

Mountain Ridge Road Fire Station Alternative

LILAC HILLS RANCH SAN DIEGO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

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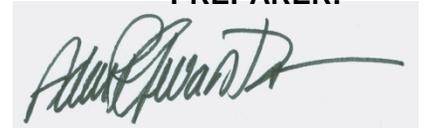
PROJECT APPLICANT:

ACCRETIVE INVESTMENTS, INC.
12275 EL CAMINO REAL, SUITE 110
SAN DIEGO, CA 92130
ATTN: JON RILLING
PH: 858-546-0700

PREPARED FOR:

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
5510 OVERLAND AVENUE, THIRD FLOOR
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92123
KIVA PROJECT: 09-0112513
SP 38-12-001
GPA 3800-12-001
RZ 360-12-003
TM 5571 RPL1 and 5572 RPL1
MUP 3300-12-005

PREPARER:



Development Design Services &
GraphicAccess, Inc.
Adam Gevanthor
2583 Via Merano
Del Mar, CA 92014
858.793.5450

and

RECON ENVIRONMENTAL, INC.
1927 FIFTH AVENUE
SAN DIEGO, CA 92101
619-308-9333

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Purpose

This addendum expands upon the **VISUAL RESOURCES REPORT** prepared for LILAC HILLS RANCH to include the Mountain Ridge Road Fire Station Alternative. This alternative includes access changes to accommodate the placement of a fire station within Phase 5 of Lilac Hills Ranch. This alternative is analyzed such that it can be used in the decision making process to provide the option of approving a permanent fire station in Phase 5 along with the associated changes as described herein.

Description and Setting

This alternative would encompass the same 608-acre project site and would consist of the same mix of residential, commercial, and institutional uses, along with parks, open space and other project amenities, as the project (See Visual Resources Report for Lilac Hills Ranch). Like the project, the residential component of this alternative would contain a maximum of 1,746 units. Under this Alternative, a permanent fire station would be constructed in Phase 5. To accommodate the fire station, this alternative includes improving Mountain Ridge Road to a County public road and eliminating the gates the project includes in the southern area of the site (i.e., in Phases 4 and 5). All other aspects of this alternative would be the same as the project. Individual components of the Mountain Ridge Road Fire Station Alternative that differ from the project are described below.

Fire Station

The Mountain Ridge Road Fire Station Alternative would locate a new DSFPD fire station within a two-acre site in Phase 5 (Figure 1). Under the project, this 2-acre site would be designated as SFS-6, which allows single family senior housing units. The Mountain Ridge Road Fire Station Alternative would designate the 2-acre portion of the SFS-6 site as Fire Station (FS) instead and transfer the units to the remaining area of SFS-6 in Phase 5, as detailed further in the residential component discussion below. The Specific Plan land uses surrounding the proposed Fire Station site include institutional uses directly west and south and SFS-5 across a roadway to the east and north.

The permanent station would consist of 3,000 square feet of livable space accommodating three fire fighters, with two dual-stacked engine bays equal to 1,500 square feet. The site would include a total of ten parking spaces. It would be a fully functioning fire station similar to existing stations in other unincorporated County areas. The station would be designed with the same architectural and landscaping style as the project. The final design of the fire station would require a Site Plan and approval by the DSFPD.

Residential

While the fire station included in this alternative would be located on a site designated as SFS-6 by the project's Specific Plan, the number of single family senior housing units would remain the same as the project. The entire 13.5-acre SFS-6 area in Phase 5 is designated for 59 units by the project. Under this

alternative, the approximately 9 units that would have been included on the 2-acre site under the project would be transferred to the remaining 11.5-acre SFS-5 are in Phase 5 under this alternative.

Community Purpose Facility

Like the project, this alternative includes a Community Purpose Facility designation over a two acre site in Phase 3. As the fire station would be located in Phase 5, this alternative does not include an option to develop that site with a fire station. Instead, that entire site would be developed with a community recreation center.

Circulation

The Mountain Ridge Road Fire Station Alternative would include the same transportation network as the project, except for modifications related to Mountain Ridge Road and the gates in Phases 4 and 5.

Mountain Ridge Road is currently a private road with access easements for several parcels in the vicinity and two on-site parcels. This alternative would reclassify the roadway from a private road to a public Rural Residential Collector and remove the gates to provide quicker access between the fire station and the area to the south and southeast. These circulation changes would also allow the public, including the proposed on-site uses and other existing residents in the area, full access to Mountain Ridge Road. While this alternative would eliminate the project's gates that are intended to restrict access to off-site roadways, this alternative may still include neighborhood entrance gates. The neighborhood entrance gates would restrict access into proposed neighborhoods on-site but not to through roadways.

The alternative includes two reclassification options; Option 1 would consist of reclassification to a standard Rural Residential Collector and Option 2 would consist of reclassification to Rural Residential Collector subject to a road exception request.

Option 1:

This option includes construction of Mountain Ridge Road to a standard Rural Residential Collector. Option 1 would require construction of 28-foot paved roadway within a 48-foot graded right-of-way (see FEIR Figure 4-17). The design speed for this Rural Residential Collector would be 30 mile per hour (mph).

Option 2:

This option includes a road exception request for Mountain Ridge Road to allow the 28-foot paved roadway to be within a 40-foot graded right-of-way, instead of a standard 48-foot graded right-of-way (see FEIR Figure 4-18). This would reduce the graded right-of-way on both sides of the roadway by 4 feet. The design speed for this option would be 30 mph identical to Option 1. All other aspects of Mountain Ridge Road Option 2 would also be the same as a standard Rural Residential Collector, as described above under Option 1. The purpose of this road modification request would be to reduce impacts to biological resources that are located adjacent to the roadway, including impacts to wetlands and a biological open space easement.

Lights would be placed intermittently along Mountain Ridge Road, as required under the County Light Ordinance and Road Design Manual.

The analysis of the Mountain Ridge Road Fire Station Alternative below addresses the Mountain Ridge Road Option 1 in the detailed analysis, as this would be the worst-case impact scenario.

Infrastructure and Utilities

While the major water, wastewater, stormwater, recycling, and electrical infrastructure included in this alternative would be the same as the project, minor changes would be required due to the Mountain Ridge Road widening. These minor changes include the relocation of several power poles and extending three existing culverts.

Grading

Under the Mountain Ridge Road Fire Station Alternative, the permanent fire station would be located in Phase 5 within the development footprint of the project. Thus, the fire station included in this alternative would not result in additional grading or impact areas beyond that of the project.

The construction of Mountain Ridge Road as a Rural Residential Collector requires that the existing hills and valleys of the roadway (a.k.a. vertical alignment) be minimized. In other words, the valley low points would be raised and the hill high points would be lowered to result in a flatter topography. Thus, the Mountain Ridge Road improvements of this alternative would result in additional grading beyond the project.

The Mountain Ridge Road Option 1 grading under this alternative would involve an additional 4.4-acre area, and would include an additional ~~78,944~~ 3,271 cubic yards of fill and ~~78,944~~ 3,271 cubic yards of cut above that required for the construction of Mountain Ridge Road as a private road under the project. Manufactured slopes ~~to approximately 50 feet~~ up to 35 feet in height would be constructed. As shown in Figure 2, a portion of the additional grading would occur within an existing open space easement. The easement is located along a drainage and is held by the County of San Diego to preserve open space.

Mountain Ridge Road Option 2 would eliminate 4-feet of grading along both sides of the roadway. This change would reduce the additional graded area to 4.04 acres. Grading quantities of Option 2 would be similar to Option 1, as the majority of the grading quantities are generated by the need to flatten out the topography and are not related to the graded right-of-way area. As with Option 1, Option 2 would result in manufactured slopes ~~to approximately 50 feet~~ up to 35 feet in height and grading within an existing open space easement.

Visual Impact Analysis

The existing conditions, methodology and significance determination information for the Visual Resources analysis below is the same as described for the project in the Visual Resources Report for Lilac

Hills Ranch. The analysis below is based on information obtained for the project that is applicable for the alternative, including additional site visits and the Lilac Hills Ranch Visual Resources Report. To address specific visual impacts associated with the changes to the visual environmental around Mountain Ridge Road, site specific photographs were taken and evaluated. These photographs are identified as Photos 1 through 10 as shown in Figures 3 through 7.

The Mountain Ridge Road Fire Station Alternative would have the same less than significant impacts related to scenic vistas, scenic resources, light, glare, and consistency with applicable policies and planning documents. The significant and unavoidable impacts due to changes in the existing visual environment as viewed from West Lilac Road, and surrounding residences that would occur under the project would also occur as a result of this alternative. In addition to those significant and unavoidable impacts, this alternative's project design would also result in changes to the visual environment. Refer to the analysis below for additional information.

The implementation of the Mountain Ridge Road Fire Station Alternative Option 2 (reduced Mountain Ridge Road right-of-way) would result in similar visual impacts as Option 1. The elimination of 4 feet of grading on each side of Mountain Ridge Road would negligibly affect I-15 scenic vistas, scenic resources, visual character and quality, and have less than significant effects on light and glare, and plan compliance.

Issue 1: Scenic Vistas (Less Than Significant Impact)

The project site is not visible from a designated state scenic highway or scenic vista; however a portion of the project site is visible from a segment of the I-15 that is designated as a County Scenic Highway. The view of the project site from I-15 is very distant and the project improvements on-site would not be highly visible. Due to the distance, the view from the I-15 of the site under the project and this alternative would be similar. The fire station and Mountain Ridge Road features included in this alternative ~~compared to the project features~~ would not be discernable from the I-15. Therefore, this alternative would result in less than significant impacts to scenic vistas similar to the project.

Issue 2: Scenic Resources (Less Than Significant Impact)

The project site contains approximately 20 acres of steep slopes that are considered scenic resources under RPO. As with the project, this alternative would impact 8 percent of these slopes on-site and would be consistent with the RPO. The disturbance and subsequent revegetation/landscaping of a relatively small area of steep slopes would not be visibly detectable and would not degrade the visual quality of the remaining on-site steep slopes. The fire station included in this alternative would be within the project's impact footprint, and no additional impacts beyond those identified for the project would occur. Mountain Ridge Road would impact additional area, but that area does not include additional steep slopes. Mountain Ridge Road improvements included in this alternative would result in the removal of a few oak trees, but that visual change would have no impact to scenic value. Therefore, this alternative would result in less than significant impacts to scenic resources similar to the project.

Issue 3: Visual Character or Quality (Significant and Unavoidable Impact)

This alternative would result in significant temporary visual impacts associated with construction of the project site similar to the project. Impacts of this alternative would be the same as identified for the project in the Visual Resources Analysis for the Project, except the additional Mountain Ridge Road improvement area. The fire station would be located within the existing footprint and the visual appearance of the fire station construction would be similar to the residential construction proposed in the same location by the project. The Mountain Ridge Road additional impact area would be 4.4 acres and would not increase the severity of the project impact. Thus, this alternative would have the same construction impact as identified for the project. Although short term, construction related impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.

The Mountain Ridge Road Fire Station Alternative would have the same significant direct and cumulative visual impacts identified for the project along West Lilac Road, surrounding residences, and other roadways. This alternative project would include design features similar to the project (see Visual Resource Report for Lilac Hills Ranch) intended to assist in the reduction of potentially significant impacts including transitional landscaping intended to relate to adjacent natural hillsides, riparian areas, and rural residential lots; manufactured slope treatments that soften their manmade appearance; and light fixtures with cut-off features to minimize light spillage beyond their intended target areas. As with the project, dense landscaping to screen the project from view would be infeasible due to the Consolidated Fire Code requirements. **Like the project, impacts to existing views under this alternative project design would remain significant and unavoidable.**

The additional on- and off-site improvements associated with the Mountain Ridge Road Alternative would change the quality of the visual environment along Mountain Ridge Road and for surrounding properties. Currently Mountain Ridge Road is a 24-foot-wide, paved private roadway that follows the undulating topography, contains no regular pattern of street lighting, and has minimal traffic generated from nearby properties. Under the project, Mountain Ridge Road would be retained as a private roadway.

This alternative would improve Mountain Ridge Road to a Rural Residential Collector, which results in widening the roadway to 28 feet of pavement, the addition of sidewalks, curb and gutter, street lighting, additional right-of-way grading, landscaping, and vegetation removal along the roadway, flattening the topography along the roadway, and increased public traffic. Grading associated with this improvement will be significant and result in slopes up to approximately 50 feet in height. These improvements will introduce new visual elements associated with suburban patterns of development but, at the same time, will relate to elements currently found within the viewshed such as asphalt paving, naturalized and native plantings, and other man-made improvements. Existing utility poles, visible in [Photo 6 \(see Figure 5\)](#) will be relocated and/or removed as overhead utilities within the right of way will be undergrounded. The existing visual environment includes slopes along the roadway, limited existing views, and paved roadways in the areas (Circle R Drive).

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Motorists traveling along Mountain Ridge Road will have brief views toward the project between existing view-blocking vegetation, structures and topography that confine views to the immediate vicinity however some of these locations offer fairly expansive views towards portions of the Project.

Photo 9 (see Figure 7) show views toward the project from one of these locations.

Views toward the site from this locations would encompass wetlands, natural hillsides, estate and rural residences, agricultural activities, graded slopes, domestic and transitional landscaping, along with the project's proposed residential and institutional structures.

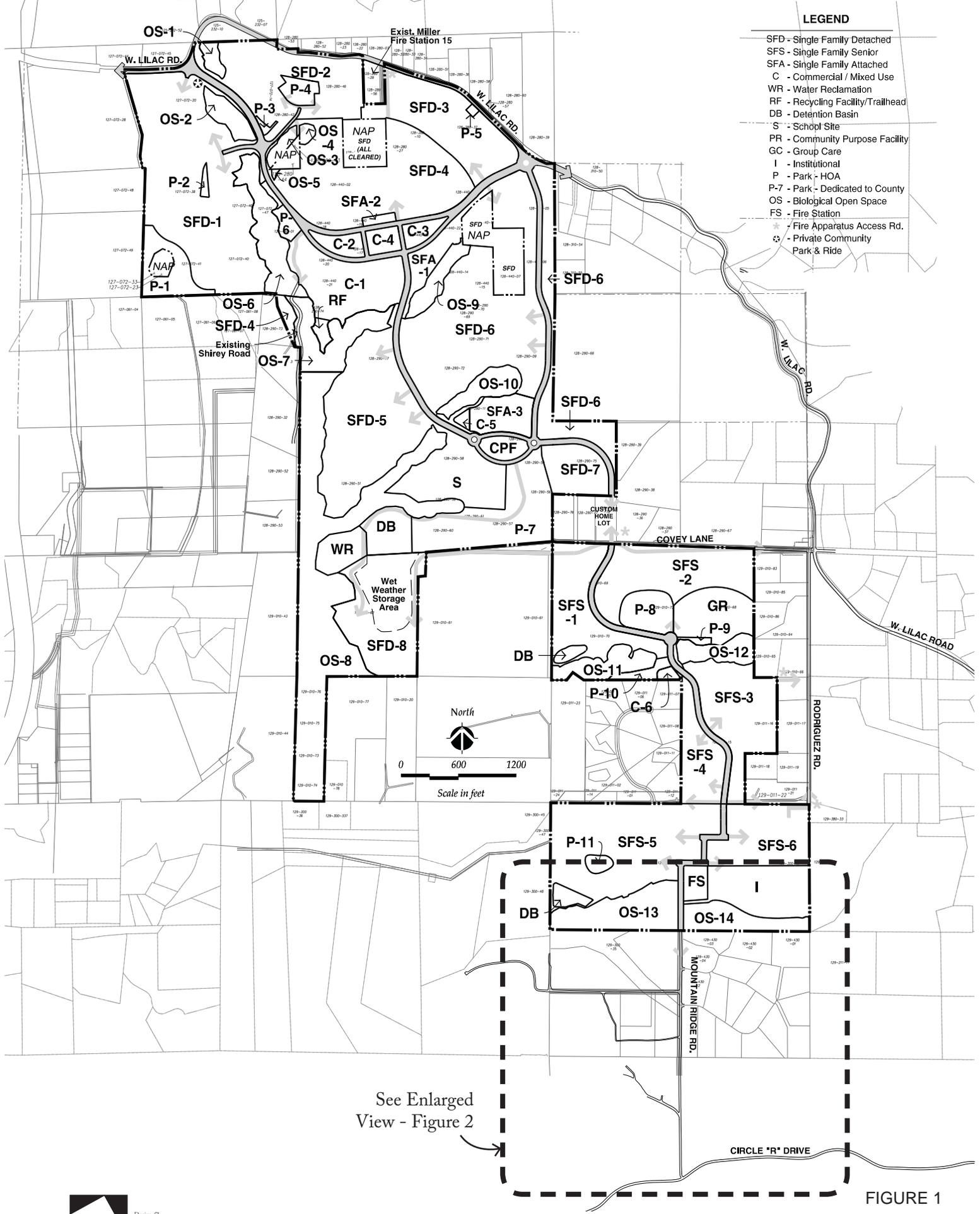
The visual portions of the project will be at a relative scale and density that will contrast moderately with the composition of the existing visual environment. Policies and guidelines required by implementation of the Specific Plan, described earlier, will minimize the contrast of the project with its surroundings to the greatest extent possible. Landscaping on slopes, along streets, and within HOA open space areas, will visually buffer and screen portions of the project from view while providing visual context by relating to foreground and background plantings. As the project vegetation matures it will increasingly screen and buffer the project from view, enabling it, over time, to be increasingly integrated into the existing visual environment to the greatest extent possible.

Because private views are not considered as sensitive under CEQA guidelines; and, implementation of the project would not change the visually prominent peaks, ridgelines, and habitat areas; and, project design measures will help reduce the contrast of the project with the existing visual environment; and, views along local roadways would be brief and highly constrained by intervening structures, vegetation, and topography, **there would not be a significant adverse impact to views from surrounding private roadways.**

The project therefore, as seen from other area roadways, under this Alternative, **would not significantly alter the composition of the visual environment and would therefore not result in significant adverse visual impacts to views.**

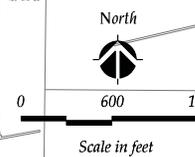
Conclusion

Overall, the changes in visual character as a result of the Project, under this Alternative, will remain the same as the Project without it, significant and unavoidable.



LEGEND

- SFD - Single Family Detached
- SFS - Single Family Senior
- SFA - Single Family Attached
- C - Commercial / Mixed Use
- WR - Water Reclamation
- RF - Recycling Facility/Trailhead
- DB - Detention Basin
- S - School Site
- PR - Community Purpose Facility
- GC - Group Care
- I - Institutional
- P - Park - HOA
- P-7 - Park - Dedicated to County
- OS - Biological Open Space
- FS - Fire Station
- ★ - Fire Apparatus Access Rd.
- ⊙ - Private Community Park & Ride



See Enlarged View - Figure 2

FIGURE 1

Mountain Ridge Road Fire Station Alternative

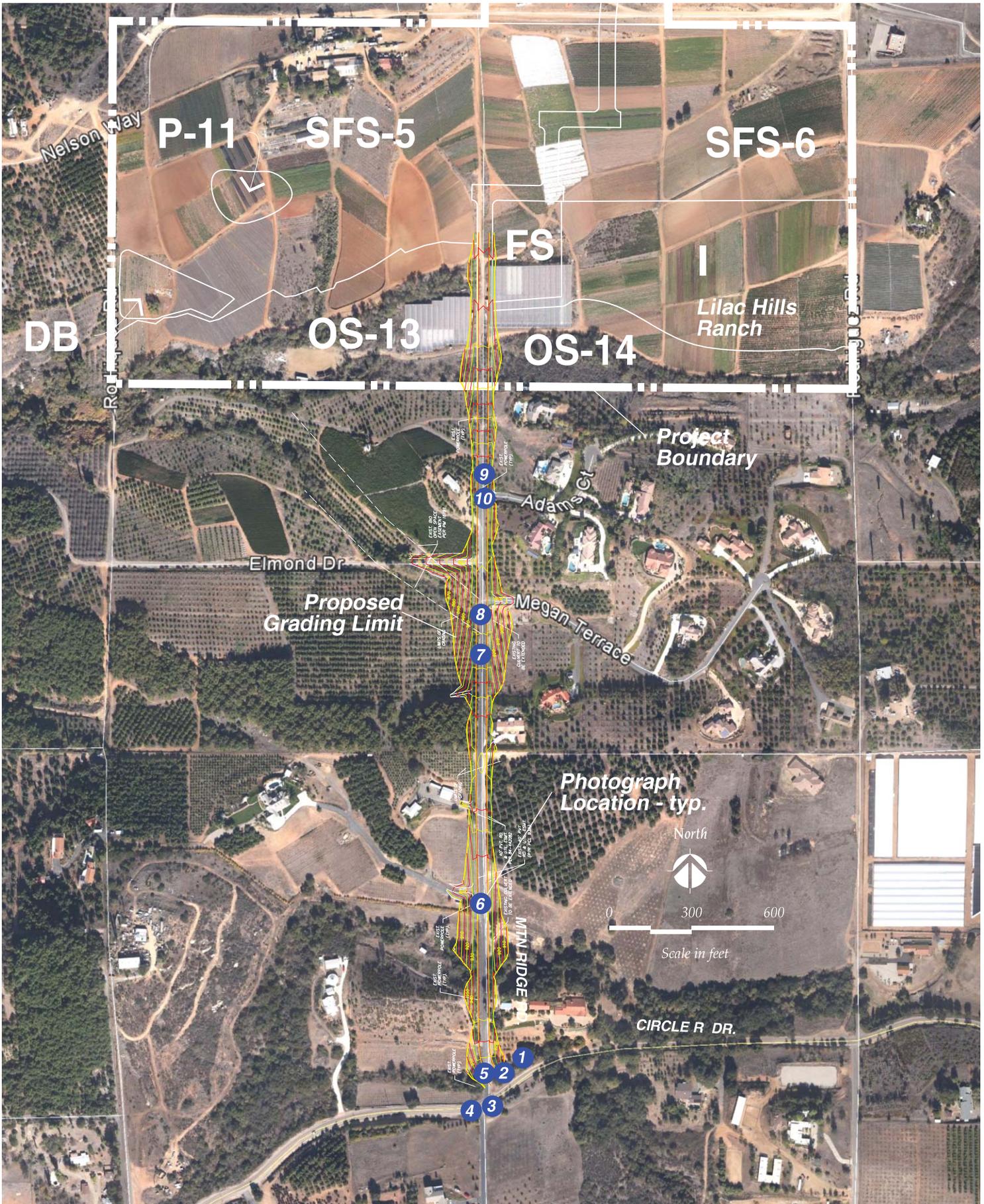


FIGURE 2

Mountain Ridge Road Fire Station Alternative - Enlarged View

Visual Resources Report Addendum - Lilac Hills Ranch - Mtn. Ridge Road Fire Station Alternative



Photo 1 - View from Circle R Drive looking west towards the Circle R Drive and Mountain Ridge Road (MRR) intersection.



Photo 2 - View from Circle R Drive looking west towards the Circle R Drive and Mountain Ridge Road (MRR) intersection.

Source: Recon

FIGURE 3



Photo 3 - View from Circle R Drive looking north to Mountain Ridge Road.



Photo 4 - View from Circle R Drive looking north to Mountain Ridge Road.

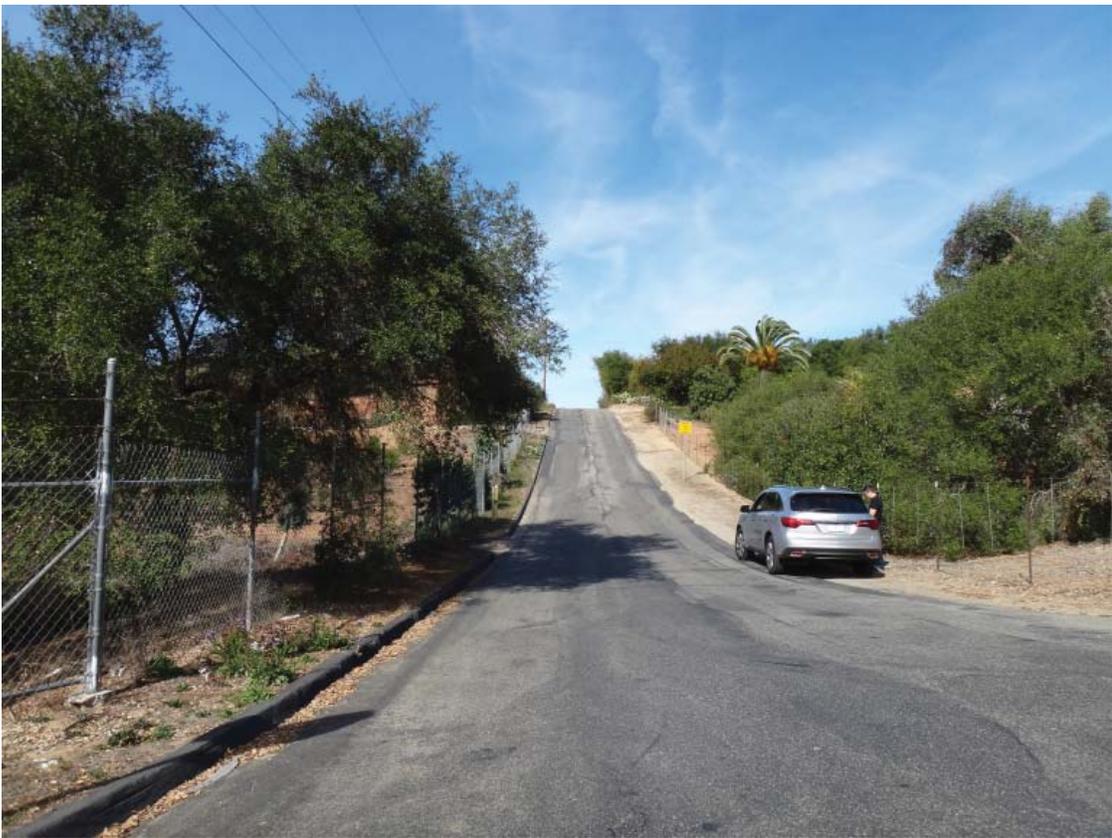


Photo 5 - View from Mountain Ridge Road looking north.

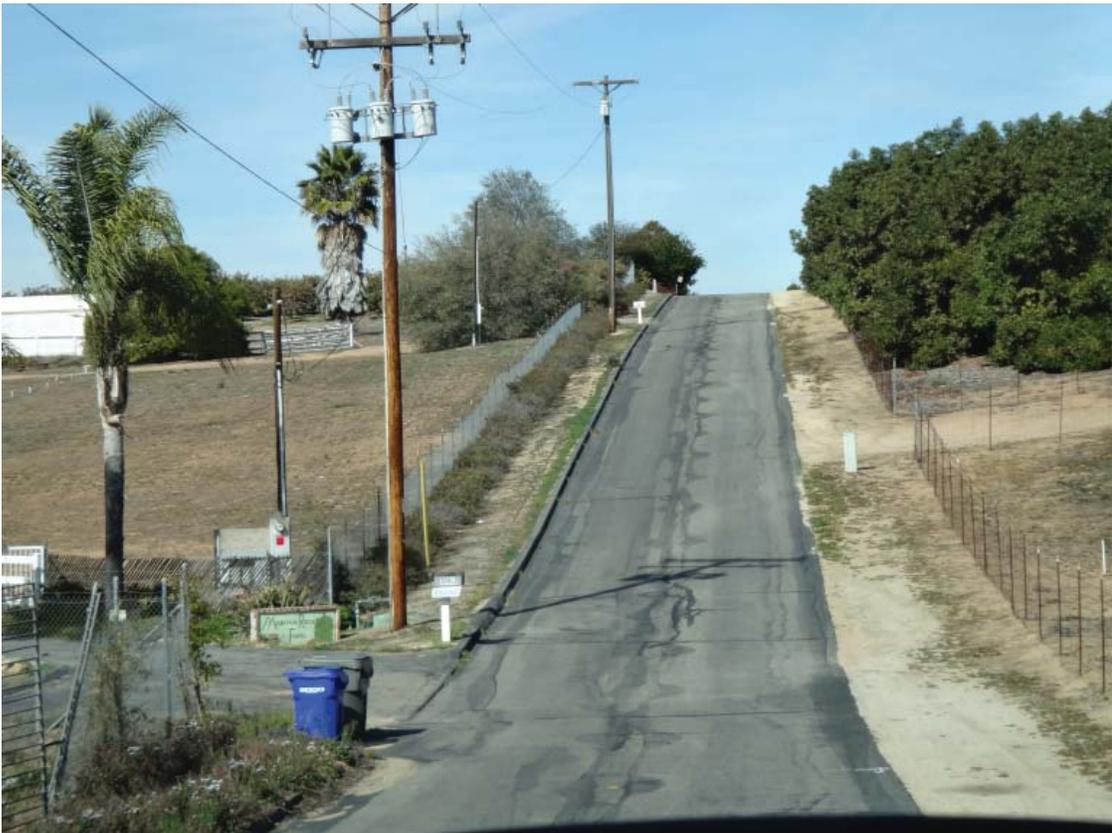


Photo 6 - View from Mountain Ridge Road looking north.



Photo 7 - View from Mountain Ridge Road looking north.



Photo 8 - View from Mountain Ridge Road looking northeast toward Megan Terrace

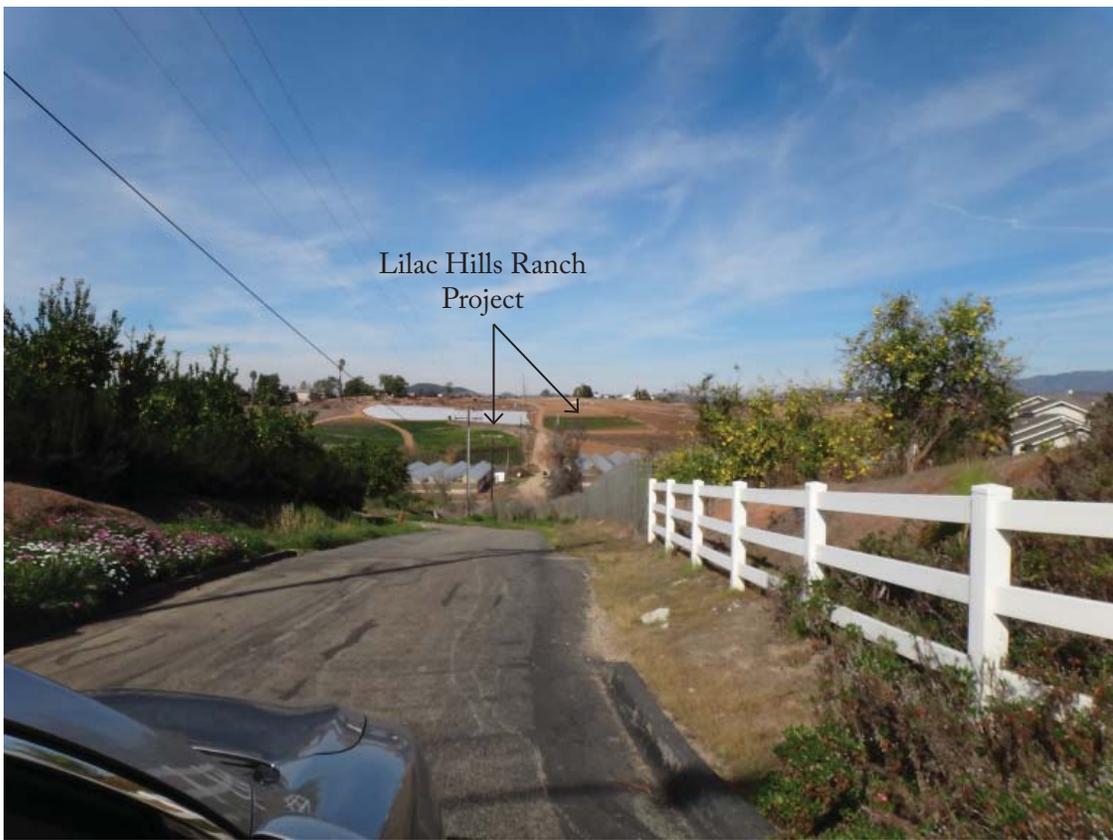


Photo 9 - View Mountain Ridge Road looking north towards Project.



Photo 10 - Mountain Ridge Road looking south towards Adam Street.

