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**NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF AN
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
FOR THE
YOUNG RANCH RESIDENTIAL PROJECT**

Date: September 7, 2016

Project Applicant: YCS Investments

File Number: 10256-14CSP-14Z

Assessor Parcel Numbers: 678-15-016, 678-12-001, 678-12-003, 678-12-004, 678-01-018, and 729-57-003

As the Lead Agency, the County of Santa Clara will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed Young Ranch Residential Project and would like your views regarding the scope and content of the environmental information to be included in the EIR. A brief description of the proposed project, its site boundary, and a summary of the potential environmental effects are attached. The EIR may be used by your agency when considering approvals for the project.

A Public Scoping Meeting to solicit comments for EIR preparation will be held at the Evergreen Community Center, located at 4860 San Felipe Rd, San Jose on **Thursday, September 22, 2016, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.** According to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) the deadline for your response is 30 days after receipt of this notice. However, an earlier response, if possible, would be appreciated. Please identify a contact person and send your response to:

County of Santa Clara Planning Office
Attention: David Rader
70 West Hedding, 7th Floor, East Wing
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E-mail: david.rader@pln.sccgov.org; Phone: (408) 299-5779

Prepared by:

David Rader, Senior Planner

Signature

9-7-16

Date

Approved by:

Manira Sandhir, Principal Planner, AICP

Signature

9-7-16

Date

Board of Supervisors: Mike Wasserman, Cindy Chavez, Dave Cortese, Ken Yeager, S. Joseph Simitian
County Executive: Jeffrey V. Smith

Introduction

The purpose of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is to inform decision-makers and the general public of the environmental effects of a proposed project that an agency may implement or approve. The EIR process is intended to provide information sufficient to (a) evaluate a proposed project and its potential for significant impacts on the environment, (b) to examine methods of reducing adverse impacts; and (c) to consider alternatives to the project.

The EIR for the proposed project will be prepared and processed in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as amended. In accordance with the requirements of CEQA, the EIR for the proposed project will include the following:

- A project description;
- A description of existing environmental setting, potential project-level and cumulative environmental impacts, and mitigation measures;
- Alternatives to the proposed project; and
- CEQA-required environmental findings, including (a) significant environmental effects that cannot be avoided if the project is implemented; (b) significant irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources; (c) growth-inducing impacts; and (d) effects found not to be significant.

Project Location

The 2,150-acre proposed project location (the “project site”) is southeast of downtown San Jose along Coyote Ridge, which runs along the eastern side of the Santa Clara Valley (see Figure 1, Local and Regional Map). The project site consists of six parcels as indicated in Figure 2, Parcel Map. The two northernmost parcels (Parcels A and B) are in unincorporated Santa Clara County (collectively the “County Parcels”) and total approximately 906 acres. The remaining four parcels (Parcels C, D, E, and F) are in the City of San Jose (collectively the “City Parcels”) and total approximately 1,244 acres.

Project Description

YCS Investments, Inc. (the applicant) has submitted a Preliminary Development Plan for a Cluster Subdivision (Young Ranch Residential Project [the proposed project]). The proposed project consists of 79 “homesites” and a 4,000-square-foot community center on the 2,150-acre Young Ranch property. All project improvements would be undertaken on the two County parcels in the northern portion of the site, except for improvements to an emergency access road crossing the four City parcels. Figure 3 shows the conceptual site plan. As required by the County’s cluster development policies, all single-family homes would be on two-acre minimum lots. The applicant has also applied for a Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment intended to allow for the transfer of density from parcels located within the City’s jurisdiction to parcels located within the County’s jurisdiction resulting in a higher residential density for the proposed cluster subdivision.

After construction of initial infrastructure, individual lots would be sold to homeowners or custom homebuilders who would construct all residences, including single-family homes and secondary units, in accordance with the Design Guidelines and Standards for the project, which include home site diagrams for each lot identifying the improvement envelope, maximum building coverage and maximum building height (see Figure 4, Sample Homesite Diagram). It is assumed for purposes of environmental analysis that typical single-family residences would be up to 5,000 square feet (SF) in area, with 5 bedrooms and 5

occupants per residence. The proposed project would include up to 16 secondary units, 4 of which would be permanently dedicated to affordable housing. Secondary units are assumed to be up to 800 SF in area, with 2 bedrooms and 2 occupants per residence.

Open space within the portion of the project site planned for the homesites and community center would be managed in a natural state through dedication of an open space easement that would be owned by the County. In addition to this managed open space area, the applicant has proposed an approximately 1,940-acre natural preserve on the City parcels as well as on part of the County parcels to be preserved as open space in perpetuity and managed in support of the sensitive habitats and species that occur there.

Environmental Review Topics

The EIR will analyze potential impacts, identify mitigation measures, and indicate whether the proposed mitigation measures would reduce potentially significant environmental impacts to a less-than-significant level. The EIR also will evaluate a no project alternative, which will assume that no changes would occur to affect existing conditions at the project site; and additional project alternatives that potentially could reduce or avoid any significant environmental impacts associated with the proposed project and variant. As part of the review process under CEQA, the County Planning Department will convene a public scoping meeting at which public comments will be solicited on the issues to be covered in the EIR. Specific environmental topics that will be evaluated in the EIR include:

Aesthetics

The project site is currently undeveloped hills used for grazing. The project would involve developing the northern portion of the project site with 79 residential lots and a community center, which could alter the appearance of the project site once the residences and associated roads and infrastructure are constructed. The EIR will evaluate visual impacts that would result from development of the cluster subdivision and propose mitigation measures, if warranted. Cumulative impacts will also be assessed.

Agriculture and Forestry Resources

The project site is currently used for stock grazing. The proposed project would convert approximately 203 acres of the project site to residential and associated non-agricultural land uses. The remaining approximately 1947 acres of open space would be permanently preserved. The EIR will analyze the impacts of the project on agricultural resources. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted. Cumulative impacts will also be assessed.

Air Quality

The proposed project would involve fuel combustion emissions during both construction of the subdivision improvements, as well as construction of future residences. The EIR will evaluate construction emissions from grading and building activities. The EIR will also include analysis of the long-term emissions resulting from occupancy of the residences. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted. Cumulative impacts will also be assessed.

Biological Resources

The project site is known to contain habitat for a variety of special-status wildlife species, including Bay checkerspot butterfly, California red-legged frog, and California tiger salamander. The project site also contains large areas of serpentine grasslands, which include several special-status plant species, and other sensitive communities such as wetlands. Various biological resource reports have been submitted by the applicant and will be peer reviewed as part of the EIR. The EIR will describe special status, threatened, and

endangered species and their habitats on the project site. The EIR will describe biological resources impacts that that would result from implementation of the proposed project. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted. Cumulative impacts will also be assessed.

Cultural Resources

Based on past investigations of the project site, there is potential for archaeological resources to occur within the project area. The EIR will describe how the proposed project would impact cultural resources (both historical and prehistorical). Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted. Cumulative impacts will also be assessed.

Geology/Soils

Geological maps show that the project site contains seismic hazard zones and identified hazards (e.g., landslides). The EIR will describe the geology, seismology, and soil conditions of the project site, particularly where project improvements, such as homesites and septic fields, the Community Center, access roads, and utilities, are proposed. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted. Cumulative impacts will also be assessed.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The EIR will evaluate greenhouse gas emissions from grading and building activities. The EIR will also include analysis of the long-term emissions resulting from occupancy of the residences and use of the Community Center. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted. Cumulative impacts will also be assessed.

Hazards & Hazardous Materials

A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment has been prepared for the project site by the applicant. The EIR will assess the findings of this report and analyze the potential for project construction workers and future residents to be exposed to hazardous materials. The EIR will also assess potential impacts related to other hazards such as wildland fires. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted. Cumulative impacts will also be assessed.

Hydrology/Water Quality

The EIR will describe construction-related and long-term hydrology and storm water quality impacts, based on preliminary grading plans for the proposed roadways and improvements, and future development of each lot. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted. Cumulative impacts will also be assessed.

Land Use/Planning

The EIR will address the project's consistency with the County's General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and other planning or policy documents that relate to development of the project site, including a summary of the project's consistency with City of San Jose policy documents. The EIR will address the project's compatibility with surrounding land uses. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted. Cumulative impacts will also be assessed.

Mineral Resources

The EIR will assess potential impacts that construction or operation of the proposed project may have on existing mineral resources, as identified in the County's General Plan. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted. Cumulative impacts will also be assessed.

Noise

The EIR will assess the potential noise generated by project construction activities, describe how such noise could affect nearby sensitive receptors, and also evaluate long-term noise impacts from occupancy of the project site. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted. Cumulative impacts will also be assessed.

Population/Housing

The EIR will assess potential impacts that construction or operation of the proposed project may have on population and housing in the context of regional and County population and housing projections. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted. Cumulative impacts will also be assessed.

Public Services

The EIR will include an analysis of whether local police, fire, and other emergency services have the capacity to serve the 79 proposed primary residences (and up to 16 secondary units) at the project site, and whether the proposed roadways will provide adequate access for these services. The EIR will also analyze the capacity of the local school system to accommodate the demand likely to be created by the addition of up to 95 new residences on this project site. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts as warranted. Cumulative impacts will also be assessed.

Recreation

The EIR will analyze potential impacts of the project on existing recreational uses in the project vicinity. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted. Cumulative impacts will also be assessed.

Transportation/Traffic

The proposed residential development would generate construction-related and long-term traffic trips on Silver Creek Valley Road. The EIR will include analysis of the traffic study submitted by the applicant and will assess the impacts of this new traffic on roadway segments and intersections in the area, along with impacts on other transportation modes. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted. Cumulative impacts will also be assessed.

Utilities/Service Systems

The EIR will include an analysis of whether existing utility services have the capacity to serve the 79 proposed primary residences (and up to 16 secondary units) proposed for the project site. The EIR will also assess whether the project would comply with relevant regulations relating to solid waste. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted. Cumulative impacts will also be assessed.

Other CEQA Issues

Pursuant to CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines, the EIR also will analyze a range of alternatives to reduce or avoid the potentially significant environmental impacts identified in the EIR, including a no project alternative, as described in Section 15126.6 of the State CEQA Guidelines. Other topics for analysis

required by CEQA—including growth-inducing impacts; significant unavoidable impacts; significant irreversible impacts—also will be addressed.

Finding

The proposed project may have a significant effect on the environment, and an EIR will be prepared. This determination is based on the criteria of the State CEQA Guidelines, Sections 15064 (Determining Significant Effect) and 15065 (Mandatory Findings of Significance). The purpose of the EIR will be to provide information about potential significant physical environmental impacts of the proposed project, identify possible ways to minimize the potentially significant impacts, and describe and analyze possible alternatives to the proposed project. Publication of a Notice of Preparation or EIR does not indicate a decision by the City to approve or disapprove a proposed project. However, before making any such decision, the decision makers must review and consider the EIR.

Public Scoping Process

Pursuant to the State of California Public Resources Code Section 21083.9 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15206, a public scoping meeting (see above) will be held to receive oral comments concerning the scope of the EIR. Written comments will also be accepted at this meeting and until 5:00 p.m. on October 6, 2016.

If you work for a responsible State agency, we need to know the views of your agency regarding the scope and content of the environmental information that is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Your agency may need to use the EIR when considering a permit or other approval for this project. Please include the name of a contact person in your agency.

Members of the public are not required to provide personal identifying information when they communicate with the Planning Department. All written or oral communications, including submitted personal contact information, may be made available to the public for inspection and copying upon request and may appear on the Planning Department's website or in other public document.



Figure 3 – Conceptual Project Site Plan

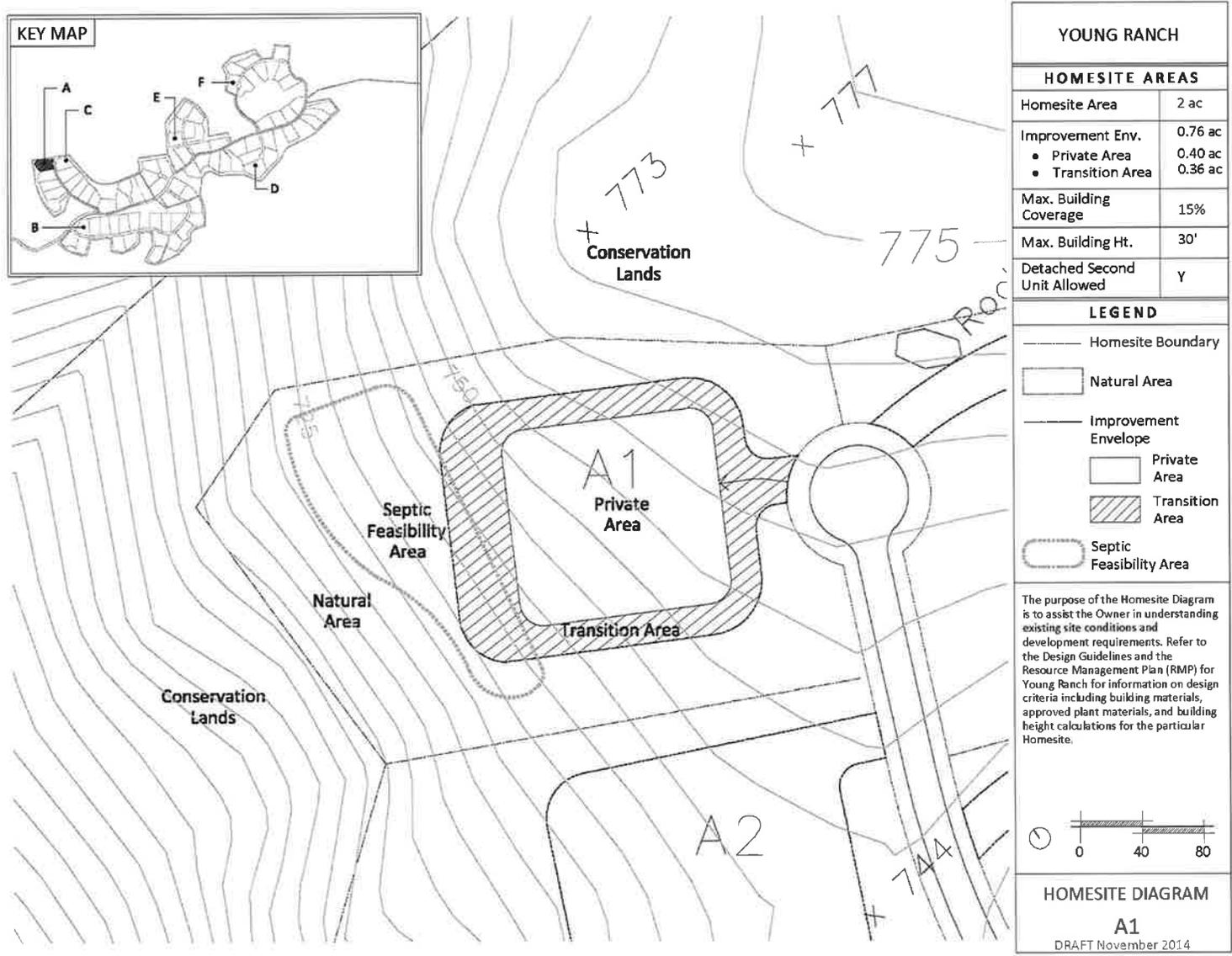


Figure 4 – Sample Homesite Diagram