

SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY

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Agenda Item 17
SMMC
2/27/17



December 12, 2016

Samuel Dea
County of Los Angeles
Department of Regional Planning
Special Projects Section, 13th floor, Room 1362
320 West Temple Street
100 Civic Center Way
Los Angeles, California 90012

Mission Village Project - Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 61105
Draft Recirculated Environmental Impact Report Comments
Project No. 04-181 - SCH No. 2005051143

Dear Mr. Dea:

The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (Conservancy) offers the following comments on the Draft Re-circulated Environmental Impact Report (DRP-EIR) for the Mission Village project within the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan. The Conservancy as the principal State planning agency for the subject area finds that the DRP-EIR remains deficient for multiple reasons. Because of the statewide importance of the subject Santa Clara River property and the interrelated tract maps and separate EIRs comprising the five villages of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan, and because of the complexity and magnitude of new environmental analysis, the Conservancy requests a 45 day extension of the comment period for additional review and potential comments.

Greenhouse Gas Emission from 28.9 Million Cubic Yards of Grading

At a minimum the project would require 28.9 million cubic yards of grading (not factoring in any allowance for remedial grading) to provide 4055 residences, a school, library, bus transfer station, one million square feet of commercial space, multiple roads, a bridge through the Santa Clara River, water systems, and sewer systems. The greenhouse gas emissions from moving 28.9 million cubic yards of earth and constructing all of the above listed facilities are an unavoidable significant adverse impact. Those proposed emissions cannot come close to being adequately offset (no net increase) by the 13 GHG emissions mitigation measures contained in the DRP-EIR. Of those 13 mitigation measures installing electric car charging stations and purchasing unspecified carbon credits will not offset the

diesel emissions from cutting, moving, shaping, and compacting 28.9 million cubic yards of earth. A statement of overriding considerations must be adopted unless there is a significant reduction in GHG emissions from project construction alone. The DRP-EIR is deficient for not addressing why the GHG construction emissions from the four other Newhall Ranch Specific Plan villages and their connecting infrastructure is not addressed as a cumulative GHG emission impact. Did the baseline level of GHG emissions reflect the exact agricultural conditions that currently exist on the site at the end of 2016?

Santa Clara River Impacts and Unarmored Threespine Stickleback Endangered Fish

The DRP-EIR further remains deficient because its analysis of potential impacts both to Santa Clara River riparian habitat and potential adverse impacts to the unarmored threespine stickleback assume a static river flood plain over multiple years if not decades. The analysis is based on the proposed project river bank stabilization freezing the site's active channels without exploring the effect of doing so on the river's hydrology, geomorphology, and ecology. The flooding potential of the river is too great to make tidy assumptions—such as that the proposed Commerce Center Bridge location will not go through or adjacent to future areas that contain unarmored threespine stickleback fish. What happens in that case—would the bridge not be built? The DRP-EIR does not address that potential condition. The only solution is to build 300 feet of flexibility into the potential Commerce Center Drive bridge location to create adequate odds that bridge construction will not have either significant direct or indirect adverse impacts to occupied unarmored threespine stickleback habitat if they exist in the proposed alignment during any part of the construction period.

The EPA review of the documentation to date found that basic assumptions about erosiveness and sedimentation rates in the project area were erroneous. Flawed assumptions are not a good foundation on which to base a complex analysis and impact assessment. Such potential flaws may not have direct bearing on the potential take of unarmored threespine stickleback from bridge construction, however they would on the function of a river that has been substantially narrowed and boxed in by the proposed bank stabilization. In a high water condition, the artificially narrowed river may reset the hydrology such that prime habitat for endangered fish is created directly in the pathway of one of the proposed Specific Plan bridges over the Santa Clara River.

Mission Village Project DRP-EIR Comments

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The DRP-EIR is not clear if every bridge span needs to be a minimum of 165 feet over the river or just those span wetted surface areas. All spans should be a minimum of 165 feet to maximize natural hydrological and ecological conditions in the river. It is important for the DRP-EIR to address the level of street lighting spillage into the riparian ecosystem.

The DRP-EIR makes numerous references to the San Jose Flats area bank stabilization construction but is deficient for not including any figures that show and label the area.

The project involves the construction of temporary haul route bridge across the river that can remain in place for three years. The DRP-EIR and its appendices conclude that the temporary bridges would not result in the take of unarmored threespine stickleback fish. However, the DRP-EIR is deficient if the unrecirculated portion of the DEIR does not address how such temporary bridges could affect wildlife movement, nesting birds, reptiles, and amphibians over the course of three years.

Please contact Paul Edelman, Deputy Director of Natural Resources and Planning, at 310-589-3200, ext. 128 with any questions and mail all future project correspondence to his attention at the above letterhead address.

Sincerely,

IRMA MUÑOZ
Chairperson

SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY

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October 24, 2011

Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
Executive Office
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Mission Village Project, County Project No. 04-181-(5)
Landmark Village Project, County Project No. 00-196-(5)
Newhall Ranch Specific Plan Area

Honorable Board Members:

The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (Conservancy) remains concerned about the impact the proposed projects would have on the Santa Clara River watershed. Our attached Mission Village Project DEIR comment letter outlines many of those concerns, the foremost of which is the lack of sufficient buffer along the Santa Clara River corridor and the extensive hydrological engineering of the watershed. A review of the hydrology studies upon which both the Mission Village and Newhall Ranch Resource Management and Development Plan environmental impact reports are based found substantial deficiencies and discrepancies that challenge their use as substantial evidence under CEQA. This Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-commissioned review, also attached, found that the environmental studies vastly underestimated the extent of the active channel, utilized inappropriate or incomplete data sets, and made incorrect assumptions about sediment flows and river geomorphology.

At the core of these findings is that the project proposes to freeze the site's active channels without exploring the effect of doing so on Santa Clara River hydrology, geomorphology, or ecology. This feat requires a complex system of bank armoring, channel grade stabilization, and other engineering techniques. The EPA review found that basic assumptions about erosiveness and sedimentation rates in the project area were erroneous. All proposed engineering treatments were designed based on these flawed assumptions.

The net result is that the unpredictable effects of the project's alteration of sediment flows will likely lead to erosion of the remaining unarmored river banks, loss of property, and ultimately ecological degradation as the last free-flowing reaches are stabilized in response to the changing forces.

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The Conservancy hopes that these issues can be clarified before final approval of the project. To provide the best available information to decision makers, environmental impact reports should only be based on accurate data and valid assumptions. Recent advancement in Santa Clara River watershed geomorphology modeling calls into question the adequacy of the current environmental studies.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. If you have any questions, I can be reached at (310) 589-3200, ext. 128.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Edelman", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

PAUL EDELMAN

Deputy Director
Natural Resources and Planning

Attachments:

Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy letter on Mission Village Draft Environmental Impact Report dated November 8, 2010

Stillwater Sciences technical memorandum on Newhall Ranch RMDP-SCP Final EIS/EIR dated August 16, 2011

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Agenda Item 17
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2/27/17



November 8, 2010

Ms. Carolina Blengini
Los Angeles County
Department of Regional Planning
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

**Mission Village Draft Environmental Impact Report
Newhall Ranch Specific Plan Area
SCH# 2005051145**

Dear Ms. Blengini:

The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (Conservancy) is the principal State planning agency in the vicinity of the subject project. The Conservancy is greatly concerned about the loss of habitat area and impact to the Santa Clara River associated with the proposed project. We strongly disagree that the proposed project would not result in significant unavoidable impacts to biological resources because—quite specifically—the loss of almost 1,500 acres of any Santa Susana Mountains habitat is both significant and irreversible. This habitat loss is both individually and cumulatively significant in the context of the rapidly urbanizing Santa Clarita Valley. The project is proposed at a time when already permitted residential development more than meets demand for the next decade, but natural systems are straining in the face of continued urban expansion. The Santa Clara River is the longest free-flowing natural river in Southern California, providing habitat to a multitude of special status species and rare ecosystems. The impacts of rapid urbanization have cumulatively damaged the river ecosystem and continue threaten the valley's defining characteristics. The Conservancy offers the following specific comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR).

Environmental Review Process is Premature Before Army Corps and CDFG Decision

The Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) and California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) have yet to issue a joint record of decision for the proposed Newhall Ranch Resource Management and Development Plan and Spineflower Conservation Plan. Until such a time as this resource plan is approved, all environmental review is speculative in nature. A tiered, project-level DEIR must be detailed and specific to a degree of accuracy not possible until after the associated program-level resource plan is finalized. The DEIR review and public comment period must be extended until the responsible agencies

complete their record of decision. Otherwise, the public will not have an opportunity to analyze the specific biological resource-related repercussions and make informed comments on the tiered DEIR. The project described in the DEIR must have the flexibility to adapt to the final Corps and CDFG decision or risk invalidating the environmental document. That is a risk the applicants appear to be willing to assume by moving forward at this time.

Water Quality Mitigation Measures are Deficient

The DEIR appropriately identifies chloride contamination as a potential impact, however asserts that the additional chloride load will be less than significant. The aquatic ecosystem has already been impacted by high concentrations of chloride in the water. The projected increase in chloride contamination is cumulatively significant, yet the proposed mitigation measures do not address increased chloride levels in the natural environment. Chloride contamination has had a significant impact on the natural river ecosystem due to high levels in treated wastewater effluent and runoff from urban areas. The DEIR is deficient for failing to eliminate future projected increases in chloride levels from operation of the project.

In addition to failing to eliminate chloride contamination from new sources, the project would exacerbate existing contamination problems in two ways. First, the project proposes to pump groundwater from formations already contaminated with chloride. Pumping water from this source would increase surface contamination as this water reenters the environment as both runoff and effluent. Second, the project proposes to pipe or pump wastewater to the existing Valencia Wastewater Treatment Plant (WTP) in the interim until build-out of the specific plan justifies construction of the proposed Newhall WTP. However, the Valencia WTP is already out of compliance for chloride. Adding substantial new flows to the plant would compound its treatment problems. Again, the result would be higher chloride amounts in the natural environment even if Mission Village itself releases no new chloride. The only option to reduce this significant impact is partial or full construction of the proposed Newhall WTP as part of the current project. Routing wastewater to the Valencia WTP is not an environmentally acceptable alternative.

Proposed Project Does Not Seek to Avoid Impacts to Riparian Resources

Riparian corridors perform multiple core ecological functions including groundwater recharge, providing critical habitat, and facilitating wildlife movement. The proposed project would eliminate these ecosystem services on all Santa Clara River tributaries within the tract map. The proposed realignment and grading of Lion Canyon does not constitute preservation of riparian resources. The long-term health and verdancy of the Santa Clara

River ecosystem is directly dependant on the condition of its tributaries. Thus, the conversion of multiple blue line streams to buried storm drains and manufactured channels is significant. The Corps and CDFG process has shown that some of these tributaries can be avoided and still allow for large numbers of units.

The DEIR asserts that the conversion of the majority of the project site's tributaries to buried storm drain is not a significant impact to the site's hydrology. To the contrary, the project proposes to replace an entirely natural hydrological system with a completely artificial and mostly buried one. This is a significant and irreversible impact. Furthermore, the reduction of groundwater infiltration due to the increase in impermeable surface area is not analyzed. Given that the project relies exclusively on groundwater rights for water supply, this is a critical deficiency in the DEIR.

Water Supply is Questionable

Water quality in the Santa Clara River is critical to its ecological function. As required by the Specific Plan, the project proposes to supply the new development with pumped groundwater currently used for agriculture on the property. A thorough analysis of this water source's reliability and potential for contamination must be completed to ensure the sustainability of using local groundwater. Particularly close attention must be paid to the potential for perchlorate contamination to spread as additional water is withdrawn from the aquifer. In addition, the final EIR must contain a list of all the parcels (including APNs) to be fallowed in order to make this local water supply available.

River Buffer Area is Inadequate

The Santa Clara River's ecosystem is intricately linked with upland areas. In developing along the riverbank, the proposed project would sever these ties. The Specific Plan requires a 100-foot buffer between development areas and the top of the riverbank unless a specific finding can be made to permit less. The Conservancy maintains that this 100-foot buffer is grossly inadequate to protect the river and adjacent habitat areas from edge effects such as lighting, noise, domestic animals, and invasive species. The 100-foot radius is less than the perimeter required for brush clearance, leaving no unaltered native habitat on the river terrace. The Center for Biological Diversity recommended a minimum 300-foot buffer for the river area. Several residential lots are within even the 100-foot buffer. All lots that are within the buffer area must be realigned or eliminated to ensure continuity of the river corridor. In addition, water quality basins and other infrastructure should likewise be located outside a minimum-width defined natural buffer area.

Newhall High Country Must be Partially Dedicated

The proposed project will pass the 2,000 dwelling unit threshold requiring dedication of one-third (approximately 1,400 acres) of the Newhall High Country open space area to a joint powers agency with the appropriate County conservation easements. A specific timeline for the completion of this transfer must be included in the final EIR mitigation measures and project description.

Rearrangement of Proposed Land Uses Would Reduce Impacts to River Terrace

The proposed Spineflower Preserve east of Commerce Center Drive would be biologically isolated and unsustainable in the long term. The fragmentation of open space reduces its utility to medium-sized and large animals. The proposed management framework relies too heavily on active interventions should populations decline in the future, rather than preventative measures such as ensuring high-quality protection and connectivity. Mitigation measure SP 4.6-76 requires a reassessment of potential impacts to spineflower populations in each project-level EIR. The tenets of conservation biology dictate that preserves should be designed to maximize buffer area width, minimize fragmentation, maximize habitat connectivity, and maximize preserve size to allow for population fluctuation. Given the constraints of the proposed Commerce Center Drive, the Spineflower Preserve requires a stronger connection to the river to increase its viability as a general habitat area.

The Conservancy proposes an alternative that relocates the northernmost mixed-use area to the southwest side of Commerce Center Drive, leaving the prominent river terrace area as an open space link between the Spineflower Preserve and the river. There is zero development advantage for the proposed project's siting over this alternative because primary access is still from Commerce Center Drive. In fact, locating the mixed-use center closer to condominiums and single-family residential enables greater pedestrian and bicycle access to the center than its current isolated configuration on the opposite side of a major arterial street, furthering many of the project's stated goals. The Conservancy alternative closely reflects the original proposed densities in the Specific Plan for this area. Any lost single-family units can be replaced by reducing the lot size of the large-lot parcels in the western part of the tract map area. The attached figure illustrates this environmentally superior alternative.

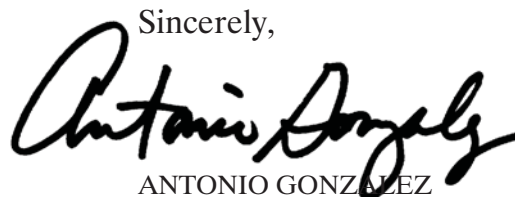
Unlike Alternative 3, the Expanded Spineflower Preserve Alternative, the Conservancy's proposed alternative would not reduce the number of number of housing units to be

Ms. Carolina Blengini
Mission Village DEIR, Newhall Ranch Specific Plan Area
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developed. It would maintain the full range of housing types offered by the proposed project. Additionally, this proposed alternative would still construct Commerce Center Drive, maintaining direct access to SR-126. The alternative would not result in a reduction in the tax base as all uses would continue to be accommodated, maintaining the total property value of the project. This proposed alternative would not reduce any significant public benefits in comparison to the proposed project and would satisfy all goals and objectives of the Specific Plan with less environmental impact. Furthermore, the increased viability of the Spineflower Preserve would reduce the potential for costly ecological intervention.

In conclusion, the Conservancy finds the DEIR to be premature and deficient in multiple respects. The design of this project was not premised on impact-avoidance and instead continues a pattern of wholesale landform alteration and habitat loss in the Santa Clarita Valley. Further environmental review of the current project proposal is inappropriate until the responsible agencies issue their record of decision. Under no circumstances should the County use this environmental document as the basis for any decision until that time. Failure to abide by the correct process in this respect would gravely undermine the County's environmental review process and make decisions legally vulnerable.

If you have any questions, please contact Paul Edelman of our staff at (310) 589-3200 ext. 128.

Sincerely,

ANTONIO GONZALEZ
Chairperson



Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning

Planning for the Challenges Ahead



Richard J. Bruckner
Director

**NOTICE OF LOCAL PUBLIC MEETING
NOTICE OF COMPLETION AND AVAILABILITY
OF DRAFT RECIRCULATED PORTIONS OF THE EIR FOR
MISSION VILLAGE PROJECT
COUNTY PROJECT NO. 04-181
VESTING TENTATIVE TRACT MAP NO. 61105
SEA CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. RCUP200500080
OAK TREE PERMIT NO. ROAK200500032
OAK TREE PERMIT NO. 200500043
CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. (OFF-SITE IMPROVEMENTS) 200500081
(ON-SITE AND OFF-SITE GRADING AND IMPROVEMENTS)
PARKING PERMIT NO. 200500011
SUBSTANTIAL CONFORMANCE REVIEW NO. 201000001
STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NO. 2005051143**

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The Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, acting in the capacity of "Lead Agency" under the County Environmental Guidelines, Chapter III, Section 304, has filed this "Notice of Completion and Availability" of the Draft Recirculated Portions of the EIR (County-EIR) for the Mission Village project (Project). Mission Village is one of five villages within the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan approved by the Board of Supervisors (Board) for the County of Los Angeles (County) in 2003. The County-EIR provides the response to court directives issued in the related California Supreme Court decision in *Center for Biological Diversity v. California Department of Fish and Wildlife* (2015) 62 Cal.4th 204 (CBD). The CBD decision provides the substantive direction needed in the related Mission Village litigation (*California Native Plant Society v. County of Los Angeles*, Appellate No. B258090; Los Angeles County No. BS138001) for the County to revisit two legal issues in connection with the Board's May 2012 decision to approve the Mission Village Project, namely, the previously-certified Mission Village Environmental Impact Report's (EIR) analysis of the Project's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and the two mitigation measures for the unarmored threespine stickleback (stickleback). Accordingly, County-EIR reevaluates the Project's GHG emissions and stickleback mitigation, consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the two referenced court decisions.

The County-EIR has been prepared in accordance with, and pursuant to, CEQA, Public Resources Code sections 21000 et seq.; and the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (State CEQA Guidelines), California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 15000 et seq. (including section 15160).

PUBLIC REVIEW/COMMENT PERIOD

The public review/comment period for the County-EIR will be from November 17, 2016 through January 17, 2017 (62 days). All comments received by the close of the public review/comment period will be considered in the Project's Final Recirculated Portions of the EIR (FRP-EIR).

Because the County is recirculating only the revised portions of the EIR for the Mission Village Project, the County is only seeking comments to the revised portions of the recirculated EIR. (See CEQA Guidelines section 15088.5(f).)

PROJECT SITE LOCATION

The Project site is located in unincorporated Los Angeles County and the Santa Clarita Valley Planning Area (Valley Planning Area). Specifically, the Project site is located within the northeastern corner of Newhall Ranch in western unincorporated Los Angeles County, south of the Santa Clara River and State Route 126 (SR-126), and west of Interstate 5 (I-5). The project applicant proposes to develop the Mission Village project, which would be constructed on 1,261.8 acres of property located primarily within the boundary of the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan (of the 1,261.8-acre tract map, approximately 39.1 acres are located outside the Specific Plan boundaries).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Mission Village is one of five villages within the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan, a large-scale mixed-used community located in unincorporated Santa Clarita Valley in northwestern Los Angeles County. The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors approved the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan in 2003. The Specific Plan guides the long-term development and conservation of the 11,999-acre Newhall Ranch community, which includes a broad range of residential, mixed-use, commercial/retail uses within five villages.

The Mission Village Project includes development of the 1,261.8-acre Mission Village tract map (Vesting Tentative Tract Map (VTTM 61105)). As approved by the County Board of Supervisors on May 15, 2012, Mission Village would provide 4,055 homes (specifically, 351 single-family and 3,704 multi-family homes) and 1,555,100 square feet of commercial (retail/office) uses. The Project also would include a 9.5-acre elementary school, 3.3-acre library, 1.5-acre fire station, 1.2-acre bus transfer station, and approximately 693 acres of open space (including parks, recreation areas, Santa Clara River area, and three spineflower preserves located on 85.8 acres). Mission Village also would include supporting facilities and infrastructure, including roads, the Commerce Center Drive Bridge, trails, drainage improvements, flood protection, potable and recycled water systems, a sanitary sewer system, and dry utilities systems.

To facilitate development of the Mission Village tract map site, Project-related improvements are proposed for construction on an additional 592.8 acres of land outside the tract map boundary. These off-site improvements include a utility corridor, the extension of Magic Mountain Parkway roadway and related improvements, a water quality basin, three water tanks, a Southern California Edison electrical substation, and two debris basins. Additional off-site development would include work associated with the Lion Canyon drainage, grading associated with construction of the northerly extension of Westridge Parkway and the southerly extension of Commerce Center Drive, and miscellaneous grading to tie proposed grades into natural grades; the total amount of grading (for the tract map and off-site improvements) is estimated at 28.9 million cubic yards.

PROJECT APPROVALS

The Project would require approval of the County entitlements listed below to the extent directed by the court pursuant to the above-referenced Mission Village litigation. However, with the exception of modified construction methods for bridges, the County has not made any changes to Mission Village's prior Project approvals, nor any changes to the Mission Village land use plan, development footprint, or Project boundary. The Mission Village project approvals are listed and summarized below:

- (a) **Vesting Tentative Tract Map No. 61105.** Vesting Tentative Tract Map to subdivide the Mission Village site into 351 single-family lots, 43 condominium lots for 3,704 multifamily units, 11 mixed-use lots, and lots for, among other uses, the Spineflower Preserves, recreation, fire station, bus transfer station, library, parks, school site, and open space. The proposed map would subdivide the site into a total of 621 lots.
- (b) **SEA Conditional Use Permit No. RCUP200500080.** On May 27, 2003, the County's Board of Supervisors approved a program-level SEA Conditional Use Permit, SEA CUP No. 94-087-(5), as part of the Board's project approvals for the Newhall Ranch Specific Plan. SEA CUP No. 94-087-(5) approved: (a) adjustments to the existing boundaries of SEA 23, consistent with County of Los Angeles General Plan policies requiring protection of natural resources within SEAs; and (b) Specific Plan development within the SEA boundaries, including bridge crossings (i.e., Commerce Center Drive Bridge), trails, bank stabilization and other improvements. The approved SEA boundary adjustments were found to be consistent with the adopted Specific Plan, which established a Specific Plan "Special Management Area" (SMA) designation over the adjusted SEA 23 boundaries. Although the adjusted SEA 23 boundaries were designated as the River Corridor SMA in the adopted Specific Plan, the County's underlying SEA 23 designation remains in effect.

As part of the Mission Village Project Approvals, a project-level SEA Conditional Use Permit would provide the County with a regulatory framework for determining if the Mission Village development within the approved River Corridor SMA/SEA 23 boundaries is consistent with both the adopted Specific Plan and previously approved program-level SEA CUP No. 94-087-(5). Specifically, the proposed project-level improvements within the River Corridor SMA/SEA 23 include the Commerce Center Drive Bridge, neighborhood park, access roads, and easements, grading, trails, water quality basins, bank stabilization, water and sewer utility crossings, utility corridor, storm drain outlets, and potential riparian mitigation sites.

The County of Los Angeles General Plan requires that any development proposal within an SEA be reviewed for compliance with certain "design compatibility criteria." The Los Angeles County Zoning Code implements this General Plan requirement. In addition, the General Plan requires that an application for an SEA CUP must undergo an "SEA Performance Review." This process involves review of the application by the appointed Significant Ecological Area Technical Advisory Committee (SEATAC). SEATAC reviews the application and accompanying biological resources report for adequacy, and makes recommendations for final project design. Such recommendations are then considered by the Los Angeles County Regional Planning Commission.

- (c) **Oak Tree Permit No. ROAK200500032.** The County Zoning Code contains provisions protecting trees of the oak genus. As a result, the removal or damage of certain "protected" oak trees is unlawful without a permit (Los Angeles County Zoning Code, Section 22.56.2050). An Oak Tree Permit would authorize the removal of 143 of the 501 oak trees and encroachment of 50 oak trees located on the Project site. Of the 143 removals, 6 trees are also covered by ROAK00-196 for

Landmark Village. Project conditions will require replacement trees to be provided at a ratio of 2 to 1 for each oak tree removed and at a 10 to 1 ratio for each Heritage Oak tree removed.

- (d) **Oak Tree Permit No. 200500043.** The County Zoning Code contains provisions protecting trees of the oak genus. As a result, the removal or damage of certain “protected” oak trees is unlawful without a permit (Los Angeles County Zoning Code, Section 22.56.2050). This Oak Tree Permit would authorize the removal of 11 of the 63 oak trees and encroachment of 2 oak trees located within the easterly extension of Magic Mountain Parkway east of the Project site. Project conditions will require replacement trees to be provided at a ratio of 2 to 1 for each oak tree removed and at a 10 to 1 ratio for each Heritage Oak tree removed.
- (e) **Conditional Use Permit No. RCUP200500081.** This CUP authorizes development of 73 second dwelling units, care facilities associated with the proposed continued care retirement community, onsite grading and development of project related infrastructure (including water tanks and utilities; necessary off-site grading associated with the extension of Westridge Parkway and Commerce Center Drive; the construction and grading for off-site improvements, including the extension of Magic Mountain Parkway; and the development of a utility corridor, a water quality basin, an electrical substation, and water tanks).
- (f) **Parking Permit RPK200500011.** The parking permit allows for off-site and reciprocal parking across lot lines.
- (g) **Substantial Conformance Review Determinations.** The adopted Newhall Ranch Specific Plan contains “substantial conformance” provisions. The purpose of the substantial conformance provisions is to determine whether proposed developments or uses substantially comply with the standards, regulations, and guidelines of the Specific Plan and other applicable Los Angeles County ordinances that do not conflict with the Specific Plan. Substantial conformance determinations are sought as to the following: (a) that grading conforms with the Grading and Hillside Management Guidelines in the Specific Plan; and (b) that modifications to certain setback requirements in the Village Center substantially conform with the Specific Plan’s site development standards.

The County also will require additional ministerial actions, such as building plan review, grading permits, and building permits prior to actual grading and construction of the proposed improvements. Numerous federal, state, and regional public agencies previously have considered permits and authorizations needed to implement the County-approved Newhall Ranch Specific Plan, which includes the Project site.

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

The following is a summary of the impacts associated with the Project with regard to (i) global climate change/greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and (ii) “take” avoidance of the unarmored threespine stickleback. Based on the analysis provided in the County-EIR, Project impacts with regard to these two issues would be mitigated to a less than significant level. Specifically, the recommended mitigation measures will reduce, mitigate, and offset 100 percent of the Project’s GHG emissions, allowing the Project to achieve net zero GHG emissions. In addition, while the Mission Village litigation did not contain any briefing or court rulings with regard to “take” of stickleback, in light of the Supreme Court’s *CBD*

decision, Mission Village mitigation measures, specifically MV 4.3-8 and MV 4.3-9¹, have been eliminated based on the Project's modified construction methods and new mitigation measures applicable to the Mission Village project.

LOCAL PUBLIC MEETING

A local public meeting to receive comments concerning environmental issues addressed in the County-EIR has been scheduled in the Santa Clarita Valley for January 12, 2017, starting at 6:00 p.m. and ending after the last testifier or 9:00 p.m., whichever comes first, at Rancho Pico Junior High School, 26250 W. Valencia Boulevard, Westridge, California 91381. Oral comments made at the public meeting will be transcribed so written responses can be provided as part of the FRP-EIR.

REVIEWING LOCATIONS

To ensure public access to the County-EIR, copies are available for review at the following County and City of Santa Clarita libraries:

- Valencia Library, 23743 W. Valencia Boulevard, Santa Clarita
- Castaic Library, 27971 Sloan Canyon Road, Castaic
- Stevenson Ranch Library, 25950 The Old Road, Stevenson Ranch
- Old Town Newhall Library, 24500 Main Street, Santa Clarita
- Canyon Country Jo Anne Darcy Library, 18601 Soledad Canyon Road, Santa Clarita

A copy of the County-EIR also will be available for public review Monday through Thursday, 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. at:

County of Los Angeles
Department of Regional Planning
Special Projects Section, 13th floor, Room 1362
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

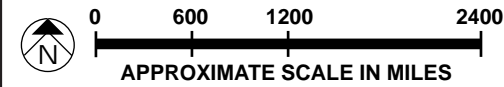
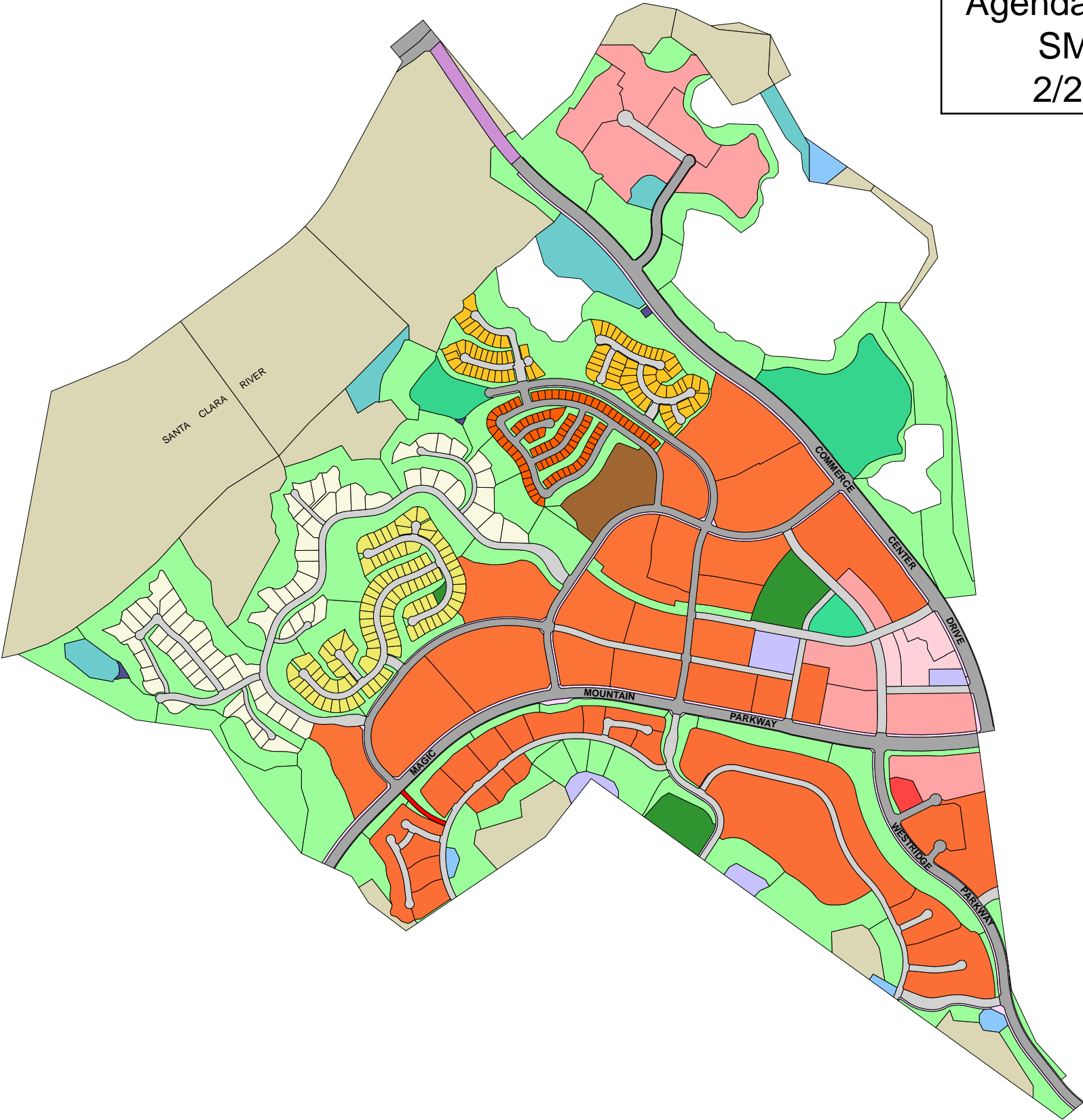
An electronic version of the County-EIR also is available on the Department's website at <http://planning.lacounty.gov/case/view/mvdaa>.

Please submit written comments on the County-EIR to Mr. Samuel Dea of the Department of Regional Planning at the above address. You may also fax your written comments to (213) 626-0434, or email to specialprojects@planning.lacounty.gov. Should you have any questions, please call (213) 974-4808.

Signature of Lead Agency Representative  Date 11/11/10

¹ Because Mission Village EIR mitigation measures MV 4.3-2, 4.3-10, 4.3-11, and 4.3-12 also contemplated Santa Clara River stream diversion and/or other river-related activities that could relocate and thereby affect unarmored threespine stickleback, those measures have been eliminated from the Mission Village EIR as well, as no longer necessary due to modified bridge design and construction methods.

Legend



SOURCE: Hunsaker & Associates - 2016

FIGURE 1.0-1

