



Los Angeles County  
Department of Regional Planning



*Planning for the Challenges Ahead*

December 16, 2008

Bruce W. McClendon FAICP  
Director of Planning

The Honorable Board of Supervisors  
County of Los Angeles  
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**HEARING ON AMENDMENT TO COUNTY CODE (TITLE 22 -- PLANNING  
AND ZONING) TO ESTABLISH THE ELIZABETH LAKE AND LAKE HUGHES  
COMMUNITY STANDARDS DISTRICT  
(FIFTH SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT) (3 VOTES)**

**IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD, AFTER THE PUBLIC HEARING:**

1. Consider the attached Negative Declaration together with any comments received during the public review process, find on the basis of the whole record before the Board that there is no substantial evidence the project will have a significant effect on the environment, find that the Negative Declaration reflects the independent judgment and analysis of the Board, and adopt the Negative Declaration.
2. Approve the recommendation of the Regional Planning Commission to establish the Elizabeth Lake and Lake Hughes Community Standards District, establishing new development and design standards for the unincorporated communities of Elizabeth Lake and Lake Hughes, as reflected in the draft ordinance.
3. Instruct County Counsel to prepare an ordinance establishing the Elizabeth Lake and Lake Hughes Community Standards District as recommended by the Regional Planning Commission, including the additional minor revisions recommended by staff.

**PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION**

Section 22.44.090 of the Los Angeles County Zoning Ordinance provides for the establishment of Community Standards Districts (CSD's) "to provide a means for 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.”

The unincorporated communities of Elizabeth Lake and Lake Hughes are distinguished by their scenic natural setting and quiet rural character. However, rapid growth in the Antelope Valley has increased development pressure on these communities.

The Lakes Town Council, an elected body that serves in an advisory capacity to Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich, recognized the challenge of maintaining the area’s unique quality-of-life while allowing new development that is consistent with the existing character of the two communities. For two years, the Town Council worked with local residents, property owners, and staff from the Department of Regional Planning to draft a CSD that reflects the desires of the two communities.

The proposed CSD will establish new development standards that will only apply to properties within the boundaries of the Elizabeth Lake and Lake Hughes area. These standards are intended to maintain the low densities, rural character, and significant natural resources of the two communities. The CSD includes regulations pertaining to minimum lot sizes for new subdivisions, ridgeline and hillside protection, building setbacks, fencing, commercial building design, and public improvements such as curbs, gutters, sidewalks, and streetlights.

Los Angeles County General Plan policies encourage guidelines governing the scale and design of new development on a community-by-community basis. In addition, the Antelope Valley Areawide General Plan designates Elizabeth Lake and Lake Hughes as “rural communities” and calls for infill growth consistent with existing community character. Establishing the Elizabeth Lake and Lake Hughes CSD is therefore consistent with the County General Plan and the Antelope Valley Areawide General Plan.

On September 17, 2008, and November 19, 2008, the Regional Planning Commission considered the Elizabeth Lake and Lake Hughes CSD in public hearings and recommended that it be adopted by your Board.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF COUNTYWIDE STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS**

The proposed CSD promotes Goal 1 of the County’s Strategic Plan pertaining to “Service Excellence” through the development of clear and reasonable development and design standards, demonstrating that the Department of Regional Planning is responsive to citizens’ concerns and willing to work with community groups, residents, and property owners to address such concerns.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Implementation of the proposed CSD will not result in any loss of revenue to the County or in significant new costs to the Department of Regional Planning or other County departments. Adoption of this CSD will not result in the need for additional departmental staffing.

### **FINANCING**

The proposed CSD will not result in additional net County costs and therefore a request for funding is not being made at this time.

### **FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

The proposed Elizabeth Lake and Lake Hughes CSD includes public input received during a community meeting held in Lake Hughes on May 31, 2008. Additionally, staff held several meetings with the Town Council's CSD meeting and with property owners to receive additional input.

The Regional Planning Commission conducted public hearings regarding the proposed CSD on September 17, 2008, and November 19, 2008. At the two hearings, the Commission heard testimony from six individuals in support of the proposal and ten individuals expressing concerns with minimum lot size, setback, and ridgeline protection requirements.

A public hearing is required pursuant to Section 22.16.200 of the County Code and Section 65856 of the Government Code. Required notice must be given pursuant to the procedures and requirements set forth in Section 22.60.174 of the County Code. These procedures exceed the minimum standards of Sections 6061, 65090, and 65856 of the Government Code relating to notice of public hearing.

### **IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)**

Approval of the proposed CSD will not significantly impact County services.

### **NEGATIVE DECLARATION/ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS**

The attached Initial Study shows that there is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before your Board, that the adoption of the proposed CSD will have a significant effect on the environment. Therefore a Negative Declaration was prepared in

accordance with Section 15070 of the California Environmental Quality Act guidelines. Copies of the proposed Negative Declaration were transmitted to the County Clerk and Quartz Hill Library for public review. In addition, public notice was published in one newspaper of general circulation pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21092. Two comments were received during the public review period.

Based on the attached Negative Declaration, adoption of the proposed CSD will not have a significant effect on the environment.

Respectfully submitted,

DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL PLANNING

Bruce W. McClendon, FAICP  
Director of Planning



BWM:RCH:MWG:JMA

Attachments:

1. Project Summary
2. Summary of Regional Planning Commission Proceedings
3. Resolution of the Regional Planning Commission
4. Recommended Ordinance for Board Adoption
5. Environmental Document
6. Legal Notice of Board Hearing
7. List of Persons to be Notified

c: Chief Executive Officer  
County Counsel  
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors  
Auditor-Controller  
Director, Department of Public Works  
Assessor

# Attachment 1: Project Summary

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL PLANNING**

**PROJECT SUMMARY**

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** Proposed amendment to Title 22 (Planning and Zoning) to establish the Elizabeth Lake and Lake Hughes Community Standards District, which institutes development standards that are intended to maintain the low density, rural character, and significant natural resources of the Elizabeth Lake and Lake Hughes communities.

**REQUEST:** Adoption of the proposed amendments to Title 22; Advance Planning Case No. 200800005.

**LOCATION:** Elizabeth Lake and Lake Hughes

**APPLICANT OR SOURCE:** Regional Planning Commission directive

**STAFF CONTACT:** Marshall Adams at (213) 974-6476

**RPC HEARING DATE:** September 17, 2008, and November 19, 2008

**RPC RECOMMENDATION:** Board public hearing to consider adoption of the proposed amendment.

**MEMBERS VOTING AYE:** Commissioners Bellamy, Rew, and Modugno

**MEMBERS VOTING NAY:** None

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Commissioner Helsley

**MEMBERS ABSTAINING:** Commissioner Valadez

**KEY ISSUES:** Rapid growth in the Antelope Valley has increased development pressure on the Elizabeth Lake and Lake Hughes area; however, the two communities lack adequate road, sewer, and public water infrastructure to support new growth at urban densities. The proposed CSD aims to maintain the area's unique quality of life while allowing new development that is consistent with the existing character of the two communities.

Specific issues identified by the community and addressed by the CSD include minimum lot sizes for new subdivisions, ridgeline and hillside protection, building setbacks, fencing, and public improvements such as curbs, gutters, sidewalks, and streetlights.

**MAJOR POINTS FOR:**

The proposed CSD provides community-specific development standards for issues where current Countywide policies do not address the needs of the Elizabeth Lake and Lake Hughes area.

**MAJOR POINTS AGAINST:**

Some property owners felt that the imposition of such standards could unreasonably restrict building on properties near the designated ridgeline.

# **Attachment 2: Summary of Regional Planning Commission Proceedings**

**REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
SUMMARY OF PUBLIC HEARING PROCEEDINGS**

**PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO COUNTY CODE TITLE 22 (PLANNING AND  
ZONING) TO ESTABLISH A COMMUNITY STANDARDS DISTRICT (CSD)  
FOR THE UNINCORPORATED COMMUNITIES OF  
ELIZABETH LAKE AND LAKE HUGHES**

**September 17, 2008**

The Commission conducted a public hearing to consider the proposed amendment to Title 22 to establish a Community Standards District (CSD) for the unincorporated Elizabeth Lake and Lake Hughes area. The proposed CSD would institute specific development standards that are intended to maintain the low densities, rural character, and significant natural resources of the two communities.

During the hearing, staff asked the Commission to consider the proposed Elizabeth Lake and Lake Hughes CSD in response to a Commission directive issued on June 5, 2008. The staff presentation elaborated on the collaborative process undertaken with the elected Town Council and other stakeholders, the justifications for the recommended development standards contained in the CSD, and the unique circumstances in the area that are not addressed by Countywide policy.

The Commission recognized the low density and rural character of the Elizabeth Lake and Lake Hughes area and the fact that rapid growth in neighboring jurisdictions has increased development pressure on the area, although it lacks adequate road, sewer, and public water infrastructure to support new growth at urban densities.

Five members of the public, including two elected Town Council members, spoke in support of the proposed CSD. Four members of the public spoke in opposition or with concerns.

The Commission requested that several revisions be made, primarily revision of the ordinance text for clarity, and directed staff to consult with large land owners and the Department of Public Works.

**November 19, 2008**

The Commission held a second public hearing on the proposed CSD. Staff reported on changes to the ordinance text as well as consultations with property owners and written correspondence received since the first hearing.

Four members of the public, including two elected Town Council members, spoke in support of the proposed CSD. Eight members of the public spoke in opposition or with

concerns.

The Commission closed the public hearing and approved the CSD as proposed. Commissioners Bellamy, Rew, and Modugno voted aye. Commissioner Valadez abstained, and Commissioner Helsley was absent. Staff was then instructed to transmit the item to the Board of Supervisors for consideration.

# Attachment 3: Resolution of the Regional Planning Commission

**RESOLUTION  
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES**

**WHEREAS**, the Regional Planning Commission of the County of Los Angeles has reviewed the matter of amendments to Title 22 (Zoning Ordinance) of the Los Angeles County code relating to the Elizabeth Lake and Lake Hughes Community Standards District (CSD); and

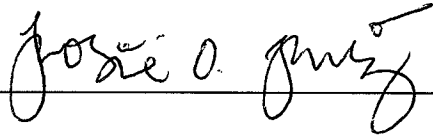
**WHEREAS**, the Regional Planning Commission finds as follows:

1. The unincorporated community of Elizabeth Lake and Lake Hughes is part of the Fifth Supervisorial District. The area is located in the Antelope Valley, bounded on the north by the California Aqueduct, on the east by the unincorporated community of Leona Valley, on the south by the Angeles National Forest and on the west by the unincorporated community of Three Points.
2. The subject community is predominantly rural, and mostly comprised of low-density residential and agricultural zones, with limited areas of commercial and industrial zones.
3. In December 2006 staff from the Department of Regional Planning was contacted by representatives of the Lakes Town Council, who expressed the desire to create a new Community Standards District (CSD) in order to preserve the rural and scenic character of the area. Staff worked closely with the community for many months to achieve consensus on community standards.
4. Following numerous CSD committee meetings, DRP staff held a public meeting on May 31, 2008, where community members overwhelmingly demonstrated their support for the proposed CSD.
5. The proposed CSD will help preserve the community character by limiting street improvements and urban infrastructure, establishing additional development standards including larger lots and setbacks, and promoting public trails and the use of native vegetation.
6. In compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act, an Initial Study was prepared for the project, which demonstrates that this regulatory action will not have a significant effect on the environment. Based on the Initial Study, staff has prepared a related Negative Declaration for this project.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Regional Planning Commission recommends that the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors:

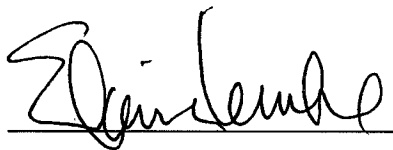
1. Hold a public hearing to consider the proposed amendments to Title 22 (Zoning Ordinance) of the Los Angeles County Code relating to establishing the Elizabeth Lake and Lake Hughes Community Standards District (CSD);
2. Certify completion of and approve the attached Negative Declaration and find that the establishment of the Elizabeth Lake and Lake Hughes CSD will not have a significant effect on the environment; and
3. Adopt the attached ordinance establishing the Elizabeth Lake and Lake Hughes CSD, and determine that it is compatible with and supportive of the goals and policies of the Los Angeles County General Plan.

I hereby certify that the foregoing was adopted by a majority of the voting members of the Regional Planning Commission of the County of Los Angeles on November 19, 2008.

By   
Rosie O. Ruiz, Secretary  
Regional Planning Commission  
County of Los Angeles

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY COUNSEL

By 

Elaine Lemke, Principal Deputy County Counsel  
Property Division

# Attachment 4: Recommended Ordinance for Board Adoption

