

September 4, 2008

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

FROM: Mitch Glaser, Supervising Regional Planner
Countywide Studies Section

**SUBJECT: SEPTEMBER 17, 2008 – AGENDA ITEM # 8
PROJECT NO. R2008-01011-(5): RADV T200800005
AMENDMENT TO TITLE 22 (ZONING ORDINANCE)
TO ESTABLISH THE ELIZABETH LAKE AND LAKE HUGHES
COMMUNITY STANDARDS DISTRICT**

BACKGROUND

Section 22.44.090 of the Los Angeles County Zoning Ordinance provides for the establishment of Community Standards Districts (CSDs) “to provide a means of implementing special development standards contained in adopted neighborhood, community, area, specific and local coastal plans within the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County, or to provide a means of addressing special problems which are unique to certain geographic areas within the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County.” As you are aware, the Board of Supervisors has established CSDs for numerous unincorporated areas, and they have proven to be an effective tool for enhancing the environment and quality of life in unique and diverse communities throughout the County.

For nearly two years, staff from the Countywide Studies Section has been working closely with the elected Town Council to create an ordinance to amend the Los Angeles County Zoning Ordinance to establish a CSD for Elizabeth Lake and Lake Hughes. The proposed CSD contains development standards that aim to maintain the rural nature of these communities, as described in the Antelope Valley Areawide General Plan, and to also address the unique concerns and desires of property owners, residents, business owners, and other stakeholders in the area.

In order to address the desire of the communities to preserve their low-density, rural character and to protect the unique scenery and significant natural resources of the area, staff recommends establishment of a CSD.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Numerous Town Council CSD committee meetings have been held with the aim of reaching agreement on issues related to the establishment of community standards. Regional Planning staff conducted a community meeting in Lake Hughes on May 31, 2008, at which we presented the draft CSD and solicited input. In preparation for the meeting, notices were sent to the approximately 1,900 owners of property located within the boundaries of the proposed CSD. The meeting was attended by approximately 50 people, virtually all of whom expressed support for establishing the CSD in their community.

Prior to the Regional Planning Commission hearing, the draft CSD ordinance, Initial Study and Negative Declaration were made available to the community for viewing at the Quartz Hill Library and on the DRP internet website.

COMMUNITY STANDARDS DISTRICT

The Zoning Ordinance provides for the use of CSDs for small geographical areas to address unique land use problems. General Plan policies encourage guidelines governing scale and design on a community-by-community basis. Establishing a community standards district is therefore consistent with the policies of the Countywide General Plan.

The Los Angeles County Zoning Ordinance does not address many of the land use issues that exist in the community of Elizabeth Lake and Lake Hughes. In order to address these issues, the draft CSD (Attachment 2) establishes new development standards and design guidelines intended to ensure that future public and private improvements are consistent with the community's existing development pattern as well as the goals, objectives and policies of the Antelope Valley Area Plan. The draft CSD addresses the following items: minimum lot size, residential development standards, street improvements, public trails and preservation of native vegetation.

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

Staff prepared an Initial Study for this project in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the environmental reporting procedures of the County of Los Angeles. The Initial Study showed that there is no substantial evidence that the project will have a significant effect on the environment. Based on the Initial Study, a Negative Declaration for this project has been prepared.

The environmental documents (Attachment 3) were made available to responsible agencies and the public for the required 30-day review period. No comments on the environmental document had been received at the time this staff report was prepared.

RECOMMENDED MOTION

I move that the Regional Planning Commission adopt the attached resolution and forward the proposed Elizabeth Lake and Lake Hughes CSD to the Board of Supervisors for consideration in a public hearing.

Please find attached the CSD ordinance, resolution, and the environmental documentation. Should you have any questions, please contact Marshall Adams at (213) 974-6476 or madams@planning.lacounty.gov.

MG:jma

Attachments:

1. Resolution for Commission Adoption
2. Recommended CSD Ordinance for Commission Adoption
3. Initial Study and Negative Declaration
4. Written Correspondence