to the nine-volume Environmental Impact Report.

On behalf of our thousands of members across the state of California, and as one of the organizations responsible for the passage of the California Environmental Quality Act over thirty years ago, the staff of PCI wishes to devote careful attention to this development proposal, a proposal of clear statewide significance. Unfortunately, due to limited staff availability during the holiday period and the extensive nature of the project's documentation, we would be unable to do so under the current sixty day review period and therefore ask that the comment period be extended an additional sixty days to end on March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2007. We also ask that a copy of the EIR be sent to the address below, care of Matthew Vander Sluis, Project Manager.

We value this opportunity to participate as partners in the environmental review of the Newhall Ranch Landmark Village Project. We appreciate your understanding of our constraints and look forward to working with the Planning Department staff to ensure that decision makers and the public have access to accurate, thorough information that allows for thoughtful consideration of all possible environmental impacts of the proposed project and project alternatives.

Sincerely,

  
Matt Vander Sluis  
Project Manager



1107 9th Street, Suite 360, Sacramento, CA 95814 Phone: 916-444-8726 Fax: 916-448-1789  
Website: [www.pcl.org](http://www.pcl.org) Email: [pclmail@pcl.org](mailto:pclmail@pcl.org)



January 22, 2007

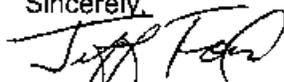
Mr. Daniel Fierros  
Los Angeles County  
Department of Regional Planning  
320 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Draft Environmental Impact Report for Landmark Village (SCH No. 2004021002)

Dear Mr. Fierros,

The Castaic Lake Water Agency (CLWA) has reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Report for Landmark Village (Draft EIR) and will submit comments prior to the close of the public hearing on the project as set forth in the "Notice of Completion and Availability and as provided by Section 21177 of the Public Resources Code. We understand that the public hearing on the Draft EIR is presently scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, January 31, 2007. If the hearing is to be continued, please advise us at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,



Jeff Ford  
Water Resources Planner

Cc: Michael Hurley, Water Resources Manager  
Valerie Pryor, Administrative Services Manager



**DIRECTORS**

E.G. "JERRY" GLADBACH  
DEAN D. EFSTATHIOU  
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**GENERAL COUNSEL**

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website address: [www.clwa.org](http://www.clwa.org)

**Fierros, Daniel**

---

**From:** jjbergamo@adelphia.net  
**Sent:** Monday, January 15, 2007 4:59 PM  
**To:** Fierros, Daniel; Tae, Susan  
**Cc:** kimberly.rivers@gmail.com; oro1238@aol.com; jjbergamo@adelphia.net; troykefm@yahoo.com; Delfina.Becerra@ventura.org  
**Subject:** Landmark Village

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Red

The Piru Neighborhood Council unanimously and respectfully requests that the comment period for the DEIR/Landmark Village, County Project No. C0-196 be extended by 60 days. There is so much material, it is difficult for everyone concerned to access the document in hard copy; reading it online limits and prolongs the process. That and the fact that the document was released during the holiday season hampers a thoughtful review and analysis of the project.

The Piru Neighborhood Council, as representatives of the community closest to the proposed project, has definite concerns. These include water quality, air quality and traffic. There are concerns about the amount of water that may be drawn from the aquifer east of us and the possible migration west of the perchlorate plume already present in the Santa Clarita water supply. The "stabilization"/channelization of the Santa Clara River could increase the flood flow of the river to damaging speeds as it enters the Piru area. The temporary routing of sewage to Santa Clarita is a concern; what is the route, and what is the risk of the line rupturing during a flood event?

There are many other issues, including the ecological damage that the project will bring. Without adequate time to study these issues, neither the public surrounding the project nor the potential residents will be fairly served.

Thank you for your consideration of this important request to extend the comment period.

Very sincerely,  
Janet Bergamo, President  
Piru Neighborhood Council

**Fierros, Daniel**

**From:** Jeff Ford [jford@clwa.org]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 16, 2007 10:17 AM  
**To:** Fierros, Daniel  
**Cc:** Meneses, Frank  
**Subject:** Extension of the Public Review Period for the Landmark Village Draft Environmental Impact Report  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Red

Dear Mr. Fierros:

The Castaic Lake Water Agency (CLWA) has reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Report for Landmark Village (SCH No. 2004021002) and respectfully requests an extension of the public review period on the document for at least 30 days. CLWA makes this request in light of the complicated nature of the project description and its relation to the Program EIR for the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan. CLWA would like adequate time to make meaningful comments and, given the substantial nature of the project, CLWA staff may want to present possible comments on the project to its Board of Directors, which would not meet again until after the close of comments on January 22, 2007. Therefore, we feel that an extension in the review period is warranted and we understand that similar requests for extension are being made by other agencies.

Sincerely,

*Jeff Ford  
Water Resources Planner  
Castaic Lake Water Agency  
27234 Bouquet Canyon Road  
Santa Clarita, CA 91350  
Phone: (661) 513-1281  
Fax: (661) 513-1202  
email: jford@clwa.org*

**Fierros, Daniel**

**From:** Decruyenaere, Joseph  
**Sent:** Monday, January 22, 2007 8:48 AM  
**To:** Fierros, Daniel  
**Subject:** landmark village call

Danny,

Ron Bottorff called to ask if an extension has been given to the Landmark Village DEIR comment period. His number is 805 498 4323

Joe Decruyenaere  
Acting Senior Biologist  
Impact Analysis Section  
Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning  
(213) 974-6461

January 19, 2007

Mr. Daniel Fierros  
Los Angeles County  
Department of Regional Planning  
320 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. Fierros:

We submit these comments to the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Landmark Village phase of the proposed Newhall Ranch development west of Santa Clarita (**Project No. 00-196 / Tract Map No. 53108 / Landmark Village; hereafter "DEIR"**). Our analysis indicates that Newhall Land and the County of Los Angeles have not conducted proper environmental review of this project, despite the issuance of the DEIR, and detail our objections below.

These comments are submitted on behalf of Audubon California and the following Audubon chapters: Los Angeles Audubon Society, San Fernando Valley Audubon Society, and Ventura Audubon Society. These are all non-profit, public interest organizations devoted to the conservation of wildlife and other natural resources. National Audubon Society and its chapters have an estimated 50,000 members in California, many of whom birdwatch and enjoy the natural habitats of the Los Angeles area. Since 2003, Audubon has held a Christmas Bird Count centered on Santa Clarita, which attracts participants from throughout Los Angeles County, and in 2004, Audubon identified the Santa Clara River Valley as one of 150 Important Bird Areas of California<sup>1</sup>.

## BACKGROUND

### Ecological Setting of Project Area

When complete, the development of Newhall Ranch in northwestern Los Angeles County will impact more than 10,000 acres, making it one of the largest developments ever proposed in the county<sup>2</sup>. Roughly half of the land within the ranch will be kept as open space, but this will be mainly restricted to the steep upper slopes in the southwest corner of the ranch, and along a narrow corridor (less than a half-mile wide) following and including the Santa Clara River<sup>3</sup>. Aside from these two areas, just over 1,500 acres of existing open space will be permanently protected within the Salt Creek watershed in adjacent Ventura County, contiguous to the ranch. Still, more than 5,000 acres, mainly coastal scrub and grassland are slated for conversion through residential and commercial development.

<sup>1</sup> Cooper, D.S. 2004. *Important Bird Areas of California*. Audubon California. 286 pp.

<sup>2</sup> Conservation Biology Institute (CBI) 2005. *Ecological Impact Assessment of Urban Development on the Santa Clara River Watershed, California* (unpublished report). Prepared August 2005.

<sup>3</sup> Impact Sciences, Inc. 2006. *Landmark Village Draft EIR*. November 2006. Section 4.4 "Biota".

Landmark Village, the first in a series of three large residential and commercial developments proposed for Newhall Ranch, is proposed for undeveloped land along the Santa Clara River. Undammed its entire 80-mile length from the Mojave Desert to the Pacific Ocean, the Santa Clara River watershed remains one of the most ecologically significant natural systems left in southern California, and projects like Newhall Ranch make it one of the most threatened. In 2005, the Santa Clara was named one of the nation's ten most endangered rivers by American Rivers, a national conservation group, which cited the proposed Newhall Ranch as a primary threat<sup>4</sup>. Unlike beaches and mountains in the region, over 95% of land immediately surrounding the river is in private ownership, which means that conservation of its steelhead run, willow and cottonwood forest will rest on the efforts to work with private landowners to secure and restore the river and its associated habitat at a time that numerous development projects are being proposed along the river.

Indeed, within the stretch between Castaic Junction and Santa Clarita, fully 51% of the remaining open space within five miles of the river either is impacted by current projects or is proposed for development<sup>5</sup>. Thus in order to protect the Santa Clara River and reverse a number of the current or impending threats such as channelization, down-cutting, and exotic species infestations that have seriously degraded so many other rivers in the region, necessarily involves identifying key remaining areas for conservation and then working closely with public agencies and private landowners to protect them. This effort depends on reliable, up-to-date ecological information from which sound scientific conclusions may be drawn.

Because Newhall Land requires confidentiality agreements for all wildlife surveys conducted on the project area, and because the site has been closed to public visitation for decades, the biota of the proposed Landmark Village - and of Newhall Ranch as a whole - is virtually unknown to all but a handful of people, none of whom are free to share their findings with the scientific community except through publications released by the landowners. Because these publications represent the only primary sources of ecological information that is made available to the public before the proposed Newhall Ranch development, it is imperative that these landowner-sponsored reports present a complete and accurate accounting of the biological resources present on Newhall Ranch. Only in this way can the County of Los Angeles allow the public and decision-makers to consider the effects of the proposed project in the "full environmental context," as specified in Section 15125 (c) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). One way for members of the public to assess the adequacy of a CEQA document is to extrapolate which species and other natural resources *should* be present on the project site by examining known records of species distributions on public lands surrounding the site (e.g., at Castaic Lagoon and Placerita Canyon). Based on previous surveys of adjoining lands, we have serious concerns that the landowner's reports and the County's DEIR appear to represent something less than the "full environmental context" mandated under CEQA.

### **Description of Proposed Development**

Slated to impact nearly 1,000 acres of natural open space along the Santa Clara River just west of Interstate 5 (DEIR: 4.4-59), Landmark Village proposes nearly 1,500 dwelling units, over a

---

<sup>4</sup> CBI 2005, p. 21.

<sup>5</sup> CBI 2005, p. 28.

million square feet of commercial space, and a major new bridge over the Santa Clara River through currently undeveloped wildlands. Of the 17 miles of tributary streams that Newhall Ranch proposes to eliminate<sup>6</sup>, many are found at the Landmark Village site.

Over a dozen major habitat types will be impacted by Landmark Village, including the removal or disturbance of nearly all the existing grassland, oak woodland, pastureland and coastal sage scrub within the development footprint (DEIR; Table 4.4-8). The County acknowledges that project implementation will cause "significant unavoidable impacts...due to the loss of many sensitive animal species, coastal sage scrub, and wildlife habitat, and the increase in human and domestic animal presence [and] contribute to a significant unavoidable cumulative impact related to the ongoing loss of biological resources in the project region" (DEIR; 4.4-1).

From the DEIR for Landmark Village, we know that the project will eliminate essentially all of the remaining agricultural land in the coastal slope of Los Angeles County, now restricted to the northeastern corner of the ranch along Hwy. 126. Though this habitat is not recognized as wildlife habitat in the DEIR, the State recognizes several types of cropland present on the ranch as wildlife habitat<sup>7</sup>, and many of the rarest and most threatened birds in the region are dependent on these grasslands and grassland-like areas for their survival. In addition, the project will place over a thousand homes immediately adjacent to what is still one of the most ecologically intact riparian forests left in southern California (DEIR; 4.4-53). And, it ushers in what is poised to become a major new city directly between two major roosting areas of the endangered California Condor.

## OVERVIEW OF COMMENTS

Based on our review of the DEIR, we find the environmental review performed by the applicant (Newhall Land) to be inadequate which therefore precludes a meaningful evaluation of the ecological impacts of the Landmark Village project.

We divide the deficiencies into several parts:

1. The DEIR fails to identify the complete suite of sensitive bird species expected from the project area.
2. The DEIR relies on bird surveys that were inadequate to credibly assess the range of projected impacts to sensitive species that *were* treated.
3. The DEIR mischaracterizes the actual status of sensitive bird species reported from the site.
4. The DEIR mischaracterizes projected and potential impacts to sensitive bird species and their habitats.
5. The DEIR does not describe specific measures that must be undertaken in order to provide the maximum feasible mitigation for impacts that are deemed significant, relying instead upon general recommendations that in no way address the ecological needs of species to be impacted.

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<sup>6</sup> CBI 2005, p. 22.

<sup>7</sup> This list would include Cropland (CRP), Dryland Grain Crops (DXR), Irrigated Grain Crops (IGR), Irrigated Hayfield (IRH), and Irrigated Row and Field Crops (IRF), per Mayer, K.E. and W.F. Laudenslayer, Jr. 1988. *A Guide to Wildlife Habitats of California*. State of Calif., Resources Agency, DFG, Sacramento.

6. The DEIR fails to provide the "full environmental context" mandated under CEQA Section 12125 (c).

Because of these deficiencies, we conclude that the construction of Landmark Village, as proposed, presents an unacceptable level of impact, and promises irreversible ecological degradation to one of the last large and unprotected expanses of wildlands that exist on the coastal slope of southern California. Our specific comments are presented below.

- 1. Failure to identify all sensitive species present or potentially present on the project site.**

From a pool of at least 25 sensitive bird species with the potential to occur in the project area, the DEIR considers just nine as occurring on the site. The DEIR preparer apparently bases these findings on just two sources of information, the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) and a handful of bird surveys conducted by a single observer in 2002, 2003 and 2004. Maintained by the California Department of Fish and Game, the CNDDDB is a database of sensitive species locations, but is entirely dependent on voluntary submissions by a small number of biologists and consultants; indeed the vast majority of records of sensitive species are never captured in this database.

Three sensitive bird species were totally omitted in the Biota section of the report, despite their being present in and around Newhall Ranch:

- California Condor (*Gymnogyps californianus*)
- Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*)
- California Spotted Owl (*Strix occidentalis occidentalis*)

The federally endangered California Condor - the rarest and arguably one of the best-studied birds in the United States - famously resumed breeding a few years ago in the Sespe Wilderness just northwest of the project area, near a historical release/feeding site that has long been the focus of an intensive (and expensive) recovery effort. Around 2001, small numbers of condors began to be seen over the hills above Sylmar, Los Angeles Co., just southeast of the project area, and even roosted here (through 2006)<sup>8,9</sup>. Because the project area lies directly between these two areas, condors are known to fly directly over Newhall Ranch, even if they don't stop to forage here<sup>10</sup>. However, no raptor surveys have ever been conducted that would confirm the species' actual status on the project site, and no satellite telemetry data (e.g., from US Fish and Wildlife Service) were obtained for this DEIR.

Remarkably, a second missing species, the Short-eared Owl (California Bird Species of Special Concern), was actually documented on recent surveys of the ranch<sup>11,12</sup>. It would be expected in agricultural and grassland habitat throughout the site, at least in migration and winter. Since

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<sup>8</sup> *vide* K.L. Gartett, Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History, Condor sightings in the area are concentrated in spring (Mar. -June); see also Los Angeles Times B1, Mar. 27, 2002, and LACoBirds (Yahoo Group).

<sup>9</sup> see: <http://www.birdsofwestwood.com/condors/Condors.html>; <http://www.habitatwork.org/condor.htm>

<sup>10</sup> J. Grantham, USFWS, pers. comm., Jan. 2007.

<sup>11</sup> Dudek & Associates, Inc. 2006. *Draft Biological Resources Technical Report: Newhall Ranch High Country Specific Management and Salt Creek Area*. Prepared for The Newhall Land and Farming Company, October 2006. p. 36.

<sup>12</sup> A freshly-dead individual was found at the edge of a cultivated field just west of I-5 during the Santa Clarita Christmas Bird Count on 27 Dec. 2006 (specimen to Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History).

much of the best agricultural habitat on Newhall Ranch is located within the Landmark Village project area, it would seem that Short-eared Owl would be directly and seriously impacted by the construction of Landmark Village. However, no surveys of these agricultural lands were conducted. Short-eared Owls are most easily detected at dusk and may therefore be routinely overlooked in typical morning bird surveys.

The California Spotted Owl (California Bird Species of Special Concern) breeds in oak and conifer forest in canyons both north<sup>13</sup> and east<sup>14</sup> of the site, and is resident at low elevations in several shady canyons elsewhere in the region. It is not generally encountered by casual observation, nor by California Gnatcatcher surveys such as those performed on the project area. No nocturnal surveys were conducted that might have discovered this species here (or other nocturnal species).

Additional sensitive species identified in the most recent version of the California Bird Species of Special Concern list<sup>15</sup> were not addressed by the preparers of the DEIR, despite the information being easily accessible online for several years. These additional species that could occur within the study area include:

- Ferruginous Hawk (*Buteo regalis*)
- Long-billed Curlew (*Numenius americanus*)
- Purple Martin (*Progne subis*)
- Swainson's Thrush (*Catharus ustulatus*)
- Clark's Marsh Wren (*Cistothorus palustris clarkae*)
- Grasshopper Sparrow (*Ammodramus savannarum*)
- Black-chinned Sparrow (*Spizella atrogularis*)
- Yellow-headed Blackbird (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*)

None of these species were treated in the DEIR, and no specific surveys were conducted that would detect them. We recommended that further surveys be conducted to determine presence and potential impacts to these species. Several of these species are already known to occur within the vicinity. For example, the Long-billed Curlew winters in agricultural habitat throughout Ventura and Los Angeles Counties (e.g. on the Oxnard Plain and in the Antelope Valley) and could winter within the project area. Up to 25% of the state's population of Purple Martins breeds in oak savannah in nearby Tehachapi Mountains,<sup>16</sup> and nesting pairs may be present in similar habitat on Newhall Ranch (which was unsurveyed). Grasshopper Sparrow breeds in grassland throughout coastal southern California, but the upland surveys conducted for this DEIR focused on coastal sage scrub, which does not support this species.

## **2. Bird surveys are inadequate to accurately portray the ecological impact of proposed development.**

Typically, environmental documentation for development projects involves the identification of sensitive species potentially impacted by the project, a description of surveys conducted that

<sup>13</sup> Known sites incl. Warm Springs, Fish, Shake and Lion Canyons; upper Piru Cr.; per The Nature Conservancy 2006. *Santa Clara River: Upper Watershed Conservation Plan*. Fall 2006; p. D19, D22.

<sup>14</sup> Resident in oak woodland at Walker Ranch; per Ian Swift, Placerita Canyon County Park. Dec. 2006.

<sup>15</sup> Point Reyes Bird Observatory, *unpubl. data*.

<sup>16</sup> Cooper, D.S. 2004. *Important Bird Areas of California*. Audubon California, 286 pp.

confirm or refute the presence of these species, and a list of proposed remedies to offset any impacts deemed to be significant or potentially significant. The Landmark Village DEIR appears to take a different approach, conducting targeted surveys for a small number of species within a limited portion of the site, and conducting no surveys over large areas of the ranch that almost certainly would have yielded sightings of several species that could be impacted by the project. This lack of data seriously hinders the formulation of appropriate analysis and development of appropriate mitigation measures.

Major deficiencies of the bird surveys conducted for the DEIR include:

1. Inappropriate surveys for federally threatened California Gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*).
2. No surveys or reference to research (e.g., telemetry data) for the California Condor, which is known to occur on either side of the property.
3. No winter bird surveys, necessary to detect such sensitive species as the Ferruginous Hawk and Long-billed Curlew.
4. No nocturnal bird surveys necessary to detect sensitive owl species such as Long-eared Owl (*Asio otus*) and Spotted Owl.
5. No bird surveys of agricultural fields and extensive grassland habitat that might have detected sensitive grassland birds such as Ferruginous Hawk, Northern Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*), Long-billed Curlew, Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia*), Short-eared Owl, Horned Lark (*Actia alpenstris*), Loggerhead Shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*) and Grasshopper Sparrow.
6. No raptor surveys that might have detected locations of nesting and foraging Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*), Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), White-tailed Kite (*Elanus leucurus*) and Prairie Falcon (*Falco mexicanus*).
7. No bird surveys of alkali marsh/wet meadow habitat for Northern Harrier, Clark's Marsh Wren, Yellow-headed Blackbird and Tricolored Blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*).
8. Few bird surveys of coastal sage scrub (those conducted were for a single species, Coastal California Gnatcatcher).

The surveys that were conducted for the California Gnatcatcher on the site were not completed according to protocol set by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which stipulates that a single observer should cover no more than c. 80 acres of potentially suitable habitat per survey day, and which requires six visits to each area during the breeding season in order to confirm the gnatcatcher's presence or absence during that breeding season<sup>17</sup>. According to the project DEIR, Landmark Village will remove 1,820 acres of coastal sage scrub<sup>18</sup> (the only habitat of the California Gnatcatcher), which suggests that more than 20 surveys would have been required to reliably confirm the presence or absence of gnatcatchers. Yet, just *five* surveys were conducted, in several cases at multiple locations on a single survey day<sup>19</sup>. The areas to be impacted are far too large to cover in just five surveys. This inadequate survey design casts doubt on the purported absence of California Gnatcatcher at the site, and it could help explain why common scrubland bird species known to occur in the region (e.g., Sage Sparrow) went unrecorded on these gnatcatcher surveys.

<sup>17</sup> Coastal California Gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*) Presence/Absence Survey Guidelines. February 28, 1997. Available on the World Wide Web: [http://www.fws.gov/ventura/sppinfo/protocols/coastal-gnatcatcher\\_survey-guidelines.pdf](http://www.fws.gov/ventura/sppinfo/protocols/coastal-gnatcatcher_survey-guidelines.pdf).

<sup>18</sup> DEIR: section 4.4-3

<sup>19</sup> DEIR: Appendix 4.4j-o.

Inadequate bird surveys for a variety of important habitats seriously undermine the validity of the environmental impact analysis conducted for the Landmark Village project. Most troubling, those habitats that were *best*-surveyed, such as the riparian woodland along the Santa Clara River, will be relatively safe from development, whereas those that were essentially *unsurveyed*, agricultural and grassland areas, are the ones to be mostly destroyed by proposed development. The ramifications of the project's incomplete surveys and inadequate analyses are discussed below.

### 3. Status of sensitive bird species portrayed inaccurately

Information about the status of sensitive species in the project area is scattered throughout the Biota section and in the Appendices, making it difficult to locate and interpret. A careful reading of the document reveals more than 30 sensitive bird species known or believed to occur on or in the vicinity of the Landmark Village project site. Of course, not all of these birds are present throughout the year, and some may be only marginal in occurrence in the area (i.e., they may visit the site only occasionally).

Even the species that are listed as occurring on the site are accompanied by virtually no specific information on their local status and distribution that would allow members of the public or decision-makers to judge the impact of the development on their survival. For example, one species formerly common throughout California, the Loggerhead Shrike, is now nearing extinction as a nesting species on the coastal slope of southern California and adjacent Baja California, mostly as a result of urbanization<sup>20</sup>. Fewer than five birds have been recorded on the Santa Clarita Christmas Bird Count each year since its inception in 2002, and it is possible that Newhall Ranch may have one of the largest resident populations in coastal southern California - three individual birds were observed during a brief tour of a small portion of the project area in December 2006, and suitable habitat exists virtually throughout the project area. Although shrikes were occasionally reported on the 2002-2004 bird surveys, the preferred habitat for this species - agricultural fields such as those along Hwy. 126 - went unsurveyed during the preparation of this DEIR, and are now slated for conversion to residential development, which is incompatible with breeding shrikes.

An almost identical situation exists for the California Horned Lark; indeed, the development of Newhall Ranch could nearly eliminate remaining suitable breeding habitat for this species on the coastal slope of Los Angeles and Orange counties. Yet, virtually no information on this species on the Landmark Village site is presented in the DEIR or in previous environmental documentation for the project area.

Bird species that the DEIR preparer reports as having the *potential* to occur on the site (Table 4.4-6 Special-Status Wildlife Species with Potential to Occur on the Project Site) were given equally uneven and vague treatment in the document. These include:

- Merlin (*Falco columbarius*)
- Yellow-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*)
- Long-eared Owl

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<sup>20</sup> See, e.g., Unitt, P. 2004. *Birds of San Diego County*. San Diego County Museum of Natural History.

- Western Burrowing Owl
- Southwestern Willow Flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*)
- Coastal California Gnatcatcher
- Summer Tanager (*Piranga rubra*)
- Bell's Sage Sparrow (*Amphispiza belli belli*)
- Tricolored Blackbird

Some of these species are probably simply not present, such as the riparian obligates (cuckoo, flycatcher and tanager), all of which were probably adequately surveyed for during the preparation of the DEIR. The Merlin is fairly common throughout southern California, including in urban areas, and is no longer considered to be a California Bird Species of Special Concern<sup>21</sup>.

However, the Long-eared Owl was simply not surveyed within the project area, as it is only detected through nocturnal surveys (which were not conducted). Interestingly, this owl was recorded from upland portions of the ranch<sup>22</sup>, and there is a very high probability of its occurring within the development footprint given its preferred habitat - dense groves of trees surrounded by grassland or agriculture lands.

The Burrowing Owl is almost definitely present on the ranch; Dudek & Associates (2006:36) refers to Newhall Ranch employees mentioning "groundowls" (*sic*), which are almost certainly this species. Unfortunately, the preferred habitat of the Burrowing Owl, level, non-native grassland and cultivated fields/pastureland, went unsurveyed during the preparation of the DEIR. This owl is essentially extirpated on the coastal slope southern California, and large, private ranches such as Newhall Ranch may be its last hope of survival in the region. Had grassland been surveyed on the site, we might know the locations of their colonies and would have a chance to plan around them.

Unlike the Burrowing Owl, the Bell's Sage Sparrow is locally common throughout the Santa Clarita area (D.S. Cooper, unpubl. data), being resident in coastal sage scrub and chamise chaparral. For example, since 2002 participants on the Santa Clarita Christmas Bird Count have found this sparrow in Newhall, Castaic, Sand Canyon and along the north side of Hwy. 126 vic. Castaic Creek. This species' purported absence from the whole of Newhall Ranch is simply not credible; it is possible that the single bird surveyor employed by Newhall Land may not have been familiar with its vocalizations, which resembles those of other sparrow species.

As for the Tricolored Blackbird, the lack of observations during the surveys for the project raises concern - dozens of these distinctive birds winter in the agricultural fields of Newhall Ranch that are proposed for conversion to houses as part of the Landmark Village, with birds easily seen and heard from pull-outs along The Old Road (D.S. Cooper, unpubl. data). Nesting Tricolored Blackbirds were found recently just west of the project area along Salt Creek<sup>23</sup> and the species is known to breed in marshes along the entire northern flank of the San Gabriel Mountains. (D.S. Cooper, unpubl. data). Since potential nesting habitat was apparently unsurveyed on the Landmark Village site, it is possible that additional breeding sites are located here.

<sup>21</sup> Point Reyes Bird Observatory, unpubl. data.

<sup>22</sup> Dudek & Associates 2006.

<sup>23</sup> F. Hovore, Frank Hovore & Associates, Inc., pers. comm. May 2003.

Given these obvious errors and omissions, it is unsurprising that several of the species categorized as Special-Status Wildlife Species *Not Expected* on the Project Site (italics mine; Table 4.4-7) include two birds that are, in actuality, very much expected on the project site. One of these, the Prairie Falcon, was recorded by Dudek & Associates on Newhall Ranch<sup>24</sup>, and has been recorded annually in the Santa Clara River Valley in winter (D.S. Cooper, unpubl. data). Oddly, the Prairie Falcon was listed in Table 4.4-6 as likely to suffer significant impact due to project implementation. How could a bird suffer a significant impact if it is not expected on the project site?

An almost identical situation exists for the Ferruginous Hawk, listed in Table 4.4-7 as being not expected on the project site. An adult Ferruginous Hawk was well seen by Newhall Land employees and local conservationists on a brief site tour on 11 December 2006 (*pers. obs.*), and in the same area during the 2006 Christmas Bird Count later in the month, in typical habitat (dry, barren cultivated field).

Regardless of these contradictions and omissions, the fact that neither Prairie Falcon nor Ferruginous Hawk was listed in recent bird surveys in no way suggests (a) that they don't occur on the site, nor (b) that they would not be impacted by project implementation. Winter bird surveys are required to detect Ferruginous Hawks, which are present in southern California only from November to March; Prairie Falcons would *not* be expected to occur along a forested river where most of the bird surveys took place, but would be seen foraging over dry scrub and grassland - the very habitat slated for development. Nesting falcons require isolated rock and sandstone outcrops, and only through a systematic search of these features in the region would one detect nesting Prairie Falcon, a species nearly extirpated (if not entirely so) as a breeder in coastal southern California.

#### **4. The DEIR mischaracterizes impacts to sensitive bird species.**

Numerous sensitive species known or suspected to occur in the project area are listed as being poised to suffer a Not Significant impact from the development, which implies that either they are not regularly present, or that mitigation measures will offset the loss of habitat, human disturbance, and other threats associated with build-out of the project. While some of these sensitive species (e.g., the Vermilion Flycatcher) are unlikely to be affected simply by virtue of their marginal occurrence here, others almost definitely reside within the footprint of the proposed development, including the numerous small tributaries of the Santa Clara River slated for cement channelization and in the extensive agricultural lands to be replaced by houses. For example, two common riparian woodland nesters, Cooper's Hawk and Yellow Warbler, were recorded on several of the 2002-04 bird surveys, but the DEIR omits location data on where they occur within the project area, much less information on nest locations that would be necessary for their management on the site. Therefore, it is difficult to determine that project implementation will entail less than significant impacts to these species.

A similar situation involves species that the DEIR claims will suffer a significant impact with the completion of Newhall Ranch [see Table 4.4-1 Significant Biological Impacts - Newhall Ranch Specific Plan and WRP (= Valencia water reclamation plant)]. As with the non-significant impacts, the data presented are implausible, and in some cases, are contradicted outright later in

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<sup>24</sup> Dudek & Associates 2006, p. 21.

the Biota section. For example, we learn from Table 4.4-1 that the (State threatened) Swainson's Hawk a) occurs on the site and b) would suffer a significant impact from the development, even after mitigation measures are undertaken. However, the document provides no description of the species' usage of the site elsewhere in the document, and this hawk apparently went undetected during surveys conducted here in 2002, 2003 and 2004. Of course, the mitigation guidelines do not discuss what might be done to reduce the project's significant impacts to Swainson's Hawks, which require groves of tall trees surrounded by grassland or agricultural lands for breeding. In reality, the Swainson's Hawk neither breeds nor winters on or near the site; the only known nesting sites in southern California are located within a handful of ranchyards in the northeastern Antelope Valley<sup>25</sup>.

Another sensitive bird species listed in Table 4.4-1 as likely to suffer significant impacts and yet discussed nowhere in the report is the Mountain Plover (*Charadrius montanus*), a California Bird Species of Special Concern. Its inclusion is perplexing - it is known to occur in just four parts of southern California, the eastern Antelope Valley, the San Jacinto and Lower Colorado River valleys in Riverside County, and the Imperial Valley in Imperial County; all far from the project area. Because its preferred habitat, extensive cultivated fields, persists along Highway 126 in Newhall Ranch, the potential exists that Mountain Plover *could* occur here, but only in winter. However, since no winter bird surveys were conducted on or around the site, it is impossible to assess whether or they do occur. Once again, the DEIR provides no way for a reader to evaluate the conclusions reached therein.

Other sensitive/protected species listed as poised to suffer significant impacts include the Golden Eagle, Northern Harrier, White-tailed Kite, Ferruginous Hawk, Sharp-shinned Hawk and Burrowing Owl. Though some of these raptors (e.g., Sharp-shinned Hawk) are still common in the region, others are not. The Golden Eagle, for example, has declined so severely in southern California that only a few pairs nest regularly in Los Angeles County in remote hills and mountains far from urban development. Yet, no information is revealed about Golden Eagle in the region, other than that a note that it will suffer a significant impact following build-out. Because no raptor surveys were conducted that might have located nesting and foraging sites, we may never know whether this project will extirpate the Golden Eagle from Los Angeles County. Another rare raptor, the White-tailed Kite, may be nowhere more common in Los Angeles County than along the Santa Clara River - 2006 saw a half-dozen breeding pairs<sup>26</sup> which may be a majority of the total number nesting in the entire county.

##### **5. Mitigation measures are insufficient to benefit impacted species.**

The Landmark Village DEIR appears to rely on three main conservation strategies to minimize and mitigate impacts to sensitive species:

1. Preservation of a "Santa Clara River Corridor" (section 4.4-93)
2. Preservation of a "large block of relatively undisturbed habitats on higher elevations into the Santa Susana Mountains", which extends down to the Santa Clara River west of the site (section 4.4-93)
3. Avoiding disturbance to nesting birds during construction (described below)

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<sup>25</sup> K.L. Garrett, Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History, *pers. comm.* Dec. 2006.

<sup>26</sup> I. Swift, Placerita Canyon County Park, *pers. comm.*, Dec. 2006.

*Mitigation for narrowing the riparian corridor in the project area should include the establishment of a large riparian reserve that includes a broad section of the intact riparian corridor from the channel to upland habitat. The reserve should contain existing mature cottonwood and willow forests that have been nearly extirpated from most of the river. The developer currently owns the last large area of this type downstream of the proposed project.*

The DEIR includes almost no detail on proposed actions that would actually mitigate permanent and significant impacts to sensitive species that are known or suspected to occur on the site. Rather, it suggests that these impacts would be reduced because of proposed preservation of habitat along a corridor along the mainstem of the Santa Clara River and in the rugged hills on the southwestern corner of the site (the "High Country" and the off-site Salt Creek drainage). The Santa Clara River has been reasonably well-surveyed, but virtually nothing is known about the wildlife elsewhere on the ranch, in particular the High Country/Salt Creek area, which has apparently never been visited by an ornithologist.<sup>27</sup> This is especially troubling because very few sensitive bird species known to occur in areas proposed for development are also present in the High Country or Salt Creek areas<sup>28</sup>. Recent surveys turned up just five such species (compared with the 17 sensitive bird species known or likely to occur within proposed grading areas), and the DEIR provides no distributional or abundance information on these five. Since the DEIR fails to demonstrate that preservation of the High Country and Salt Creek areas is likely to benefit many of the species to be impacted by Landmark Village, the DEIR should not identify preservation of these areas as providing mitigation for significant impacts to these species.

Rather than suggesting meaningful mitigation that preserves sensitive species and habitats *where they occur*, the DEIR instead offers only vague guidelines to be followed should such mitigation projects be initiated, and proposes no specific remedies to offset what it acknowledges would be significant impacts to a variety of species and habitats. In fact, the DEIR relies on a single guideline, LV 4.4-8<sup>29</sup> as the sole mitigation action to be taken to reduce impact levels below significance for the majority of the affected sensitive bird species. Rather than setting aside habitat for these species or directing development away from sensitive habitats (aside from the flood-prone riverbed and court-mandated rare plant reserves), LV 4.4-8 suggests simply delaying development activities (e.g., grading, landscaping) if nests are located during construction. Given that the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act requires the exact same course of action, LV 4.4-8 has no practical effect. Once birds are finished nesting in the late summer or fall, construction and resultant habitat elimination would be permitted under this mitigation measure.

By failing to identify feasible measures to mitigate this project's many significant impacts to sensitive species, the DEIR clearly violates the requirements of CEQA. Mitigation recommendation LV 4.4-8 - delaying construction only where nests are found - is listed as the primary mitigation measure for nearly 20 bird species that occur or potentially occur on the site. Because LV 4.4-8 is insufficient as mitigation, we consider the following species to be especially vulnerable to significant impacts here:

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<sup>27</sup> The DEIR relies upon a seriously flawed biological report by Dudek & Associates (2006) which included no bird surveys, only incidental sightings; many of the most common birds of the region (e.g., Greater Roadrunner, California Thrasher) are not listed as having been observed by Dudek biologists.

<sup>28</sup> Dudek & Associates 2006, p. 81-84.

<sup>29</sup> "Within 30 days of ground disturbance activities associated with construction or grading...the applicant shall have weekly surveys conducted by a qualified biologist...to determine if active nests...are present in the disturbance zone..."

- Known to occur on Landmark Village site
  - Cooper's Hawk
  - Southern California Rufous-crowned Sparrow (*Aimophila ruficeps canescens*)
  - Lawrence's Goldfinch (*Carduelis lawrencei*)
  - Yellow Warbler (*Dendroica petechia*)
  - White-tailed Kite
  - Horned Lark
  - Yellow-breasted Chat (*Icteria virens*)
  - Least Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*)
  - Loggerhead Shrike
  
- Potentially occurring<sup>30</sup>
  - Tricolored Blackbird
  - Bell's Sage Sparrow
  - Long-eared Owl
  - Western Burrowing Owl
  - Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo
  - Southwestern Willow Flycatcher
  - Summer Tanager
  - Coastal California Gnatcatcher

Even addressing only those species *known* (to the DEIR preparers) from the site, it seems highly unlikely that grassland-dependent species such as Loggerhead Shrike and Horned Lark would not suffer a significant impact following the destruction of their preferred habitat (grassland, cultivated fields, pastureland) on the site, as proposed by the project. While these birds might get a "reprieve" during construction (assuming their nests can be found and left undisturbed), once the project is built, they would have no place to return to nest in the future.

Unfortunately, because so many species were so poorly surveyed (see above), we have no information on where their nests or consistent populations occur on the site, much less how to suggest mitigation to benefit them.

**5. The DEIR proposes an unacceptable magnitude of impact to sensitive bird species and their habitats.**

The Landmark Village DEIR actually presents two categories of impact; first, those to resources within the *entire* 10,000-acre Newhall Ranch development (including the Landmark Village) as addressed in the original Newhall Ranch Specific Plan. Impacts associated *only* with Landmark Village (the first phase of Newhall Ranch), are discussed later in the document<sup>31</sup>.

Even after mitigation, the impacts from implementing Landmark Village would apparently still be significant, and include the outright elimination of over 3,000 acres of wildlife habitat, including two sensitive habitat types (coastal sage scrub and Valley Oak woodland); substantial

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<sup>30</sup> Evidence for Tricolored Blackbird, Bell's Sage Sparrow and Western Burrowing Owl occurring on the site is discussed above.  
<sup>31</sup> See sections 4.4-70 to 4.4-82.

impacts to 10 sensitive bird species (in the report); plus indirect and cumulative impacts that the preparers admit cannot be mitigated (Table 4.4-1)<sup>32</sup>.

Even without appropriate surveys for grassland species, nesting raptors, owls, or wintering birds the DEIR still predicts that many unavoidable, significant impacts will occur with the construction of Landmark Village. These admitted unavoidable impacts of only the Landmark Village site include:

1. "Permanent conversion" (i.e., elimination) of 267.27 acres of coastal sage scrub, a sensitive plant community.
2. "Permanent net loss" of 918.84 acres of wildlife habitat.
3. Loss of oak woodland and protected oak trees.
4. "Unavoidably significant" impacts to three bird species:
  - a. Southern California Rufous-crowned Sparrow
  - b. Northern Harrier
  - c. White-tailed Kite

Even assuming that these effects represent the only significant impacts of implementing the Landmark Village project, two of these bird species, the Northern Harrier and White-tailed Kite, are sufficiently imperiled in the region to request more thorough surveys be conducted in appropriate habitat to determine their locations and if they are nesting, and then possibly require a re-evaluation of the project design and its proposed mitigation.

The Northern Harrier is a grassland-dependent raptor that was historically common throughout southern California. It nests in extensive grassland, on the ground or in matted reeds, and requires short herbaceous vegetation (e.g., grass, short reeds, barren/cultivated land) for foraging. In Los Angeles County, is most numerous in the Antelope Valley, where it breeds locally (e.g., at the Piute Ponds). On the coastal slope of the county, recent (non-historical) breeding has been suspected only in the Puente Hills<sup>33</sup>. Birds are more widespread in winter, occurring in grasslands near Santa Clarita and in the Santa Monica Mountains, but are still highly localized and nearing extirpation in much of the Los Angeles Basin. The total breeding population of Northern Harrier in Los Angeles County is certainly fewer than 5 pairs, and breeding may not even occur every year. The discovery of nesting Northern Harrier on Newhall Ranch would be a significant discovery, and a "significant impact" to the population here should be avoided or mitigated.

White-tailed Kite is another grassland-dependent raptor, but unlike the harrier, it selects as nest sites tall, often isolated clumps of trees surrounded by short grassland for foraging. Known breeding areas in Los Angeles County are very few, and are restricted to remote areas of the Santa Monica Mountains, Santa Susanna Mountains, the Santa Clara River, and the Puente Hills. Occasional breeding occurs elsewhere in the Los Angeles area, such as within flood-control basins. The total population of this species in the county is low - well under 100 individuals during winter - with possibly as few as 10 breeding pairs each year. Therefore, we assert that a

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<sup>32</sup> Sensitive bird species to be significantly impacted on Newhall Ranch, even after mitigation, include: Northern Harrier, Southern California Rufous-crowned Sparrow, Tricolored Blackbird, White-tailed Kite, Swainson's Hawk, Mountain Plover, Bell's Sage Sparrow, Ferruginous Hawk, Western Burrowing Owl, Sharp-shinned Hawk, and Golden Eagle; not all of these are considered by the DEIR as present on lands affected by the construction of Landmark Village, but rather are felt to occur on habitats elsewhere on the ranch.

<sup>33</sup> Cooper, D.S. 2000. Breeding landbirds of a highly-threatened open space: the Puente-Chino Hills, California. *Western Birds* 31:213-234.

significant impact to this small population is unacceptable and should be avoided or properly mitigated.

**6. The DEIR fails to provide the "full environmental context" mandated under CEQA Section 15125 (c).**

All CEQA lead agencies have a responsibility to ensure the competence, thoroughness, and objectivity of the consultants retained to prepare CEQA documentation for a given project. This is a matter of due diligence, since certification of demonstrably inadequate CEQA documentation leaves the lead agency vulnerable to legal challenge by citizens who have no other recourse for achieving impartial, reasonable planning of their communities and natural open spaces. The deficiencies of the biological resources section of the Landmark Village DEIR are so pervasive that the most important points of contention identified herein probably cannot be resolved without preparation of a revised DEIR. The revised document should be circulated for another round of public review.

### **SUGGESTED REMEDIES**

We assert that *all* sensitive species that were not adequately surveyed during the preparation of the Landmark Village DEIR be re-evaluated and, if necessary, re-surveyed. As outlined below, this would specifically apply to the three taxa entirely overlooked in the preparation of the DEIR; nesting and wintering raptors; nocturnal species; and grassland-dependent species. The actual status of each, including nesting sites as applicable, must be addressed in an amended DEIR before any impact analysis is attempted. Specifically, these species include:

1. California Condor (overlooked)
2. Golden Eagle (nesting raptor)
3. Cooper's Hawk (nesting raptor)
4. Ferruginous Hawk (winter-only; grassland obligate)
5. Northern Harrier (grassland obligate)
6. White-tailed Kite (nesting raptor)
7. Prairie Falcon (nesting raptor)
8. Short-eared Owl (overlooked; winter-only; grassland obligate)
9. Long-eared Owl (nocturnal)
10. California Spotted Owl (overlooked)
11. Burrowing Owl (grassland obligate)
12. Loggerhead Shrike (grassland obligate)
13. Horned Lark (grassland obligate)

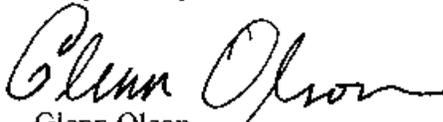
Following this analysis, we suggest the adoption and implementation of reasonable mitigation to offset the projected impacts - as well as any new impacts discovered after surveys for the above species. Once satisfactory mitigation measures are identified and agreed upon, only then should Newhall Land use the guidelines set forth in the DEIR for implementing them; *the guidelines described in the DEIR, such as LV 4.4-8, do not constitute mitigation measures.*

Examples of appropriate mitigation could include the following actions:

- Permanent protection of a large agricultural reserve along Highway 126 maintained as cultivated fields or irrigated pastureland for grassland birds and other wildlife species.
- Adequate undeveloped buffers along tributaries, including seasonal streams, and a project-wide prohibition on the use of concrete culverts to replace these vital natural riparian systems.
- Establishment of permanent reserves for sensitive coastal sage scrub, grassland and riparian-dependent birds that are *consistent with existing concentrations of these species within the site boundaries* (requires initial and ongoing surveys for Northern Harrier, Loggerhead Shrike, Summer Tanager, Bell's Sage Sparrow, etc.).
- Establishment of ecological reserves or at least passive-recreation parks around raptor nesting and foraging areas, particularly for rare and declining species such as Northern Harrier, Golden Eagle, White-tailed Kite and Short-eared Owl.

In summary, based on our comments herein, we find that the avian analysis in the Biota section of this DEIR is inadequate and incomplete and request that, based on our specific recommendations above, a new EIR be submitted with additional data on bird species and appropriate mitigation measures.

Respectfully submitted,



Glenn Olson  
Executive Director

cc: Garry George, Executive Director, Los Angeles Audubon Society  
Marianne Slaughter, President, Ventura Audubon Society  
Kris Ohlenkamp, President, San Fernando Valley Audubon Society

## DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL

28648 The Old Road  
Valencia, CA 91355  
(800)735-2929 (TT/TDD)  
(661)294-5540



December 11, 2006

File No.: 540.9107.13086

RECEIVED  
DEC 26 2006

Mr. Daniel Fierros  
Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning  
320 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. Fierros:

This is in response to the Notice of Completion for the Landmark Village Project. The proposed project will be located in the unincorporated area of Los Angeles County and within the jurisdiction of the California Highway Patrol. Traffic enforcement and accident investigation will be the responsibility of our agency.

In reviewing this project, State Clearinghouse Number 2004021002, our concern is the effect this project will have on traffic. The project will significantly increase traffic volume on SR-126 and Interstate 5. This will undoubtedly affect the Moorpark and Ventura CHP Area as well as the Newhall CHP Area. Additionally, we have great concern for the additional roadways which would necessitate additional resources and officers to provide traffic enforcement, emergency incident management, public service, assistance and accident investigation. This area has been very rural and sparsely populated and therefore not subjected to the level of patrol responsibilities which we are currently facing in the Santa Clarita Valley metropolitan area. Accordingly, this area will need a substantial increase in resources from the Newhall CHP Area.

If you have any questions or concerns, Sergeant Jacobs will be the contact person for the Newhall CHP Area and may be reached at the above address or telephone number. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to comment on this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "S. V. Bernard".

S. V. BERNARD, Captain  
Commander  
Newhall Area

cc: Southern Division  
Office of Special Projects

*Safety, Service, and Security*



# SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

Los Angeles Office: 818 W. 7th Street, 12th Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90017 • 213.236.1800  
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## FAX COVER SHEET

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To: Mr. Daniel Fierros Date: 01/22/07

Location: Dept. Regional Planning Fax #: (213) 626-0434

Number of pages (including cover): 19

From: Jill Egerman Phone #: (213) 236-1919

Note: If you do not receive all the pages, please call Jill Egerman

URGENT  FOR REVIEW  FYI

### Comments:

SCAG's comments on the Landmark Village Project DEIR are attached, and have also been sent via U.S. mail.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA



ASSOCIATION of GOVERNMENTS

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Los Angeles County: [List of names including: Norman E. Clarke, Los Angeles County; Don Wasserman, Los Angeles County; Jim Aldridge, Monterey Park; ...]

Orange County: Chris Nomy, Orange County; [List of names including: Geraldine Garcia, La Habra; ...]

Riverside County: [List of names including: [Name obscured], Riverside County; ...]

San Bernardino County: [List of names including: Gary Droll, San Bernardino County; ...]

Ventura County: [List of names including: Judy West, Ventura County; ...]

Orange County Transportation Authority: [List of names including: Lou Correa, County of Orange]

Riverside County Transportation Commission: [List of names including: Robin Lewis, Member]

Ventura County Transportation Commission: [List of names including: Paul Malheux, Member]

22 January 2007

Mr. Daniel Fierros  
Department of Regional Planning  
County of Los Angeles  
320 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: SCAG Comments on the Notice of Availability of a Draft EIR for the Landmark Village Project - SCAG No. 120060771

Dear Mr. Fierros,

Thank you for submitting the DEIR for the Landmark Village Project to the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) for review and comment. As the clearinghouse for regionally significant projects per Executive Order 12372, SCAG reviews the consistency of local plans, projects, and programs with regional plans. This activity is based on SCAG's responsibilities as a regional planning organization pursuant to state and federal laws and regulations. Guidance provided by these reviews is intended to assist local agencies and project sponsors to take actions that contribute to the attainment of regional goals and policies.

SCAG staff reviewed the aforementioned DEIR, and has determined that the proposed project is regionally significant per the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines (Section 15206). The proposed project considers over 500 residential units.

CEQA requires that EIRs discuss any inconsistencies between the proposed project and applicable general plans and regional plans (Section 15125 [d]). If there are inconsistencies, an explanation and rationalization for such inconsistencies should be provided.

Policies of SCAG's Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide, Regional Transportation Plan, and Compass Growth Vision that may be applicable to your project are outlined in the attachment. We expect the FEIR to specifically cite the appropriate SCAG policies and address the manner in which the project is consistent with applicable core policies or supportive of applicable ancillary policies. Please use our policy numbers to refer to them in your FEIR. Also, we would encourage you to use a side-by-side comparison of SCAG policies with a discussion of the consistency or support of the policy with the proposed project.

SCAG's Compass Growth Vision, adopted in 2004, encourages better relationships between housing, transportation, and employment. For a clearer understanding of the intent of and possibilities with Compass, please consult our website, [www.socalcompass.org](http://www.socalcompass.org) in addition to the guidance offered in this letter.

Please provide a minimum of 45 days for SCAG to review the FEIR when this document is available. If you have any questions regarding the attached comments, please contact me at (213) 236-1919. Thank you.

Sincerely,  
*Jill Egerman*  
Jill Egerman  
Associate Regional Planner

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 Mr. Daniel Fierros  
 Page 2

**COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT  
 FOR THE LANDMARK VILLAGE PROJECT  
 SCAG NO. I 20060771**

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Landmark Village Project proposes to develop the 292.6 acre Landmark Village tract map site, located in the first phase of the Riverwood Village of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan. The tract map site proposes construction of 1,444 residential dwelling units (308 single-family units, 1,136 multi-family units), up to 1,033,000 square feet of mixed-use/commercial uses, a 9-acre elementary school, a 16-acre community park, a fire station, public and private recreational facilities, trails, and road improvements. Several off-site project-related components would be developed on an additional 750.9 acres of land that is mostly within the approved Specific Plan boundary. The entire project site comprises approximately 1,044 gross acres. In addition, the applicant is requesting the approval of the following entitlements: (a) General Plan Amendment, Sub-Plan Amendment and Specific Plan Amendment; (b) Vesting Tentative Tract Map; (c) Significant Ecological Area (SEA) Conditional Use Permit (CUP); (d) Oak Tree Permit; (e) Off-Site Soil Transport Approval; (f) CUP for off-site grading; and (g) Modification to adopted County Floodway limits.

**CONSISTENCY WITH REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND GUIDE POLICIES**

The **Growth Management Chapter (GMC)** of the Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide (RCPG) contains the following policies that are particularly applicable and should be addressed in the EIR for the Landmark Village Project.

3.01 *The population, housing, and jobs forecasts, which are adopted by SCAG's Regional Council and that reflect local plans and policies, shall be used by SCAG in all phases of implementation and review.*

Regional Growth Forecasts

The EIR should reflect the most current SCAG forecasts, which are the 2004 RTP (April 2004) Population, Household and Employment forecasts. The forecasts for your region, subregions, and nearest city are as follows:

**Adopted SCAG Regionwide Forecasts**

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>2030</u>
Population	19,208,661	20,191,117	21,137,519	22,035,416	22,890,797
Households	6,072,578	6,463,402	6,865,355	7,263,519	7,660,107
Employment	8,729,192	9,198,618	9,659,847	10,100,776	10,527,202

**Adopted North Los Angeles County Forecasts**

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>2030</u>
Population	735,262	852,964	967,387	1,076,013	1,179,228
Households	221,538	256,966	292,658	327,745	362,324
Employment	215,955	236,070	253,417	270,409	286,286

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**City of Santa Clarita Forecasts**

	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Population	187,795	200,104	211,367	221,915	231,846
Households	62,837	67,832	72,883	77,868	82,806
Employment	57,248	60,891	64,012	67,133	70,078

\* The 2004 RTP growth forecast at the regional, county and subregional level was adopted by RC in April, 2004. City totals are the sum of small area data and should be used for advisory purposes only.

**SCAG staff comments:** The Draft EIR, Section 2.0 at page 2.0-19 addressed the consistency of the project with this SCAG policy with the following:

"Based on SCAG's most recent forecasts, by the year 2025, the Los Angeles region is expected to grow to approximately 22.6 million people, representing 7.4 million household units and 9.9 million jobs. This growth represents a population increase of 34.5 percent, an increase in housing of 37.9 percent, and an increase in employment of 34.2 percent between the years 2000 and 2025. SCAG's distribution of regional growth was developed through the subregional planning process. Development of the proposed project will accommodate an increase in population of about 3,680 persons and 1,444 housing units. The resultant increase in region-wide population is planned and considered negligible. While the proposed project would not create significant or permanent employment opportunities, it would provide new housing in support of existing and new employment opportunities expected to occur in the Santa Clarita Valley. A detailed analysis of the project's consistency with the population and housing forecasts for the North Los Angeles County subregion and City of Santa Clarita is provided in the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan Program EIR."

SCAG concurs with this assessment and concludes that the project would be consistent with Policy 3.01.

3.03 *The timing, financing, and location of public facilities, utility systems, and transportation systems shall be used by SCAG to implement the region's growth policies.*

**SCAG staff comments:** The Draft EIR, Section 2.0 pages 2.0-19 and 2.0-10, provides a discussion on the consistency of the project with this SCAG policy with the following:

"The proposed Landmark Village project represents the first phase of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan, which contains backbone water, sewer, and drainage plans that generally identify the size and location of needed infrastructure. The proposed project would be developed over five years as part of Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 53108, which represents the phasing mechanism used by the Specific Plan to identify the timing and sizing of necessary infrastructure. Given the existence of the approved Specific Plan, and that the proposed project is located adjacent to existing infrastructure, Landmark Village would represent an orderly progression of development that would aid in implementing the region's growth policies. The proposed project would use various techniques currently available for financing and maintenance of public facilities, streets, and utilities. For example, the applicant could decide to finance the infrastructure and services necessary to serve the project through a Community Facilities District under the provisions of the Mello-Roos Communities Facilities Act of 1982. Such a district is formed to finance designated public services and capital facilities by levying special taxes within the specific plan area. While the exact financing method has not yet been decided, the County and the property owner/developer must mutually agree to the method and enter into an agreement reflecting

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the selected financing and maintenance method. As proposed, the project would be consistent with the region's growth policies."

SCAG concurs with this assessment and concludes that the proposed project is consistent with SCAG policy 3.03.

#### **GMC POLICIES RELATED TO THE RCPG GOAL TO IMPROVE THE REGIONAL STANDARD OF LIVING**

The Growth Management goals to develop urban forms that enable individuals to spend less income on housing cost, that minimize public and private development costs, and that enable firms to be more competitive, strengthen the regional strategic goal to stimulate the regional economy. The evaluation of the proposed project in relation to the following policies would be intended to guide efforts toward achievement of such goals and does not infer regional interference with local land use powers

3.05 *Encourage patterns of urban development and land use which reduce costs on infrastructure construction and make better use of existing facilities.*

**SCAG staff comments:** Please see comments under 3.10.

3.09 *Support local jurisdictions' efforts to minimize the cost of infrastructure and public service delivery, and efforts to seek new sources of funding for development and the provision of services.*

**SCAG staff comments:** Please see comments under 3.10.

3.10 *Support local jurisdictions' actions to minimize red tape and expedite the permitting process to maintain economic vitality and competitiveness.*

**SCAG staff comments:** The Draft EIR, Section 2.0 at pages 2.0-20, 2.0-21 addressed the consistency of the project with SCAG policies 3.5, 3.9, and 3.10 by the following:

"The Landmark Village site is located near existing urban uses that are supported by a full complement of roadways, water, sewer, electricity, natural gas, communications links, cable, and other urban infrastructure. In addition, existing development in the area is served by local law enforcement and fire protection services. As a result, extension of these services to proposed on-site uses would make use of existing facilities. Project residents would generate revenue in the form of property taxes, fees, etc., which would be available to the County to fund public services on site, such as fire and police services, flood control, library services, street maintenance, and wastewater treatment. Revenues for capital improvements would also be generated by the project directly through various forms of development fees, including, but not limited to, bridge and thoroughfare fees, fire facilities fees, sewer annexation and construction fees, and school fees. In addition, the project would build all on-site roadways, potable water, sewer, energy, and communications systems, as well as share in the upgrade of all affected roadways. Financing mechanisms for needed on-site infrastructure improvements and supporting public service facilities could possibly include, but are not limited to, private financing, assessment districts, fee districts, and Mello-Roos districts. As such the project is consistent with these RCPG policies."

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SCAG concurs with this assessment and concludes that the proposed project is consistent with SCAG policies 3.5, 3.9, and 3.10.

#### **GMC POLICIES RELATED TO THE RCPG GOAL TO IMPROVE THE REGIONAL QUALITY OF LIFE**

The Growth Management goals to attain mobility and clean air goals and to develop urban forms that enhance quality of life, that accommodate a diversity of life styles, that preserve open space and natural resources, and that are aesthetically pleasing and preserve the character of communities, enhance the regional strategic goal of maintaining the regional quality of life. The evaluation of the proposed project in relation to the following policies would be intended to provide direction for plan implementation, and does not allude to regional mandates.

- 3.12 *Encourage existing or proposed local jurisdictions' programs aimed at designing land uses which encourage the use of transit and thus reduce the need for roadway expansion, reduce the number of auto trips and vehicle miles traveled, and create opportunities for residents to walk and bike.*

**SCAG staff comments:** Please see comments under 3.14

- 3.14 *Support local plans to increase density of future development located at strategic points along the regional commuter rail, transit systems, and activity centers.*

**SCAG staff comments:** The Draft EIR, Section 2.0 pages 2.0-21 and 2.0-22, provides a discussion on the consistency of the project with SCAG policies 3.12 and 3.14 with the following:

"Two major transit carriers serve the Landmark Village project study area, the Santa Clarita Transit (SCT) system operated by the City of Santa Clarita and Metrolink operated by the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA). The SCT largely serves the Santa Clarita Valley, while Metrolink currently serves Ventura, Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Riverside, Orange, and San Diego Counties.

The SCT route passes the tract map site via SR-126 and provides service to the Santa Clarita and Newhall Metrolink Stations, the Valencia Industrial and Commerce Centers, and the Valencia Town Center area. Buses run every 30 minutes. Route 2 connects with other bus routes at McBean Transfer Station, and connects with commuter trains at the Jan Heidt Metrolink Station in Newhall. Major destinations along Route 2 are Soledad Entertainment Center, Newhall, Newhall Metrolink Station, Valencia Town Center, Valencia Industrial Center, Valencia Commerce Center, and Val Verde.

SCT commuter busses provide regional service to downtown Los Angeles, the San Fernando Valley and the Antelope Valley. . . .

The proposed project is consistent with these transit policies because it would place development in an area presently served by local and regional transit. It can also be considered consistent because of its extensive pedestrian and bicycle trails network, which are linked to adjacent uses and roadways. This network would provide project residents with a combination of transportation modes including bicycling, walking, and driving. Furthermore, because the project has been designed to provide housing that would support existing and new employment opportunities that are projected to occur in the Santa Clarita Valley, it could reduce travel distances and could create opportunities for employees to walk and bike to work."

SCAG concurs with this assessment and concludes that the proposed project is consistent with

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 Mr. Daniel Fierros  
 Page 6

SCAG policies 3.12 and 3.14.

3.17 *Support and encourage settlement patterns which contain a range of urban densities.*

**SCAG staff comments:** Please see comments under 3.19.

3.18 *Encourage planned development in locations least likely to cause adverse environmental impact.*

**SCAG staff comments:** Please see comments under 3.19.

3.19 *National Forests shall remain permanently preserved and used as open space. SCAG shall support policies and actions that preserve open space areas identified in local, state, and federal plans.*

**SCAG staff comments:** The Draft EIR, Section 2.0 at pages 2.0-22 and 2.0-23 addressed the consistency of the project with SCAG policies 3.17, 3.18, and 3.19 by the following:

"The Landmark Village tract map site is largely disturbed due to ongoing agricultural activity and is planned for development as part of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan, which implements the goals and policies of the Los Angeles County General Plan and Santa Clarita Valley Areawide Plan on a focused, site-specific basis. The approved Newhall Ranch project site is located adjacent to developed uses and is subject to the provisions of the Specific Plan. The Specific Plan contains a conceptual development plan, development regulations, design guidelines, and implementation mechanisms consistent with the goals, objectives, and policies of the Los Angeles County General Plan and Santa Clarita Valley Areawide Plan, including those directed towards protection of open space and natural resources.

The project design was developed consistent with the Resource Management Plan (Section 2.6 of the Specific Plan) and the resource conservation objectives of the Specific Plan. Design considerations included establishment of an adequate buffer between residential uses and sensitive resources to enhance the habitat value of the natural area and preserve the river resources. To this end, roughly 38 acres of the Landmark Village project site would be dedicated to open space. The Landmark Village project would also construct a Community Park consistent with the Specific Plan as well as trails and major utility easements that function as a separation between development areas south of the SR 126 and the Santa Clara River. For these reasons, the project is consistent with these RCPG policies."

SCAG concurs with this assessment and concludes that the proposed project is consistent with SCAG policies 3.17, 3.18, and 3.19.

3.20 *Vital resources as wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, woodlands, production lands, and land containing unique and endangered plants and animals should be protected.*

**SCAG staff comments:** The Draft EIR, Section 2.0 at pages 2.0-23 through 2.0-25 addressed the consistency of the project with this SCAG policy by the following excerpted comments:

"The Landmark Village tract map site is largely disturbed from ongoing agricultural activity but it is located adjacent to the River Corridor SMA/SEA 23. SEA 23 was originally established along the Santa Clara River to protect the variety of riparian habitat found within and along its corridor. In general terms, the purpose of designating SEAs is to maintain and protect areas that possess biotic resources that are uncommon, rare, unique, or critical to

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the maintenance of wildlife. More specifically, SEA 23 was established to conserve habitat for four federally listed endangered species: (1) unarmored three-spine stickleback, (2) least Bell's vireo, (3) Southwestern pond turtle, and (4) arroyo Southwestern toad in the Santa Clara Valley.

The proposed Landmark Village project represents the first phase of construction within the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan, and the applicant is planning to construct a number of improvements within the River Corridor SMA/SEA 23 as contemplated by the Program SEA CUP No. 94-087-(5), including the Long Canyon Road Bridge, trails, water quality basins, bank stabilization, water and sewer utility crossings, storm drain outlets, and potential riparian mitigation sites.

Consistent with the approved SEA CUP, the Landmark Village project has been designed to lessen direct and indirect impacts to the sensitive resources found within the River Corridor SMA/SEA 23. The site plan incorporates a setback to separate natural resources in the River Corridor SMA/SEA 23 from the residential and mixed uses associated with the project. Where improvements must be constructed in the River Corridor SMA/SEA 23, they have been sensitively designed to minimize permanent disturbance.

The drainage concept for Landmark Village proposes the use of buried bank stabilization where necessary to protect against erosion except at bridge crossings, where exposed grouted rip-rap or reinforced concrete would be used. . . . Consequently, under most circumstances, project improvements would not hinder river flows or reduce the area of the floodplain. Instead, these flows would spread across the river channel, unaffected by the bank protection and bridge abutments.

The Landmark Village tract map site would also introduce people and animals into this resource area as the project would implement a segment of the River Trail as identified by the Master Trails Plan of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan. However, access to trails in the River Corridor SMA/SEA 23 must be restricted to daytime hours as defined by the management component of the Resource Management Plan. In addition, the River Trail is separated from the natural resources by fencing or other barriers to discourage intrusion into natural areas. Based on the above, the project is considered consistent with these policies."

SCAG concurs with this assessment and concludes that the proposed project is partially consistent with SCAG policy 3.20. The Draft EIR, Section 4.4 discusses impacts from the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan on biological resources that would remain significant after mitigation. It would be helpful if the Final EIR would provide a discussion and address the manner in which Landmark Village is supportive or detracts from the achievement of protecting wetlands, production lands, and land containing unique and endangered plants and animals. Based on the information provided in the Draft EIR, we are unable to determine if the project is fully consistent with Policy 3.20. Please address this in the Final EIR.

- 3.21 *Encourage the implementation of measures aimed at the preservation and protection of recorded and unrecorded cultural resources and archaeological sites.*

**SCAG staff comments:** The Draft EIR, Section 4.22 addressed the consistency of the project with this SCAG policy. The impact analysis of Landmark Village on archeological resources included an examination of the impacts of the Landmark Village project on the site's archeological and paleontological resources. Section 4.22 of the DEIR reiterated the Mitigation measures required by the Adopted Newhall Ranch Specific Plan, as they relate to the Landmark Village Project and also set forth the Additional Mitigation Measures proposed by this EIR. As such, SCAG concludes that the proposed project is consistent with SCAG policy 3.21.

- 3.22 *Discourage development, or encourage the use of special design requirements, in areas with steep slopes, high fire, flood, and seismic hazards.*

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Page 8

**SCAG staff comments:** Please see comments under 3.23.

- 3.23 *Encourage mitigation measures that reduce noise in certain locations, measures aimed at preservation of biological and ecological resources, measures that would reduce exposure to seismic hazards, minimize earthquake damage, and to develop emergency response and recovery plans.*

**SCAG staff comments:** The Draft EIR, Section 2.0 at pages 2.0-25 and 2.0-26 addressed the consistency of the project with SCAG policies 3.22 and 3.23 by the following:

"The Landmark Village tract map site is flat and site development would not expose people to hazards associated with steep slopes. As with all areas in Southern California, the site is subject to seismic hazards associated with local and regional fault systems and uses on the site would be subject to building codes addressing seismic hazards. The site is located adjacent to the Santa Clara River and portions of the site are within the Federal Emergency Management Act (FEMA) 100-year flood boundary. The project contains a drainage concept that would protect people and development from flood hazards. In addition, the Los Angeles County Fire Department designates the project site as Zone 4, High Fire Hazard, so the project would be subject to Section 1117.2.1 of the County Fire Code, which requires preparation of a fuel modification plan, landscape plan, and irrigation plan for developed areas.

The proposed project has been designed consistent with the Land Use Plan component of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan. Less sensitive Commercial and Medium-Density residential uses are planned along SR-126. In addition, mitigation measures have been incorporated into this EIR that will minimize impacts to those residential units closest to SR-126, San Martinez Grande, and Chiquito Canyon Road.

As described above under Policy 3.20, the Landmark Village Tract map site is disturbed from ongoing agricultural activity but is located adjacent to sensitive resources in the River Corridor SMA/SEA 23. The project itself has been designed to minimize impacts to sensitive resources. Where necessary, mitigation measures have been proposed, which would reduce impacts to sensitive biological and ecological resources to the extent feasible.

In summary, hazards to the project associated with wildfires, flooding and seismic events would be reduced to less than significant levels through compliance with building and fire codes, as required by the County of Los Angeles. Impacts associated with roadway noise and disturbance to natural resources are addressed through site design and implementation of recommended mitigation measures in this EIR."

As such, SCAG concurs with this assessment and concludes that the proposed project is consistent with SCAG policies 3.22 and 3.23.

#### **GMC POLICIES RELATED TO THE RCPG GOAL TO PROVIDE SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AND CULTURAL EQUITY**

The Growth Management Goal to develop urban forms that avoid economic and social polarization promotes the regional strategic goal of minimizing social and geographic disparities and of reaching equity among all segments of society. The evaluation of the proposed project in relation to the policy stated below is intended guide direction for the accomplishment of this goal, and does not infer regional mandates and interference with local land use powers.

- 3.24 *Encourage efforts of local jurisdictions in the implementation of programs that increase the supply and quality of housing and provide affordable housing as evaluated in the Regional Housing Needs*

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*Assessment.*

**SCAG staff comments:** Please see comments under 3.27.

- 3.27 *Support local jurisdictions and other service providers in their efforts to develop sustainable communities and provide, equally to all members of society, accessible and effective services such as: public education, housing, health care, social services, recreational facilities, law enforcement, and fire protection.*

**SCAG staff comments:** The Draft EIR, Section 2.0 at pages 2.0-27 and 2.0-28 addressed the consistency of the project with SCAG policies 3.24 and 3.27 by the following:

"SCAG prepares the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) for a six-county region that includes Ventura, Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Riverside, Orange and Imperial Counties and some 150 local governments. The RHNA defines the housing need allocation for each member local government in Southern California, including Los Angeles County. This total need is divided into housing construction need for households in four broad income categories . . . For the unincorporated area, this need has been determined to be 9,019 units of very low-income housing, 7,519 units of low-income housing, 9,859 units of moderate-income housing, and 25,835 units of above moderate-income housing.

Section 3.10 of the adopted Newhall Ranch Specific Plan includes an Affordable Housing Program that provides for the direct inclusion of very low, low, and moderate income affordable housing opportunities within the Specific Plan area. At buildout, a total of 2,200 affordable dwelling units would be provided. The Affordable Housing Program includes timing mechanisms and monitoring provisions to ensure that affordable housing is provided concurrent with market rate housing. The applicant is required to identify the number and location of affordable housing units as a condition of tentative or final map approval.

The Landmark Village project proposes a total of 1,444 dwelling units. Approximately 296 units located in the project's Medium Residential, High Residential, and Mixed-Use land use categories would be set aside as affordable under the Affordable Housing Program of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan. An affirmative marketing program consisting of advertising in newspapers, information flyers, promotional materials, and on-site signage would be used to assure opportunities for local residents. The variety of housing types proposed for the project site, combined with implementation of apportion of the Newhall Ranch Affordable Housing Program, will serve to assist in meeting the County's housing needs, which cover all levels of the economic spectrum.

The Landmark Village project would implement the first phase of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan, which is a balanced community containing the full range of community and social services. The Landmark Village project site is currently served by one fixed-route transit line (Route 2). The route passes the project site via SR-126 and provides service to the Newhall Metrolink Station, the Valencia Industrial and Commerce Centers, and the Valencia Town Center area. Buses run every 30 minutes. Route 2 connects with other bus routes at McBean Transfer Station, and connects with commuter trains at the Jan Heidt Metrolink Station in Newhall. Major destinations along Route 2 are Soledad Entertainment Center, Newhall, Newhall Metrolink Station, Valencia Town Center, Valencia Industrial Center, Valencia Commerce Center, and Val Verde. Close proximity of the project site to regional transportation modes provides greater opportunity for all members of society access to public education, housing, health care, social and recreational services (provided within and outside of the project), law enforcement, and fire services."

SCAG concurs with this assessment and concludes that the proposed project is consistent with SCAG policies 3.24 and 3.27.

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#### **AIR QUALITY CHAPTER CORE ACTIONS**

The **Air Quality Chapter (AQC)** core actions that are generally applicable to the Project are as follows:

- 5.07 *Determine specific programs and associated actions needed (e.g., indirect source rules, enhanced use of telecommunications, provision of community-based shuttle services, provision of demand management based programs, or vehicle-miles-traveled/emission fees) so that options to command and control regulation can be assessed.*

**SCAG staff comments:** Please see comments under 5.11.

- 5.11 *Through the environmental document review process, ensure that plans at all levels of government (regional, air basin, county, subregional and local) consider air quality, land use, transportation and economic relationships to ensure consistency and minimize conflicts.*

**SCAG staff comments:** The Draft EIR Section 2.0 at pages 2.0-31 and 2.0-32 addressed the consistency of the project with SCAG policies 5.07 and 5.11 by the following:

"The Landmark Village tract map site proposes the construction of an arterial street/infrastructure system and a network of pedestrian and bicycle trails that would provide for local travel by a combination of transportation modes, including bicycles, walking, bus transit, commuter rail service, and automobiles. The project also incorporates bus pull-ins, as necessary to accommodate bus-related transit and proposes to fund its fair share of infrastructure improvements required off site through the payment of fees. As indicated in this EIR, Section 4.7, Traffic/Access, funding and construction of main-line freeway capacity (i.e., I-5 and SR-14) and interchanges with other regional highways (i.e., I-5 at SR-126) is provided by existing sources of tax revenue and by Caltrans through allocations made by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA). Existing funding sources include state and federal gas taxes and Los Angeles County Proposition A and C sales taxes. As transportation improvements are constructed over the life of the project, the desire to improve air quality while providing adequate transportation infrastructure can be facilitated. Consequently, the project favorably addresses this issue.

As indicated above, the project proposes a pattern of development that includes a wide range of housing unit types and job-creating uses. These uses would be linked by an arterial street system and a pedestrian and bicycle trails network that provide for local travel by a combination of transportation modes, including bicycles, walking, bus transit, and automobiles. The project has been designed to provide future residents of the site with employment opportunities and services within proximity to the project, through the inclusion of the commercial site. Access to the community-wide trail system promotes an efficient means of access to these uses; therefore, VMT and air pollutant emissions can be minimized. Furthermore, the project is located in close proximity and adjacent to existing job centers (e.g., Valencia Commerce Center, Industrial Center, Town Center, and Corporate Center) which would help to reduce the need for long commutes from the site to more distant employment centers in Ventura County, the San Fernando Valley, and beyond. As a result, VMT and, consequently, air pollution emissions would be minimized. Based on this information, the proposed project favorably addresses the above-noted air quality core actions."

SCAG concurs with this assessment and concludes that the proposed project is consistent with SCAG policies 5.07 and 5.11.

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**OPEN SPACE CHAPTER ANCILLARY GOALS**

The **Open Space and Conservation Chapter** goals related to the proposed project include:

9.02 *Increase the accessibility to open space lands for outdoor recreation*

**SCAG staff comments:** Please see comments under 9.03.

9.03 *Promote self-sustaining regional recreation resources and facilities.*

**SCAG staff comments:** Section 2.0 of the DEIR, pages 2.0-33 and 2.0-34 addressed the consistency of the project with SCAG policies 9.2 and 9.3 with the following:

"The Landmark Village tract map site provides a variety of open space for both passive and active recreation. Consistent with the Specific Plan's Community Park that contains both active and passive recreational areas. The project also implements a segment of the Regional River Trail and Community Trails identified in the Specific Plan's Master Trails Plan. A river outlook point is located in the passive area of the Community Park, which is accessed by both the Regional River Trail and the Community Trail system. Thus, the proposed project is considered consistent with outdoor recreation and public health and safety policies identified in the Open Space Chapter of the RCPG."

SCAG concurs with the above assessment and concludes that the proposed project is consistent with SCAG policies 9.02 and 9.03.

9.04 *Maintain open space for adequate protection of lives and properties against natural and man-made hazards.*

**SCAG staff comments:** Please see comments under 9.05.

9.05 *Minimize potentially hazardous developments in hillsides, canyons, areas susceptible to flooding, earthquakes, wildfire and other known hazards, and areas with limited access for emergency equipment.*

**SCAG staff comments:** Section 2.0 of the DEIR, page 2.0-34 addressed the consistency of the project with SCAG policies 9.4 and 9.5 with the following:

"Open spaces proposed within the Landmark Village project site would be maintained and owned by a Homeowners Association or the County of Los Angeles to ensure that open space areas protect both persons and properties against natural and manmade hazards. Implementation of geotechnical reports and drainage concepts as well as review of plans by the Los Angeles County Sheriff and Fire Departments will ensure that development located in areas susceptible to flooding, earthquakes, and wildfire hazards are constructed and situated so as to minimize and avoid potential hazards. Subsequently the proposed project is considered consistent with Policies 9.04 and 9.05 of the Open Space Chapter of the RCPG."

SCAG concurs with the above assessment and concludes that the proposed project is consistent with SCAG policies 9.04 and 9.05.

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9.07 *Maintain adequate viable resource production lands, particularly lands devoted to commercial agriculture and mining operations.*

**SCAG staff comments:** Section 2.0 of the DEIR, pages 2.0-34 and 2.0-35 addressed the consistency of the project with this SCAG policy with the following:

"The Landmark Village tract map site is presently cultivated with row crops. Site development as proposed would result in the loss of 292 acres of active farmland. The economic and agricultural productivity of the Landmark Village site is constrained, as the property is isolated from nearby agricultural lands by the presence of SR-126 and the Santa Clara River. The loss of 292 acres of agricultural land for development of Landmark Village represents a significant unavoidable impact that was considered in the CEQA Findings adopted by the County Board of Supervisors for the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan.

A number of overriding economic, legal, social technological and other considerations were identified in the Statement of Overriding Considerations to determine that these benefits outweighed the loss of this agricultural land. The Landmark Village project is the first subdivision map filed under the Specific Plan."

SCAG concurs with the above assessment and concludes that the proposed project is consistent with SCAG policy 9.07.

9.08 *Develop well-managed viable ecosystems or known habitats of rare, threatened and endangered species, including wetlands.*

**SCAG staff comments:** Section 2.0 of the DEIR, page 2.0-35 addressed the consistency of the project with this SCAG policy with the following:

"The Landmark Village project site has been designed to minimize direct and indirect impacts to the sensitive resources found within the River Corridor SMA/SEA 23. For example, the site plan incorporates a setback to separate natural resources in the River Corridor SMA/SEA 23 from the residential and mixed uses associated with the project. Where improvements must be constructed in the River Corridor SMA/SEA 23, they have been sensitively designed to minimize permanent disturbance. Mitigation measures have been incorporated into the proposed project (Section 4.4, Biota) to minimize impacts on the endangered species, which reside in the Santa Clara River. Consequently, the proposed project is considered consistent with Policy 9.08 of the Open Space Chapter of the RCPG."

SCAG concurs with the above assessment and concludes that the proposed project is consistent with SCAG policy 9.08.

**WATER QUALITY CHAPTER RECOMMENDATIONS AND POLICY OPTIONS**

The Water Quality Chapter core recommendations and policy options relate to the two water quality goals: to restore and maintain the chemical, physical and biological integrity of the nation's water, and, to achieve and maintain water quality objectives that are necessary to protect all beneficial uses of all waters.

11.07 *Encourage water reclamation throughout the region where it is cost-effective, feasible, and*

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*appropriate to reduce reliance on imported water and wastewater discharges. Current administrative impediments to increased use of wastewater should be addressed.*

**SCAG staff comments:** Section 2.0 of the DEIR, page 2.0-33 addressed the consistency of the project with this SCAG policy with the following: "The Landmark Village tract map site proposes the use of reclaimed water for landscape irrigation purposes, consistent with the Public Services and Facilities Plan of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan. The project is considered consistent with this policy." SCAG concurs with the above assessment and concludes that the proposed project is consistent with SCAG policy 11.07.

**REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

The 2004 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) also has goals and policies that are pertinent to this proposed project. This RTP links the goal of sustaining mobility with the goals of fostering economic development, enhancing the environment, reducing energy consumption, promoting transportation-friendly development patterns, and encouraging fair and equitable access to residents affected by socio-economic, geographic and commercial limitations. The RTP continues to support all applicable federal and state laws in implementing the proposed project. Among the relevant goals and policies of the RTP are the following:

**Regional Transportation Plan Goals**

- Protect the environment, improve air quality and promote energy efficiency.
- Encourage land use and growth patterns that complement our transportation investments.

**Regional Transportation Plan Policies**

- Transportation investments shall be based on SCAG's adopted Regional Performance Indicators.

<b><u>Performance Indicator</u></b>	<b><u>Performance Measures</u></b>	<b><u>Definition</u></b>	<b><u>Performance Outcome</u></b>
<b>Mobility</b>	• Average Daily Speed	Speed-experienced by travelers regardless of mode.	10% Improvement
	• Average Daily Delay	Delay-excess travel time resulting from the difference between a reference speed and actual speed. Total daily delay and daily delay per capita are indicators used.	40% Improvement
<b>Accessibility</b>	• Percent PM peak work trips within 45 minutes of home		Auto 90% Transit 37%
	• Distribution of work trip travel times		Auto 8% Improvement Transit 8% Improvement
<b>Reliability</b>	• Percent variation in travel time	Day-to-day change in travel times experienced by travelers. Variability results from accidents, weather, road closures, system problems and other non-recurrent conditions.	10% Improvement
<b>Safety</b>	• Accident Rates	Measured in accidents per million vehicle miles by mode.	0.3% Improvement

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<u>Performance Indicator</u>	<u>Performance Measures</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Performance Outcome</u>
Cost Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Benefit-to-Cost (B/C) Ratio</li> </ul>	Ratio of benefits of RTP investments to the associated investments costs.	\$3.08
Productivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percent capability utilized during peak conditions</li> </ul>	Transportation infrastructure capacity and services provided. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roadway Capacity - vehicles per hour per lane by type of facility.</li> <li>Transit Capacity – seating capacity utilized by mode.</li> </ul>	20% Improvement at known bottlenecks  N/A
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Total cost per capita to sustain current system performance</li> </ul>	Focus in on overall performance, including infrastructure condition. Preservation measure is a sub-set of sustainability.	\$20 per capita, primarily in preservation costs
Preservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintenance cost per capita to preserve system at base year conditions</li> </ul>	Focus is on infrastructure condition. Sub-set of sustainability.	Maintain current conditions
Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emissions generated by travel</li> </ul>	Measured/forecast emissions include CO, NOX, PM10, SOX and VOC. CO2 as secondary measure to reflect greenhouse emissions.	Meets conformity requirements
Environmental Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expenditures by quintile and ethnicity</li> <li>Benefit vs. burden by quintiles</li> </ul>	Proportionate share of expenditures in the 2004 RTP by each quintile.  Proportionate share of benefits to each quintile ethnicity.  Proportionate share of additional airport noise by ethnic group.	No disproportionate impact to any group or quintile

- Ensuring safety, adequate maintenance, and efficiency of operations on the existing multi-modal transportation system will be RTP priorities and will be balanced against the need for system expansion investments.
- RTP land use and growth strategies that differ from currently expected trends will require a collaborative implementation program that identifies required actions and policies by all affected agencies and sub-regions.

4.01 Transportation Investments shall be based on SCAG's adopted Regional Performance Indicators.

**SCAG's Adopted Regional Performance Indicators:**

**Mobility** - Transportation Systems should meet the public need for improved access, and for safe, comfortable, convenient and economical movements of people and goods.

- Average Work Trip Travel Time in Minutes – 22 minutes
- PM Peak Highway Speed – 33 mph
- Percent of PM Peak Travel in Delay (All Trips) – 33%

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**Accessibility** - Transportation Systems should ensure the ease with which opportunities are reached. Transportation and land use measures should be employed to ensure minimal time and cost.

- Work Opportunities within 25 Minutes – 88%

**Environment** - Transportation Systems should sustain development and preservation of the existing system and the environment. (All Trips)

- Meeting Federal and State Standards – Meet Air Plan Emission Budgets

**Reliability** - Reasonable and dependable levels of service by mode. (All Trips)

- Transit – 63%
- Highway – 76%

**Safety** - Transportation Systems should provide minimal risk, accident, death and injury. (All Trips)

- Fatalities Per Million Passenger Miles – 0.008
- Injury Accidents – 0.929

**Livable Communities** - Transportation Systems should facilitate Livable Communities in which all residents have access to all opportunities with minimal travel time. (All Trips)

- Vehicle Trip Reduction – 1.5%
- Vehicle Miles Traveled Reduction – 10.0%

**Equity** - The benefits of transportation investments should be equitably distributed among all ethnic, age and income groups. (All trips)

- **Low-Income (Household Income \$12,000) Share of Net Benefits** – Equitable Distribution of Benefits

**Cost-Effectiveness** - Maximize return on transportation investment. (All Trips)

- Net Present Value – Maximum Return on Transportation Investment
- Value of a Dollar Invested -- Maximum Return on Transportation Investment

**SCAG staff comments:** Section 2.0 of the DEIR, page 2.0-30 addressed the consistency of the project with this SCAG policy with the following:

"The Landmark tract map is proposed to accommodate projected regional growth in a location that is adjacent to existing and planned infrastructure, urban services, transportation corridors, and major employment centers. Because the project has been designed to provide housing that would support existing and new employment opportunities that are projected to occur in the Santa Clara Valley, it could reduce travel distances and could create opportunities for employees to walk and bike to work, thereby reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT). The project also includes a mobility system that includes alternatives to automobile use, such as an extensive pedestrian, equestrian and bicycle trail system. The trails provide linkages from homes at the site to important destinations within the community, such as the school and park, recreation centers, and nearby commercial developments. The project would provide safe and convenient access to the local bus system and to the Metrolink commuter train station in Newhall. By providing for convenient access to public transit opportunities, the project would help to minimize travel time to work.

The proposed project would preserve the environment by providing for needed housing and opportunities to work closer to home. The shorter travel distances will reduce VMT and associated emissions by shortening the distance between home and work and providing safe and convenient access to public transit opportunities.

A traffic study for Landmark Village has been prepared and is discussed fully in this EIR. The study evaluates project-related, as well as long-term, Santa Clara Valley buildout traffic impacts

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on local and regional road networks.

The project includes a number of on- and off-site transportation system management actions, such as traffic signals and intersection improvements to speed the flow of traffic. Mitigation measures are proposed for traffic improvements and traffic signals, and comply with the requirements of the County's Congestion Management Program. As a result, the project is consistent with these RTP policies."

SCAG concurs with the above assessment and concludes that the proposed project will not affect the implementation of the goals.

### **GROWTH VISIONING**

The fundamental goal of the Compass Growth Visioning effort is to make the SCAG region a better place to live, work and play for all residents regardless of race, ethnicity or income class. Thus, decisions regarding growth, transportation, land use, and economic development should be made to promote and sustain for future generations the region's mobility, livability and prosperity. The following "Regional Growth Principles" are proposed to provide a framework for local and regional decision making that improves the quality of life for all SCAG residents. Each principle is followed by a specific set of strategies intended to achieve this goal.

**Principle 1: Improve mobility for all residents**

- Encourage transportation investments and land use decisions that are mutually supportive.
- Locate new housing near existing jobs and new jobs near existing housing.
- Encourage transit-oriented development.
- Promote a variety of travel choices

**Principle 2: Foster livability in all communities**

- Promote infill development and redevelopment to revitalize existing communities.
- Promote developments, which provide a mix of uses.
- Promote "people scaled," walkable communities.
- Support the preservation of stable, single-family neighborhoods.

**Principle 3: Enable prosperity for all people**

- Provide, in each community, a variety of housing types to meet the housing needs of all income levels.
- Support educational opportunities that promote balanced growth.
- Ensure environmental justice regardless of race, ethnicity or income class.
- Support local and state fiscal policies that encourage balanced growth
- Encourage civic engagement.

**Principle 4: Promote sustainability for future generations**

- Preserve rural, agricultural, recreational and environmentally sensitive areas.
- Focus development in urban centers and existing cities.
- Develop strategies to accommodate growth that uses resources efficiently, eliminate pollution and significantly reduce waste.
- Utilize "green" development techniques.

**SCAG staff comments:** Section 7.0 of the Draft EIR at page 7.0-1 addressed the growth-inducing impacts of the entire Newhall Ranch Specific Plan, by referring to the certified Newhall Ranch Specific Plan Program EIR. It would be helpful if the Final EIR would provide a discussion and address the manner in which the Landmark Village project is supportive or detracts from each of the four principles

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of the Compass Growth Visioning effort. Based on information provided in the Draft EIR, we are unable to determine if the Project is supportive of SCAG policy.

**CONCLUSIONS**

1. As noted in the staff comments, the proposed Draft EIR for the Landmark Village Project is consistent with or supports many of the core and ancillary policies in the RCPG and RTP.
2. All feasible measures needed to mitigate any potentially negative regional impacts associated with the proposed project should be implemented and monitored, as required by CEQA.

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## SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

### *Roles and Authorities*

THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS (SCAG) is a *Joint Powers Agency* established under California Government Code Section 6502 et seq. Under federal and state law, SCAG is designated as a Council of Governments (COG), a Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA), and a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). SCAG's mandated roles and responsibilities include the following:

SCAG is designated by the federal government as the Region's *Metropolitan Planning Organization* and mandated to maintain a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process resulting in a Regional Transportation Plan and a Regional Transportation Improvement Program pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 1134, 49 U.S.C. 5301 et seq., 23 C.F.R. 450, and 49 C.F.R. 1813. SCAG is also the designated *Regional Transportation Planning Agency*, and as such is responsible for both preparation of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) under California Government Code Section 65080 and 65082 respectively.

SCAG is responsible for developing the demographic projections and the integrated land use, housing, employment, and transportation programs, measures, and strategies portions of the *South Coast Air Quality Management Plan*, pursuant to California Health and Safety Code Section 40460(b)-(c). SCAG is also designated under 42 U.S.C. 17504(a) as a *Co-Lead Agency* for air quality planning for the Central Coast and Southeast Desert Air Basin District.

SCAG is responsible under the Federal Clean Air Act for determining *Conformity* of Projects, Plans and Programs to the State Implementation Plan, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 17506.

Pursuant to California Government Code Section 65089.2, SCAG is responsible for *reviewing all Congestion Management Plans (CMPs) for consistency with regional transportation plans* required by Section 65080 of the Government Code. SCAG must also evaluate the consistency and compatibility of such programs within the region.

SCAG is the authorized regional agency for *Inter-Governmental Review* of Programs proposed for federal financial assistance and direct development activities, pursuant to Presidential Executive Order 12,372 (replacing A-95 Review).

SCAG reviews, pursuant to Public Resources Code Sections 21083 and 21087, Environmental Impacts Reports of projects of regional significance for consistency with regional plans [California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines Sections 15206 and 15125(b)].

Pursuant to 33 U.S.C. 1288(a)(2) (Section 208 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act), SCAG is the authorized *Areawide Waste Treatment Management Planning Agency*.

SCAG is responsible for preparation of the *Regional Housing Needs Assessment*, pursuant to California Government Code Section 65584(a).

SCAG is responsible (with the Association of Bay Area Governments, the Sacramento Area Council of Governments, and the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments) for preparing the *Southern California Hazardous Waste Management Plan* pursuant to California Health and Safety Code Section 25135.3.

Revised July 2001



STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
 Governor's Office of Planning and Research  
 State Clearinghouse and Planning Unit



Arnold Schwarzenegger  
 Governor

Cynthia Bryant  
 Director

January 4, 2007

Daniel Fierros  
 Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning  
 320 West Temple Street  
 Los Angeles, CA 90012

Subject: The Landmark Village Project, Project No. 00-196, TR 53108, CP06496 COAK-0100-195 RCUP200500112  
 SCU#: 2004021002

Dear Daniel Fierros:

The State Clearinghouse submitted the above named Draft EIR to selected state agencies for review. On the enclosed Document Details Report please note that the Clearinghouse has listed the state agencies that reviewed your document. The review period closed on January 3, 2007, and the comments from the responding agency (ies) is (are) enclosed. If this comment package is not in order, please notify the State Clearinghouse immediately. Please refer to the project's ten-digit State Clearinghouse number in future correspondence so that we may respond promptly.

Please note that Section 21104(c) of the California Public Resources Code states that

"A responsible or other public agency shall only make substantive comments regarding those activities involved in a project which are within an area of expertise of the agency or which are required to be carried out or approved by the agency. Those comments shall be supported by specific documentation."

These comments are forwarded for use in preparing your final environmental document. Should you need more information or clarification of the enclosed comments, we recommend that you contact the commenting agency directly.

This letter acknowledges that you have complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act. Please contact the State Clearinghouse at (916) 445-0613 if you have any questions regarding the environmental review process.

Sincerely,

Terry Roberts  
 Director, State Clearinghouse

Enclosures  
 cc: Resources Agency

## NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION

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December 26, 2006

RECEIVED

DEC 28 2006

STATE CLEARING HOUSE

Mr. Daniel Fierros

## LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL PLANNING

320 West Temple Street  
 Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: SCH#2004021002: CEQA Notice of Completion; draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for Landmark Village Project; No. 00-196; TR53108/CP00-196/ROAK-0100-196/RCU0200500112; LA County Dept of Regional Planning; Mixed Use Development of 1,444 Homes; Hwy 126 Area north of Santa Clara; Los Angeles County, California

Dear Mr. Fierros:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above-referenced document. The Native American Heritage Commission is the state's Trustee Agency for Native American Cultural Resources. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that any project that causes a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource, that includes archeological resources, is a 'significant effect' requiring the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) per CEQA guidelines § 15064.5(b)(c). In order to comply with this provision, the lead agency is required to assess whether the project will have an adverse impact on these resources within the 'area of potential effect (APE)', and if so, to mitigate that effect. To adequately assess the project-related impacts on historical resources, the Commission recommends the following action:

- ✓ Contact the appropriate California Historic Resources Information Center (CHRIS). The record search will determine:
  - If a part or the entire APE has been previously surveyed for cultural resources.
  - If any known cultural resources have already been recorded in or adjacent to the APE.
  - If the probability is low, moderate, or high that cultural resources are located in the APE.
  - If a survey is required to determine whether previously unrecorded cultural resources are present.
- ✓ If an archaeological inventory survey is required, the final stage is the preparation of a professional report detailing the findings and recommendations of the records search and field survey.
  - The final report containing site forms, site significance, and mitigation measures should be submitted immediately to the planning department. All information regarding site locations, Native American human remains, and associated funerary objects should be in a separate confidential addendum, and not be made available for public disclosure.
  - The final written report should be submitted within 3 months after work has been completed to the appropriate regional archaeological information center.
- ✓ Contact the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) for:
  - A Sacred Lands File (SLF) search of the project area and information on tribal contacts in the project vicinity who may have additional cultural resource information. Please provide this office with the following citation format to assist with the Sacred Lands File search request: USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle citation with name, township, range and section.
  - The NAHC advises the use of Native American Monitors to ensure proper identification and care given cultural resources that may be discovered. The NAHC recommends that contact be made with Native American Contacts on the attached list to get their input on potential project impact, particularly the contacts of the on the list.
- ✓ Lack of surface evidence of archeological resources does not preclude their subsurface existence.
- Lead agencies should include in their mitigation plan provisions for the identification and evaluation of accidentally discovered archeological resources, per California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) §15064.5 (f). In areas of identified archeological sensitivity, a certified archaeologist and a culturally affiliated Native American, with knowledge in cultural resources, should monitor all ground-disturbing activities.
- Lead agencies should include in their mitigation plan provisions for the disposition of recovered artifacts, in consultation with culturally affiliated Native Americans.

√ Lead agencies should include provisions for discovery of Native American human remains or unmarked cemeteries in their mitigation plans.

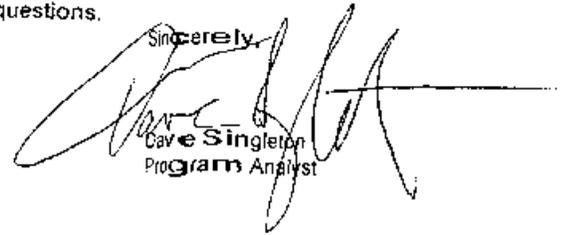
• CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5(d) requires the lead agency to work with the Native Americans identified by this Commission if the initial Study identifies the presence or likely presence of Native American human remains within the APE. CEQA Guidelines provide for agreements with Native American, identified by the NAHC, to assure the appropriate and dignified treatment of Native American human remains and any associated grave liens.

√ Health and Safety Code §7050.5, Public Resources Code §5097.98 and Sec. §15064.5(d) of the CEQA Guidelines mandate procedures to be followed in the event of an accidental discovery of any human remains in a location other than a dedicated cemetery.

√ Lead agencies should consider avoidance, as defined in § 15370 of the CEQA Guidelines when significant cultural resources are discovered during the course of project planning.

Please feel free to contact me at (916) 653-6251 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Dave Singleton  
Program Analyst

Cc: State Clearinghouse

Attachment: List of Native American Contacts

January 21, 2007

Mr. Daniel Fierros  
Los Angeles County  
Department of Regional Planning  
320 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Landmark Village phase of the proposed Newhall Ranch development west of Santa Clarita (**Project No. 00-196 / Tract Map No. 53108 / Landmark Village.**

I am a local environmental activist living in the Santa Clarita area. I am also a mother of three young children who live, play and go to school in the Santa Clarita Valley. It is of serious concern to me that the County of Los Angeles and the City of Santa Clarita continues to approve all of these housing developments -- in spite of the fact that it is well documented that these projects will seriously further degrade the air quality of the Santa Clarita Valley, and surrounding areas. A recent study done by the City of Santa Clarita found that, more than 51% of the working population in Santa Clarita has to commute to the San Fernando Valley and beyond. Each one of these sprawling developments that entice people to move from the San Fernando Valley and Los Angeles -- without supplying adequate local employment opportunities -- contributes to our already declining air quality with commuter traffic while clogging our roads and freeways. New housing is not what is required to support the Santa Clarita Valley. Smart planning would create and attract businesses to employ the many folks that live in Santa Clarita, but still have to commute to better paying jobs in San Fernando and Los Angeles.

Yet, project after project has been approved with so-called overriding considerations. It troubles me that a society would override the health of our children and shorten their life span in doing so. This is not smart planning, smart planning would ensure that projects are built that include jobs to support those currently living here to reduce our already degraded air quality and relieve congestion on our roads and freeways that travel through Los Angeles, Ventura and Kern Counties. It is irresponsible to continue building housing developments that will further strain our already maxed out roads and freeway systems, while threatening the health of our most precious gift -- the future generation, our children. The result is short term financial benefits and long term consequences to our children's health and well being.

Regarding the Santa Clara River, it is a precious gift to our county. We have to save it now. The Nature Conservancy has recently submitted a report called the Santa Clara River Watershed Plan. It outlines the most significant ecological areas within the Santa Clara River. Much of this land is within the proposed Landmark Village plan, and the rest of the proposed Newhall Ranch project area. Audubon California has said the Santa Clara River -- especially in LA County -- is on the verge of disaster. American Rivers designated the river as one of the top 10 endangered rivers in the Country. Many organizations and individuals recognize the value of the Santa Clara River and the imminent threat to it. We need the County of Los Angeles to recognize the value of the Santa Clara River, by appreciating and protecting this resource from further development. We must find a way of protecting the Santa Clara River from more degradation. We can do this by making all the projects back up off the Santa Clara River -- and out of its floodplain -- and making acquisitions of important wildlife habitats along the river corridor and associated upland habitat, with a focus on connectivity with other areas.

The nearly five and a half linear miles of riparian degradation being proposed in the Landmark Village Project area is a significant and negative impact on the ecosystem. It is a permanent disturbance that will eliminate breeding and foraging habitat for the endangered arroyo toad, the California fully protected unarmored threespined stickleback, the southwestern pond turtle, the Santa Ana sucker, the two-striped garter snake, the

endangered Least Bell's Vireo, the fully protected White-tailed Kite and the many sensitive species that are known or expected to occur within the project area.

Stream hydrology, ecology, and morphology are influenced by impervious cover, as is overall stream water quality. The proximity of this proposed project to the Santa Clara River will create severe negative impacts. Urban development in the riparian zone and hardening/stabilizing of the stream banks will increase the impervious cover in this natural ecosystem. This hydromodification of riparian habitat and wetlands will reduce groundwater recharge; increase streambank erosion; increase channel scour; increase storm water concentrations of metals, hydrocarbons and priority pollutants; reduce amphibian and reptile populations; reduce fish diversity; and reduce diversity of aquatic insects. Stream degradation in many streams can be measured when there is as little as 10% impervious cover in the watershed (Schueler 1994, Cappiella and Brown 2001).

Higher traffic volumes translate into higher levels of stormwater pollution running off of commercial parking lots and high-traffic streets, contributing a very high and disproportionate amount of the total pollution load (Beech 2002).

The Santa Clara River in the section of Landmark Village, the pending Embarcadero Project, and the Commerce Center Drive Project contain all the primary constituent elements, including breeding pools in low gradient stream segments, sandy substrates, seasonal flood flows, and riparian and upland habitats for foraging and dispersal. Special management considerations are required to address urban development in these areas. There are breeding arroyo toads within a short distance of the project area, and with proper management the population near the Landmark Village site has the potential to greatly increase in size with appropriate conservation and protections.

The arroyo toad has been documented in the Santa Clara River Watershed near the Landmark Village project area. Including but not limited to: Upper Piru Creek, Castaic Junction, and Upstream of I-5.

Arroyo toads have perhaps the most specialized habitat requirements of any amphibians found in California – shallow, exposed streamside, quiet water stretches, or overflow pools with silt-free sandy or gravelly bottoms particularly favored for breeding (Jennings and Hayes 1994, Stebbins 2003). Impacts from human activities can affect water quality, flow frequency, sedimentation, and the degradation or loss of surrounding uplands reduces and eliminates foraging and overwintering habitat (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 1999). Artificial stabilization of the river will eliminate the river's capacity to meander and will increase the flow velocities, scouring the banks (Riley 1998). Hydromodification of natural streambeds by channelization or stabilization for flood control extend the negative effects of arroyo toad habitat by destroying potential dispersal routes between closely spaced tributary streams (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 1999).

The southwestern arroyo toad, one of the "true toads," is specialized for life in an unstable habitat. No more than three inches long, this small toad was once found throughout coastal rivers and streams in southern and central California, from Monterey to San Diego counties, as well as in Baja California. The toad hatches in a river or stream and begins to develop in water; as an adult, it lives on land, where it forages for insects (mostly ants) and digs burrows on sandy terraces.

The same issues that caused the decline and eventual listing of the arroyo toad as an endangered species will occur within the Landmark Village project area.

As recognized Arroyo toad populations have suffered throughout the twentieth century as watersheds in southern California have been dammed and polluted by siltation from development and other activities. The toad's habitat has been degraded, fragmented and reduced by urban sprawl, dams, cattle grazing, mining and off-road vehicle use; it now survives only in 22 small, isolated headwaters. In addition, having lost over 80% of

its habitat in Southern California and as populations dwindle, the toad has become more vulnerable to other factors that reduce species, such as predation by introduced species.

Projects built and approved within Newhall Land's Natural River Management have failed to address the loss of habitat for the endangered arroyo toad partly because Newhall denied their presence. Even once it became well documented that the arroyo toads occurred within the Natural River Management Plan, no meaningful mitigations were made to protect the arroyo toad from further harm. Newhall Land, the City of Santa Clarita, L.A County Sheriff's Department and State and Federal Agencies have not fulfilled their mitigation measures in the Natural River Management Plan. For instance, constant off road vehicle use continues right in the Santa Clara River, creating apparent off road vehicle "parks" right within the arroyo toad habitat, including near and on where both arroyo toad tadpoles and adults have been previously observed. This is evident in the following photograph taken in December 2006 (just a few weeks ago) by Lisa Fimiani, with Los Angeles Audubon, during Audubon's 2006 Santa Clarita Christmas Bird Count.



Since it has been well documented that mitigation measures have failed within Newhall Lands Natural River Management it is quite clear that these same mitigations as proposed in the Landmark DEIR will fail to address impacts to the arroyo toad and many other sensitive species. It is also clear that the City of Santa Clarita, County of Los Angeles, California Department of Fish and Game, US Fish and Wildlife, and the Army Corps of Engineers have not yet figured out how to enforce such mitigation.

Unarmored Threespined stickleback (*Gasterosteus aculeatus williamsoni*)

Santa Clara River populations of the unarmored threespined stickleback (*Gasterosteus aculeatus williamsoni*) have survived because of the relative lack of urbanization and the existence of barriers to dispersal of plated

sticklebacks and exotic organisms. *G. a. williamsoni* has been extirpated from most of the river due to habitat destruction because of channelization, drying of streams by groundwater pumping, and the introduction of exotic organisms, such as mosquito fish (City of Santa Clarita 1991). The same issues that caused this species decline will occur within the Landmark Village Project area.

There will be a loss of 169 acres of wetlands, which will be filled to raise the development out of the flood plain (4.2 Hydrology). Rather than destroying the wetland area by dumping fill material into the river, there should be no construction in the floodplain. Any urban development in this area should be set back a minimum of 500 feet from the upland edge of the riparian zone. This buffer serves to not only preserve the riparian habitat; it also provides a buffer from stormwater runoff from the impervious surfaces of the developed areas.

The constructed hydrologic systems to convey stormwater away from homes and roads exacerbate the degradation of the riparian zone. Not only do the concrete boxes and channels add to impervious cover of the area, they concentrate the pollutants in high velocity runoff, both scouring the streambanks downstream and degrading the water quality. They prevent the natural percolation of rainfall. Additionally, these constructed capital projects will become publicly maintained facilities. In other words, they will be operated and maintained at taxpayer expense.

Downstream erosion resulting from concentrated and high velocity flows from the proposed narrowing of the river and bank hardening has not been adequately addressed. Both northern and southern banks of the river are proposed to be degraded by soil cement, reinforced concrete, or riprap. These are mischaracterized as improvements, but they in fact negatively affect the natural flow and structure of the river and degrade wildlife habitat.

The DEIR erroneously calls exposed soil cement a naturalized and aesthetic bank protection method. It is, in fact, a cement channel. It also errs in claiming that re-vegetation of soil dumped on the cement will maintain the natural habitat presently found along the river. The Santa Clara River is a dynamic system. Grading its banks, pouring in cement, and covering it with dirt does not produce a natural habitat. There is a false assumption that an ecosystem can be buried with cement and then recreated. As proposed in this DEIR, the excavation and placement of up to 5.8 million cubic yards of fill in the floodplain combined with almost five and a half linear miles of hardened banks, the river's natural meandering system is slated for destruction.

#### Edge effects:

With continued development and increasing human population along the Santa Clara River and its tributaries so do the threats that people bring to the watershed and species. Currently Off Road Vehicle (ORV) use continues in the Santa Clara River, in spite of the fact that it is an illegal activity. Environmentalists and organizations have met with the City of Santa Clarita, the Local Sheriff's Department, contacted Fish and Game and Fish and Wildlife to no avail. These agencies evidently do not have the personnel or the will to implement and enforce mitigation measures as set forth in the approvals of prior developments. For instance, in Newhall Lands Natural River Management Plan we have tried to address the ORV use in the Santa Clara River. Unfortunately, we have been unable to reduce these impacts as evident in photograph above.

#### **Urbanization, increases Brown-Headed Cowbird**

Mitigation measures to control Brown-headed Cowbirds in the Landmark Village DEIR does not fix the root causes which drives high rates of parasitism to threatened and endangered species. Cleary habitat loss will increase the cowbird population.

In the last century, Brown-headed Cowbirds have experienced massive range expansions and population explosions as forests have been opened to make way for agricultural and suburban landscapes. Clearly the increase in parasitism has been caused by human encroachment and fragmentation of the host species habitat.

Cowbird control is a short-term solution that ignores the real problem of habitat degradation as a result of agriculture, grazing and development.

Cowbirds occur most often in agricultural/residential landscapes near open woodlands. Cowbirds frequent woodland edges created when deforestation leads to a mosaic of trees and open brush/grassland.

Fragmented forests have proportionally more edge than contiguous forests, creating small woodlots that are easy for cowbirds to penetrate.

Rates of parasitism depend on the proximity of cowbird feeding sites to host breeding sites. Cowbirds search for hosts near woodland edges and feed in agricultural/residential areas. They are often seen at home bird feeders. The closer such cowbird foraging areas are to host breeding habitats, the more likely hosts will suffer cowbird parasitism (Halterman and Laymon, Tewksbury et al.).

Landmark Village will negatively affect threatened and endangered species. Loss of Habitat will likely increase the cowbird population. In addition, the use human bird feeders in developments along the project area will attract Brown-headed Cowbirds. Additionally Brown-headed Cowbirds may not be as easily trapped and removed from the riparian areas, as they may learn to avoid the traps because food will be offered in the housing development.

Further mitigation measures may be required, including the exclusion of Bird Feeders in new residential areas.

### **Non – Native Species**

**Habitat Loss in the Landmark Village Project area will increase the populations of non-native species. The DEIR does not adequately address the many negative impacts that non-native species will have on native wildlife. Therefore the DEIR fails to address this in any meaningful way. The list of introduced species and their impacts on the environment are many. Here I address just a few of the species that will impact native species.**

The introduced European Starling and European House Sparrow cause serious decline in native bird populations. They evict Bluebirds, Swallows, Wrens, Nuthatches and Woodpeckers from their nests and tree holes and often destroy the eggs and young in the process. In addition, Starlings have been found to have a very negative impact on American Kestrels, the smallest falcon in North America. Both Starling and House Sparrow populations will increase with development of the Landmark Village Project Area. These species are not realized as pests in the Landmark DEIR. Therefore, their impacts to native bird species have not been adequately analyzed or addressed in the DEIR. It is important to note that House Sparrows can be plentiful at bird feeding stations in yards and gardens. Both the Sparrow and Starling make good living off our trash, pet food and bird feeding stations. An amended DEIR should be required in order to address the impacts of these non-native species on our native bird populations.

**Norway Rats and House Mice** The Landmark Village DEIR does not address the increase of non-native Norway Rats or House Mice.

Within the vicinity of human inhabitation, they subsist well on carrion, refuse, offal and spoiled food, bird feeders and pet food... They will feed on a multitude of native birds, reptiles, amphibians and plants. This increase of non-native rodents will have a serious impact on our native species. Human constructions provide

excellent shelter for these commensals, and around urban areas the population density of House Mouse can reach 10 per square metre, 1000 times of that in the wild.

It is estimated that one rat occurs per person in homes and related areas. (Wachtel and McNeely 1985).

**Anticoagulant use is NOT the answer and here is why:**

Poisons set out to kill non-native populations, such as anticoagulants, should not be used as a method to reduce non-native rodent populations as they can negatively impact non-target species and cause secondary poisoning to native wildlife that feed upon the poisoned rodents. In developed areas along the Santa Clara River and its tributaries rodent bait stations are currently being used. The County of Ventura is currently taking measures to reduce the use of anticoagulants in order to reduce the impacts to non-target species. Biological methods must be studied and implemented to reduce the number of non native rodents without the use of harmful poisons. The utilization of Barn Owl houses, raptor perches, American Kestrel houses, etc., can all help keep the population of rodents down. In addition, trash must be properly disposed of and covered, and bird feeders should not be allowed in the project area.

It should also be noted that anticoagulants have killed mountain lions not far from the proposed Landmark Village project area. It is believed that two mountain lions likely fed on dead or dying coyotes that had eaten poisoned rodents. Anticoagulants are also partly responsible for the decline in the bobcat and coyote population. In addition, they impact other non-target species, such as Owls, Hawks and Falcons.

**Rodent poison blamed after  
two mountain lions are  
found dead in Simi Hills  
By Daniel Wolowicz  
Special to the Simi Valley Acorn**

7

Within the past three months, two mountain lions were found dead in the Simi Hills.

The two carnivores—a female known as P4 and a male called P3

—were among the wildlife tracked by National Park Service naturalist Seth Riley in a recent study. His research found that suburban development and pest control substances cause problems for wild animals in the local habitat.

Riley, a wildlife ecologist for the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, recently addressed a standing-room-only crowd at the National Park Service Visitor Center in Thousand Oaks.

In his lecture "Carnivores on the Fringe," he presented the results of his nine years of field research on the impact of urbanization on large carnivores.

Hosted by the NPS, the lecture was part of a series that lets the public speak directly with scientists, said Park Ranger Sheila Braden, the event's coordinator.

Riley's talk focused on bobcats, coyotes and mountain lions. His fieldwork on bobcats and coyotes was done primarily in the Simi Hills, while he tracked the mountain lions throughout the Santa Monica Mountains, the Simi Hills and the Santa Susana Mountains.

Specifically, Riley noted how major freeways and roadways, as well as toxic anticoagulants used in most major rodent poisons, have hurt the large carnivore population.

"The main reason for this lecture is to show people how their everyday lives affect the local wildlife," Riley said. "The simple usage of rat poison can have a complex affect on the total ecosystem, even on large cats such as mountain lions."

Using radio collars and motion sensor cameras hidden in the brush along known wildlife trails, Riley tracked animals throughout Ventura County and into the Santa Monica Mountains.

"On the coyotes and bobcats, we use basic VHF tracking collars," Riley said. "But on the mountain lions, we can use VHF collars with global positioning capability, which uploads the animal's location to a satellite on a regular basis. We can then download the information and better understand the lions' patterns."

Riley noted that the relatively new GPS technology has added a means to collect data that scientists couldn't previously have acquired.

Riley based his findings on the tracking of more than 100 coyotes, 15 to 20 bobcats, four adult mountain lions and four mountain lion cubs recently found in the Simi Hills.

The increase in urban development has brought a marked decrease in the animals' daytime movement, Riley said. In addition to the fact that these animals are primarily nocturnal, Riley thinks they curb their daytime movement to avoid human contact.

Scientists estimate 1,400 acres of natural habitat are destroyed annually to make room for urban development in the 350-square-mile Santa Monica Mountains, according to the Los Angeles Times.

"In some cases, these animals end up living in habitats totally surrounded by developed land," Riley said.

Because large predators require an enormous amount of space to find food and mates—an adult male mountain lion prowls about 300 square miles—Riley said many of the animals cross busy roads or freeways on a regular basis.

However, highways aren't the primary reason so many large carnivores die prematurely, according to Riley.

Within a group of tracked bobcats, 28 died. Of those deaths, vehicles killed only six. There were 18 tracked coyote deaths, and only five were a result of road fatalities.

"The deaths by car are pretty low, considering how many animals we track," Riley said. "It was the anticoagulants that had a much more devastating effect on the lives of the animals."

Anticoagulants are toxins used in major rodent poisons like d-Con, which is available at hardware stores. Often used by schools, parks, golf courses, housing developments, even the National Park Service, anticoagulants are eaten by rodents and cause the blood to thin, resulting in death from massive internal bleeding. The two most common anticoagulants are brodifacoum and bromadiolone.

Rodents have developed greater resistance to the chemicals. Higher and higher doses of the poisons are required to kill rodents, which, in turn, are eaten by coyotes and bobcats. If an average-sized coyote, about 30 to 40 pounds, ingests three or four rodents over a short period of time, there's a good chance these

anticoagulants will pass from the infected rodent to the coyote, killing him.

Although most felines have high resistance to the toxin, Riley said toxicology reports showed 80 percent of bobcats tested in the area had some levels of anticoagulants, and 23 of 31 studied bobcats were carrying more than one toxin.

Riley's study took a dramatic turn in the spring of 2002. A disproportionate number of bobcats were dying from what scientists thought was a form of mange, a typically non-lethal strain of the skin disease that's found primarily in cats.

A previously recorded 77 percent chance of survival from year-to-year for bobcats dropped to 50 percent in 2002 and then to only 20 percent in 2003.

Scientists realized bobcats that died of mange also had high levels of anticoagulants in their systems. Together, these two factors caused a nearly 50 percent drop in survival rates for local bobcats in a two-year period.

"We're working very hard to get this information published," Riley said. Then, he said, they'll try to let the public know "how they can make a difference."

Anticoagulants also affect the largest of the local cats—the mountain lions. Scientists suspect cougars acquire toxins from coyotes, which are one of their primary food sources.

Toxicology reports conducted by scientists from UC Davis concluded that the mountain lions P4 and P3 had high levels of anticoagulants.

Riley estimates that the Santa Monica Mountains and the Simi Hills provide enough habitat to support about eight adult mountain lions. Before the deaths of P4 and P3, Riley's team tracked four adult lions and four mountain lion cubs. So when two of the four known adult lions died in a relatively short amount of time, Riley and his team took special note because their deaths were preventable.

Riley, who received his doctorate degree in ecology from UC Davis and is an adjunct professor at UCLA, believes there's hope for these animals.

The recent discovery of the four lion cubs heartens the ecologist.

"It's great that (the cubs) are out there," he said. "Right now, they're about 5 months old. We're really interested in tracking them after they've grown up so we can better understand where they go. That would be the next step in our study if we could find available funding."

Keeping the public informed, Riley said, coupled with efforts by Caltrans and other agencies to build animal-friendly bridges and tunnels for roadways will help maintain the wildlife population.

#### Domestic Cats:

Landmark Village DEIR does not address the impacts of domestic cats on our wildlife population or any meaningful mitigation to ensure that cats do not have access to our native species.

Landmark Village will cause loss and fragmentation of wildlife habitat, resulting from development, road construction, and other land uses. This is by far the leading cause of declining bird populations. However, with an estimated 20,000 plus homes to be build in the Newhall Ranch project, we must also address the fact that domestic cats will more than likely become numerous within the project area and will wreak havoc on threatened and endangered species. Domestic cats are numerous, efficient, non-native predators who will dramatically contribute to the decline of species. For example, habitat fragmentation provides cats easier access to wildlife forced to live on smaller and smaller tracts of native land. Rather than providing havens for wild creatures, these smaller tracts can become death traps instead.

Cats are non-native species and their outdoor presence in the project area should not be permitted. Homeowners and associations must agree that cats found outdoors will be trapped and immediately turned over to animal control.

Introduced cats are a serious threat to native birds and other animals. There are an estimated 63 million pet cats in the United States (Nassar and Mosier 1991), plus as many as 30 million feral cats (Luoma 1997). Cats prey on native birds (Fitzgerald 1990), plus small native mammals, amphibians, and reptiles (Dunn and Tessaglia 1994). Cornell University estimates that about 465 million birds are killed by cats per year in the United States.

David Pimentel, Lori Lach, Rodolfo Zuniga, and Doug Morrison  
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences  
Cornell University .

The following studies and data provided by the American Birds Conservancy:

**How many birds and other wildlife do domestic cats kill each year in the U.S.?** No one knows, although reasonable extrapolations from scientific data can be made. Nationwide, cats are estimated to kill hundreds of millions of birds and more than a billion small mammals, such as rabbits, chipmunks, squirrels, and shrews each year. Cats kill not only plentiful animals, but also rare and endangered species for which the loss of even one animal is significant. The scientific community is increasingly concerned about cat predation. How many birds and other wildlife do domestic cats kill each year in the U.S.? The scientific community is increasingly concerned about cat predation.

There are over 66 million pet cats in the United States. A recent poll shows approximately 35 percent are kept exclusively indoors, leaving more than 40 million owned cats free to kill birds and other wildlife, all or part of the time. In addition, millions of stray and feral cats roam our cities, suburbs, farmlands and natural areas. Abandoned by their owners or lost (stray), or descendants of strays and shunning all human contact (feral), these cats are victims of human irresponsibility through owner abandonment and the failure to spay or neuter pets. No one knows how many homeless cats there are in the U.S., but estimates range from 60 to 100 million. These creatures lead short, miserable lives.

Loss and fragmentation of wildlife habitat, resulting from development, road construction, intensive agriculture, and other land uses, are by far the leading causes of declining bird populations. Domestic cats are numerous, efficient, non-native predators who contribute to the decline. For example, habitat fragmentation provides cats easier access to wildlife forced to live on smaller and smaller tracts of land. Rather than providing havens for wild creatures, these smaller tracts can be death traps instead.

### **Cats Are Not a Natural Part of Ecosystems**

The domestic cat, *Felis catus*, is a descendant of the wild cat of Africa and extreme southwestern Asia, *Felis silvestris libyca*. Domesticated in Egypt approximately 4,000 years ago, cats were introduced to Europe around 2,000 years ago. Cats were introduced to North America when Europeans arrived on this continent, but were brought in large numbers during the latter part of the nineteenth century in an attempt to control burgeoning rodent populations associated with the spread of agriculture. Some people presume that a cat killing certain animals, such as field mice, is beneficial, but native small mammals are important to maintaining biologically diverse ecosystems. For example, mice and shrews are an important food source for birds such as the Great Horned Owl, Red-tailed Hawk, and American Kestrel.

### **Cats Compete With Native Predators**

Owned cats have huge advantages over native predators. They may be afforded some protection from disease, predation, competition, and starvation, factors, which control native predators such as owls, bobcats, and foxes. Cats with dependable food supplies are not as vulnerable to changes in prey populations. Unlike many native predators, cats are not strictly territorial, keeping members of their own species out of a given area. As a result, cats can exist at much higher densities and may out-compete native predators for food. In addition, unaltered cats are prolific breeders. A female cat can have up to three litters per year, with four to six kittens per litter.

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cats can exist at much higher densities and may out-compete native predators for food. In addition, unaltered cats are prolific breeders. A female cat can have up to three litters per year, with four to six kittens per litter.

### **Cats Transmit Disease to Wildlife**

Unvaccinated cats can transmit rabies and cats are the domestic animal most frequently reported rabid to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Cats are also suspected of spreading feline leukemia virus to a mountain lion in California and may have infected the endangered Florida panther with feline distemper. Feline infectious peritonitis has been diagnosed in mountain lion and lynx, and feline immunodeficiency virus has been found in Florida panther and bobcats

### **Studies of Cat Predation**

Extensive studies of the feeding habits of domestic, free-roaming cats have been conducted over the last 50 years in Europe, North America, Australia, Africa, and on at least 22 islands. These studies show that approximately 60 to 70 percent of the wildlife cats kill are small mammals, 20 to 30 percent are birds, and up to 10 percent are amphibians, reptiles, and insects.

Scientists have found that the number and types of animals killed by cats vary greatly, depending on the individual cat, time of year, and availability of prey. Some free-roaming domestic cats kill more than 100 animals each year. Some cats specialize in killing birds while others take mainly small mammals. One regularly fed cat that roamed a wildlife experiment station was recorded to have killed more than 1600 animals (mostly small mammals) over 18 months. Rural cats take more prey than suburban or urban cats. Birds that nest or feed on the ground are the most susceptible to cat predation, as are nestlings and fledglings of many other bird species. Following are summaries of specific studies:

**Wisconsin Study:** Researchers at the University of Wisconsin coupled their four-year cat predation study with data from other studies, and predicted a range of values for the number of birds killed each year in the state. By estimating the number of free-ranging cats in rural areas, the number of kills per cat, and the proportion of birds killed, the researchers calculated that rural free-roaming cats kill at least 7.8 million and perhaps as many as 217 million birds a year in Wisconsin. They estimated that in some parts of the state, free-roaming cat densities reach 114 cats per square mile, outnumbering all similar-sized native predators. (Coleman, J.S. and S.A. Temple. 1995. How many birds do cats kill? *Wildlife Control Technology*:44.)

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**Virginia Study:** Virginia researchers compared free-roaming domestic pet cats in a rural setting and a more urban one. A total of 27 native species (eight bird, two amphibian, nine reptile, and eight mammal, including the star-nosed mole, a species of special state concern) were captured by a single rural cat. Four urban cats captured 21 native species (six bird, seven reptile, eight mammal). Between January and November 1990 each cat caught, on average, 26 native individuals in the urban area, and 83 in the rural area. The study did not count prey killed and completely consumed, prey killed and left elsewhere, or non-native prey. (Mitchell, J. and R.A. Beck. 1992. Free-ranging domestic cat predation on native vertebrates in rural and urban Virginia. *Virginia Journal of Science* 43:197-206.)

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Yet another reason that bird feeders should be prohibited in the project area: Death to bird population.

**Cats at Bird Feeders Study:** A continent-wide survey of 5,500 homes with bird feeders during the winter of 1989-90 showed that the domestic cat was a significant predator of birds at feeders. Species killed by cats at bird feeders included Dark-eyed Junco, Pine Siskin, Northern Cardinal, and American Goldfinch. (Dunn, E.H. and D.L. Tessaglia. 1994. Predation of birds at feeders in winter. J. Field Ornithology 65(1):8-16.) **Cats at Bird Feeders Study:** A continent-wide survey of 5,500 homes with bird feeders during the winter of 1989-90 showed that the domestic cat was a significant predator of birds at feeders. Species killed by cats at bird feeders included Dark-eyed Junco, Pine Siskin, Northern Cardinal, and American Goldfinch. (Dunn, E.H. and D.L. Tessaglia. 1994. Predation of birds at feeders in winter. J. Field Ornithology 65(1):8-16.)

### **Cats on Islands**

Because some island bird populations evolved in the absence of mammalian predators, they have no defense mechanisms against them. When an efficient predator such as the domestic cat is introduced or abandoned on an island, elimination of entire bird populations can result. Domestic cats are considered primarily responsible for the extinction of eight island bird species and the eradication of over 40 bird species from New Zealand islands alone. Island bird species that are now extinct primarily due to cat predation include the following: Stephen's Island Wren, South Island Thrush, Chatham Island Rail, Stewart Island Snipe, and the Auckland Island Merganser. On Marion Island in the Sub-Antarctic Indian Ocean, cats were estimated to kill about 450,000 seabirds annually prior to cat eradication efforts.

### **Cat Predation of Wildlife in Habitat Reduced to Islands**

Cats can have highly significant impacts on local wildlife populations, especially in habitat "islands" such as suburban and urban parks, wildlife refuges, and other habitats that are surrounded by human development. For birds, the loss of species from habitat islands is well documented, and nest predation is an important cause of the decline of neotropical migrants. The Point Arena mountain beaver, Stephen's kangaroo rat, and Pacific pocket mouse, protected under the Federal Endangered Species Act, now live on habitat islands created by destruction and fragmentation of their habitat in California. Domestic cat predation by pet and feral cats on these species is a serious threat to their future existence on the habitat that is left.

### **Cat Predation of Federally-Protected Wildlife**

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) prohibits the hunting, taking, capturing, or killing of any migratory bird. However, owners of free-roaming domestic cats permit their pets to kill birds protected by the MBTA in seeming violation of this landmark law. Domestic cats are also killing birds and other wildlife protected under the Endangered Species Act.

Through the Endangered Species Act, the federal government protects and restores wildlife at risk of extinction. Habitat loss is the most significant cause of species declines, and predation, including killing by cats, ranks second. Although cats may not be responsible for the perilous status of endangered wildlife, the loss of even a single animal can be a setback to the survival of the species. It is not possible to document fully the predation of protected species by cats, but the following is a list of protected species for which there is at least one documented case of cat predation in the U.S.

### **Documented Cat Predation of Birds**

### **Protected by the Endangered Species Act**

Light-footed Clapper Rail, *Rallus longirostris levipes*

California Clapper Rail, *Rallus longirostris obsoletus*

California Least Tern, *Sterna antillarum browni*

Western Snowy Plover, *Charadrius alexandrinus nivosus*

California Brown Pelican, *Pelecanus occidentalis californicus*

California Gnatcatcher, *Polioptila californica*

Piping Plover, *Charadrius melodus*

San Clemente Loggerhead Shrike, *Lanius ludovicianus mearnsi*

Palila, *Loxioides bailleui*

Florida Scrub-Jay, *Aphelocoma coerulescens*

### **Documented Cat Predation of Mammals Protected by the Endangered Species Act**

Pacific Pocket Mouse, *Perognathus longimembris pacificus*

Stephens' Kangaroo Rat, *Dipodomys stephensi*

Morro Bay Kangaroo Rat, *Dipodomys heermanni morroensis*

Point Arena Mountain Beaver, *Aplodontia rufa nigra*

Florida Beach Mouse, *Peromyscus polionotus*

Santa Rosa Beach Mouse, *Peromyscus polionotus leucocephalus*

Key Largo Woodrat, *Neotoma floridana smalli*

Key Largo Cotton Mouse, *Peromyscus gossypinus allopaticola*

### **Documented Cat Predation of Reptiles**

#### **Protected by the Endangered Species Act**

Island Night Lizard, *Xantusia riversiana*

Alameda Whipsnake, *Masticophis lateralis euryxanthus*

### **Correcting Four Myths About Cat Predation of Birds and Other Wildlife**

Some people mistakenly believe:

- (1) Well-fed cats are not a danger to wildlife;
- (2) Putting a bell on a cat is an effective way to deter predation;
- (3) Interrupting an attack by a cat allows the prey to escape and live;
- (4) Stray cat colonies present no danger to wildlife.

**Well-fed Cats Do Kill Birds:** Well-fed cats kill birds and other wildlife because the hunting instinct is independent of the urge to eat. In one study, six cats were presented with a live small rat while eating their preferred food. All six cats stopped eating the food, killed the rat, and then resumed eating the food. Well-fed Cats Do Kill Birds: Well-fed cats kill birds and other wildlife because the hunting instinct is independent of the urge to eat. In one study, six cats were presented with a live small rat while eating their preferred food. All six cats stopped eating the food, killed the rat, and then resumed eating the food.

**Cats With Bells on Their Collars Do Kill Birds:** Studies have shown that bells on collars are not effective in preventing cats from killing birds or other wildlife. Birds do not necessarily associate the sound of a bell with danger, and cats with bells can learn to silently stalk their prey. Even if the bell on the collar rings, it may ring too late, and bells offer no protection for helpless nestlings and fledglings. Cats With Bells on Their Collars Do Kill Birds: Studies have shown that bells on collars are not effective in preventing cats from killing birds or other wildlife. Birds do not necessarily associate the sound of a bell with danger, and cats with bells can learn to silently stalk their prey. Even if the bell on the collar rings, it may ring too late, and bells offer no protection for helpless nestlings and fledglings.

**Birds That Seem to Escape Don't Get Away Unscathed:** Birds That Seem to Escape Don't Get Away Unscathed: Contrary to popular belief that birds and other small animals can be rescued from a cat attack and get away unharmed, wildlife rehabilitation centers report that most small animals injured by cats die. Cats carry many types of bacteria and viruses in their mouths, some of which can be transmitted to their victims. Even if treatment is administered immediately, only about 20 percent of these patients survive the ordeal. A victim that looks perfectly healthy may die from internal hemorrhaging or injury to vital organs.

Wildlife rehabilitation centers also report that a large percentage of their patients are cat attack victims and animals orphaned by cats. At Wildlife Rescue, Inc. in Palo Alto, California, approximately 25 percent of their patients during May and June 1994 were native cat-caught birds and almost half were fledglings. Thirty percent of birds and 20 percent of mammals in the care of the Lindsay Wildlife Museum in California were caught by cats. Cat predation of wildlife is especially frustrating to wildlife rehabilitators. These losses are totally unnecessary because unlike other predators, pet cats don't prevent the predation of birds and other wildlife. For example, a famous heron and egret rookery of several thousand birds reportedly has been decimated, and songbird populations have plummeted, in Greynolds Park in Dade County, Florida where the numbers of cats and raccoons fed by humans have exploded.

Sincerely,

Teresa Savaikic

26724 Mocha Drive, Santa Clarita, Ca. 91350

661-263-9624

### Literature Cited

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# TriCounty Watchdogs

*...protecting mountain resources and communities  
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Mr. Daniel Fierros  
Los Angeles County Regional Planning Dept.  
320 W. Temple St.  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Date 1/21/07**

TriCounty Watchdogs  
11667 Steinhoff Rd  
Frazier Park  
California 93225  
[www.rcwdogs.org](http://www.rcwdogs.org)

Re: Landmark Village (Project No. 00-196-5), DEIR Comments

Dear Mr. Fierros,

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to comment on the DEIR for Landmark Village.

The DEIR is a very large and complicated document, and a comment period of only sixty days makes it virtually impossible for the public to give thorough and far-reaching comments. To make matters worse the DEIR refers at many places to the DEIR for the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan, another gigantic document that is difficult, if not impossible, to oversee in its entirety. As a consequence the whole procedure for these large projects strongly suggest that it is sufficient for certification if developers hire consultants to generate thousands of pages of documents. Documents that suggest expertise, and sometimes even have a tenuous and remote relationship to science, but are basically written in templates and characterized by bulk. We have no doubt that the CEQA guidelines have been followed, We just wanted to restate that the outcome of the process is quite unsatisfactory.

To keep our comments to within reasonable limits we concentrate on the Traffic/Access section of the DEIR .

In Section 4.7 we see that the traffic impact reports by Austin-Foust are somewhat dated. The main report in Appendix 4.7a dates from 2004. Since the traffic situation in the area is changing rapidly, this is not really up to date. The reports on impacts in Ventura County (Piru and Fillmore) are from April 2006, and are more pertinent. Since TriCounty Watchdogs is

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mainly interested in the Mountain Communities north of Castaic, we shall naturally concentrate on impacts on the I-5. This is also because the UCLA Center for Environmental Statistics is currently doing a study on I-5 traffic between SR-14 and SR-99, and the impact of current and future project developments in the corridor on traffic. The study is still in a preliminary stage, but we expect to get a clearer picture soon.

Section 4.7, which is based on the reports of Austin-Foust, estimates that the three phases of the Landmark Village project cumulatively will generate about 42,000 average daily trips, of which about 30% would be internal trips. The Newhall Ranch project at buildout will generate 357,000 ADT's. Added to many other developments in the corridor, that is an enormous number of additional trips.

The DEIR assumes a growth factor of 2% for ambient traffic. That is not realistic for I-5 traffic. From 2004 to 2005 Average Annual Daily Traffic at the I-5 and SR-126 intersection, for instance, increased from 97,000 to 103,000, a 6% growth. Typical growth at other I-5 intersection in the Santa Clarita area is 4%, and the increase in truck traffic approaches 6%. See the Figure I at the end of this letter. Our information is based on Caltrans counts -- the Austin-Foust 2003 AADT figures (Table 4.7-5 in the DEIR, supposedly also from the Caltrans database) are considerably lower.

In the cumulative traffic impact section the DEIR only pays attention to projects that are "reasonably expected to be in place in 2007" and that are in the Santa Clarita area. That seems short-sighted, both in time and space. The GIS map in Figure 2 at the end of this letter shows planned developments, some of it with approved specific plans, that will impact traffic in the corridor between Castaic and the North San Fernando Valley. Centennial, 30 miles north of the project, will generate 400,000 ADT's at buildout, and it seems reasonable to assume that at least 50,000 will head south on I-5, and all of these will cross the intersection with SR-126. It is true that Centennial and similar projects have not yet been approved, and will take 25 years to completion, but it is certainly not proper planning to act as if they do not exist. SCAG and MTA to some extent take these projects into account in their long-term plans for Northern LA County traffic.

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More generally, it is well known that trip generation models have poor predictive power. To quote Niels Bohr: "Prediction is very difficult, especially of the future." We argued above that the short-term and local perspective of the models implies poor prediction. Do the traffic flow models that compute LOS take the mega-container ships into account that are flooding the harbors ? What will the influence be of Centennial, Northlake, San Emidio New Town, Los Lomas, Gates-King, Riverpark ? What will happen to Magic Mountain ? Do the consultants and developers know that SCAG/MTA in their long-range plans propose to widen the I-5 from SR-14 to SR-126 to a sixteen-lane freeway ? What will then happen to the fancy new Newhall interchanges ?

Even if, and it's a big if, we take the trip generation and traffic prediction models seriously, they are clearly extremely localized in time and space, and they do not acknowledge that traffic flow on I-5 is both a large-scale and a long-term problem. And, as any commuter can testify, it is getting worse every year.

Sincerely,

Jan de Leeuw,

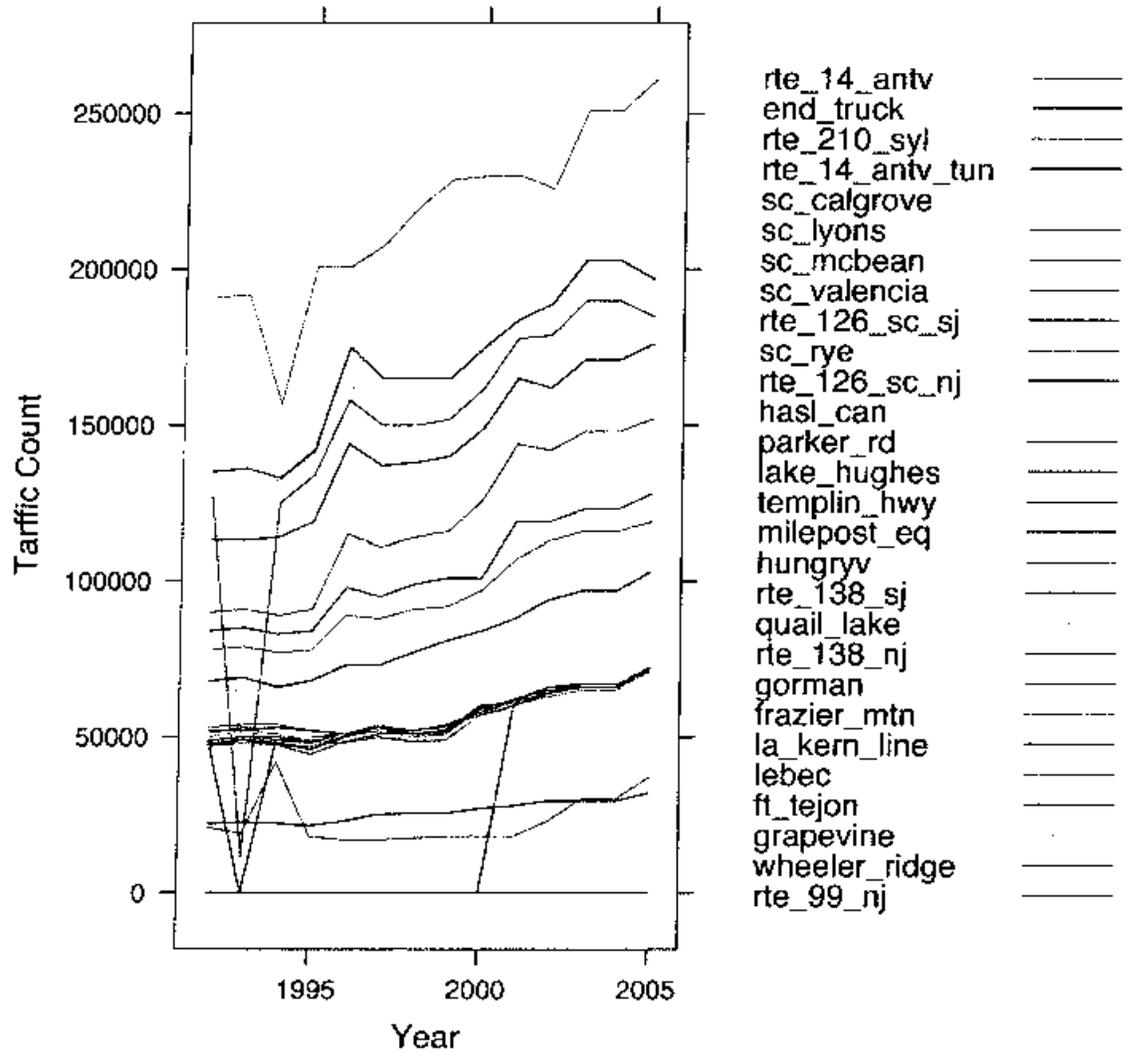
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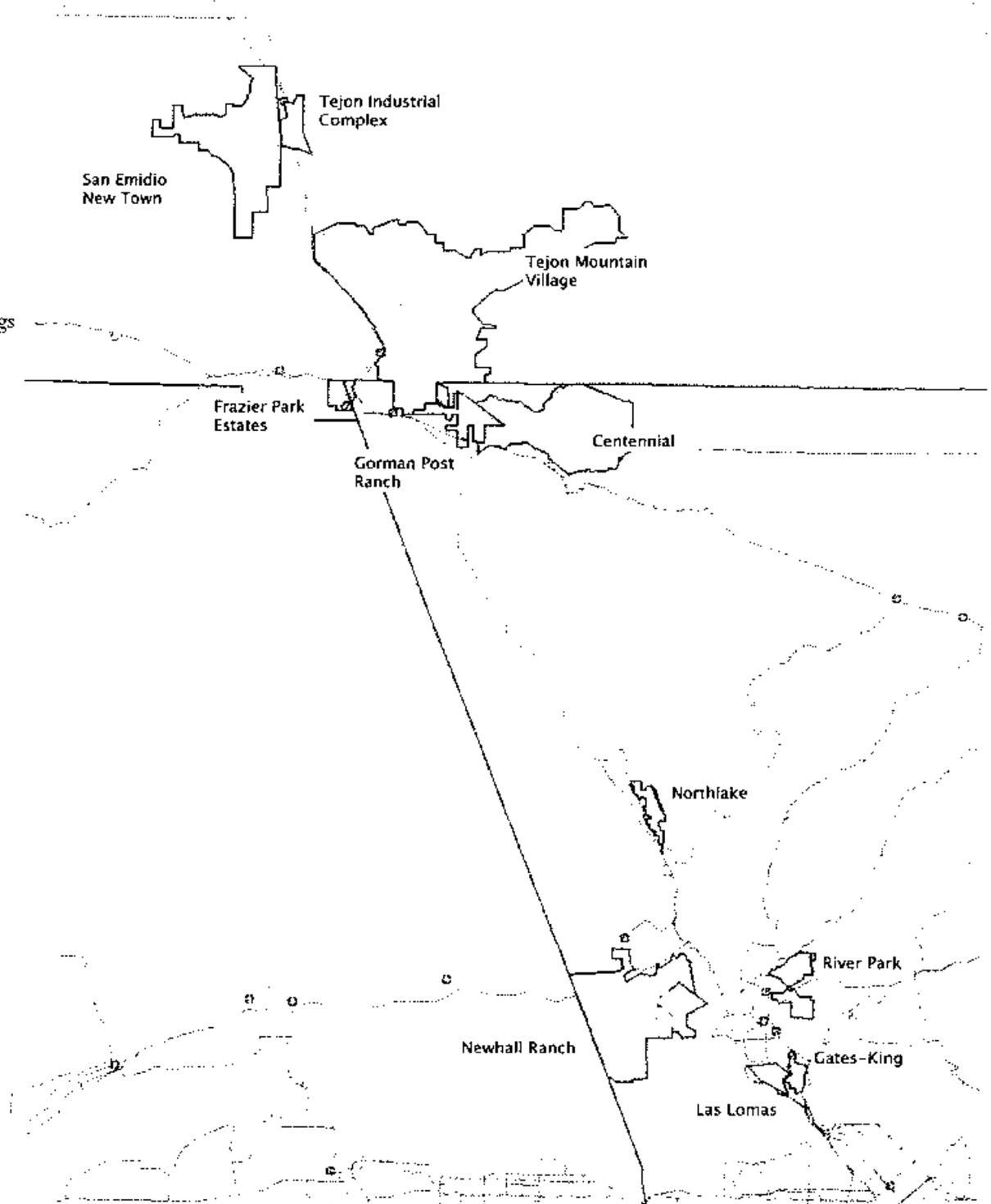
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Mr. Daniel Fierros  
Los Angeles County Regional Planning Dept.  
320 W. Temple St.  
Los Angeles, CA 90013

**Date 1/19/07**

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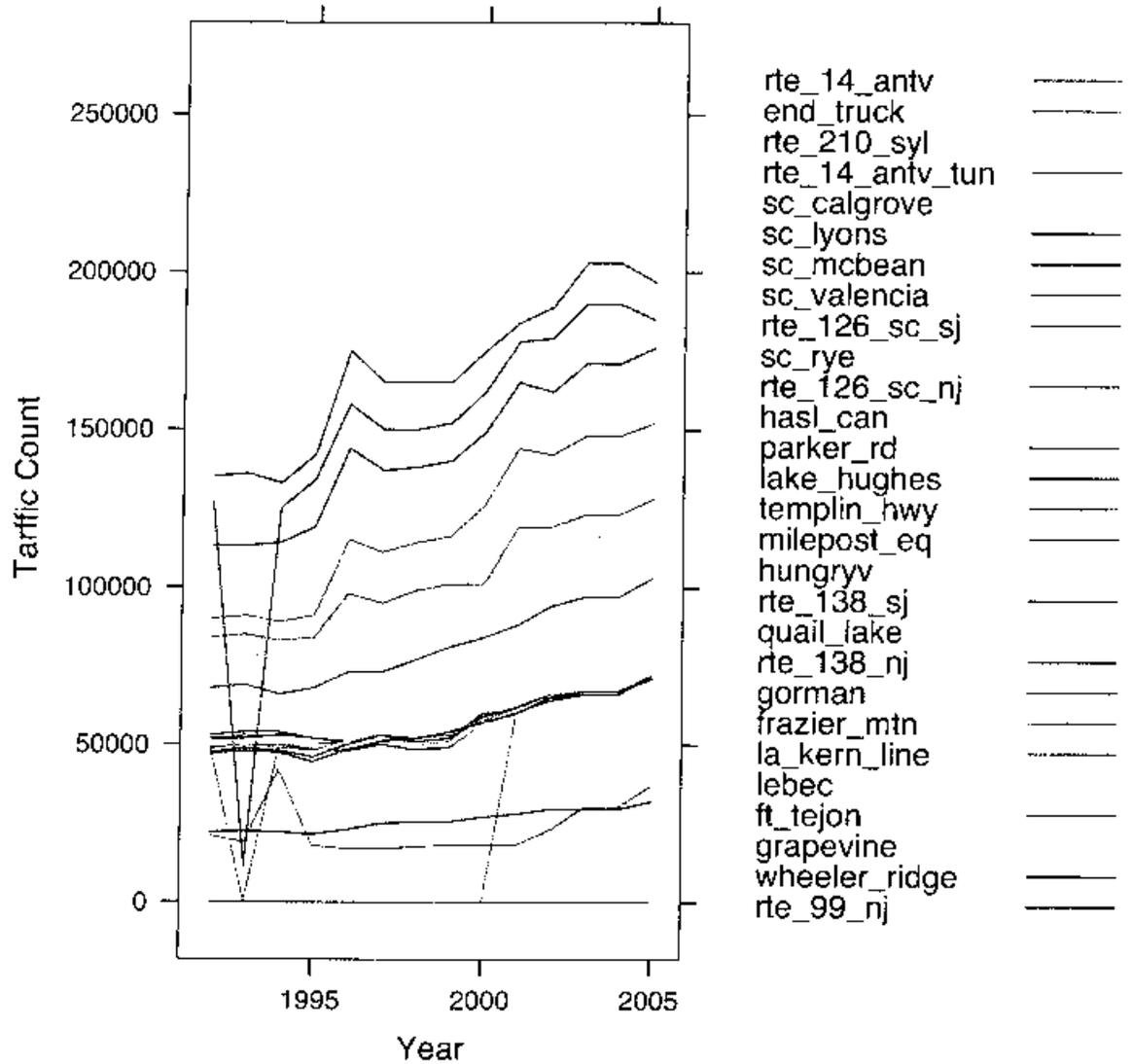
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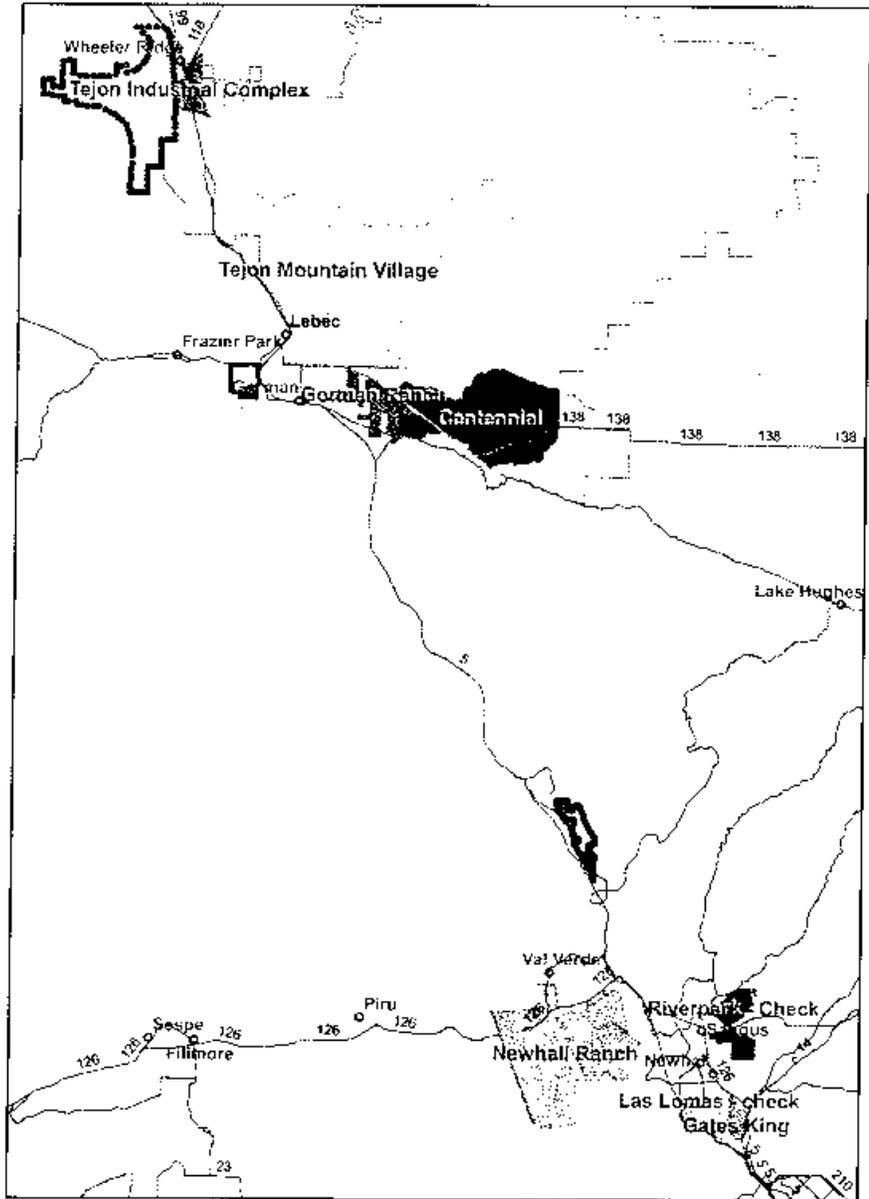
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## I-5 Corridor Housing Development Projects



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California 93225  
[www.tcwdogs.org](http://www.tcwdogs.org)

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Cartography by Sierra Club Angeles Chapter GIS Committee  
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SANITATION DISTRICTS OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY



STEPHEN R. MAGUIN  
Chief Engineer and General Manager

# Fax

**DATE:** January 22, 2007

**TOTAL PAGES:** 3  
(Including Cover Page)

**TO:** Daniel Fierros

**COMPANY:** Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning

**FAX NO:** (213) 974-6411 (213) 626-0434

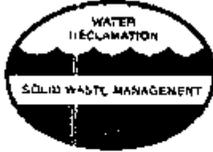
**FROM:** Sean Christian

**FAX OPERATOR:** same **EXTENSION:** 2707

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Review and Comment | <input type="checkbox"/> Call to Discuss      | <input type="checkbox"/> For Your Approval    |

**COMMENTS:**

Comments on Draft Environmental Impact Report for Landmark Village - Tentative Tract Map No. TR53108



## COUNTY SANITATION DISTRICTS OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY

1955 Workman Mill Road, Whittier, CA 90601-1400  
 Mailing Address: P.O. Box 4998, Whittier, CA 90607-4998  
 Telephone: (562) 699-7411, FAX: (562) 699-5422  
 www.lccsd.org

STEPHEN R. MAGUIN  
 Chief Engineer and General Manager

January 22, 2007

File No. 31-900.13.10J

Daniel Fierros  
 Department of Regional Planning  
 Impact Analysis Section  
 320 West Temple Street  
 Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. Fierros:

### Landmark Village Draft Environmental Impact Report - TT 53108

The County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County (Districts) received a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the subject project on November 20, 2006. The Districts offer the following comments regarding sewerage service:

- **Page 4.11-2, Paragraph 2:** The DEIR refers to the conceptual backbone sewer plan as Exhibit 2.5-3 of the *Newhall Ranch Specific Plan*. This sewer plan is outdated. A new figure is required that accurately reflects the current plan for a backbone sewer system.
- **Page 4.11-2, Paragraph 2; Page 4.11-8 Paragraph 3:** In reference to the sanitation district serving Landmark Village, the DEIR states that "a new county sanitation district would be formed." The Local Area Formation Commission filed a Certificate of Completion for formation of the Newhall Ranch County Sanitation District effective July 27, 2006.
- **Page 4.11-4, Paragraph 2; Page 4.11-15, Paragraph 1; Page 4.11-15, Paragraph 2:** The DEIR states in several places that the Districts would not issue connection permits without sufficient capacity in its collection or treatment systems. Sizing of collection and treatment systems is based on regionally adopted general plans and population forecasts. System capacity is routinely monitored and incremental increases are made as necessary to accommodate projected growth.
- **Page 4.11-6, Paragraph 1; Page 4.11-9, Paragraph 3:** The DEIR provides incorrect information about the recent and planned expansions of the Valencia WRP. The Stage V expansion (9 mgd) was completed in May 2005. Based on population projections published in the most recent Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) 2004 Regional Transportation Plan, the Valencia WRP has adequate capacity through the year 2015. Stage VI expansion would increase capacity by 6 mgd but will not be constructed until flow materializes.

DOC #738801

Daniel Fierros

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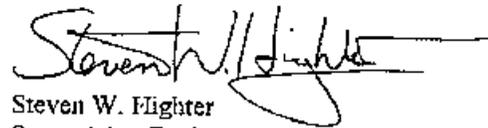
January 22, 2007

- *Page 4.11-15, Paragraph 2:* The DEIR provides incorrect information about the *Final 2015 Santa Clarita Valley Joint Sewerage System Facilities Plan and EIR (2015 Plan)*. The 2015 Plan bases its wastewater projections on the SCAG 1996 Regional Transportation Plan.
- *Page 4.11-15, Paragraph 2:* The DEIR provides incorrect information about the amount of wastewater tributary to the Saugus and Valencia WRPs by 2015 and site capacities of these two plants. The 2015 Plan estimated that a total of 34.1 mgd would be tributary to its Saugus and Valencia WRPs by the year 2015, which is also the combined site capacity determined for these two plants.

Thank you for providing the Districts an opportunity to review and comment on the DEIR. Please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Sean Christian of my staff at extension 2707 if you have questions regarding these comments.

Very truly yours,

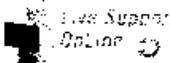
Stephen R. Maguin



Steven W. Flighter  
Supervising Engineer  
Planning Section



ROCKWELL  
JAN 18 2007



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  - funny
  - funny stuff
  - fusd
  - FUSD
  - future reference
  - gigs
  - meccha posts
  - photos, memorabilia
  - PNC
  - scv wellness found.
- Trash (25)

**Date:** Monday, January 15, 2007 4:58 PM  
**From:** jjbergamo@adelphia.net  
**To:** dfierros@planning.lacounty.gov, stae@planning.lacounty.gov  
**cc:** kimberly.rivers@gmail.com, oro1238@aol.com, jjbergamo@adelphia.net, troykefm@yahoo.com, Delfina.Becerra@ventura.org  
**Subject:** Landmark Village  
**Size:** 2 KB

The Piru Neighborhood Council unanimously and respectfully requests that the comment period for the DEIR/Landmark Village, County Project No. 00-196 be extended by 60 days. There is so much material, it is difficult for everyone concerned to access the document in hard copy; reading it online limits and prolongs the process. That and the fact that the document was released during the holiday season hampers a thoughtful review and analysis of the project.

The Piru Neighborhood Council, as representatives of the community closest to the proposed project, has definite concerns. These include water quality, air quality and traffic. There are concerns about the amount of water that may be drawn from the aquifer east of us and the possible migration west of the perchlorate plume already present in the Santa Clarita water supply. The "stabilization"/channelization of the Santa Clara River could increase the flood flow of the river to damaging speeds as it enters the Piru area. The temporary routing of sewage to Santa Clarita is a concern; what is the route, and what is the risk of the line rupturing during a flood event?

There are many other issues, including the ecological damage that the project will bring. Without adequate time to study these issues, neither the public surrounding the project nor the potential residents will be fairly served.

Thank you for your consideration of this important request to extend the comment period.

Very sincerely,  
 Janet Bergamo, President  
 Piru Neighborhood Council

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## Fierros, Daniel

---

**From:** jjbergamo@adelphia.net  
**Sent:** Monday, January 15, 2007 4:59 PM  
**To:** Fierros, Daniel; Tae, Susan  
**Cc:** kimberly.rivers@gmail.com; oro1238@aol.com; jjbergamo@adelphia.net; troykefm@yahoo.com; Delfina.Becerra@ventura.org  
**Subject:** Landmark Village

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Red

The Piru Neighborhood Council unanimously and respectfully requests that the comment period for the DEIR/Landmark Village, County Project No. 00-196 be extended by 60 days. There is so much material, it is difficult for everyone concerned to access the document in hard copy; reading it online limits and prolongs the process. That and the fact that the document was released during the holiday season hampers a thoughtful review and analysis of the project.

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Thank you for your consideration of this important request to extend the comment period.

Very sincerely,  
Janet Bergamo, President  
Piru Neighborhood Council

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Arnold Schwarzenegger, Governor

**NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION**

815 CAPITOL MALL, ROOM 364  
 SACRAMENTO, CA 95814  
 (916) 653-6251  
 Fax (916) 657-5390  
 Web Site [www.nahc.ca.gov](http://www.nahc.ca.gov)  
 e-mail: [ca\\_nahc@pacbell.net](mailto:ca_nahc@pacbell.net)



January 22, 2007

Mr. Daniel Fierros

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL PLANNING**

320 West Temple Street  
 Los Angeles, CA 90012

Sent by FAX to: (213) ~~647-2262~~ <sup>626-0434</sup>  
 No. of Pages: 1

Re: SCH#2004021002: CEQA Notice of Completion: draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for Landmark Village Project: No. 06-196: TR53108/CP00-196/ROAK-OT00-196/RDUO200500112: LA County Dept of Regional Planning: Mixed Use Development of 1,444 Homes: Hwy 126 Area north of Santa Clarita: Los Angeles County, California

Dear Mr. Fierros:

This is an **ADDENDUM TO OUR LETTER OF DECEMBER 26, 2006**. We have completed a review of the Technical Appendices 422A and we note in Section 2.2 in the Ethnographic Description (page 7 of 120 pages) that the archaeological firm contracted to the County of Los Angeles, states that the "Tataviam Tribe is extinct." This statement is unacceptable to the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). The Commission is in frequent contact with the Tataviam Tribe; its chairperson, Rudy J. Ortega, Sr., recently played an important role in getting AB 2641, which deals with issues of Native American human remains, passed in the 2006 Session of the California Legislature. The Fernandeano Tataviam Band of Mission Indians is a organized California Native American tribe and on the NAHC Tribal Consultation list pursuant to Government Code Section 65352.3.

If you have any questions concerning this ADDENDUM to our letter of December 26, 2006, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 653-6251.

Sincerely,

Dave Singleton  
 Program Analyst

Cc: Larry Myers, Executive Secretary - Native American Heritage Commission

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STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Arnold Schwarzenegger, Governor

**NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION**

915 CAPITOL MALL, ROOM 364  
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814  
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Web Site [www.nahc.ca.gov](http://www.nahc.ca.gov)  
e-mail: [ds\\_nahc@pacbell.net](mailto:ds_nahc@pacbell.net)



December 26, 2006

Mr. Daniel Fierros

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL PLANNING**  
320 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: SCH#2004021002; CEQA Notice of Completion; draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for Landmark Village Project; No. 00-196; TR53108/CP00-196/ROAK-OT00-196/RCUO200500112; LA County Dept of Regional Planning; Mixed Use Development of 1,444 Homes; Hwy 126 Area north of Santa Clarita; Los Angeles County, California

Dear Mr. Fierros:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above-referenced document. The Native American Heritage Commission is the state's Trustee Agency for Native American Cultural Resources. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that any project that causes a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource, that includes archeological resources, is a 'significant effect' requiring the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) per CEQA guidelines § 15064.5(b)(c). In order to comply with this provision, the lead agency is required to assess whether the project will have an adverse impact on these resources within the 'area of potential effect (APE)', and if so, to mitigate that effect. To adequately assess the project-related impacts on historical resources, the Commission recommends the following action:

- ✓ Contact the appropriate California Historic Resources Information Center (CHRIS). The record search will determine:
  - If a part or the entire APE has been previously surveyed for cultural resources.
  - If any known cultural resources have already been recorded in or adjacent to the APE.
  - If the probability is low, moderate, or high that cultural resources are located in the APE.
  - If a survey is required to determine whether previously unrecorded cultural resources are present.
- ✓ If an archaeological inventory survey is required, the final stage is the preparation of a professional report detailing the findings and recommendations of the records search and field survey.
  - The final report containing site forms, site significance, and mitigation measures should be submitted immediately to the planning department. All information regarding site locations, Native American human remains, and associated funerary objects should be in a separate confidential addendum, and not be made available for public disclosure.
  - The final written report should be submitted within 3 months after work has been completed to the appropriate regional archaeological information center.
- ✓ Contact the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) for:
  - \* A Sacred Lands File (SLF) search of the project area and information on tribal contacts in the project vicinity who may have additional cultural resource information. Please provide this office with the following citation format to assist with the Sacred Lands File search request: USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle citation with name, township, range and section.
- The NAHC advises the use of Native American Monitors to ensure proper identification and care given cultural resources that may be discovered. The NAHC recommends that contact be made with Native American Contacts on the attached list to get their input on potential project impact, particularly the contacts on the list.
- ✓ Lack of surface evidence of archeological resources does not preclude their subsurface existence.
- Lead agencies should include in their mitigation plan provisions for the identification and evaluation of accidentally discovered archeological resources, per California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) §15064.5 (f). In areas of identified archeological sensitivity, a certified archaeologist and a culturally affiliated Native American, with knowledge in cultural resources, should monitor all ground-disturbing activities.
- Lead agencies should include in their mitigation plan provisions for the disposition of recovered artifacts, in consultation with culturally affiliated Native Americans.

√ Lead agencies should include provisions for discovery of Native American human remains or unmarked cemeteries in their mitigation plans.

\* CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5(d) requires the lead agency to work with the Native Americans identified by this Commission if the initial Study identifies the presence or likely presence of Native American human remains within the APE. CEQA Guidelines provide for agreements with Native American, identified by the NAHC, to assure the appropriate and dignified treatment of Native American human remains and any associated grave liens.

√ Health and Safety Code §7050.5, Public Resources Code §5097.98 and Sec. §15064.5(d) of the CEQA Guidelines mandate procedures to be followed in the event of an accidental discovery of any human remains in a location other than a dedicated cemetery.

√ Lead agencies should consider avoidance, as defined in § 15370 of the CEQA Guidelines, when significant cultural resources are discovered during the course of project planning.

Please feel free to contact me at (916) 653-6251 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Dave Singleton  
Program Analyst

Cc: State Clearinghouse

Attachment: List of Native American Contacts

**Native American Contacts  
Los Angeles County  
December 26, 2006**

Verly Salazar Folkes  
31 Shadybrook Drive  
Thousand Oaks, CA 91362  
Phone: (805) 492-7255

Chumash  
Tataviam  
Fernandeño

Owl Clan  
Dr. Kote & Lin A-Lul'Koy Lotah  
48825 Sapaque Road  
Bradley, CA 93426  
Chumash  
(805) 472-9536

Lynn Tumamait  
North Pole Ave  
Thousand Oaks, CA 93023  
Email: tumamait@hotmail.com  
Phone: (805) 646-6214

Chumash

Patrick Tumamait  
992 El Camino Corto  
Ojai, CA 93023  
Email: yanahua2@aol.com  
Phone: (805) 640-0481  
Cell: (805) 216-1253

Chumash

City/County Native American Indian Comm  
Andrade, Director  
5 West 6th Street, Rm. 403  
Los Angeles, CA 90020  
Phone: (213) 351-5324  
Fax: (213) 386-3995

Tehachapi Indian Tribe  
Attn: Charlie Cooke  
32835 Santiago Road  
Acton, CA 93510  
Email: suscol@interx.net  
Phone: (661) 269-1422

Kawaiisu

This list is current only as of the date of this document.

The distribution of this list does not relieve any person of statutory responsibility as defined in Sec. 7050.5 of the Health & Safety Code, Sec. 5097.94 of the Public Resources Code and Sec. 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code.

This list is only applicable for contacting local Native Americans with regard to cultural resources for the proposed Project #2004021002; CEQA Notice of Completion; draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for The Landmark Project; Santa Clarita/Hwy 126 Area; Los Angeles County, California.

**Native American Contacts  
Los Angeles County  
December 26, 2006**

Kitanemuk & Yowlumne Tejon Indians

Lia Dominguez

1 N. Virginia

Yowlumne, CA 91722

(6) 339-6785

Yowlumne

Kitanemuk

San Fernando Band of Mission Indians

John Valenzuela, Chairperson

P.O. Box 221838

Newhall, CA 91322

tsen2u@msn.com

(661) 753-9833

Office

(760) 949-1604 Fax

Fernandeño

Tataviam

Serrano

Vanyume

Kitanemuk

San Gabriel Valley Indian Council

John Williams, Chairperson

75 Settimo Creek Road

San Gabriel, CA 93518

(916) 333-5032

Southern Paiute

Kawaiisu

Tubatulabal

Koso

Yokuts

This list is current only as of the date of this document.

The distribution of this list does not relieve any person of statutory responsibility as defined in Sec. 7050.5 of the Health & Safety Code, Sec. 5097.94 of the Public Resources Code and Sec. 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code.

This list is only applicable for contacting local Native Americans with regard to cultural resources for the proposed project (#2004021002; CEQA Notice of Completion; draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for The Landmark Project; Santa Clarita/Hwy 126 Area; Los Angeles County, California.

**Heffernan & Boortz**

A Partnership Composed of Law Corporations  
26 Corporate Plaza - Suite 100  
Newport Beach, California 92660  
Telephone (949) 640-4300  
Facsimile (949) 721-1140  
e-mail [dboortz@hblaw.net](mailto:dboortz@hblaw.net)

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January 19, 2007

Mr. Daniel Fierros  
County of Los Angeles  
Department of Regional Planning  
Impact Analysis Section, Room 1348  
320 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Draft Environmental Impact Report ("DEIR") for Landmark Village  
Tentative Tract Map No. TR53108  
State Clearinghouse No. 2004021002

Dear Mr. Fierros:

Our firm represents the owner of Travel Village, the recreational vehicle park situated adjacent to Castaic Creek and the site of the proposed Landmark Village project (the "Project"). We have been asked by our client to provide you with the following comments concerning the above-referenced DEIR:

Based on an initial review of the DEIR, our client has no objection to the Project as described in the DEIR assuming that the following understandings remain in place:

1. It is our understanding that the development of the Project as described in the DEIR will not have any impact (whether by velocity or surface level) upon the Travel Village property insofar as the flow of water through both Castaic Creek and the Santa Clarita River are concerned;
2. We also understand that no modifications or improvements will be required for or made to the Travel Village property as a result of the Project other than those bank stabilization improvements that will be installed by the County or the Newhall Land and Farming Company pursuant to the State Route 126 and Commerce Center Drive interchange project (the "SR 126 Project"); and
3. Finally, we understand that the development of the Project will not adversely impact the design or timing of the construction of the SR 126 Project improvements

- Heffernan & Boortz -

A Partnership Composed of Law Corporations

Mr. Daniel Fierros  
Department of Regional Planning  
January 19, 2007

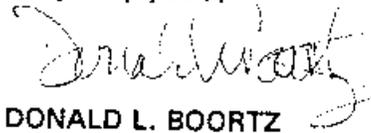
Page 2

serving the Travel Village property including (i) the traffic light and intersection on SR 126 providing direct access to the Travel Village property at its west end, (ii) the service road providing access to the Travel Village property from Henry Mayo Drive, (iii) the sound attenuation walls along SR 126 and (iv) the inclusion of lateral connections and related facilities (e.g., manhole access facilities) for any utility services to be located within the utility corridor for connection to the Travel Village property.

Additionally, we ask, unless that portion of Henry Mayo Drive between the east end of the Travel Village property and Commerce Center Drive is to be currently completed to full-street improvement level as part of either the Project or the SR 126 Project, that our client be given the option to install those street improvements that will not otherwise be constructed now to facilitate improved emergency access to and from the Travel Village property. Given the increased danger inherent in the substantial development and construction activities that will be taking place in close proximity to Travel Village during the next several years, providing additional access for the park's tenants, guests and employees is of critical importance.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our comments on the DEIR and the Project. Please do not hesitate to contact us immediately should you have any questions.

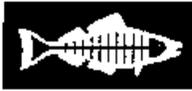
Very truly yours,



DONALD L. BOORTZ

cc: Travel Village

- Heffernan & Boortz -  
A Partnership Composed of Law Corporations



1444 9th Street  
Santa Monica, CA  
90401

Heal the Bay.

**Fax Cover Sheet**

To: Mr. Daniel Fierros

Company: LA county Regional Planning

Phone:

Fax:

From: Kirsten James

Phone:

Fax:

Date: 1/22/07

Total Pages: 9

Comments:

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Heal the Bay

1444 9th Street  
Santa Monica CA 90401ph 310 451 1550  
fax 310 496 1902info@healthebay.org  
www.healthebay.org

January 22, 2007

Mr. Daniel Fierros  
County of Los Angeles  
Department of Regional Planning  
Impact Analysis Section, Room 1348  
320 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, A 90012

**Re: Comments on the Landmark Village Draft Environmental Impact Report,  
County Project No. 00-196**

Dear Mr. Fierros:

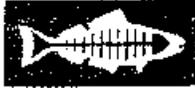
On behalf of Heal the Bay, we submit the following comments on the *Landmark Village* ("Project") *Draft Environmental Impact Report, County Project No. 00-196* ("DEIR"). We appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments.

In general the DEIR does not adequately consider alternatives that would enable the project to proceed with the least environmental damage and does accurately describe the environmental risk to decision makers. Therefore, the Los Angeles County Regional Planning Commission should not certify the EIR as written. Our concerns with water quality, hydrology, and biological resources impacts are described in further detail below.

The Santa Clara River ("River") is the largest wild river remaining in southern California. It provides crucial aquatic ecosystem functions in the region, including groundwater recharge and riparian habitat for endangered and rare species. It is also a significant input to southern California's coastal waters at the City of San Buenaventura. Thus, it is imperative that development occurring within the Santa Clarita River watershed proceeds in a manner that protects and restores the water quality and aquatic ecosystem functions of this important river system. In 2005, the Santa Clara River was named the "10<sup>th</sup> Most Endangered River" in the Country by the American Rivers organization in part because of the imminent threat of development.

Our over-arching concern with this project as outlined in the DEIR is that it impinges upon the natural functioning of the River to such an extent that significant, immitigable damage will be done to water quality and aquatic habitat. Specifically:

- There is an insufficient buffer zone (undeveloped vegetated area) provided between developed areas and the River.
- There are extensive areas of stream bank alteration, in the form of hardened structures for stabilization, including buried bank stabilization, which are known to increase erosion/sedimentation problems and decrease aquatic and riparian habitat.



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- The analyses are fatally flawed and do not accurately present the true impacts of the proposed development at the project site and downstream to water quality, biological resources and downstream property owners.
- Significant development occurs within the 100-year floodplain of the River.

### **Water Quality – Section 4.3**

#### **Integrated water resources planning should be considered in the project design.**

Efforts such as the Los Angeles County Integrated Regional Water Management Plan and the City of Los Angeles Integrated Resources Plan highlight the need for integrated water resources planning in the region. However, the DEIR does not appropriately address aspects of integrated planning for the project. For instance, why is all of the storm water being directed off-site? Are there no plans for water reclamation or infiltration? The DEIR should consider integrated water resources planning as a way to address some of the potential impacts from the project.

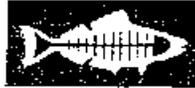
#### **Fill and grading projects should be appropriately mitigated.**

The project requires 5.8 million cubic yards of fill and significant grading activities at the Adobe Canyon Borrow Site and the Chiquito Canyon Grading Site. DEIR at 39. This is an enormous amount of cut and fill, yet there are no specific grading restrictions outlined in the DEIR. For a proposed project of this magnitude in proximity to an important waterbody, extra precautions should be required. For example, there should be no grading within 500 feet of the River or any tributary or on steep slopes (steeper than 4:1). Also, there should be no grading activity during the rainy season (November through April). On many occasions Heal the Bay staff has witnessed the disastrous effect of grading, even at much smaller projects, when a rainstorm occurs. For instance, there were disastrous sediment discharges from the much smaller Shea Homes project in Agora Hills that were documented by the Regional Water Board and Fish and Game in 2003/2004. The basic best management practices ("BMPs") are not sufficient to prevent massive sediment inputs to creeks when hillsides are graded and exposed to rainfall. These restrictions should be specified in the DEIR.

#### **Pollutant concentrations and loadings should not be directly compared to the existing agricultural use pollutant concentrations and loadings.**

The DEIR compares all pollutant concentrations and loadings to the existing conditions with the agricultural site. This comparison is inappropriate. Pollutant concentrations in the runoff should be evaluated based on potential impacts to water quality. Various reaches of the Santa Clara River are listed on the State's 303(d) list as impaired by various constituents. Specifically Reach 5 is listed for chloride, high coliform and nitrate and nitrite, and a TMDL has been adopted for Nitrogen and Ammonia. Regardless of whether or not the land use remains agricultural or the proposed development takes place, the owners must comply with all existing TMDLs or will be in violation of the Clean Water Act.

Ultimately the County and City of Santa Clara will be responsible for meeting TMDLs that exist for waterbodies in the project area. Clean-up measures are extremely expensive. These costs



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will likely be passed on to the tax payers. We strongly urge that any development not further impair water quality in 303(d) listed waters. Any costs associated with runoff from the project should be placed on the property owners or the developers.

**The estimated nutrient concentrations may lead to excess algal growth.**

The DEIR predicts that average annual nitrate + nitrite concentrations will be 0.5 mg/l and total phosphorus will be 0.3 mg/l. Data show that these concentrations may impact the water quality. For instance, data collected in the Malibu Creek Watershed by Heal the Bay's Stream Team between the period of November 1998 and November 2004 show that algal cover in Malibu Creek consistently exceeds 30% when nitrate is <0.05 mg/l and phosphate is above 0.15 mg/l. Lawn care practices in the development may increase the nutrient levels significantly. Thus, the discharges of nutrients from the development will likely contribute to water quality impacts.

**BMPs should be maintained and monitored in perpetuity.**

Some of the proposed water quality BMPs will be maintained by homeowner associations. This does not ensure ongoing water quality protection because there is no regulatory oversight of these associations. All water quality protection measures should be the responsibility of the developer. Alternatively the homeowners associations should at least be required to sign binding agreements with such government agencies requiring the homeowners associations to perform specific maintenance, monitoring and reporting requirements, depending on the BMP. Without maintenance, monitoring and reporting follow-up, there is no point in using BMPs since there will be no way of determining whether a given BMP is effective in mitigating water quality impacts.

**The water quality impacts for all drainages in the project area should be evaluated.**

The DEIR states that "[f]our other drainages within or adjacent to the project site are also considered 'waters of the U.S'..." DEIR at 4.2-12. There is little to no mention of these drainages in the document. Were impacts to these considered in the DEIR and are there proposals for mitigation measures? This analysis should be included in the DEIR and appropriate mitigation measures and setbacks should be required.

**Water quality impacts from the new wastewater treatment facility should be considered in the DEIR.**

The downstream water quality impacts of increased nutrient and bacteria loading from the proposed wastewater treatment plant are not addressed in the DEIR. Will the combination of pollutants from wastewater discharges and storm water discharges prevent compliance with TMDLs? Also, where will the sewer lines and water supply lines be placed and how will this impact aquatic and riparian resources onsite and downstream? Without further details regarding discharges of wastewater and its impacts to water quality, there is not sufficient information for decision makers to evaluate impacts of this project. This constitutes a fatal flaw in the DEIR.

**Appropriate actions should be taken to avoid the spread of exotic species.**



Heal the Bay

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Recent aquatic invertebrate surveys in the Malibu Creek watershed have confirmed the presence of the New Zealand mudsnail, an insidious exotic invasive species that could potentially wreak havoc on the watershed's native organisms. The mudsnail has also been found in Piru Creek in the Santa Clara River watershed. The DEIR describes various construction activities that will take place in the River. In order to avoid the spread of this exotic species, the developer should include a strict protocol that will be implemented to prevent its spread. Anyone having contact with the River due to this project should complete a HACCP to prevent the spread of the mudsnail further into the watershed.

#### Hydrology – Section 4.2

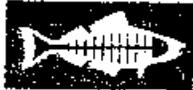
##### **The Project should avoid any hard armoring of the stream bank.**

The DEIR estimates that there will be a 148 acre-ft per year increase in runoff, despite proposed mitigation measures. DEIR at 4.4-77. (The actual runoff and pollutant loading estimate would be greater if the applicant would use more appropriate models and not bulk and burn calculations.) Small increases in flow can result in massive erosion problems over time. In order to "mitigate" the impacts of these flows, the DEIR proposes the use of buried cement bank stabilization, bridge piers and abutments, rip-rap, and energy dissipaters. Specifically, 18,600 linear feet of buried soil cement and 11 bridge piers are proposed in the project area. DEIR at 4.2-35. Any of these structures or modifications will affect the hydrology of the stream even if only in localized areas. Anytime natural processes are altered, there are substantial downstream impacts.

The long-term effects of stream bank/bed modifications include increased scouring, increased erosion, and increased downstream deposition of eroded material, which degrades downstream habitat. As a result native vegetation are often washed out, eliminating the ability for pollutant removal. Also, eroding stream banks contribute fine sediment to streams. Fine sediments contribute nutrients, bacteria, and bury important spawning habitat for steelhead trout. Heal the Bay's Stream Team mapped 70 miles of stream in Malibu Creek Watershed between 2001 and 2003. They found that 19.8 (28%) linear stream miles of armoring resulted in 18.7 (27%) linear miles of eroding stream banks.

The best ways to avoid increased erosion/deposition effects are to (1) keep all structures and utilities outside the 100-year floodplain or the 500 foot riparian buffer of the River (whichever is greater); (2) use only soft bioengineering techniques to stabilize stream banks. (No armoring of stream banks). Bioengineering is preferable because it allows the river to maintain a natural dynamic balance. It also requires less maintenance over time as there are no concrete or other hard structures to eventually fail and be replaced. Bioengineering also provides natural riparian habitat that maintains water quality and wildlife habitat;

We strongly recommend that the space between vertical support columns be increased to the maximum extent possible to provide for less obstruction and less impact on wildlife migration. Additionally we believe that the bridge height should be increased to minimize noise and light impacts that could deter aquatic and terrestrial wildlife migration. A light-penetrating surface



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should also be used to provide light for the organisms below. Plant growth below the bridge will provide for migrating wildlife and enhance stabilization.

In sum, the Santa Clara River supports numerous endangered, threatened and rare aquatic species that must be protected from the deleterious erosion and deposition effects of stream bank/bed modifications. The DEIR fails to analyze the impacts that the project will have to both water quality and habitat quality in the Santa River and other impacted drainages. Without this information, decision makers can not evaluate the true impacts of this project, which is a fatal flaw of the DEIR. Therefore, the project must be modified to avoid all armoring.

**The amount of impervious surface should be greatly decreased.**

A key factor in the degradation of stream water quality is the proportion of impervious surfaces versus pervious surfaces in the watershed.<sup>1</sup> Heal the Bay's State of the Watershed concluded that "[o]ur imperviousness data and BMI data indicate a trend of increasing imperviousness associated with decreasing mean BMI scores." Further, the State of the Watershed Report finds that there is serious degradation to BMI with effective impervious surfaces as low as 5%. Hollis (1995) states that even "low levels of impervious cover (5 to 10 percent) are capable of increasing the peak discharge rate by a factor of 5 to 10 for storms smaller than the one year storm."

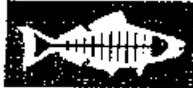
While Schueler (1995) comments that "more impervious cover directly translates into higher peak discharge rates, greater runoff volumes, and higher floodplain elevations," detention ponds are most commonly constructed to mitigate these effects. The primary goal of stormwater detention ponds is to reduce the peak discharge rate by slowly releasing water over a longer period of time. Therefore, the total volume of runoff is the same with or without the detention pond, the only difference is that discharge lasts for a longer amount of time. Thus, the proposed BMPs will not solve many of the problems created by increased runoff volumes from the development.

Table 4.2-1 provides the percent imperviousness for selected land uses. These numbers should be reduced. The DEIR should consider alternatives such as increasing the density of the housing or reducing the number of houses so that the % impervious is decreased below 5%. Maintaining 5% or less effective impervious area will ensure viable biological communities.

**The DEIR's calculations for bulk and burn are misleading.**

The DEIR states that "[o]nce developed, the Landmark Village project would reduce post-development stormwater flows during a capital storm event." DEIR at 4.2-1. Further, the DEIR asserts that the project will decrease the total debris volume and burned and bulked runoff. DEIR at 4.2-4. We completely disagree with this statement. Using this methodology, the DEIR concludes that a undeveloped site will be dirtier and produce more runoff than an developed site. This assertion is ridiculous.

<sup>1</sup> Center for Watershed Protection, 2003. Impacts of impervious cover on aquatic systems. Watershed Protection Research Monograph 1, 158 pp. <http://www.cwp.org/Downloads/>



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The pre-development pollutant loading analyses used the LA County "bulk and burn" runoff estimates, which provide unrealistically high flow and pollutant estimates most of the time. Given the return frequency of major fires in the region, it is extremely unlikely that most rain events will generate the equivalent of the amount of water and pollutants estimated in the "bulk and burn" method. We understand that this is the standard calculation used in the LA County stormwater manual; however, while it may be appropriate for sizing bridges and culverts, it is entirely inappropriate for calculating pollutant loads and runoff volumes at a development site. We feel it is imperative that the project proponent also analyze stormwater flow and loadings under normal, non-bulk and burned conditions and we urge the County to require such analyses for flow and pollutant loadings in this DEIR, in order to achieve a realistic estimate of pre- and post-development pollutant loads to the River. Without such an analysis, it is impossible for decision makers to evaluate on-site and downstream impacts that the project will have on water quality.

#### **All development should take place out of the floodplain.**

The proposed Landmark Village project impinges upon the 100-year floodplain of the River. As stated in the DEIR, 103.5 acres are within the FEMA floodplain. DEIR at 4.2-29. There is absolutely no reason why housing needs to be placed in the 100-year floodplain, thus necessitating stream bank stabilization measures (i.e. stream bank hardening) to then protect those homes in the floodplain. Any development in the Santa Clara River watershed must occur well outside the 100-year floodplain or outside of the 500 foot riparian buffer (whichever is greater) and as discussed below must maintain vegetated buffers in order to protect the water quality and ecosystem functions of the River.

#### **Biota – Section 4.4**

##### **A 500 foot riparian buffer should be required for all development activities.**

As acknowledged in the DEIR, "[t]he river is an important migration and genetic dispersion corridor for many wildlife species, including aquatic taxa, riparian obligate species (resident and migratory), and larger more terrestrial animals." DEIR at 4.4-27. Numerous riparian plant communities have been observed on the project site. For instance, there are documented populations of elderberry scrub, mulefat scrub, southern willow scrub, river wash, freshwater marsh, alluvial scrub, great basin scrub, and scalebroom scrub. In addition, there are numerous special-status riparian plant species on-site such as the late-flowering mariposa lily, Los Angeles sunflower, southwestern spiny rush, Davidson's bush mallow, California Muhly, mud nama, spreading navaretia, Gambel's watercress and Sonoran maiden fern documented in the project area. DEIR at 4.4-33. In addition, there are numerous animal communities that inhabit the riparian corridor. Tables 4.4-5 and 4.4-6 of the DEIR outline the special-status wildlife species that were observed on-site or are likely to occur on-site. Many of these species inhabit the riparian zone such as the Lawrence's goldfinch, Northern harrier, Arroyo toad, Western spadefoot toad, and San Bernardino ringneck snake. There are also federally listed aquatic species present or that may be present at the project site or downstream.



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Dr. Philip Rundel stated in his written comments on the proposed Ahmanson Ranch Project that “[r]iparian ecosystems are keystone habitats in Southern California and play a critical role in a variety of ecosystem processes... these ecosystems act to buffer hydrologic and erosional cycles, control and regulate biogeochemical cycles of nitrogen and other key nutrients, limit fire movements, and create unique microclimates for animal species. Both terrestrial and aquatic wildlife depend on riparian ecosystems with their year-round availability of water, nutrients, food sources, and organic sediments ... It is not surprising, therefore, that riparian ecosystems are centers of high biodiversity.”<sup>2</sup> In addition, scientific evidence clearly demonstrates that buffer zones, or intact areas of natural vegetation, are crucial to the protection of water quality.<sup>3</sup>

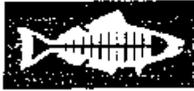
Although the DEIR claims that an appropriate riparian buffer is being included in the project design to protect these species, the impact analysis in Section 4.4 refutes this assertion. Table 4.4-8 shows the acreage of each plant community/land use that would be developed or temporarily disturbed. A large percentage of the riparian plant communities described above would be completely destroyed or severely impacted by the project. For example of the 6.93 acres of scalebroom scrub currently on-site, 4.27 acres will be permanently destroyed and 2.67 acres will be temporarily impacted. This means that the entire community will be impacted. If a riparian buffer is proposed, how is this riparian community completely impacted?

The DEIR acknowledges that the loss of habitat due to the project would be significant. “[...]he loss of wildlife habitat would adversely affect numerous common and special-status wildlife species, including the silvery legless lizard, rosy boa, San Bernardino ringneck snake, coast horned lizard, coast patch-nosed snake, northern harrier, white-tailed kite, southern rufous-crowned sparrow, Bell’s sage sparrow, western burrowing owl, San Diego desert woodrat, pallid bat, mountain lion, and San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit.” Further, the document states that this loss is “unavoidable.” DEIR at 4.4-59 and 60. This claim is completely unfounded, and the huge impact to wildlife species is unacceptable.

The developer has obviously not considered reasonable alternatives to lessen this impact such as increasing the riparian buffer, increasing the density of homes, and/or building fewer homes. If there is an appropriate riparian buffer, then the risk to these species - many of which are endangered or special-status - is greatly reduced. A minimum 500 foot buffer, as measured from the outside edge of the riparian canopy (not from the edge of the bank stabilization as proposed on page 4.4-61.), or a restriction to not build in the floodplain whichever is greater, should be required for this project due to its size and the nature of the River. This sizable buffer is

<sup>2</sup> Letter from Dr. Philip Rundel to Dennis Hawkins, dated April 26, 2002.

<sup>3</sup> See these references: “National Management Measures to Control Nonpoint Source Pollution from Urban Areas” (<http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/urbanmm/index.html>), last updated 8/8/2003); Herson-Jones et. al. 1995, cited in the aforementioned EPA document; Wenger, S. J. & Fowler, L. (2000) Protecting Stream and River Corridors. Creating Effective Local Riparian Buffer Ordinances. *Policy Notes*. Public Policy Research Series, Carl Vinson Institute of Governments, the University of Georgia. 1(1):1-2; Wegner, S. (1999) A Review of the Scientific Literature on Riparian Buffer Width, Extent and Vegetation. Office of Public Service & Outreach, Institute of Ecology, University of Georgia; Basnyal, P., Teeter, L. D., Flynn, K. M., & Graeme Lockaby, B. (1999). Relationships between Landscape Characteristics and Nonpoint Source Pollution Inputs to Coastal Estuaries. *Environmental Management* 23(4):539-549; and US EPA (2002) National Management Measures to Control Nonpoint Source Pollution From Urban Areas-Draft. Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds. Nonpoint Source Control Branch. Washington D.C.



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necessary for many reasons including that “[a] number of studies have found that even the more riparian-dependent wildlife species also require adjacent upland habitats...” and “[a]rroyo toads have been found in agricultural fields and occur within portions of the site outside of the proposed riparian setback zones.” DEIR at 4.4-60. In general, the purpose of the buffer is to protect the riparian areas from filling, devegetation and encroachment by human development. Grading, development, and BMPs should not be allowed in the buffer. Also, the fuel modification zone should not interfere with the buffer zone.

In addition, a mitigation ratio of 2:1 should be employed for disturbance to areas of riparian and oak habitat that can absolutely not be avoided. This ratio will ensure that in the long term, a 1:1 ratio will be established. Further, mitigation must occur on-site. The mitigation proposed is completely inadequate and should be dramatically increased.

**The DEIR should address downstream species impacts.**

The DEIR addresses species found in the immediate area of the project but fails to address potential impacts to those species located downstream such as steelhead and the red-legged frog. For example, Table 4.4-7 of the DEIR indicates that wildlife species such as the steelhead rainbow trout are “not expected on the Project Site.” However, the steelhead trout is a federally listed species that is present downstream and thus should be evaluated. The steelhead will likely be affected by the changing stream flows, temperatures, and sedimentation rates. Why did the Newhall Ranch developers apply for a 1998 Incidental Take Permit for steelhead and red legged frog if the developer did not think downstream impacts would occur? These species should be considered as well.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss any of these comments, please feel free to contact us at (310) 451-1500. Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Kirsten James  
Staff Scientist

Mark Abramson  
Stream Team Manager

REFERENCES ARE BEING MAILED



# Friends of the Santa Clara River

660 Randy Drive, Newbury Park, California 91320-3036 • (805) 498-4323

January 21, 2007

Mr. Daniel Fierros  
Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning  
Impact Analysis Section, Room 1348  
320 West Temple St.  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Board of Directors**

Rob Bottorff  
*Chair*  
Barbara Warnpole  
*Vice-Chair*  
Ginnee Bottorff  
*Secretary*

Re: Comments on Draft Environmental Impact Report - Newhall Ranch, Landmark Village (County Project No. 00-196)

Dear Mr. Fierros,

Friends of the Santa Clara River submits the following comments on the subject project.

**Affiliated Organizations**

California Native Plant Society  
LA/Santa Monica Mountains Chapter

Santa Clara Organization for Planning the Environment (SCOPE)

Sierra Club  
Los Angeles Chapter  
Los Padres Chapter

**Surfrider Foundation**

Accubon Society  
Ventura Chapter

Ventura County Environmental Coalition

Wishoyo Foundation

**Areas of Controversy to be Resolved**

At a minimum, there are several areas of controversy and issues to be resolved relative to the Newhall Ranch Project that neither the Specific Plan nor the DEIR sufficiently addresses. Most of these will be considered in the EIS/EIR now being prepared by the Army Corps of Engineers and California Department of Fish and Game (see comments below on EIS/EIR review). These issues need to be studied, understood, and mitigation defined for significant impacts prior to any approval of Landmark Village. Among these are:

- What is the long-term effect of stormwater runoff on the unarmored threespine stickleback and can this species survive continued floodplain alteration?
- What is the long-term effect of bank protection on the sediment dynamics of the river?
- What is the probability of success of riparian restoration and mitigation (see comments below on mitigation effectiveness)?
- Why can't alternative methods of bank protection be used and what is the justification for encroachment into the river floodplain when there are large areas of undeveloped uplands in the surrounding areas (see comments below on floodplain modifications and the need for larger buffer zones)?
- What are the cumulative impacts of multiple large development projects in the upper Santa Clara River, including Newhall Ranch and projects within the City of Santa Clara, on the biological resources of the river corridor?

### Water Quality

The DEIR comments on hydromodification (page 4.3-113) show once again that there is no real understanding of the cumulative potential for existing and future development along the Santa Clara River to cause detrimental hydromodification impacts. A larger, quantitative, regional study is needed. Until that study is complete and the impacts understood, we urge that no further projects, including Landmark Village and other Newhall Ranch Villages, be approved.

### Biota

Friends is submitting a separate comment letter on biota, prepared by David Magney Environmental Consulting.

We also refer to the remarks of Dr. Jonathon Baskin (Reference 4), a recognized expert on aquatic species and the unarmored threespine stickleback (UTS) in particular. Dr. Baskin clearly explains his concern that the Newhall Ranch project will “negatively affect, and perhaps eliminate, the unarmored threespine stickleback.”

Specifically, he states (Ref 4) “The sensitive biota of the river, including the UTS, arroyo toad, least Bell’s vireo, etc., requires a habitat that is produced by a meandering stream. Meandering streams have a variety of shallow, slow flow habitats, as well as areas of faster flow, and during flooding overbank habitat is formed. A well-developed riparian corridor is essential to the birds, but is also important to the fish because it provides a refugium during high flows and its ecotonal nature increases productivity of the aquatic habitat. The sensitive aquatic species require good water quality, water free of sediments and chemical pollutants. The project documents do not provide adequate evidence that these conditions will be maintained if the project is implemented.

“The installation of buried and other bank stabilization will destroy the riparian vegetation upon which some species (birds, insects and others) depend. Revegetation at best takes many years to produce the mature plant community that support these organisms, and recent studies show that revegetation efforts, even if they succeed in restoring some of the ecosystem structure, fail to restore ecosystem functions. One reason for this failure is that the root systems of willows, mule fat and other vegetation hold the soil in place, and these root systems take many years, perhaps hundreds of years, to develop. Even when the above ground vegetation is flattened or removed by floods, the roots resprout rapidly. The proposed bank stabilization will destroy this root system for many miles of riverbank area. Revegetation cannot replace it, and the soil will be much more vulnerable to erosion. This will, in turn, destroy the remaining vegetation and what ever had developed, and greatly increase sediment in the river. This sediment is particularly harmful to gravel spawning fishes such as the Santa Ana sucker, and the southern steelhead, which inhabit the river further downstream, and to the bottom nesting UTS. Sediment smothers the eggs and nests of the UTS. Additional downstream impacts of sediment and other water quality parameters are inadequately addressed. Furthermore revegetation, even if successful, will tend to become uniform if the dynamic nature of the

river is impaired. The diversity of organisms associated with the riparian is maintained by the dynamic nature of the stream, which periodically disrupts patches of riparian habitat so that the corridor is a mosaic of habitats in various stages of ecological succession. Disruption of the disturbance regime will significantly reduce the biodiversity, including sensitive species such as the least Bell's vireo."

### Adequacy of Mitigation

Recent studies have shown that wetlands mitigation is not working. A recent report (Reference 1: Ambrose, et.al., UCLA, August, 2006) studied 129 wetlands mitigation projects and found that "despite relatively high permit compliance, the vast majority of mitigation sites were not optimally functioning wetlands... In comparison to reference sites, only 19% of the mitigation files were classified as optimal, with just over half sub-optimal and approximately one-quarter marginal to poor." (Reference 1, page iii). Given the high reliance placed on wetlands mitigation to offset project impacts, we must conclude that wetlands loss, in general, is not being adequately mitigated in projects such as Landmark Village. Thus, we urge that a thorough review of project mitigation be carried out along with the establishment of sufficiently high mitigation ratios and adequate monitoring to ensure there is no net loss of wetlands in the project area.

### Need for Larger Buffer Zones

The Santa Clara is the last major natural river remaining in Southern California, a region has already lost all but 3-5% of its pre-settlement riparian woodlands. The Newhall Ranch Environmental Impact Report states: "The Santa Clara River is a regionally significant biological resource. Its value is derived from the inherent value of the riparian habitats and associated species, from its function as a regional wildlife corridor, and because it is a natural river for most of its course".

The river's riparian corridor can properly be considered an ecological reserve, as per its designation by Los Angeles County as SEA#23. Reference 2 ("*Buffer Zones for Ecological Reserves in California: Replacing Guesswork with Science*" by Kelly and Rotenberry) considers needed width, or buffer, for ecological reserves such as SEA 23. Here is a key quote from Reference 2 (page 87): "Buffer design needs to be regarded as a key component of any integrated management strategy for sensitive species". In designing buffers, the UC Riverside scientists consider what processes are operating at the reserve boundary and to what extent those external forces are likely to penetrate the boundary and result in negative effects. Several potential forces are listed, including: (1) introduction of alien predators (particularly domestic cats and dogs), (2) increased nighttime illumination, (3) trespass, including pedestrian, equestrian, and off-road vehicles, (4) introduction of wildlife competitors, (5) pollution, and (6) disease transmission from domestic animals to wildlife. The paper illustrates the problem with an example of a wildlife reserve in Orange County. This reserve, which is up to a *mile wide* in places, is discussed by the authors as likely having *no interior area* immune from certain edge effects such as far-ranging pets, *even at a mile in width*. This reserve is much wider than the buffer allowed between the river trail (top of buried bank protection)

and the riparian vegetated zone in Landmark Village, which varies from zero to about 300 feet. Moreover, the EIR does not reference any studies concerning urban edge effects on riparian species.

A study by Stanford's Department of Biological Studies (Reference 3: Rottenborn, Stephen C., "Predicting impacts of urbanization on riparian bird communities) shows that the placement of urban uses in the vicinity of riparian zones has substantial impacts on riparian bird communities *out to a distance of 1500 feet*. Landmark Village setbacks range from zero to about 300 feet and thus fail to buffer the sensitive riparian resources of the project area. The Stanford paper's concluding paragraph contains the following statement: *"The single most important step that can be taken to conserve riparian communities in the face of urbanization is to minimize development in and along floodplains by maintaining broad buffers of undeveloped land between developed areas and riparian habitats."*

#### **Floodplain modifications**

Landmark Village, as proposed, will result in a loss of over 85 acres of river floodplain. The Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board has recommended that Newhall Ranch avoid development in the floodplain and Friends agrees with that recommendation. The purpose of floodplains is to store floodwaters. Usurping the floodplain of a river can have serious immediate and long-term repercussions on the hydrology of the river and on channel morphology, both upstream and downstream (see comments above under Water Quality). Long-term impacts could include structural flood control measures of unknown magnitude which could be required in the future due to the cumulative effects of artificial reduction of the existing floodplain. The floodplain avoidance alternative would prevent these impacts and, if the project is eventually approved, this alternative or a lesser damaging environmental alternative, should be adopted. (See remarks above on hydromodification).

#### **Traffic/Access**

Friends will submit a separate comment letter on traffic impacts.

#### **New Alternatives Needed**

The proposed Landmark Village project includes construction of the Long Canyon bridge and an extensive section of buried bank protection downstream of the project for use in future phases of Newhall Ranch. These future phases will require separate EIRs and the extent to which they will be approved remains undetermined at this time. Both the bridge construction and the downstream section of bank stabilization will have significant impacts on riparian flora and fauna, and neither is actually needed for the great majority of the housing and commercial development within Landmark Village. A project alternative should therefore be developed that omits these parts of the project so that the impacts can be isolated and understood and a better determination made as to whether approval as part of the Landmark Village phase is warranted.

A second alternative should be developed which provides a minimum 500-foot buffer zone between the urban edge (top of the buried bank protection) and the riparian zone. Such an alternative would at least go part way towards reducing the urban edge effects discussed above under "Need for Larger Buffer Zones".

### **Cumulative Impacts**

The unprecedented growth in the Santa Clara River watershed over the last few decades has caused an array of cumulative impacts to flora and fauna of the River corridor. Encroachment by development into the River floodplain and terrace lands has resulted in habitat loss and fragmentation and will inevitably be followed by a decline in species and loss of biological diversity. These cumulative impacts are not adequately addressed the DEIR. In its 1998 "Biological Opinion for the Valencia Company's Clean Water Act Section 404 Authorization for Portions of the Santa Clara River, Los Angeles County, California", the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (p. 33) states that "The potential increase in urbanization could result in alterations to the Santa Clara River through increasing the pollutant load reaching the river through runoff, human activity in the river, and introduction of additional exotic predators, all of which could adversely affect the unarmored threespine stickleback, southwestern willow flycatcher, and least Bell's vireo." Almost ten years later, the truth of this statement is evident as numbers of massive projects continue to impact the river. The DEIR must completely reexamine cumulative impacts of Santa Clara watershed projects and evaluate the effectiveness of mitigation for these impacts (see comments above under Water Quality).

### **EIS/EIR Review Document**

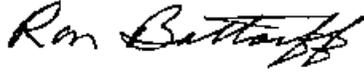
We note with some puzzlement that the Landmark Village approval process is proceeding in advance of a major environmental review document that will impact the entire Newhall Ranch project. We refer to the EIS/EIR now being prepared by the California Department of Fish and Game and the Army Corps of Engineers that will govern the needed 1603 Stream Alteration Agreement and Corps 404 permit. This document, along with its associated public hearings and a finalizing process, could affect large sections of the project over which these two agencies have jurisdiction and could well result in major alterations. We therefore submit that project approval by Los Angeles County Regional Planning should be delayed until after such changes have been clarified and any associated alternatives evaluated. Sequencing project-level review after completion of the EIS/EIR could avoid needless staff time and expense if substantial changes are required in the project.

### **Conclusion**

No approval for Landmark Village should be forthcoming until the DEIR is revised to account for the impacts discussed above. Cumulative impacts, in particular must be analyzed, understood and mitigated. If approval is granted, Friends recommends that the floodplain avoidance alternative, or an alternative less biologically damaging, be adopted.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,



Ron Bottorff, Chair

References

1. Ambrose, R. F. et. al. *An Evaluation of Compensatory Mitigation Projects Permitted Under the Clean Water Act Section 401 by the Los Angeles Regional Quality Control Board, 1991-2002*. Department of Environmental Health Sciences, University of California, Los Angeles, December 2004.
2. Kelly, Patrick J. and Rotenberry, John T., *Buffer Zones for Ecological Reserves in California: Replacing Guesswork with Science*, in "Interface Between Ecology and Land Development in California". Southern California Academy of Sciences Symposium Proceedings: 1993.
3. Rottenborn, Stephen C., *Predicting the impacts of urbanization on riparian bird communities*. In *Biological Conservation*, v. 88, n.3, June, 1999, pages 289-299.
4. Personal email communication, Jonathan Baskin, Ph.D. to Ron Bottorff, February 28, 2003.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY  
**county of ventura**

Planning Division

Kim Rodriguez  
Director

January 19, 2007

Daniel Fierros  
Department of Regional Planning  
Los Angeles County  
320 W. Temple St.  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

FAX #: 213.626.0434

Subject: Newhall Ranch Landmark Village Project (phase of total specific plan), County  
Project No. 00-196

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the subject document.  
Attached are the comments that we have received resulting from intra-county review of  
the subject document.

Your proposed responses to these comments should be sent directly to the commenter,  
with a copy to Chuck Anthony, Ventura County Planning Division, L#1740, 800 S.  
Victoria Avenue, Ventura, CA 93009.

If you have any questions regarding any of the comments, please contact the  
appropriate respondent. Overall questions may be directed to Chuck Anthony at  
(805) 654-3683.

Sincerely,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kim Rodriguez  
County Planning Director

G:\Planning Division\Outside Environmental Documents\Response Letters\06-060 LA County Response Cover Letter

Attachment

County RMA Reference Number 06-060

800 South Victoria Avenue, L #1740, Ventura, CA 93009-1740  
2509

(805) 654-2481 FAX (805) 654-



The applicant shall contribute a project pro rata share for the following improvements at the intersection of SR 126 with Center Street and Main Street:

1. Improvements at SR 126 and Main Street as identified in the Piru Area Plan EIR for signal modifications with new signal phasing, mast arms, signal heads, westbound right-turn lane, eastbound left-turn lane, and lengthening the southbound left-turn lane at an estimated cost of \$395,000. The project share at 9% (Page 4.7-92 reference 13) will amount to \$35,550.
2. Improvements at SR 126 and Main Street as identified in the Piru Area Plan EIR for pedestrian crosswalk, pedestrian signal heads and pushbuttons, and wheelchair ramps at an estimated cost of \$150,000. The project share at 9% will amount to \$13,500.
3. Improvements at SR 126 and Center Street as identified in the subject EIR and the Piru Area Plan EIR for the construction of westbound right-turn deceleration lane on SR 126 is estimated at \$100,000. The project share at 9% will amount to \$9,000.
4. Improvements at SR 126 and Center Street as identified in the Piru Area Plan EIR to construct a raised channelizer island at an estimated cost of \$50,000. The project share at 9% will amount to \$4,500.

The project pro rata shares to mitigate the impacts on SR 126 corridor will amount to \$62,550. Prior to the issuance of the first building permit within the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan, the applicant shall enter into an agreement with the County of Ventura to deposit \$62,550 in a Trust Fund towards these improvements.

In addition, prior to the issuance of the first building permit within the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan, the applicant shall post bond their pro rata share towards the cost of design and construction of a Traffic Signal at the intersection of SR 126 and Center Street. The estimated cost of construction of a Traffic Signal projected to 15 years is estimated to be \$600,000. The Traffic Signal will be constructed when the intersection meets warrant. If the Traffic Signal does not meet warrant at the end buildout of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan, the deposit will be returned to the applicant.

The cumulative impacts that result from the incremental impact of traffic generated by this project, when added to other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable probable future projects, may be individually minor, but collectively significant over a period of time. The EIR should be revised to address the cumulative impact of this project on County local roads and the Regional Road Network. To mitigate the cumulative impact of traffic, the EIR should include a condition for payment of the Traffic Impact Mitigation Fee (TIMF). The fee is due prior to the issuance of the first building permit for the project.

Based on the fee schedule established in accordance with County Ordinance Code 8601-0 et seq. for the Piru area and the information provided in the DEIR, the TIMF due to the County is:

$$1000 \text{ ADT} * \times \$14.99/\text{ADT} = \underline{\$14,990}$$

\* Newhall Ranch Traffic Analysis estimated that the Specific Plan would contribute 1000 ADT in the Piru area.

The above estimated fee may be subject to adjustment at the time of deposit, due to provisions in the Traffic Impact Mitigation Ordinance allowing the fee to be adjusted for inflation based on the Engineering News Record (ENR) construction cost index. The above is an estimate only based on information provided in the draft environmental document. If the project cumulative impacts are not mitigated by payment of a traffic mitigation fee, current General Plan policy will require County opposition to this project.

Our review is limited to the impacts this project may have on Ventura County's Regional Road Network.

Please call me at 654-2080 if you have questions.

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Ventura County  
**Watershed Protection District**  
Groundwater Section

**MEMORANDUM**

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**DATE:** January 18, 2007

**TO:** Carl Morehouse, RMA - Planning Division

**FROM:** Theresa Stevens, WPD - Water & Environmental Resources Division

**CC:** Paul Callaway, WPD - Planning & Regulatory Division

**SUBJECT:** RMA 06-060, Draft EIR - Newhall Ranch Landmark Village

**Project Description**

The project consists of 418 lots to include a maximum of 1,444 residential units, a maximum of 1,353,000 square feet of non-residential mixed-used space, an elementary school, a community park, a fire station, three private recreational facilities, open space and river trail uses. The project proposes to develop the 292.6-acre Landmark Village tract map site located within the boundary of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan in western Los Angeles County, north of the Santa Clara River, South and north of Highway 128, east of the Ventura County line and west of Interstate 5. The current land uses of the site are agricultural operations.

Additional off-site project-related components on 750.9-acres of land include the following.

A cut and fill grading operation, which includes fill imported to the tract map site from a 215-acre borrow site (Adobe Canyon borrow site), grading to accommodate roadway improvements to SR-126, and debris basins for stormwater flows collected by the tract map's storm drainage system on approximately 120-acres of land, located directly north of SR-126 within Chiquito Canyon (Chiquito Canyon grading site);

A 225.5-acre utility corridor, which would run parallel to SR-126, from the western boundary of the tract map site to the approved Newhall Ranch Wastewater Reclamation Plant (WRP) near the Los Angeles County/Ventura County line, from the eastern boundary of the tract map site to the Old Road/Interstate 5 (I-5), and then south to the existing Valencia WRP, which would extend municipal services to and from the tract map site.

Several portable water tanks, reclaimed water tanks, construction of the Long Canyon Road Bridge, bank stabilization and storm drainage improvements.

**Comments**

**Section 4.3 Water Quality**

Page 4.3-19 indicates "... Compliance with SUSMP requirements is used as one method to evaluate the significance of project development impacts". This statement is followed by a series of Best Management Practices (BMPs). The BMPs appear to be suggested options rather than requirements in the way they are written. For example, several of the BMPs indicate the applicant "must" or "needs" to implement a particular BMP rather than stating the applicant "shall" implement a BMP. Please revise the EIR to reflect that BMPs are required mitigation measures for water quality impacts.

## Project Review – RMA 06-060

Page 4.3-20 indicates that the 0.2 inch per hour intensity rainfall was used to calculate runoff and therefore designs for flow-based BMPs. Please clarify in the EIR the duration of this intensity of rainfall.

The hourly rainfall intensity for LA County was also used as the standard for calculating runoff. We recommend recalculation using the hourly rainfall intensity for the Santa Clara River watershed, and not just LA County or the LA County portion of this watershed.

Page 4.3-20 discusses hydro-modification. The EIR discusses protection of the Santa Clara River. Please revise the EIR and mitigation measures to require the applicant to detain all runoff generated by the development on site to pre-project conditions in order to protect the Santa Clara River and all tributaries thereto.

Page 4.3-29. Why does the flow date included in the analysis stop with 1969? Please revise the EIR to address this question.

Page 4.3-30(b) indicates there will be no discharge to tributaries in the post-development condition. If there will be no future discharge to these tributaries, this is permanent and potentially adverse change in their hydrologic condition and aquatic habitats. Please revise the EIR to address these impacts and include additional mitigation measures if impacts are determined to be potentially significant.

Page 4.-3-50. The EIR indicates that "...Project related improvements to borrow sites would not result in introduction of impervious surfaces or any changes in drainage or hydrology characteristics..." and that "...all water quality impacts will be limited to the construction phase". The mass grading associated with this project will result in sedimentation downstream of the graded area. While the EIR concludes that impacts would be limited to the construction phase, this conclusion is not supported in the EIR. Please revise the EIR and explain how graded areas will be stabilized and the timing of such stabilization work. Additional measures to stabilize the site should be added to the EIR as required mitigation measures.

Pages 4.3-56 and 4.3-57 describe several previously adopted hydro-modification control measures. The document also indicates that bank stabilization in the form of buried soil cement is proposed. This is hydro-modification and appears to be inconsistent with the adopted hydro-modification adopted measures described in the EIR and existing policy. Please revise the EIR and explain how a buried soil cement levee is consistent with adopted measures and the Los Angeles Regional Board's Hydro-modification policy (adopted on January 27, 2005).

The references to the length of the buried soil cement are not clear. The EIR identifies variously 18,600 linear feet and 17,400 linear feet "...plus additional...". Please revise the EIR to clearly explain the entire extent (length) of buried soil cement.

Please revise the EIR and explain the hydraulic effects of the Turf Reinforcement Mat. Is it hydraulically equivalent to rock slope protection of buried soil cement?

Table 4.3-12. Please revise the EIR so that "will" statements should be revised to "shall" to make these conditions required and enforceable.

Page 4.3-102. Will the buried soil cement be covered with soil and planted? What is the temporary impact footprint for constructing this bank stabilization? Will the temporary impacts extend into the river beyond the permanent impact footprint? If so, how far? Please revise the EIR to answer these questions. Further, if the buried soil cement will be maintained by the Los Angeles County Public Works Department and/or re-planted by the applicant after high flows erode the soil and plants away, please revise the EIR and describe how cumulative impacts on the river as a result of such maintenance and/or re-planting will be avoided, minimized, and mitigated over the long term.

## Project Review – RMA 08-060

What other phases of the project and the larger Newhall land development include hydro-modification in the form of bank stabilization? Please revise the EIR and explain potential future hydro-modification in the cumulative impact analysis. Please add additional mitigation measures to address potentially significant future impacts associated with additional bank stabilization.

The statement that "...reset events buffer imperviousness..." oversimplifies the broader issue of the impact of urban development and increased impervious surfaces on water quality, biological resources, aesthetics, and sediment transport processes. What evidence is there to support this conclusion? Please revise the EIR to provide an example and a meaningful discussion of the cumulative impact of this development on the Santa Clara River and its tributaries so that the public and decisionmakers can make an informed decision on the project.





Ventura County  
**Watershed Protection District**  
Groundwater Section

**MEMORANDUM**

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**DATE:** January 17, 2007  
**TO:** Chuck Anthony, RMA - Planning Division  
**FROM:** David Panaro, WPD - Groundwater Section  
**SUBJECT:** RMA 06-060, Draft EIR - Newhall Ranch Landmark Village

**Project Description**

The project consists of 418 lots to include a maximum of 1,444 residential units, a maximum of 1,353,000 square feet of non-residential mixed-used space, an elementary school, a community park, a fire station, three private recreational facilities, open space and river trail uses. The project proposes to develop the 292.6-acre Landmark Village tract map site located within the boundary of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan in western Los Angeles County, north of the Santa Clara River, south and north of Highway 126, east of the Ventura County line and west of Interstate 5. The current land uses of the site are agricultural operations.

Additional off-site project-related components on 750.9-acres of land include the following:

A cut and fill grading operation, which includes fill imported to the tract map site from a 215-acre borrow site (Adobe Canyon borrow site), grading to accommodate roadway improvements to SR-126, and debris basins for stormwater flows collected by the tract map's storm drainage system on approximately 120-acres of land, located directly north of SR-126 within Chiquito Canyon (Chiquito Canyon grading site);

225.5-acre utility corridor, which would run parallel to SR-126, from the western boundary of the tract map site to the approved Newhall Ranch Wastewater Reclamation Plant (WRP) near the Los Angeles County/Ventura County line, from the eastern boundary of the tract map site to the Old Road/Interstate 5 (I-5), and then south to the existing Valencia WRP, which would extend municipal services to and from the tract map site;

Water tanks or storage reservoirs for potable and reclaimed water, construction of the Long Canyon Road Bridge, bank stabilization and storm drainage improvements are included in proposed plans.

**Comments**

The Landmark Village Draft EIR Section 4.3 - Water Quality states that cumulative impacts on groundwater quality from the proposed project and future urban development in the Santa Clara Watershed are addressed through compliance with the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Permit and Standard Urban Stormwater Mitigation Plan requirements, Construction General Permit requirements, General Dewatering Permit requirements, and benchmark Basin Plan groundwater quality objectives, which are intended to be protective of beneficial uses of the groundwater. Project compliance with the requirements designed to protect beneficial uses, cumulative groundwater quality impacts are mitigated to a level that is less than significant.

## Project Review – RMA 06-060

The groundwater recharge discussion contained within the water quality section of the DEIR summarizes that urbanization has been accompanied by long-term stability in pumping and groundwater levels, plus the addition of State Water Project water to the Santa Clara River Valley. Together these factors have not reduced recharge to groundwater and not depleted the amount of groundwater that is in storage within the valley. Based on additional information provided within the groundwater recharge discussion, the cumulative impact on groundwater recharge is considered less than significant.

The Landmark Village Draft EIR Section 4.10 – Water Service reports no additional mitigation measures beyond those identified in the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan Program EIR are required or necessary, because the Landmark Village project does not result in any significant water-related impacts after implementation of the mitigation measures. The Landmark Village Draft EIR volumes on water supply assessment regarding groundwater management plans, state water project deliverability reports, etc. is an adequate review and a through account of water service for the proposed project.

The Landmark Village Draft EIR Section 4.11 – Wastewater Disposal mitigation measures requires that the project applicant implement the applicable mitigation measures from the Adopted Newhall Ranch Specific Plan as they relate to the Landmark Village project. Mitigation Measure Nos. 4.12-1 through 4.12.7 were adopted by Los Angeles County in connection with its approval of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan. These applicable mitigation measures will be implemented, or have been implemented already, to mitigate the potentially significant wastewater disposal impacts associated with the proposed project.

Additional phases of this project will be examined at appropriate intervals.

DP:gl

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Office of  
**AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER**

P.O. Box 889, Santa Paula, CA 93061  
815 East Santa Barbara Street  
Telephone: (805) 933-3165  
(805) 647-5931  
FAX: (805) 525-8922

**Agricultural Commissioner**  
W. Earl McPhail

**Chief Deputy**  
David Buettner

January 12, 2007

Daniel Fierros  
Los Angeles County  
Department of Regional Planning  
320 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Subject:** Newhall Ranch, Landmark Village Project (RMA Ref # 06-060)

Dear Mr. Fierros:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Initial Study and Draft EIR for the above project. The comment deadline is January 18, 2007.

The project description (abbreviated) is: Develop the 292.6-acre Landmark Village tract map site, located in the first phase of the Riverwood Village within the boundary of the approved Newhall Ranch Specific Plan. Construction includes 1,444 residential dwellings, up to 1,033,000 sq ft of mixed-use/commercial uses, a 9-acre elementary school, a 16-acre Community park, a fire station, public and private recreational facilities, trails, and road improvements, as well as related off-site support activities and construction, including construction of the Long Canyon Road Bridge, bank stabilization and storm drainage improvements.

With respect to the conversion of farmland, no part of the project is within Ventura County; and therefore, the Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner's Office has no comment on this topic.

With respect to conflicts with existing zoning for agriculture within Ventura County, the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan abuts farmland within Ventura County. However, no part of the Landmark Village tract map site (residential, school, or commercial uses) is within the development setback from the Los Angeles County/Ventura County line that was approved in the specific plan EIR. Storm drainage improvements for Landmark Village (debris basins) along the Santa Clara River appear to be within close proximity to Ventura County, but as they are considered non-human-intensive uses, they do not require extended setbacks from Ventura County farmland.

With respect to other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or

David Fierros, Los Angeles County, Regional Planning [RMA Ref # 06-060]  
January 12, 2007  
Page 2

nature, could result in the conversion of farmland downstream or downwind in Ventura County, the Ventura County Initial Study Assessment Guidelines (2000 Ed.), ("Initial Study Guidelines") state that any use that will decrease the quality of ground water available for agriculture to a level greater than 1200 mg/L total dissolved solids (TDS) is considered to have a significant impact. Any use that will cause a net decrease in the availability of water for agriculture is considered to have a significant project and cumulative impact. This includes uses that may increase the net utilization of ground water in an over drafted basin or in a basin in hydrologic continuity with a basin in over draft.

Further, the Initial Study Guidelines also provide that any project that will cause a 10 percent or greater increase in dust on agricultural parcels in Ventura County is considered to have a significant impact. The temporary construction of drainage improvements within one-half mile of farmland in Ventura County is likely to cause an increase in dust of over 10 percent, unless disturbed areas are watered and construction is halted during periods of high winds.

If you have any questions about these comments, please contact me at the telephone number or email address below.

Thank you.



Rita Graham  
Agricultural Land Use Planner  
(805) 933-8415  
[rita.graham@ventura.org](mailto:rita.graham@ventura.org)

cc: Chuck Anthony, Ventura County Planning Division

[TO BE RETYPED ON DISTRICT LETTERHEAD]

By Facsimile and First-Class Mail

January 22, 2007

Mr. Daniel Fierros  
Department of Regional Planning  
Room 1346  
320 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Re: County Project No. 00-196-(5)  
Vesting Tentative Tract Map. No. 53108  
General, Local and Specific Plan Amendment Case Nos. 00-196-(5)

Dear Mr. Fierros:

This letter constitutes the Castaic Union School District's ("School District") comments to the Draft Environmental Impact Report associated with the above-referenced project. The School District appreciates the opportunity to comment upon this matter.

### **THE PROJECT**

In 1997, the Newhall Land and Farming Company ("NLF") was the owner of land within the County, and partially within the School District's boundaries, that NLF proposed for development into a new community known as Newhall Ranch. The entire developed was proposed to include approximately 24,000 residential units as well as commercial and industrial facilities. Total build out of the development was anticipated over 30 years.

The portion of the Newhall Ranch development that is within the School District's boundaries was known as Riverwood, consisting of approximately 2,333 acres. NLF's development plans for Riverwood include 2,338 single family and 1,686 multi-family dwelling units. Riverwood is further divided into several project areas, including, but not limited to, Landmark Village. The Landmark Village project area consists of 292.2 acres that NLF proposes to develop into 1,444 residential units (308 single family and 1,136 multi-family) with an anticipated residential population of 3,684. The Landmark Village project area also contemplates the inclusion of 1,033,000 square feet of commercial/mixed use space, a 9-acre elementary school site, a 16-acre community park, three private recreational facilities, open space and river trails, and supporting roadway, drainage and infrastructure improvements.

By the above-referenced application, NLF is seeking approval of the Landmark Village portion ("the Project") of the Riverwood development. The proposed 9-acre school site is included among the lots for which NLF seeks approval within the Landmark Village Vesting Tentative Tract Map. No. 53108.

## **THE 1997 FUNDING AGREEMENT**

The School District and NLF entered into a "School Facilities Funding Agreement" dated November 20, 1997 ("Funding Agreement"). The intent of the parties was to reach agreement as to the manner in which the Newhall Ranch project's impact on the School District would be mitigated. In relevant summary, the Funding Agreement provides:

- NLF will provide a school site appropriate for an elementary (K-5) school designed to house 837 students on traditional single, track, 9 month schedule.
- The school site will be 10 acres, or 7 acres with a 5 acre adjoining park.
- The school site is subject to consent of the District and the California Department of Education ("CDE").
- The School District will construct the school on the school site in compliance with State requirements and specifications, including the then current State School Building Lease-Purchase Program Applicant Handbook.
- NLF will advance funds to the School District for construction of the school in response to District draw requests.
- NLF's per student contribution to construction costs will be ½ of the total costs per student. If state funds are not available for the construction, then NLF will be responsible for the full costs per student.
- NLF will provide funding to the School District to lease emergency relocatable classrooms to house up to 420 students generated by Riverwood until the completion of the school.
- If Riverwood generates more than 1,260 K-5 students, then NLF will provide another elementary school site.

There have been no significant amendments or modifications to the terms of the Funding Agreement since its original execution.

## **SUMMARY OF DRAFT EIR AND SCHOOL DISTRICT IMPACTS**

NLF submitted the draft EIR presently under consideration in November 2006. The Draft EIR provides that the Project would generate 336 new elementary, 93 middle and 161 high school students at complete build out. (Draft EIR, 4.15.1.) With regard to mitigating the impact of the students generated by the Project, the draft EIR states:

On November 20, 1997, the Castaic District entered into a school facilities/funding agreement with Newhall to ensure that development within the Riverwood Village of the Specific Plan, either individually or cumulatively with other projects within District's boundaries, would have no adverse impacts on the District's ability to provide adequate educational opportunities to every student in the District. In particular, the Financing Schedule and Financing Plan contained in the agreement guarantees to the Castaic District that there will be adequate school facilities available to house every student within the Specific Plan's Riverwood Village. The agreement states that the funds and land to be provided to the Castaic District by Newhall constitute the entire extent of Newhall's obligation to provide school facilities for the Specific Plan's Riverwood Village. (Draft EIR, 4.15-5.)

The draft EIR then restates the terms of the Funding Agreement with regard to the school site size and construction requirements. For example, the draft EIR provides that the school will be designed for a capacity of 837 students, based on traditional, single track, nine-month schedule school program. It states that the school will be constructed in accordance with the requirements of the specifications contained in the Education Code and the Applicant Handbook for State School Building Lease-Purchase Program as they exist at the time of construction.

The draft EIR acknowledges that the Project's "cumulative impacts on the School District would be significant" but concludes that "compliance with the funding agreement would reduce the cumulative impacts to below a level of significance."

## **AREAS OF CONCERN**

The School District has three (3) areas of concern with regard to the draft EIR and proposed mitigation measures outlined in the EIR and the Funding Agreement: (1) the size of the proposed school site; (2) the location of the proposed school site; and (3) the measures available to address interim student housing needs pending completion of the proposed elementary school.

### **1. Site Size.**

As outlined above, the Funding Agreement contemplates NLF providing a 10-acre site or, in the alternative, a 7-acre site with an adjoining 5-acre park. The Funding Agreement, however, also provides that the school site shall meet Education Code requirements and be subject to School District and California Department of Education approval.

With regard to the size of a traditional track, K-5 elementary school designed to house 750 students, the current proposed site is below the California Department of Education recommended minimum acreage. The District and NLF are in discussions to determine what measures, including any modification of the Funding Agreement, are necessary to obtain CDE site approval.

## **2. Site Location**

The current proposed school site is abutted by California Highway route 126 to the north. California Code of Regulations, Title 5, section 14010(e) states, "The site shall not be adjacent to a road or freeway that any site-related traffic and sound level studies have determined will have safety problems or sound levels which adversely affect the educational program."

In addition to noise concerns, the site's proximity to Highway 126 raises potentially significant hazardous materials, air quality and other student safety issues. For example, in 2003, subsequent to the execution of the Funding Agreement, the Legislature required school districts to consider and evaluate the impact of freeways and other busy traffic corridors within one-fourth of a mile of a proposed school site that "might reasonably be anticipated to emit hazardous air emissions, or to handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances or waste." (See Education Code section 17213.)

The current proposed school site is well within one-fourth of a mile of the Highway 126. Moreover, the growth and expansion of the entire valley area and the cumulative impact of that expansion on the traffic flows along Highway 126 may impact the mitigation measures required to make the site suitable for school purposes.

## **3. Interim Student Housing**

The Funding Agreement contemplates that construction of the new elementary school will not begin until the Riverwood project has reached a certain level of development. Specifically, the Funding Agreement states, "District shall provide NLF with written notice ("District Notice") for the New Elementary School when District reasonably determines that at least 420 Riverwood Students are estimated to exist within the next 30 months of the District Notice and that the New Elementary School is reasonably required to house Riverwood Students." NLF would then begin to provide construction funds in response to draw applications from the School District.

Until the completion of the new elementary school, the Funding Agreement provides for NLF to fund the lease of emergency relocatable buildings to house up to 420 Riverwood students. In addition to this relocatable building option, the School District contemplated using excess capacity in other School District schools to house such students. One of the alternative schools the School District contemplating using was scheduled for completion in 2007. However, the School District's facilities needs and plans have changed, and as a result, the School District no longer has plans to construct the alternative school. As a result, the School District is still exploring options for interim housing for Riverwood students consistent with School District facility, class size, and transportation targets and procedures.

Finally, the School District notes that the California Department of Education has performed a preliminary evaluation of the current proposed site. The evaluation noted the size and location concerns discussed above. The report concluded that the School

District could proceed with further evaluation of the site. However, the report was inconclusive as to whether the site would receive CDE approval and as to exactly what mitigation measures may need to be taken to make the site suitable.

## **CONCLUSION**

The School District believes that the Funding Agreement is a positive and substantial step in the joint effort with NLF to mitigate the Project's impacts on the School District. It provides a workable framework for the School District and NLF to move forward. However, as discussed above, several issues remain with regard to the practical implementation of the Funding Agreement to ensure the Project's impacts are adequately and appropriately addressed.

The School District looks forward to continuing its positive partnership with NLF to resolve these remaining issues. Nevertheless, the School District believes there is important work still to be done in this regard.

The School District once again thanks the County for the opportunity to comment upon this matter and hopes that these comments are helpful in the County's evaluation of the Project.

If you should have any questions regarding these comments or desire further information from the School District, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Jaime Garcia

cc: Glenn Adamick, The Newhall Land and Farming Company  
bc: Trevin E. Sims

s0066559



PM 02 10/2 M

Attention:		From:	
DANIEL FIERROS		CHERYL POWELL	
Unit / Company:		Name of Sender:	
LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPT. OF REGIONAL PLANNING		ELMER ALVAREZ	
District / City:		Date:	Total Pages (including cover sheet):
		1-22-07	4
		FAX # (include area code):	ATSS FAX:
		Phone # (& area code):	ATSS:
		(213) 897-3747	*
Phone # (& area code):	FAX # (include area code):	ORIGINAL DISPOSITION: <input type="checkbox"/> DESTROY <input type="checkbox"/> RETURN <input type="checkbox"/> CALL FOR PICK-UP	
(213) 974-6411	(213) 979-0434		
Comment:			

626  
The original letter will arrive via regular mail.



**Feasibility Study Report**

A Feasibility Study Report was prepared by the project's consultant with Caltrans oversight to determine future roadway improvements on State Route 126. The Feasibility Study includes the following recommendations for improvements to SR-126:

- Widening of SR-126 to four-lanes in each direction from Commerce Center Drive to Long Canyon Road.
- New at-grade, signalized intersection at Walcott Way
- New at-grade, signalized intersection at Long Canyon Road/Chiquito Canyon Road

We note that at buildout of Phase Three (3) of Landmark Village (2010), a third through lane would be required at the Walcott Way and Long Canyon Road intersections. Although the Feasibility Study Report references the widening of SR-126, the Draft EIR does not mention the SR-126 widening. The EIR needs to explicitly state that the project (Newhall Ranch Specific Plan) applicant will fund widening of SR-126 from I-5 to Long Canyon Road.

**Transportation/Traffic Mitigation Plan**

We recommend that Transportation/Traffic Mitigation Plan be prepared detailing all project related mitigation measures for all phases of the project, including improvements to SR-126 and to Interstate 5. It needs to state that the applicant (Newhall Land and Farm) will be responsible for fully funding traffic mitigation to SR-126 including the widening of mainline through lanes, timely with development. We acknowledge that the applicant may seek other sources of funding. Section SP 4.8-7 of the document states: "Construction or funding of any required facilities shall not preclude the applicant's ability to seek state, federal, or local funding for these facilities." However, if the project's efforts to secure state, federal or local funding are unsuccessful, the developer is still responsible to fund the improvements. The mitigation plan needs to be consistent with the feasibility study report, and link improvements identified in the feasibility study report with future subdivision maps or phases of Newhall Ranch Specific Plan. The Transportation/Mitigation Plan needs to describe the "triggers" for initiation of specific mitigation measures, tied to both the project phases and the number of units built.

**Reserving Right-of-Way**

We acknowledge the statement on page 4.7-22, that the development project would construct temporary intersections with SR-126, which would be consistent with the project's planned potential future grade-separated crossings for Long Canyon Road and Walcott Way. We recommend that enough right-of-way be reserved for potential future grade-separated interchanges. The final design for both new access intersections will be determined by a Project Initiation Report that includes an alternative analysis. The pending decision to change highway designation from conventional highway to expressway may also influence the final intersection design and the number of access points as well.

**Captured Vehicle Trips**

As stated in our previous comment letter, we request for further clarification as to the assumption of unusually high percentage of captured vehicle trips, 30%. It is conceivable that higher captured trips could be achieved in multi-use development, when it includes affordable housing and retail uses. We remind you that school and office uses will also attract vehicle trips from outside the development as well.

**Interstate-5**

Regarding transportation impacts to Interstate-5, the traffic/access report does not indicate significant impacts as a result of the buildout of Landmark Village. However, through mitigation measures LV-4.7-21 (as shown in the document), the project applicant has committed to participate in capacity augmentation improvements on a fair-share basis for Interstate 5.

**Contingency Mitigation Plan**

The 2030 cumulative impact analysis for Interstate-5 shown on Table 4.7-30 assumes the addition of a High Occupancy Lane (HOV) in area. It is true that over the years various studies have recommended the addition of HOV lanes, and truck lanes in the area; however, its construction and completion prior to the buildout of Newhall Ranch is not certain. If capacity augmentation improvements such as HOV lanes, truck lanes, or mixed-flow lanes are not built prior to buildout of Newhall Ranch, significant transportation impacts would occur as a result. We request that alternate traffic mitigation measures and/or a contingency plan based on a no-HOV/truck lanes scenario by 2030 be prepared.

**Enhanced Transit Usage & Other Smart-Growth Strategies**

We encourage the implementation of Smart-Growth Strategies such as: bikeways, pedestrian walkways, enhanced transit usage, and increased Jobs/Housing Balance.

The document describes the following transit related mitigation measures:

- Landmark Village reserves 8 acres of land in a 35-foot wide strip along the south side of State Route-126 as a future rail corridor right of way.
- Construction of Park-and-Ride lot.
- Community design will include bus stop areas for future public bus services.

In the spirit of partnership, we look forward to continuing to work closely with the County and the project applicant regarding the transportation-related aspects of the project. If you have any questions regarding our comments and recommendations, you may call me at (213) 897-3747 or Elmer Alvarez, the IGR Coordinator, at (213) 897-6696, and refer to record number 060133/EA.

Sincerely,



CHERYL J. POWELL  
IGR/CEQA Program Manager  
Caltrans, District 7

cc: Scott Morgan, State Clearinghouse  
Barry Witler, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works



# California Regional Water Quality Control Board

## Los Angeles Region



Linda S. Adams  
Cal/EPA Secretary

320 W. 4th Street, Suite 200, Los Angeles, California 90013  
Phone (213) 576-6600 FAX (213) 576-6640 - Internet Address: <http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/losangeles>

Arnold Schwarzenegger  
Governor

January 22, 2007

Post-It™ brand fax transmittal memo 7671		# of pages ▶ 3
To Daniel Fierros	From Sam Unger	
Co. LAC DRP	Co. LARWQCB	
Dept.	Phone # 213-576-6622	
Fax # 626-0434	Fax #	

Mr. Daniel Fierros  
County of Los Angeles  
Department of Regional Planning  
Impact Analysis Section, Room 1348  
320 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA, 90012

**COMMENTS ON DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE  
LANDMARK VILLAGE PROJECT, COUNTY PROJECT NO. 00-196, SCH NO.  
2004021002**

Dear Mr. Fierros:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Landmark Village project.

The Landmark Village project site is located in unincorporated Los Angeles County, within the Santa Clarita Valley, and within the Santa Clara River watershed. The Landmark Village project site lies within the jurisdiction of the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board). The Regional Board is charged with protecting the surface and groundwater quality in the Santa Clara River watershed. Please address the following comments on the water quality section (Chapter 4.3) of the DEIR:

- The DEIR discusses the environmental impacts of urban runoff from the Landmark Village project site; however the impacts of wastewater (from the quality and quantity perspective), generated by residential and commercial uses, were not addressed. Reach 5 of the Santa Clara River is listed on the 2002 Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 303(d) List for chloride, coliform, and nitrate-nitrogen plus nitrite-nitrogen, and is on the proposed 2006 CWA Section 303(d) List for chloride and coliform. Wastewater discharges from the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts' Saugus and Valencia Water Reclamation Plants have been identified as the primary source of chloride in the Santa Clara River by the Upper Santa Clara River (USCR) Chloride TMDL. Similarly, wastewater generated from the Landmark Village project site may have a potentially significant impact on the Santa Clara River if the treated wastewater is discharged to the USCR. Regional Board staff believes that the impacts of wastewater discharges, generated by the Landmark Village project, to the upper Santa Clara

*California Environmental Protection Agency*

Recycled Paper

Daniel Fierros

- 2 -

January 22, 2007

River should be addressed by the DEIR. If the impacts of wastewater have been discussed in other documents, the DEIR should reference those documents.

- The DEIR should include a detailed impact analysis of urban pesticides. The DEIR presents very limited pesticide monitoring data. The current Landmark Village project site is largely open space with limited agricultural use and thereby limited pesticide applications. Urban pesticide applications that would be expected as part of the proposed project are likely to have greater pesticide applications at the site than current practice. Detailed information on pesticides monitoring and impact analysis is necessary to quantify the impacts of pesticides application.
- The potential impacts of actively used urban pesticides is not sufficiently discussed in the DEIR. The DEIR discusses mainly on chlorpyrifos and diazinon. Chlorpyrifos and diazinon have been banned by the USEPA for most urban applications, although some public health uses such as fire ant eradication and mosquito control have been continued; however, other active pesticides that are allowed for urban applications may have potentially significant impacts. In addition to discussing the impacts from the allowable uses of chlorpyrifos and diazinon, please discuss impacts from other pesticides that may be utilized in these areas.
- The DEIR should more adequately discuss the incremental steps needed to significantly reduce the project's stormwater runoff and accomplish the hydrologic goals (i.e., site drainage) of the project. As presented, the annual volume of stormwater runoff from the site will increase from 183 acre-feet per year to 331 acre-feet per year; this is an 81 percent increase in annual stormwater runoff. Increased stormwater runoff not only contributes more pollutants, but can cause significant hydromodification downstream which can cause further water quality impacts and habitat loss. Reduction of stormwater runoff may primarily be achieved through best management practices (BMPs) such as an increase in open spaces, and an increase in drainage flow pathway within the project area.
- The DEIR should describe the process of how the required principles of development will achieve the hydrologic goals through use of special exceptions, zoning or subdivision ordinances. Essentially, most development projects currently planned do not incorporate Low Impact Development (LID) strategies on site planning because these LID techniques require special exceptions and/or ordinances. Primarily, the LID approach is a site drainage approach designed to mimic the natural drainage prior to development.
- The DEIR should describe the procedures the developer will follow to achieve special exceptions (or code modifications) for zoning and subdivision ordinances to better protect the area's water resources. Model development techniques include: shorter or narrower streets, fewer and smaller cul-de-sacs, smaller parking lots, permeable pavement, increased storm

*California Environmental Protection Agency*



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Daniel Fierros

- 3 -

January 22, 2007

- water BMPs, more community open spaces, flexible sidewalk standards, increased vegetated buffers and other similar measures.
- The DEIR should discuss in the development site-preparation plan and/or negative impact declaration, the 750-acre off-site grading area. In unusual circumstances or complex excavation and grading operations, the off-site grading may impact (extent of the pre- and post-grading operations) water quality and quantity of the project area due to clearing and grubbing, construction of access roads, by-passes, and controls and protection of existing natural drainages and slope stabilization.
  - The DEIR should discuss cumulative impacts from hydromodification of the Landmark Village project in relationship to other projects in the Santa Clara River watershed. The total miles of hydromodification from all the projects of the Specific Plan need to be assessed. Each hydromodification shall be subject to 401 certification requirements.

If you have any questions, please contact Regional Board staff Dr. Yanjie Chu at (213) 576-6681 or Carlos D. Santos at (213) 620-2093.

Sincerely,



Deborah J. Smith  
Chief Deputy Executive Officer



# California Regional Water Quality Control Board

## Los Angeles Region



Linda S. Adams  
Cal/EPA Secretary

320 W. 4th Street, Suite 200, Los Angeles, California 90013  
Phone (213) 576-6600 FAX (213) 576-6640 - Internet Address: <http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/losangeles>

Arnold Schwarzenegger  
Governor

January 22, 2007

Mr. Daniel Fierros  
County of Los Angeles  
Department of Regional Planning  
Impact Analysis Section, Room 1348  
320 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA, 90012

### **COMMENTS ON DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE LANDMARK VILLAGE PROJECT, COUNTY PROJECT NO. 00-196, SCH NO. 2004021002**

Dear Mr. Fierros:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Landmark Village project.

The Landmark Village project site is located in unincorporated Los Angeles County, within the Santa Clarita Valley, and within the Santa Clara River watershed. The Landmark Village project site lies within the jurisdiction of the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board). The Regional Board is charged with protecting the surface and groundwater quality in the Santa Clara River watershed. Please address the following comments on the water quality section (Chapter 4.3) of the DEIR:

- The DEIR discusses the environmental impacts of urban runoff from the Landmark Village project site; however the impacts of wastewater (from the quality and quantity perspective), generated by residential and commercial uses, were not addressed. Reach 5 of the Santa Clara River is listed on the 2002 Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 303(d) List for chloride, coliform, and nitrate-nitrogen plus nitrite-nitrogen, and is on the proposed 2006 CWA Section 303(d) List for chloride and coliform. Wastewater discharges from the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts' Saugus and Valencia Water Reclamation Plants have been identified as the primary source of chloride in the Santa Clara River by the Upper Santa Clara River (USCR) Chloride TMDL. Similarly, wastewater generated from the Landmark Village project site may have a potentially significant impact on the Santa Clara River if the treated wastewater is discharged to the USCR. Regional Board staff believes that the impacts of wastewater discharges, generated by the Landmark Village project, to the upper Santa Clara

***California Environmental Protection Agency***



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River should be addressed by the DEIR. If the impacts of wastewater have been discussed in other documents, the DEIR should reference those documents.

- The DEIR should include a detailed impact analysis of urban pesticides. The DEIR presents very limited pesticide monitoring data. The current Landmark Village project site is largely open space with limited agricultural use and thereby limited pesticide applications. Urban pesticide applications that would be expected as part of the proposed project are likely to have greater pesticide applications at the site than current practice. Detailed information on pesticides monitoring and impact analysis is necessary to quantify the impacts of pesticides application.
- The potential impacts of actively used urban pesticides is not sufficiently discussed in the DEIR. The DEIR discusses mainly on chlorpyrifos and diazinon. Chlorpyrifos and diazinon have been banned by the USEPA for most urban applications, although some public health uses such as fire ant eradication and mosquito control have been continued; however, other active pesticides that are allowed for urban applications may have potentially significant impacts. In addition to discussing the impacts from the allowable uses of chlorpyrifos and diazinon, please discuss impacts from other pesticides that may be utilized in these areas.
- The DEIR should more adequately discuss the incremental steps needed to significantly reduce the project's stormwater runoff and accomplish the hydrologic goals (i.e., site drainage) of the project. As presented, the annual volume of stormwater runoff from the site will increase from 183 acre-feet per year to 331 acre-feet per year; this is an 81 percent increase in annual stormwater runoff. Increased stormwater runoff not only contributes more pollutants, but can cause significant hydromodification downstream which can cause further water quality impacts and habitat loss. Reduction of stormwater runoff may primarily be achieved through best management practices (BMPs) such as an increase in open spaces, and an increase in drainage flow pathway within the project area.
- The DEIR should describe the process of how the required principles of development will achieve the hydrologic goals through use of special exceptions, zoning or subdivision ordinances. Essentially, most development projects currently planned do not incorporate Low Impact Development (LID) strategies on site planning because these LID techniques require special exceptions and/or ordinances. Primarily, the LID approach is a site drainage approach designed to mimic the natural drainage prior to development.
- The DEIR should describe the procedures the developer will follow to achieve special exceptions (or code modifications) for zoning and subdivision ordinances to better protect the area's water resources. Model development techniques include: shorter or narrower streets, fewer and smaller cul-de-sacs, smaller parking lots, permeable pavement, increased storm

water BMPs, more community open spaces, flexible sidewalk standards, increased vegetated buffers and other similar measures.

- The DEIR should discuss in the development site-preparation plan and/or negative impact declaration, the 750-acre off-site grading area. In unusual circumstances or complex excavation and grading operations, the off-site grading may impact (extent of the pre- and post-grading operations) water quality and quantity of the project area due to clearing and grubbing, construction of access roads, by-passes, and controls and protection of existing natural drainages and slope stabilization.
- The DEIR should discuss cumulative impacts from hydromodification of the Landmark Village project in relationship to other projects in the Santa Clara River watershed. The total miles of hydromodification from all the projects of the Specific Plan need to be assessed. Each hydromodification shall be subject to 401 certification requirements.

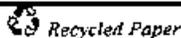
If you have any questions, please contact Regional Board staff Dr. Yanjie Chu at (213) 576-6681 or Carlos D. Santos at (213) 620-2093.

Sincerely,



Deborah J. Smith  
Chief Deputy Executive Officer

***California Environmental Protection Agency***



*Our mission is to preserve and enhance the quality of California's water resources for the benefit of present and future generations.*

23621 Mesa Ct.  
Valencia Ca 91355

11 Jan 2007

Mrs Susan Tse  
Los Angeles Regional Planning - Los Angeles County  
320 W. Temple St.  
Los Angeles, Ca 90013

Dear Mrs Tse:

I wish to present some points relative to the  
Newhall Ranch Project - Phase I:

- a) Please extend the comment period to 120 days
- B.) Please take no action regarding approval of the  
Newhall Ranch Project prior to the EIS on  
the Santa Clara River being released.
- C.) Please oppose any building in significant  
Ecological Area (SECA) 23.
- D.) Do not allow the destruction of the 67 oak  
trees as planned in Phase I of the Newhall  
Ranch Project.

Thank you for your support regarding these matters

Respectfully,

Edward J. Benison

Ms. SUSAN TWE,

LA County Regional Planning Dept.

320 West Temple Street

LA, CA 90033

Ms. Twe,

I care deeply about the Santa Clara River. Please extend the ~~comment~~<sup>comment</sup> period so more people have time to comment and review this issue. Also, I greatly oppose building in such ecologically significant region. The current down of 67 previous acts, is entirely inappropriate. And finally, it is unethical and appears to approve project before the Santa Clara River EIS is completed. Please, take your time and complete this project in a way that does not harm the quality of life of my community.

Sincerely

Michael Benetz of Santa Clara

17 January 2006  
2652 Wilshire Ave  
Berkeley, CA 94705

Ms Susan Lee

Los Angeles County Regional Board, Dept  
300 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90013

Dear Ms Lee

I am writing to you today, the first phase of the proposed  
Sanctuary area project. This is a critical project and the State  
Board will take significant action. I encourage you to  
attend the annual Board to 23 days. This is a critical  
should be your until the EIS on the Santa Clara River  
has been completed. Safety work will be completed  
You should be no building on SEA 23. The project as proposed  
will have adverse effects on our efforts to reach CO2 emissions,  
the primary source of global warming. Our dependence on carbon based  
development needs to be changed.

Sincerely yours  
David Johnson

Mrs Susan Tice

Jan 16, 2017

Los Angeles Regional Planning Dept

330 West Temple Street

Los Angeles, Ca. 90013

Subject: Proposed Newhall Ranch Project

Mrs Tice

In reference to the above subject, I am requesting that you extend the comment period to 150 days, oppose building in a S.E.A., oppose the destruction of 67 ac's, request that impacts to global warming be addressed and mitigated before the project can be approved.

In addition, do not approve the project before the EIS on the Santa Clara River has been released/completed because this may change the project configuration.

Thank you for these considerations.

Sincerely,

Hennith J. Renner

11772 HIGH FALLS ST

CANYON COUNTRY, CA

91387

MS Susan Tree

Jan 11, 2007

L A County Regional Planning Dept  
320 West Temple St  
Los Angeles, Ca 90013

I am MS Tree

I would like to express some comments on phase 1  
of the Newhall Ranch Project:

1. Please extend the comment area to 120 days
2. Oppose building in a Significant Ecological Area
3. Oppose destruction of 67 acres
4. Do not approve the project before EIS on the  
Santa Clara River has been revised/ completed because this  
may change the project configuration
- 5.

Sincerely

Benjamin Rivkin

22641 Copperhill Dr #32

Sages, Ca. 91350

Jan. 11, 2007

Ms. Susan Tae

L.A. County Regional Planning Dept.

320 W. Temple St.  
Los Angeles, CA 90013

Re: Neuhall Ranch Project

Dear Ms. Tae:

Please oppose building in SEA 23.

Please oppose destruction of 67 oaks, they  
take hundreds of years to grow.

Please extend the comment period to 120 days.

Please don't approve this before the  
Environmental Impact Report Study on the Santa  
Clara River is completed.

This project is going to impact the  
traffic flow immensely and that is bad  
enough.

It is difficult to plan well given our  
current transportation systems.

Very truly yours

Karen Wood

27611 Nugget Dr. #3

Costa Mesa, CA 92626

**Tae, Susan**

---

**Subject:** FW: Newhall Ranch will be a great place to live, work and play

-----Original Message-----

From: Ruiz, Rosie  
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2007 3:03 PM  
To: Tae, Susan  
Subject: FW: Newhall Ranch will be a great place to live, work and play

FYI

Rosie O. Ruiz  
Commission Secretary  
Department of Regional Planning  
(213) 974-6409  
rruiz@planning.lacounty.gov

The information contained in this electronic mail transmission is confidential and intended to be sent only to the stated recipient of the transmission. It is protected from unauthorized use or dissemination by the attorney-client privilege and/or work product doctrine. If you are not the intended recipient or the intended recipient's agent, please take notice that any review, use, dissemination, distribution or copying of this communication is strictly prohibited. You are also asked to notify us immediately by telephone and to delete this e-mail and any attachments from your system and destroy any and all copies made.

-----Original Message-----

From: jillmhughes1978@yahoo.com [mailto:jillmhughes1978@yahoo.com]  
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2007 1:16 PM  
To: Ruiz, Rosie  
Cc: fifthdistrict@bos.co.la.ca.us  
Subject: Newhall Ranch will be a great place to live, work and play

Dear Chair Esther L. Valadez and members of the Planning Commission:

I look forward to the opportunity to purchase a home in the new masterplanned hometown of Newhall Ranch by Newhall Land, and I am writing to show my support for the plan.

From the information I have reviewed, the plan would offer a variety of much-needed new homes - from condominiums to traditional single-family homes to large estates. In addition, Newhall Ranch would include community features I am looking for; such as neighborhood parks, new schools, nature trails and nearby shops. And with more than 19,000 new jobs, many Newhall Ranch residents would enjoy the luxury of working close to home.

Please recommend approval for Landmark Village and the subsequent villages of Newhall Ranch.

Sincerely,

Jill Hughes  
Valencia

CC:  
Los Angeles County Supervisor Mike Antonovich

JAN. 11, 2007

MS. SUSAN TOE,

L.A. COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING DEPT.

I AM WRITING TO EXPRESS MY OPPOSITION TO THE PROPOSED NEWHALL RANCH PROJECT. AT LEAST THE FIRST PHASE SHOULD BE POSTPONED UNTIL PEOPLE CAN BE BETTER INFORMED ABOUT THE PROJECT. IS THE PROJECT BEING PROPOSED IN A SIGNIFICANT ECOLOGICAL AREA? IF SO, ITS CONSTRUCTION WOULD BE OPPOSED BY MYSELF. ALSO THE ISSUE OF "GLOBAL WARMING" MAY BE AN ISSUE WHICH MAY CAUSE OPPOSITION TO THE PROJECT.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR KIND CONSIDERATION OF THESE ISSUES

John Skelley  
15670 POPPYSEED LANE  
CANYON COUNTRY, CA 91387

**Tae, Susan**

**From:** Jeanette Vosburg [jeanette@saveballona.org]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 24, 2007 10:57 AM  
**To:** Tae, Susan; Fierros, Daniel; 'Lisa Fimiani'; paulherzog@riseup.net  
**Subject:** Landmark Village, Draft EIR

January 24, 2007

Daniel Fierros  
County of Los Angeles  
Department of Regional Planning  
Hall of Records (13th Floor)  
320 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Telephone: (213) 974-6411  
Fax: (213) 626-0434  
TDD: (213) 617-2292

Daniel Fierros email: [dfierros@planning.lacounty.gov](mailto:dfierros@planning.lacounty.gov)

RE: Project No. 00-196 / Tract Map No. 53108 / Landmark Village, Draft EIR

Dear Mr. Fierros,

I have been working to Green Up and Restore Water Function to the Ballona Watershed. I know from experience, we never appreciate what we have until we lose it.

As an owner of property in Santa Clarita since the 1980's, I am frequently out there. I marvel at the natural parts of the Santa Clara River and watch with horror as concrete begins to find its way into this natural watershed. Nature does a much better job of cleaning urban runoff than mechanical solutions. Please respect that. Look with fresh eyes, as your department receives comments regarding the Landmark Village Draft EIR.

There are obvious challenges -- air quality, water, traffic, and energy, which must be overcome, but the most overriding challenge of all is whether we can save the last free-flowing river in Southern California from being destroyed in one of the last truly wild areas of Los Angeles County.

This is a tremendous opportunity for all of us to save the upper Santa Clara River, its floodplain, tributaries, and upland habitat -- which links to other wild areas in the state.

I am not against housing development, I understand the need to provide housing for our growing population -- however -- not at the detriment of this wonderful state resource.

Please reconsider the EIR and make recommendations that it be revised to include the proper studies to determine what areas are most critical to birds and wildlife. My greatest concern is that this project is being rushed through without acceptable scientific research, which has been strongly recommended by many non-profit organizations.

1/24/2007

Sincerely,

Jeanette Vosburg, Ballona Network  
4124 East Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90066

**Tae, Susan**

**From:** Randi Parent [rparent@HealTheBay.org]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 24, 2007 1:57 PM  
**To:** Tae, Susan; dfierros@planninglacounty.gov

RE: Project No. 00-196 / Tract Map No. 53108 / Landmark Village, Draft EIR

Dear Ms. Tae and Mr. Fierros,

I am writing with the hope that you will be willing to look over comments regarding the landmark Village Draft EIR with fresh eyes and an open mind, and with a determination that saving the wilderness of the upper Santa Clara River is of the utmost importance.

There are obvious challenges -- air quality, water, traffic, and energy, which must be overcome, but the most overriding challenge of all is whether we can save the last free-flowing river in Southern California from being destroyed in one of the last truly wild areas of Los Angeles County.

This is a tremendous opportunity for all of us to save the upper Santa Clara River, its floodplain, tributaries, and upland habitat -- which links to other wild areas in the state.

I am not against housing development; I understand the need to provide housing for our growing population -- however -- not at the expense of this wonderful state resource.

Please reconsider the EIR and make recommendations that it be revised to include the proper studies to determine what areas are most critical to birds and wildlife. My greatest concern is that this project is being rushed through without acceptable scientific research, which has been strongly recommended by many non-profit organizations.

Sincerely,

Randi Parent  
Community Outreach Coordinator  
Santa Monica Pier Aquarium  
1600 Ocean Front Walk  
Santa Monica, CA 90401  
310-393-6149, ext. 105

**Tae, Susan**

---

**From:** Susan Suntree [ssuntree@verizon.net]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 24, 2007 4:19 PM  
**To:** Tae, Susan  
**Subject:** RE: Project No. 00-196 / Tract Map No. 53108 / Landmark Village, Draft EIR

January 24, 2007

Daniel Fierros  
County of Los Angeles  
Department of Regional Planning  
Hall of Records (13th Floor)  
320 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Telephone: (213) 974-6411  
Fax: (213) 626-0434  
TDD: (213) 617-2292

Daniel Fierros email: [dfierros@planning.lacounty.gov](mailto:dfierros@planning.lacounty.gov) <<mailto:dfierros@planning.lacounty.gov>>

RE: Project No. 00-196 / Tract Map No. 53108 / Landmark Village, Draft EIR

Dear Mr. Fierros,

I am writing on behalf of an area that I hope you will be willing to look at with fresh eyes, as your department receives comments regarding the Landmark Village Draft EIR.

There are obvious challenges -- air quality, water, traffic, and energy, which must be overcome, but the most overriding challenge of all is whether we can save the last free-flowing river in Southern California from being destroyed in one of the last truly wild areas of Los Angeles County.

This is a tremendous opportunity for all of us to save the upper Santa Clara River, its floodplain, tributaries, and upland habitat -- which links to other wild areas in the state.

I am not against housing development, I understand the need to provide housing for our growing population -- however -- not at the detriment of this wonderful state resource.

Please reconsider the EIR and make recommendations that it be revised to include the proper studies to determine what areas are most critical to birds and wildlife. My greatest concern is that this project is being rushed through without acceptable scientific research, which has been strongly recommended by many non-profit organizations.

Sincerely,  
Susan Suntree  
1223 11th Street  
Santa Monica  
CA 90401

**Taylor, Gloria**

**From:** Tae, Susan  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 25, 2007 1:36 PM  
**To:** Taylor, Gloria  
**Subject:** FW: Newhall Ranch, Landmark Village Project No. 00-196-(5)/Attention Ms. Susan Tae

please print for our package!

Thanks,  
Susie Tae, AICP  
Land Divisions Section  
(213) 974-6433

Please note new e-mail address: [stae@planning.lacounty.gov](mailto:stae@planning.lacounty.gov)

**From:** margoteiser [mailto:[margoteiser@ojai.net](mailto:margoteiser@ojai.net)]  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 25, 2007 1:35 PM  
**To:** Tae, Susan  
**Subject:** Newhall Ranch, Landmark Village Project No. 00-196-(5)/Attention Ms. Susan Tae

Re: Newhall Ranch, Landmark Village Project No. 00-196-(5)

Dear Ms.Tae,

Please do not approve the project before the EIS on the Santa Clara River has been released/completed because this may change the project configuration.

It is important to recognize that the Santa Clara River and its biology is a treasure with value far beyond the monetary profits imagined by those who would destroy it. People all over the country and the world are now recognizing and preserving remaining natural, open land for us in the present and as a legacy for future generations. To accommodate the many others who oppose building in Significant Ecological Area 23, please extend the comment period to at least 120 days,

It is clear that such a massive, project is sure to create major traffic and air pollution problems. In this day and age, with so many alternatives increasingly available, it is necessary that such huge additions to global warming and pollution be addressed and mitigation proposed before the project could even be considered for approval. Another obvious way the planners demonstrate a disregard for protecting the environment is by proposing to needlessly destroy at least sixty-seven oak trees which produce oxygen and provide habitat and do not pollute.

The general public deserves good service by it's governmental agencies. Please let the so called developers know that urban sprawl is no longer acceptable and make all efforts to postpone decisions on this project until all evidence has been submitted and evaluated. If you have not already done so, I urge you to visit the area yourself to see why so many are urging protection of this significant place. Please contact Lynne Plambeck ([lynneplambeck@access4less.net](mailto:lynneplambeck@access4less.net)) who has been leading informative walks by the river and its surroundings.

1/25/2007

Very sincerely yours,  
Margot Eiser  
Co-Founder  
Save Montebello Hills Sierra Club Task Force  
Montebello, California  
323 728 7066

Ms. Susan Tae  
Los Angeles County Regional Planning Dept  
320 W. Temple St  
Los Angeles, CAL 90013

SUBJECT: Newhall Ranch, Landmark Village Project No. 00-196-(5)

We urge you to oppose this Newhall Ranch, Landmark Village Project No 00-196-(5). This project is a bad idea. Not only will it destroy pristine wildlife and farming areas and the Santa Clara River, but also it will create terrible traffic jams and more air pollution problems.

Please do the following:

1. Extend the comment period to 120 days.
2. An EIS study on the Santa Clara River needs to be completed and then released before any project can be done. This study must be presented to the public so we can comment on your direction.
3. Oppose any building in significant ecological areas as well as opposing destroying 67 oaks.
4. Global warming must be addressed and mitigated before any project can be approved. The impacts on global warming are important.

We urge you to say No to the Landmark Village Project No 00-196-(5).

Thank you,

Sincerely,

Walter

+  
Cecilia Runkle

6411 Stimp Ave  
West Hills, CA 91307

101 JAN 20 2006

Ms. Susan Tae  
Los Angeles County Regional Planning Dept  
320 W. Temple St  
Los Angeles, CAL 90013  
SUBJECT: Newhall Ranch, Landmark Village Project No. 00-196-(5)

We urge you to oppose this Newhall Ranch, Landmark Village Project No 00-196-(5). This project is a bad idea. Not only will it destroy pristine wildlife and farming areas and the Santa Clara River, but also it will create terrible traffic jams and more air pollution problems.

Please do the following:

1. Extend the comment period to 120 days.
2. An EIS study on the Santa Clara River needs to be completed and then released before any project can be done. This study must be presented to the public so we can comment on your direction.
3. Oppose any building in significant ecological areas as well as opposing destroying 67 oaks.
4. Global warming must be addressed and mitigated before any project can be approved. The impacts on global warming are important.

We urge you to say No to the Landmark Village Project No 00-196-(5).

Thank you.

Mrs. Helen ...  
11619 FRANCIS PL.  
LOS ANGELES, CA. 90066

Ms. Susan Tae  
Los Angeles County Regional Planning Dept  
320 W. Temple St  
Los Angeles, CAL 90013  
SUBJECT: Newhall Ranch, Landmark Village Project No. 00-196-(5)

We urge you to oppose this Newhall Ranch, Landmark Village Project No 00-196-(5). This project is a bad idea. Not only will it destroy pristine wildlife and farming areas and the Santa Clara River, but also it will create terrible traffic jams and more air pollution problems.

Please do the following:

1. Extend the comment period to 120 days.
2. An EIS study on the Santa Clara River needs to be completed and then released before any project can be done. This study must be presented to the public so we can comment on your direction.
3. Oppose any building in significant ecological areas as well as opposing destroying 67 oaks.
4. Global warming must be addressed and mitigated before any project can be approved. The impacts on global warming are important.

We urge you to say No to the Landmark Village Project No 00-196-(5).

Thank you,

*Thank you  
Linda Johnson  
5007 Laramie St  
Woodland Hills, Ca*

*9/30/94*