

REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL

DATE: JANUARY 11, 2006

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS

FROM: GREG RAMIREZ, CITY MANAGER

**BY: MIKE KAMINO, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT**

**SUBJECT: DISCUSSION OF RETAIL CENTER AT RUSSELL RANCH (LOWE'S)
PROJECT**

The purpose of this item is to provide information to the City Council regarding the Retail Center at Russell Ranch (Lowe's) Project in the City of Westlake Village. The proposal consists of amendments to the City of Westlake Village Land Use Plan to change the land use designation from business park to general commercial to allow retail development. The project development would consist of 227,408 square feet of building area with the Lowe's building comprising 168,708 square feet. The project would be located on Russell Ranch Road east of its intersection with Lindero Canyon Road and adjacent to U.S. Highway 101/Ventura Freeway. The eastern edge of the site is adjacent to the Lake Lindero residential community of the City of Agoura Hills.

Attached is a letter prepared by Planning and Community Development Department staff, dated December 21, 2005, which was submitted to the City of Westlake Village as part of the public comment period for the project's Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR). The public comment period for the DEIR began on November 8, 2005 and ended on December 23, 2005. The letter outlined several comments on the DEIR regarding the following issue areas: aesthetics, noise, traffic and circulation, and alternatives. The focus of the comments was on the potential impacts to the Lake Lindero residences. The site plan shows the truck access area at the rear of the Lowe's building to be located along the eastern property line, approximately 125 feet from the residences, and the lumber staging and loading areas to be between 200 and 325 feet from the residences. The letter recommends changes to the DEIR, as necessary, and offers suggestions for possible additional mitigation measures to ensure that impacts to the Lake Lindero area are minimized. For example, our letter recommends incorporating additional mitigation measures, such as the provision of a block wall, tall trees, and dense vegetation along the eastern property line, reduction in illumination, and restrictions on construction and loading and unloading hours.

As of this writing, formal responses from the City of Westlake Village to the comments in the City staff letter have not yet been made available. However, the Westlake Village City Council is holding a public hearing on January 18, 2006 to consider approval of the project and certification of the EIR.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff has identified the following options if the City Council wishes to take a formal position on the Retail Center at Russell Ranch project. However, the Council is not limited to these, and could choose to take no position.

1. That the City Council supports the project as currently proposed.
2. That if the project is approved, the City Council recommends that the project incorporate the revisions and mitigation measures identified in the City's letter, dated December 21, 2005.
3. That the City Council opposes the project as currently proposed.

It is further recommended that if the City Council chooses to take a position on this project that it direct the City Manager to submit a letter to the City of Westlake Village conveying the Council's position.

Attachments:

1. Letter from City of Agoura Hills staff to City of Westlake Village, dated December 21, 2005.
2. Surrounding Land Uses Aerial Photo
3. Site Plan
4. Land Use Plan
5. Detail Aerial Photo