

**ADDENDUM
TO THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
FOR THE PROMONTORY SPECIFIC PLAN**

September 1999

El Dorado County Planning Department

I. INTRODUCTION

In September 1994, PALISADES PROPERTIES, INC., submitted to the County an application for approval of the Promontory Specific Plan ("Specific Plan," or "Project"). The Specific Plan sets forth comprehensive guidance and regulations for development of 999.0 acres bordering on the eastern boundary of Sacramento County. The Specific Plan organizes this development into nine separate phases or Villages. The current Promontory Specific Plan contemplates the construction of 1,387 residential dwelling units in addition to office and commercial construction.

The County's environmental review for the Specific Plan pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") (Pub. Resources Code, § 21000 *et seq.*) began with issuance of a Notice of Preparation ("NOP") for a draft environmental impact report ("Draft EIR") in November 1994, and a second NOP released in November 1996. On June 16, 1997, the County released the Promontory Draft EIR for a 45-day public review period. The County Planning Commission ("Planning Commission") held a hearing on the Draft EIR on July 10, 1997, in order to provide the public with an additional opportunity to offer comments. In August 1997, the County issued the Final EIR, which consists of the Draft EIR, comments on the Draft EIR, responses to comments, revisions to the Draft EIR text, and a mitigation monitoring and reporting program. On October 9, 1997, the Planning Commission held a public hearing and recommended that the Board certify the Final EIR and approve the Specific Plan. On November 4, 1997, the Board held a public hearing on the Specific Plan, and took the actions necessary to complete the County's CEQA obligations and to approve the Specific Plan. First, the Board certified the Final EIR. Next, it approved findings and a statement of overriding considerations, and then adopted the Specific Plan with accompanying conditions of approval.

Based on a settlement agreement with parties who challenged in court the Board's actions of November 4, 1997, the applicant now seeks to reduce the proposed densities of residential dwelling units allowed under the Specific Plan. It proposes to amend the Promontory Specific Plan to allow construction of 1,100 residential dwelling units rather than 1,387 residential dwelling units. The applicant also proposes a number of other changes all designed to reduce the environmental impacts that could result from the Specific Plan. These changes are discussed in detail below. As will be explained further, none of these changes will create significant new environmental effects.

This Addendum is intended to be part of the Final EIR for the Project. The Final EIR and this addendum together serve as the environmental documentation for the following Specific Plan approvals:

- amendment of the current Promontory Specific Plan;
- amendment of the development agreement for the Promontory Specific Plan, if required;
- design review;
- tentative and final subdivision or parcel maps;
- conditional use permits;

- annexation/reorganization of special districts;
- grading permits;
- building permits;
- Department of Fish & Game 1600 agreement(s);
- Regional Water Quality Control Board Section 401 certification, if needed???
- Regional Water Quality Control Board NPDES permit;
- Service District annexations;
- school site acquisition and construction; and
- Public Facilities Financing Plan for the Promontory Specific Plan.

II. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE ADDENDUM

The Addendum is intended to provide updated information resulting from the Settlement Agreement. Much of this information was available at the time the Board originally approved the Promontory Specific Plan in September 1996.

An addendum is an appropriate environmental document for considering these relatively minor changes to the specific plan since none of the changes proposed will cause new significant environmental effects or substantial increases in previously identified significant environmental effects. (CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15162, subd. (a)(1), 15164, subd. (a).) Section 15162, which contains the standards for triggering a subsequent EIR, provides, in relevant part, as follows:

“(a) When an EIR has been certified or a negative declaration adopted for a project, no subsequent EIR shall be prepared for that project unless the lead agency determines, on the basis of substantial evidence in the light of the whole record, one or more of the following:

“(1) Substantial changes are proposed in the project which will require major revisions of the previous EIR or negative declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects;

“(2) Substantial changes occur with respect to the circumstances under which the project is undertaken which will require major revisions of the previous EIR or negative declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects; or

“(3) New information of substantial importance, which was not known and could not have been known with the exercise of reasonable diligence at the time the previous EIR was certified as complete or the negative declaration was adopted, shows any of the following:

“(A) The project will have one or more significant effects not discussed in the

previous EIR or negative declaration;

“(B) Significant effects previously examined will be substantially more severe than shown in the previous EIR;

“(C) Mitigation measures or alternatives previously found not to be feasible would in fact be feasible, and would substantially reduce one or more significant effects of the project, but the project proponents decline to adopt the mitigation measure or alternative; or

“(D) Mitigation measures or alternatives which are considerably different from those analyzed in the previous EIR would substantially reduce one or more significant effects on the environment, but the project proponents decline to adopt the mitigation measure or alternative.

“(b) If changes to a project or its circumstances occur or new information becomes available after adoption of a negative declaration, the lead agency shall prepare a subsequent EIR if required under subsection (a). Otherwise the lead agency shall determine whether to prepare a subsequent negative declaration, an addendum, or no further documentation.”

The specific rules authorizing EIR addenda state that it need not be circulated for public review. (CEQA Guidelines, § 15164, subd. (c).) Even if we were to take an extremely conservative stance, and assumed the general provision of CEQA were to apply however, recirculation would be unnecessary. CEQA Guidelines section 15088.5 contains the rules for determining whether an agency must recirculate all or part of an EIR prior to its certification. That section states that:

"[a] lead agency is required to recirculate an EIR when significant new information is added to the EIR after public notice is given of the availability of the draft EIR for public review under Section 15087 but before certification."

"Significant new information" is limited to information showing that:

- "(1) A new significant environmental impact would result from the project or from a new mitigation measure proposed to be implemented.
- (2) A substantial increase in the severity of an environmental impact would result unless mitigation measures are adopted that reduce the impact to a level of insignificance.
- (3) A feasible project alternative or mitigation measure considerably different from others previously analyzed would clearly lessen the significant environmental impacts of the project, but the project's proponents decline to adopt it.

- (4) The draft EIR was so fundamentally and basically inadequate and conclusory in nature that meaningful public review and comment were precluded."

(CEQA Guidelines, § 15088.5, subd. (b).)

The information included in this "Addendum" does not merit recirculation under the foregoing rules. As the discussion in section III of this Addendum will make clear, the revised project description does not reveal a new significant environmental impact resulting from project changes or a new mitigation measure. Nor does the information reveal an increase in the severity of an impact, or a "considerably different" feasible mitigation measure or alternative that would lessen the Project's significant impacts, but that the Project proponent declines to adopt. Accordingly, CEQA does not require the County to recirculate this Addendum.

III. ADDENDUM TO DISCUSSION OF RESOURCE IMPACTS IN THE DRAFT EIR

A. Land Use

The project as proposed in 1997 consisted of adoption of a specific plan to guide the development of the 999-acre project site. The current Promontory Specific Plan contemplates the construction of 1,387 residential dwelling units in addition to office and commercial construction on 999 acres. The development in the Promontory Specific Plan is divided into eight (8) Villages and one (1) Village Center. The Promontory Specific Plan has been revised to reduce residential density from 1,387 to 1,100 dwelling units. No changes will be made to Villages 1 - 6 in the Promontory Specific Plan. All changes, including all density reductions, will be made in Villages 7 and 8 and in the Village Center. Therefore, no amendments will be made to the Specific Plan or Development Agreement for Villages 1 - 6. Narrowing of roads will also be implemented, subject to review and modifications by the El Dorado Hills Fire Departments.

All of these modifications can be considered less-than-significant changes from the previously approved specific plan, and in some instances will result in reducing impacts. The reduction in dwelling units will decrease the number of housing units built, thus lessening the short-term impact from dust, noise, and construction traffic. Fewer units will also lessen the impact of altering the existing landscape characteristics of the area from rural to a developed urban/suburban uses; lessen impacts of daytime glare and reflections from hillside development; and lessen impacts of nighttime light sources associated with new development. Moreover, fewer units and narrower roads will result in less impervious groundcover and less resulting runoff of surface waters. With these project modifications, impacts to land use associated with this proposed modified project will not substantially increase, but will actually decrease, the land use impacts originally analyzed in the project's Draft EIR.

B. Aesthetics

The Promontory Specific Plan has been revised to reduce residential density from 1,387 to 1,100

dwelling units, with all reductions in Villages 7 and 8 and the Village Center. In addition, the Specific Plan will be amended to require that Villages 4 - 6 will be gated communities. Narrowing of roads will also be implemented, subject to review and modifications by the El Dorado Hills Fire Departments. With the decrease in housing units and the narrowing of roads, the area will visually have fewer urban vistas and more open space and rural vistas.

The Project will now will minimize the uses of artificial lighting, consistent with safety standards. For instance, no street lighting will be installed in Villages 4 - 8, unless safety standards warrant otherwise. Where street lighting will be installed in the residential areas in Villages 1 - 3, and in parking lots, shielded lighting will be employed. No lighting will be installed within the open space areas unless safety standards require otherwise. These measures are expected to reduce light and glare generated by the project and to preserve rural views of night time skies.

The Specific Plan will also include street trees to be planted along collector and arterial roads, specifically along Russell Ranch Boulevard, Brittany Way, and Village Center Drive. A street tree will be planted every 15 feet on center along those roads unless the species selected requires greater spacing. The intent is to plant trees that grow quickly, so that they will provide shade within 15 years. Trees will also be planted in all commercial parking lots, excluding school and park district parking lots, to ensure a 75% canopy coverage within 15 years. Revegetation of riparian corridors with native plants will also now occur in the Specific Plan area, in addition to preserving additional wetland and to larger setbacks. In addition, the minimizing use of culverts and concrete V-ditches and the maximizing of open spaces, unlined channels to preserve a more natural, rural feel to the development will now be implemented. These added changes and improvements will only serve to enhance the visual characteristics of the area. With these project modifications, impacts to aesthetic resources associated with this proposed modified project will not substantially increase, but rather will decrease, the aesthetic impacts originally analyzed in the project's Draft EIR.

C. Population, Housing, and Employment

The Promontory Specific Plan has been revised to reduce residential density from 1,387 to 1,100 dwelling units. This reduction of 287 housing units will reduce the projected population by 804 persons (assuming 2.80 persons per dwelling unit) for the Specific Plan area. This reduction in projected population will reduce direct and indirect environmental effects (such as noise, public services, and traffic), which are discussed in the relevant sections of this Addendum. The reduction in population will also help increase the 0.07 jobs-to-employed-resident ratio. Affordable housing goals will still be met since the Specific Plan will still include a range of housing sizes and densities. The effects associated with a decrease in dwelling units will not substantially increase the impacts originally analyzed in the project's Draft EIR.

D. Transportation and Circulation

The Promontory Specific will not include any changes to the transportation and circulation system.

There will be, however, certain Traffic Calming Measures implemented outside the Specific Plan area that will improve the projected circulation within the Specific Plan area. These Traffic Calming Measures consist of the following:

[1] Stop Sign

*Gillette Drive and Ridgeview Drive intersection:*¹ install a stop sign on the northbound lane on Ridgeview Drive on the south side of the Gillette Drive/Ridgeview Drive intersection.

[2] Barrier

The northbound lane of Ridgeview Drive, beginning at the intersection of Ridgeview Drive and Gillette Drive, shall be closed by the construction of a barrier. In other words, Ridgeview Drive, north of the Gillette Drive intersection, shall become a one-way street. Real Parties shall construct the half closure on the northbound lane of Ridgeview Drive at the Gillette Drive and Ridgeview Drive intersection.

The half closure shall consist of keystone-type construction materials, approximately four-feet deep and twelve-feet long, or suitable dimensions to achieve the half closure. The keystone materials shall be placed on top of the existing pavement section instead of excavating the pavement section. The barrier shall be landscaped with plants and shrubs that will not exceed four feet high so as not to exceed site visibility requirements.

Irrigation for landscaped barrier shall be provided from existing waterlines for adjacent homes. No new hookups are needed. The Project Applicant will also employ a water-conserving irrigation system, probably drip irrigation. Once the landscaped barrier is installed, the Promontory Homeowner's Association or landscaping and lighting district ("LLAD") shall establish a landscaping maintenance fund. This fund will provide for the costs, including water utility costs, associated with maintaining the landscaped medians.

Although these additional intersection improvements are located outside the Promontory Specific Plan area, they will help alleviate future traffic congestion within the Promontory Specific Plan area to significantly reduce the impacts on the surrounding neighborhoods of traffic generated from the Project.

Currently, no light rail fees are imposed on new development and none are contemplated in the

¹/ At this intersection, Ridgeview Drive proceeds in a northerly fashion, then turns ninety degrees and proceeds in an easterly fashion. For purposes of this discussion and for consistency, Ridgeview Drive is described as a north-south road.

Specific Plan. The Project Applicant will contribute to light rail fees in the following circumstances: (1) a region-wide or county-wide, light-rail fee requirement is imposed; (2) before grading permits are issued; and (3) fees shall only apply to units in which no building permit has been issued at the time the light rail fee is imposed. The Project Applicant will receive credit against any fees for any light rail related improvements or land donated to serve light rail. Any future contributions to light rail fees will only serve to alleviate the regions existing and future traffic congestion problem.

Villages 4 through 6 will now be gated, thus slowing traffic. The decrease in dwelling units with Villages 7 and 8 and the Village Center will also help reduce traffic congestion impacts analyzed in the project's Draft EIR. Together, these modifications to the Promontory Specific Plan will not substantially increase, but rather will reduce, the traffic impacts originally analyzed in the project's Draft EIR.

E. Air Quality

The decrease in dwelling units within the Promontory Specific Plan Area, and the resulting reduction in traffic generated, along with the intersection improvements, and possible contributions to light rail, will together contribute directly and indirectly to the reduction in mobile source and area source criteria air pollutant emissions in the region.

The construction of fewer housing units will also help reduce impacts associated with fugitive dust generated by construction activities that potentially add to PM 10 concentrations, criteria air pollutant emissions from equipment exhaust, and fugitive hydrocarbon emissions. The construction of fewer housing units will also decrease impacts associated with the PM10 and CO from the burning of removed of vegetation and trees. The modifications of the Promontory Specific Plan, therefore, will not substantially increase, but rather will decrease, air quality impacts previously analyzed in the project's Draft EIR.

F. Noise

The decrease in the number of dwelling units within the Promontory Specific Plan Area, along with the intersection improvements, and possible contributions to light rail will all contribute directly and indirectly to the reduction in noise levels due to decreases in housing construction and vehicle traffic. These Specific Plan modifications thus will not substantially increase, but will reduce, noise impacts previously analyzed in the project's Draft EIR.

G. Biological Resources

The Promontory Specific Plan will now include preservation of an additional 1.29 acres of wetlands, with 50 to 200 foot setbacks from the drainage corridors in Villages 2 and 4. Revegetation of riparian corridors with native plants will also now occur in the Specific Plan area. This additional open space area will enhance the existing biological setting within the Promontory Specific Plan area. In addition, the minimizing use of culverts and concrete V-ditches and the maximizing of open

spaces, unlined channels to preserve a more natural, rural feel to the development will now be implemented. The modifications of the Promontory Specific Plan therefore will not cause any additional biological resource impacts, and thus, will not substantially increase, but will reduce, biological impacts previously analyzed in the project's Draft EIR.

H. Geology and Soils

The modifications of the Promontory Specific Plan will require less grading and soil disturbance due to the reduction of housing units, the narrowing of roads proposed, more open space preserved in its natural state, and the filling of less wetlands acres. These modifications will help in reducing impacts associated with ground instability and soil erosion and exposure of people and structures to major seismic hazards. These modifications of the Promontory Specific Plan therefore will not cause any additional geology and soil impacts, and thus, will not substantially increase geological and soil impacts previously analyzed in the project's Draft EIR.

I. Hydrology and Water Quality

The modifications of the Promontory Specific Plan will require less grading and soil disturbance due to the reduction of housing units, the narrowing of roads proposed, more open space preserved in its natural state, the vegetation of open channel drainages and where needed a combination of open channel drainage and conventional drainage shall be employed, and the filling of less wetlands acres. These modifications will help in reduce impacts associated with: temporary degradation of downstream surface water quality of area creeks and lakes; long-term water quality degradation from urban runoff; storm runoff flows in a drainageway that drains into Folsom Lake; and cumulative flows in Willow and Humbug creeks in the City of Folsom. These modifications will not cause any additional hydrology and water quality impacts, and thus, will not substantially increase, but rather will reduce, hydrology and water quality impacts previously analyzed in the project's Draft EIR.

J. Cultural Resources

The modifications of the Promontory Specific Plan will not cause any additional cultural resource impacts, and thus, will not substantially increase cultural resource impacts previously analyzed in the project's Draft EIR.

K. Public Services

The Promontory Specific Plan has been modified to include the construction of a public hiking trail between Highway 50 and Village 8. The trail, which shall run through the oak tree mitigation area, shall initially be constructed as a simple, bladed-dirt hiking trail. At the completion of oak tree mitigation in this area, the dirt hiking trail will be replaced by a decomposed granite or other rock trail. The homeowner's association or LLAD will maintain the trail. A mechanism shall also be in place to fund construction and maintenance of the planned parks before a issuance of the first building permit for Villages 1 through 5. This addition of a hiking trial will improve public access

and could be considered a public benefit.

Upon approval by the Board of Supervisors of the first final subdivision map within Villages 1 through 5, the Project Applicant shall make a gift of \$100,000 to the Rescue Union School District. This gift, along with the reduction in population, will also help reduce impacts associated with the demand on existing schools. The modified Specific Plan allows for fewer homes to be constructed, thus reducing the potential for wildfire hazards within the steep terrain area. The modified plan will now include gates for Villages 4 through 6. This may deter potential crime, thus potentially reducing the impacts of the project's increased demand for law enforcement services.

For these reasons, the modifications of the Promontory Specific Plan will not cause any additional public service impacts, and thus, will not substantially increase, but will instead decrease, public service impacts previously analyzed in the project's Draft EIR.

L. Utilities and Service Systems

The decrease in the number of dwelling units may decrease the cumulatively significant demand for water services in the EID service area. The modifications of the Promontory Specific Plan will not cause any additional public service impacts, and thus, will not substantially increase public service impacts previously analyzed in the project's Draft EIR.

M. Public Health and Safety

The modifications of the Promontory Specific Plan will not cause any additional public health and safety impacts, and thus, will not substantially increase public health and safety impacts previously analyzed in the project's Draft EIR.

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