



CITY OF ESCONDIDO
 PLANNING DIVISION
 201 NORTH BROADWAY
 ESCONDIDO, CA 92025-2798
 (760) 839-4671

NOTICE OF PREPARATION
NOTICE OF PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING
Safari Highlands Ranch

Date: September 11, 2015

To: State Agencies Responsible Agencies Local and Public Agencies Trustee Agencies Interested Parties	From: Jay Petrek Assistant Planning Director City of Escondido 201 N. Broadway Escondido, CA 92025
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Subject: Notice of Preparation/Notice of Public Scoping Meeting
Safari Highlands Ranch, City Case #: SUB 15-0019, ENV 15-0009

The City of Escondido will be the Lead Agency for the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Safari Highlands Ranch project (proposed project). We need to know the views of your agency (and the views of other interested parties) as to the scope and content of the environmental information germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project if your agency will need to use the EIR prepared by our agency when considering your permit or other approvals associated with the proposed project.

The proposed project description, location and the scope of the EIR are contained in the attached materials. Because an EIR will be prepared, the City is not required to complete an Initial Study.

The City will also conduct a **public scoping meeting on Thursday, September 24, 2015, at 3:00 p.m. in the Mitchell Room, Escondido City Hall, 201 North Broadway, Escondido.** Your agency and the public are invited to attend. The purpose of this scoping meeting is to further define the issues, feasible alternatives and potential mitigation measures that may warrant in-depth analysis in the EIR.

Please send your response no later than **5:00 p.m. Monday, October 12, 2015 to John Helmer, Planning Consultant, City of Escondido Planning Division**, at the address shown above. We will need the name and contact information for the representative in your agency. Written comments may also be submitted via e-mail to safarihighlands@escondido.org. Additional information about the proposed project may be obtained on the city's website at: <http://www.escondido.org/safari-highlands-ranch-specific-plan.aspx>

Project Title: Safari Highlands Ranch
Project Applicant: Safari Highlands Ranch, LLC
Project Location: 23360 Old Wagon Road, Escondido, San Diego County, California

Signature:  _____

Jay Petrek, Assistant Planning Director
 City of Escondido Planning Division

NOTICE OF PREPARATION-Safari Highlands Ranch

DATE: **September 11, 2015**

COMMENTS DUE: **October 12, 2015**

SAFARI HIGHLANDS RANCH (Case No: SUB 15-0019 and ENV 15-0009)

The City of Escondido will be the Lead Agency for the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), as defined in Section 15161 of the CEQA Guidelines for the proposed Safari Highlands Ranch (proposed project). The Safari Highlands Ranch (SHR) is located at 23360 Old Wagon Road, Escondido, San Diego County, California. The proposed project is located on 1,098 acres of vacant land east of Rancho San Pasqual, northeast of the Rancho Vistamonte Community and just north of the San Diego Zoo Safari Park in unincorporated San Diego County. The project site is within the City's General Plan Specific Plan Area (SPA) #4. See Figure 1.

The project proposes to build 550 single family residential units along with new public and private parks and open space, a new City fire station, a community center, and on-site sewage treatment plant and a system of new private and public streets. A complete description of the proposed project starts on the following page. Figure 2 is an illustrative site plan of the proposed project.

Since the City has determined that an EIR will be prepared, an Initial Study is not required and has not been prepared (Section 15063 of the CEQA Guidelines). The EIR will consider all potential environmental effects of the proposed project to determine the level of significance of the environmental effect, and will analyze the potential effects to the detail necessary to make appropriate determinations on significance. In addition, the EIR may consider those environmental issues which are raised by responsible agencies, trustee agencies, and members of the public or related agencies during the NOP process. An electronic version of this notice is posted on the City's website, along with additional project information including the Specific Plan document and technical studies, at: <http://www.escondido.org/safari-highlands-ranch-specific-plan.aspx>.

We need to know the views of your agency or organization as to the scope and content of the environmental information germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities or of interest to you in connection with the proposed project. This includes the following for responsible and trustee agencies:

1. Whether your agency will be a responsible or trustee agency.
2. List of permits or approvals required by your agency for the proposed project.
3. If your agency would like to meet with the City regarding the proposed project.
4. Significant environmental issues and reasonable alternatives and/or mitigation measure(s).

Due to the time limits mandated by state law, responses from responsible agencies, other agencies, and organizations must be sent and received by the City of Escondido not later than 30 days following the publication of this Notice of Preparation (5:00 p.m. Monday, October 12, 2015). **Comments may be sent to:**

John Helmer
Planning Consultant
City of Escondido Planning Division
201 N. Broadway
Escondido, CA 92025
safarihighlands@escondido.org
(760) 839-4543 fax: (760) 839-4313

If response from your agency or organization is not received, we will presume that your agency or organization has no response to make. A responsible agency, trustee agency, or other public agency may request a meeting with City representatives in accordance with Section 15082(c) of the CEQA Guidelines.

Project Description

The proposed project consists of the following:

1. 550 single-family residences on lots ranging from approximately 8,000 square feet to over 200,000 square feet clustered into seven neighborhoods. Average lot size range among the different neighborhoods from 16,000 square feet to 66,000 square feet.
2. A "Village Core" providing a new 2.6-acre, three bay fire station site, a five-acre public park and trails, private recreation center, small convenience retail store and community gathering areas.
3. Safari Highlands Ranch Road, a new primary access road intersecting at Rockwood Road between Old Ranch Road and Vistamonte Avenue.
4. An internal private street system with street rights of way varying from 49 feet wide with travel lanes, parking and walkways to 82 feet wide with a median, travel lanes, bike lanes and walkways.
5. Approximately 14 acres of recreational parks and trails and 784 acres of resource, wildlife corridors, open space and conservation easement areas (totaling approximately 69.6 percent of the site).
6. An on-site satellite sewage treatment facility (also referred to as a water factory) providing reclaimed water consistent with Title 22 requirements for a portion of the project's common landscaped and open areas irrigation. Remaining solids would be discharged into the City sewer system via a new connection in Rockwood Road.
7. Water utilities would include connection to the City of Escondido water system, pumps to boost water to an on-site 80 foot diameter water tank, and an internal water distribution system that would use both pumps, reducing stations, and gravity feed.

8. A stormwater system that includes hydro-modification management practices including the use of biofilters and the use of both retention and detention basins.
9. A multi-modal transportation system that emphasizes the integration of vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian traffic throughout the project.
10. Various off-site improvements including the following:
 - Reconstruction and improvements to Rockwood Road's intersection with the proposed SHR Road;
 - Improvements along Rockwood Road between Cloverdale Road and San Pasqual Union School to enhance the school's student pick up and drop off locations;
 - Intersection of Rockwood Road/Cloverdale Road. Install traffic signal and restripe westbound approach to provide one left-turn and one shared left-turn lane. Restripe southbound Cloverdale Road to provide an additional receiving lane from Rockwood Road left turning movements;
 - Restripe Rockwood Road between Cloverdale and San Pasqual Union School to provide additional westbound lane;
 - Intersection of San Pasqual Valley Road (SR 78)/Citrus Avenue. Install new signal and restripe southbound approach to provide one left hand and one right hand turn lane;
 - Intersection of San Pasqual Valley Road (SR 78)/Cloverdale Road San Pasqual Road. Widen eastbound approach of San Pasqual Valley road to provide dual left-turn lanes. Widen northbound section of Cloverdale Road north of the intersection to provide approximate 650 foot long plus a 150-foot transition lane;
 - Segment of Felicita Road/17th Avenue from Escondido Boulevard to San Pasqual Valley Road (SR 78). Stripe a new eastbound turn pocket at Lendee Drive and extend the two-way left turn lane eastward to the City of Escondido/San Diego County boundary;
 - Two gated emergency access roads: a 2.4 mile road to the northwest connecting to Stonebridge Road and a one mile road to the south connecting to Zoo Road;
 - Gas, electric, cable, and phone system connections at Rockwood Road to existing infrastructure operated by San Diego Gas and Electric, Times Warner Cable, and AT&T;
 - Improvements to the Eagle Crest Golf Course including replacing the existing temporary clubhouse with a new 4,000 square foot permanent clubhouse with restaurant, reconstruction of hole #14, extension of SHR Road and miscellaneous other golf course improvements (all by separate permit).

Seven phases of development are proposed, corresponding to the seven neighborhoods being created. Public facilities and services and phase development would be coordinated so that services are available and ready to serve the residences as need arises.

Project Entitlements/Approvals

The proposed Project consists of the following entitlements and agency approvals, which would be processed concurrently unless noted:

1. Update of the City of Escondido's Sphere of Influence (SOI) to include SHR (SPA #4) as well as other properties as determined by the City to be appropriate to be included as part of a larger SOI update and municipal services review (LAFCO);
2. A Development Agreement to allow residential lots of less than one acre in size and to authorize an increase in the General Plan "maximum theoretical yield" of 284 dwelling units . The applicants request to add an additional 266 dwelling units totaling 550 dwelling units. This increase in density would be in exchange for on-site and/or off site community benefits above and beyond the project's impacts as permitted in the General Plan. This request is within the maximum permissible density allowable for the site pursuant to SPA #4.
3. Adoption of a Specific Plan Text and Map providing development and design standards for the SHR site involving 550 units and other proposed features, community benefits and amenities (i.e. trails, recreational, fire station, landscaping, public park, open space, and small neighborhood-serving commercial);
4. Tentative Subdivision Map creating a total of 591 lots consisting of: 550 residential lots; 13 open space lots; 15 Home Owners' Association lots; eight (8) private street lots; two (2) public facilities lots; one (1) fire station lot; one (1) public park lot; and one (1) private park lot.
5. Amendment to the Escondido General Plan Circulation Element map to add Safari Highlands Ranch Road as a new Local Collector with a Specific Alignment Plan for deviations to horizontal and vertical angles and inclinations and designating other proposed primary and emergency access route(s) accessing the site;
6. Amendment to General Plan SPA #3 map (Rancho San Pasqual) to designate Safari Highlands Ranch Road (as described in #5 above) through the Eagle Crest Golf Course fairway between Old Ranch Road and Vistamonte Avenue in the southern portion of SPA #3 in an alignment currently designated as "Emergency Access Road".
7. Pre-zoning of the SHR property to the category of Specific Plan (S-P) Zone, consistent with the City's General Plan SPA designation;
8. Pre-zoning of the other properties annexed into the City consistent with the underlying General Plan designations.
9. Annexation of the SHR property and the Beacon-Sun Ranch (underlying property for Emergency Access route to the North) into the City of Escondido corporate limits and into the City's membership of the Metropolitan Water District. Other properties considered in the SOI update may be included in a larger annexation, but such annexations are not a precondition of the SHR project. (LAFCO);
10. Detachment from the County Communications District (LAFCO);

11. Detachment from CSA No.113, San Pasqual Fire Protection District (LAFCO);
12. Optional detachment of a portion of the Specific Plan from the Valley Center-Pauma Unified School District and subsequently reorganize into the San Pasqual Union School District and the Escondido Union High School District.
13. Requests for multiple grading exemptions: 118 interior lot grading-exempted cut slopes ranging up to 106 feet at 1.5:1 inclination and 220 interior grading exempted fill slopes ranging up to 135 feet at 2:1 inclination.
14. Standard Urban Storm Water Mitigation Plan
15. Certification of a Final Environmental Impact Report
16. The project also seeks associated permits and agreements from agencies including:
 - Agreements with San Diego County and both the US and California Departments of Fish and Wildlife to reassign the Multiple Species Conservation Plan (MSCP), previously approved for the southern approximately one-half area of SPA #4, from San Diego County to the City of Escondido and to reassign permits for project related habitat loss.
 - Adoption of a habitat plan management plan for northern portion of project site located outside of adopted MSCP area.
 - Water quality permits from the Army Corps of Engineers and the Regional Water Quality Control Board.
 - Other responsible or trustee permits/approvals as identified through the NOP process.

Completion of SOI update and annexations/detachments (items #1, 9, 10 and 11 above) would take place through the San Diego Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) after EIR certification and conditional Project approval by the City Council. LAFCO approval of SOI update and annexations/detachments are necessary for project development to proceed.

Issues to be Addressed in the EIR

The EIR will address issues related to aesthetics, air quality, biology, cultural/historical resources, greenhouse gases, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, planning/land use, geologic/mineral resources, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation and traffic, and utilities. If analysis is completed and it is determined that an issue would have a less than significant impact, it may be included in a less than significant section with analysis supporting that conclusion.

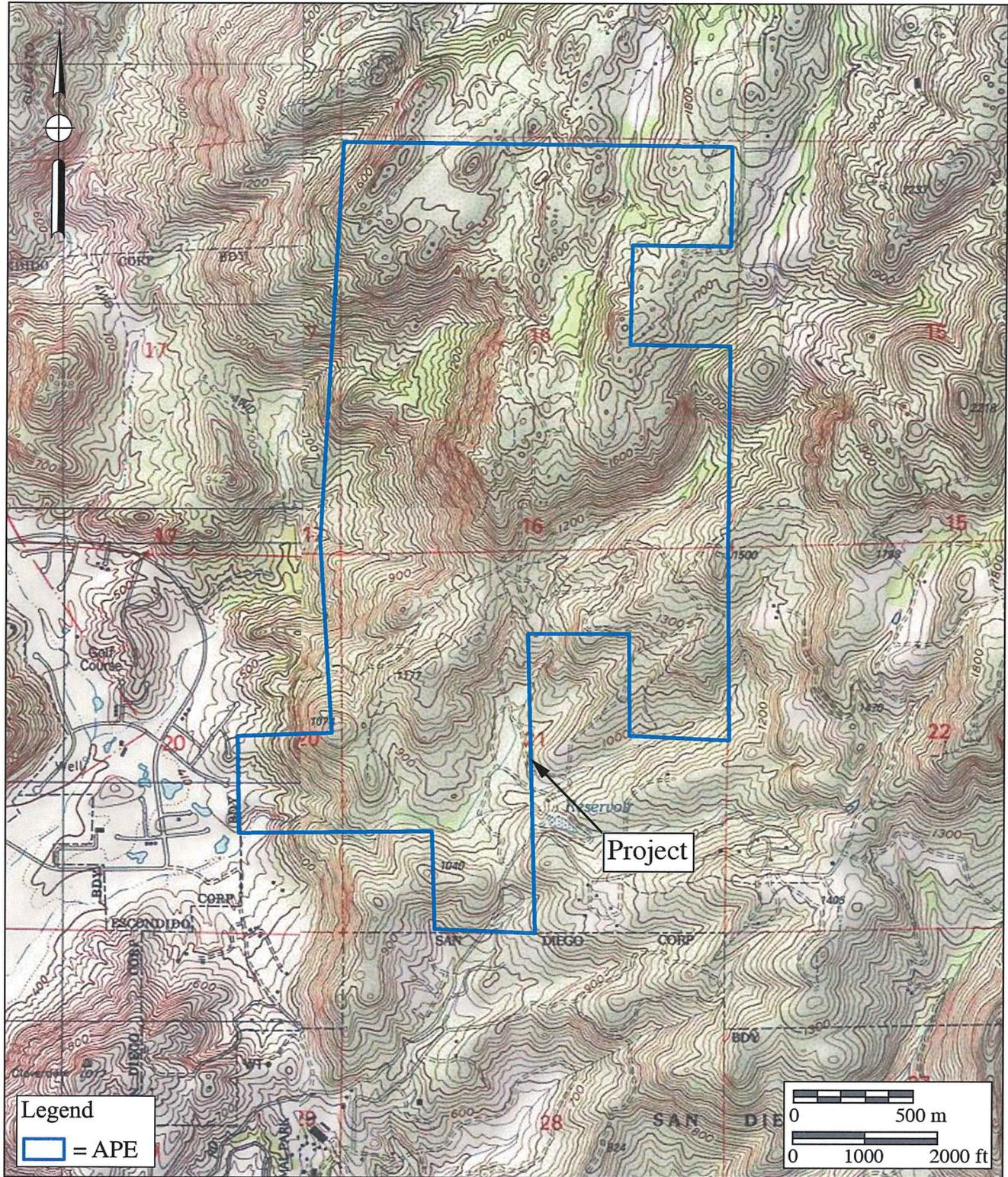


Figure 1

Project Location Map

The Safari Highlands Ranch Project

USGS *San Pasqual, Rodriguez Mountain, Escondido, and Valley Center* Quadrangles (7.5-minute series)





Illustrative Site Plan

Figure 2