



**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

**TO: PLANNING COMMISSION**

**FROM: MIKE KAMINO, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT** *ae ff mk*

**BY: ALLISON COOK, PRINCIPAL PLANNER** *ac*

**DATE: FEBRUARY 5, 2015**

**SUBJECT: PUBLIC HEARING TO RECEIVE COMMENTS ON THE AGOURA EQUESTRIAN ESTATES DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT**

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**I. BACKGROUND, PURPOSE AND PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The purpose of this hearing is solely to receive public comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) prepared for the Agoura Equestrian Estates Project, which is currently available for public review. Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the 45-day public comment period for the DEIR began on January 15, 2015 and ends on March 2, 2015 at 5:00 PM.

The project site is located in the unincorporated area of Los Angeles County, just east of the City border, along Chesebro Road north of Driver Avenue/Palo Comado Canyon Road (APNs 2052-009-270, 2055-010-270). The project involves the annexation of this approximately 71-acre site into the City of Agoura Hills from the County of Los Angeles, and subdivision of the site into 17 lots, including two permanent open space lots and 15 residential single-family lots (see Figure 2-2, Project Location, of the DEIR). Phase 1 of the project includes the following: construction of a private access road through the site; trails, fencing and drainage improvements within the private road right-of-way; relocation/construction of an existing multi-use informal trail located partially within and partially outside of the site boundaries to the east; earthen and rock drainage swale improvements, debris detention basins and underground pipes for runoff; an equestrian trail and fence along the western border; extension of utilities under the proposed road from existing water and sewer lines under Chesebro Road; and grading of one residential lot in order to ensure that the grading in Phase 1 can be balanced onsite. Phase 2 development of each of the 15 residential lots with single family homes is not proposed at the same time as the subdivision and infrastructure work, but is expected to occur at a later date as part of an individual permit process, which would include separate application review.

Upon initial discussions with the Los Angeles Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO), the entity that reviews and approves annexations, City staff was directed to include two other areas in the annexation request: (1) the portion of the Caltrans U.S. Highway 101 right-of-way along the south side of the project site; and (2) the State of California open space parcel APN 2055-010-901 (see Figure 2-8, Areas to Be Annexed, of the DEIR). Nonetheless, these two areas would remain in their existing state, with no improvements proposed.

The current zoning designations are as follows: County of Los Angeles A-1-5 (Light Agricultural, maximum residential density of one dwelling per 5 acres) and O-S (Open Space) for 71-acre area; for Caltrans right-of-way and State of California parcel to be annexed only, it is A-1-5 and O-S respectively.

The current land use designations are as follows: County of Los Angeles North Area Plan N5 Mountain Lands (maximum residential density of 1 dwelling per 5 acres), and OS-P (Open Space-Parks) for 71-acre area; for Caltrans right-of-way and State of California parcel to be annexed only, it's TC (Transportation Corridor) and OS-P with Significant Ecological Area overlay, respectively.

LAFCO requires that a CEQA document be prepared and adopted/certified by the Lead Agency, and submitted to LAFCO as part of a request for an annexation/Sphere of Influence change. A Sphere of Influence (SOI) is a term used to delineate the City's probable future physical boundary and service area. It consists of an area(s) that a City intends to annex in the future, but which is (are) not currently within the City limits. As such, the SOI is often bigger than a City's current jurisdiction. Annexation refers to incorporating a specific unincorporated County territory into the City limits. The area to be annexed must be identified in a City's SOI. Since the date of incorporation of the City of Agoura Hills, the City's boundary has been coterminous with its SOI. In other words, there are no lands in the SOI that have not already been incorporated into the City. Therefore, the proposed application to LAFCO would include a request for an SOI change and annexation at the same time.

An Initial Study/Notice of Preparation of an EIR (IS/NOP) per CEQA was prepared and distributed to relevant agencies and members of the public in May 2014 to request input on issues to be addressed in the DEIR. Based on the Initial Study, the following environmental issue areas were carried forward in the DEIR for further analysis: aesthetics, biological resources, geology/soils, hazards/hazardous materials; and hydrology and water quality. All other environmental issue areas were addressed in the Initial Study and determined not necessary for additional investigation in an EIR. In the DEIR, all issue areas had impacts that were found to be less than significant, or potentially significant but with incorporation of mitigation measures would be reduced to a less than significant level. For impacts to hazards/hazardous materials, all impacts were found to be less than significant. There were no significant, unavoidable impacts found for any of the issue areas in the DEIR.

The purpose of this meeting, and the role of the Planning Commission, is to conduct a public hearing to receive comments on the adequacy of the DEIR, but not on the merits of the Agoura

Equestrian Estates Project. No action on the Agoura Equestrian Estates Project will be taken at the public hearing, and aside from the EIR's adequacy, there should be no discussion of the Project itself. The City is not required to respond to oral comments made at this hearing. However, City staff will be available to respond to procedural and technical questions, and will record the comments and respond to them in writing at the end of the public review period, as part of the Response to Comments phase of the EIR process, and as part of the Final EIR preparation.

In addition to providing oral comments at this meeting, City staff encourages members of the public to prepare written comments and submit them to the Planning and Community Development Department prior to the close of the public comment period on March 2, 2015.

## **II. AVAILABILITY OF DOCUMENT**

The DEIR is currently available for review at the Planning Counter at City Hall and at the Agoura Hills Library, as well as online at [www.ci.agoura-hills.ca.us](http://www.ci.agoura-hills.ca.us). Additionally, copies of the DEIR on a CD can be purchased at the Planning Counter at City Hall. A notice of the availability of this document, along with the hearing date, was distributed to about 75 individuals or agencies, and published in *The Acorn*.

## **III. REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS**

Once the public review period is complete, City staff would prepare the Responses to Comments and finalize the EIR. Comments received during the review period would be addressed in the Responses to Comments section of the Final EIR. A Planning Commission hearing would then be held to consider the Final EIR and the request for an annexation/Sphere of Influence change, as well as pre-zoning of the parcels to be annexed, and make a recommendation to the City Council. Thereafter, a City Council hearing will be held to consider certification of the Final EIR and approval of the pre-zoning of the parcels to be annexed, and whether to direct City staff to forward an annexation/Sphere of Influence application to LAFCO.

If LAFCO approves the annexation, then additional Planning Commission and City Council hearings would be held at that time to consider approval of the Agoura Equestrian Estates Project, including the following actions: Conditional Use Permit 13-CUP-005, Development Agreement 13-DA-001, Zone Change 13-ZC-001, Zoning Ordinance Amendment 13-ZOA-001, Annexation 13-ANX-001, General Plan Amendment 13-GPA-002, Oak Tree Report 13-OTP-021, and Tract Map TR 72316.

## **IV. RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission conduct a public hearing to receive public comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Agoura Equestrian Estates Project.

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**ATTACHMENT:**  
Draft EIR (January 2015)

**CASE PLANNER:** Allison Cook, Principal Planner