

CHAPTER 8 - COMMUNITY DESIGN ELEMENT

8.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Project Site is characterized by diverse topography and a variety of vegetation types and habitats. The Site occupies the eastern portion of a well-defined “valley” surrounded by steep hills. I-15 bisects the valley. A prominent ridgeline traverses the Site from north to south creating the eastern boundary of the valley. The flat portions of the Site lie to the west of the ridgeline and are at a lower elevation. Much of Meadowood is currently used for various agricultural purposes, including avocado and citrus production. The Site generally drains to the south and west, with runoff eventually entering the San Luis Rey River.

8.2 COMMUNITY DESIGN PLAN

The Community Design Element contains policies that protect existing scenic resources, ensure continued visual compatibility and promote a cohesive community design theme for all common areas, including streets, parks, entries and open space areas. This element of the Meadowood Specific Plan Amendment promotes the creation of a visually unified and attractive community that preserves and enhances the natural resources and maintains the unique visual features of this area. The Community Design Element addresses the following objectives:

- Preservation of the scenic qualities of the San Luis Rey River viewshed;
- Preservation of the scenic qualities of the I-15 Corridor and the Fallbrook Community Plan viewshed through application of the “B” Designator, related to potential visual impacts of the Proposed Project;
- Design parameters for all common areas to establish project design consistency among the various planning areas (neighborhoods) of the Proposed Project, including streetscapes, entries and landscaping; and
- Design policies addressing a wide range of community design issues such as trails, roads, open space areas, signage and lighting.

The Community Design Element includes community design goals, objectives and policies, which address visual quality aspects of the proposed common areas, include streetscape, entry treatments, pedestrian circulation, lighting, signs and landscaping. The guidelines are to be considered in the review of discretionary permits for development projects within the Proposed Project. In addition, site plan review will be required per the “B” Designator.

There are two different sets of design guidelines applicable to the Proposed Project. The Fallbrook Design Guidelines pertain to all commercial development, all industrial development, all multi-family development at a density of 7.3 dwelling units an acre and higher, and any use that requires a major use permit. Therefore, Planning Areas 1 and 4 require compliance to the

Fallbrook Design Guidelines because higher density multi-family development or a WWTP requiring a major use permit is proposed in these areas. No commercial or industrial development is planned in this Proposed Project.

The second set of design guidelines is the I-15 Corridor Scenic Preservation Guidelines, which pertain to all development permits within the mapped I-15 Corridor Study Area. The entire Project Site is within the mapped area. Therefore, all the planning areas require compliance to the I-15 Corridor Scenic Preservation Guidelines. No structures are currently proposed for Planning Area 2 (elementary school), 3 (parks), 6 (agriculture), and 7 (open space). The school will be constructed by the school district at a later date. If the school is not built, 42 residential units are planned for Planning Area 2. This development would require site plan approval to comply with the Scenic Preservation Guidelines. If any structures are proposed in Planning Area 3, 6, or 7 they will require compliance to the I-15 Corridor Scenic Preservation Guidelines through a subsequent site plan review process.

The Fallbrook Design Guidelines and the I-15 Corridor Subregional Plan designate the areas within the Project Site with the “B” Designator. The Fallbrook Design Guidelines pertain to Planning Areas 1 and 4. The I-15 Corridor Scenic Preservation Guidelines pertain to all the planning areas. The purpose of the “B” Designator is to require a site plan review for any development permit. The intent of the “B” Designator is to address man-made and natural features that affect the scenic quality of the Fallbrook Community and the I-15 Corridor area, which extends from the northern Escondido city limits to the Riverside County line.

8.3 FALLBROOK DESIGN GUIDELINES

The Fallbrook Design Guidelines require a careful examination of a project’s quality of site planning, architecture, landscape design and important details such as signage and lighting. The purpose is to ensure that every new development will carefully consider the community context in which it takes place and make a conscientious effort to develop a compatible relationship to the natural setting, neighboring properties and community design goals.

Site Design Process

The site design of Meadowood demonstrates sensitivity to both the natural setting and to the neighborhood context, while taking into account the applicable design guidelines. In Meadowood , no ridge line development is proposed, no existing neighborhood views will be blocked and all codes and ordinances will be satisfied. General site design criteria, the preservation of natural features, the circulation and parking, and the internal site design have been taken into account during the design phase of this development process.

Preservation of Significant Trees

The existing groves and the trees along the primary and secondary roadways are conserved whenever possible to create the feeling of a harmonious relationship between new development and existing agricultural land. The design of these areas does incorporate a full landscape plan to

provide streetscape landscaping and landscaping throughout the Proposed Project. 49.3 acres of groves will also be retained on the surrounding hillsides and near the entrance.

Old and New Design Relationships

The design of Meadowood has taken into account the neighboring properties. The design has incorporated the existing hiking and horse trails, the existing access driveways, the connection of roads through neighboring properties and to the two adjoining active projects, and keeps much of the existing agriculture.

Architectural Character

Architectural character as detailed in the Fallbrook Design Guidelines has been incorporated into the design of Meadowood. The buildings have been limited to two stories and a 35-foot maximum height limit. The roof lines, shadows patterns, and architectural detailing have been offset to provide relief and visual contrast. Roofs and facades will be earth-toned to blend with the existing environment. Conceptual elevations, lot plottings and example architecture are shown in the Residential Guidelines – Site Design and Architecture, Appendix 2. While elevations and floor plans are subject to change, they will adhere to the Fallbrook Design Guidelines. Site planning has also incorporated natural features as design elements, such as the wetlands, existing trees, and the rolling topography.

Landscape Character

The landscape character of the area has also been incorporated into the design of Meadowood. A portion (49.3 acres) of the citrus and avocado groves will be conserved. Proposed trees, shrubs, and plantings have been proposed that are compatible to the rural and natural setting of Fallbrook’s agricultural heritage. Conceptual landscape plans have been developed for all the planning areas and are included in the Proposed Project’s development plans. See Section 8.5 for further details.

Design for Climate and Energy Conservation

Outdoor and indoor shaded areas have been implemented into the design of the two multi-family planning areas. Large parking lots have been avoided and plantings throughout the Site will provide comfortable living spaces, while reducing energy consumption.

Signage

The signage proposed will be limited to the entrance to the Site and smaller entrance signage to each of the planning areas. There are no commercial or industrial uses in the Proposed Project, which reduces the need for signage. The proposed signage will comply with signage guidelines as specified in the Fallbrook Design Guidelines.

Site Lighting

The overall lighting concept for the community is to be energy-efficient, screen or shield the source wherever possible, and be effective for safety and security. The signage for entries shall be well lit in order to assist visitors, but the fixtures will be shielded horizontally. Special landscape lighting shall be limited to key areas and carefully controlled. County standards shall be adhered to for all street and walk areas.

Building Equipment and Services

No commercial development is included in the Proposed Project. The trash enclosures, mechanical equipment, and utility boxes and meters will be screened from public viewpoints. Landscaping will be utilized throughout the Proposed Project and will provide adequate screening where necessary.

Preservation of Historic Buildings

Cultural resources on Meadowood include six buildings more than 50 years old and one prehistoric archeological site containing three loci located in the development area. The buildings were evaluated for eligibility for the California Register of Historical Resources and the San Diego County Local Register of Historical Resources. None of the buildings is recommended as eligible. As such, it is not anticipated that these buildings will pose a constraint on development. The archeological sites will be avoided and capped and/or monitored during grading.

Multi-Family Residential Development

The Proposed Project has included features to enhance the neighborhood character. Dwelling units have been oriented toward streets where possible. Large residential parking lots have not been utilized. Single-loaded parking on certain streets, private garage parking, and more guest parking than the Zoning Ordinance requires have been included to minimize the impact on the existing character. Group and private usable open spaces have been implemented in both multi-family planning areas. Landscaping has been selected to enhance the feeling and scale of residential streets and properties.

Scenic Roads

There are no listed scenic roads within the Project Site. The only County designated scenic road with a partial view of the Proposed Project is the I-15. On intermittent parts of I-15 from Reche Road to SR-76, the Proposed Project will be visible. Several design considerations have been implemented to reduce the visual significance. No ridge line development is proposed, landscaping will be planted on all graded slopes, 49.3 acres of the site will remain in groves, and the most visual single-family area follows the natural topography with curved streets and streets with steeper grades to minimize grading and landform alterations.

Hillside Development

The amount of hillside development has been minimized. Only a minimal amount of grading is located in areas defined as “steep slopes.” This area makes up less than 10% of the RPO steep slopes area, as depicted in Figure 5-2. No buildings will be located on ridge lines. Grading has been minimized and drainage controls have been comprehensively planned through a drainage study. Sidewalks and streets have been integrated and existing trees (groves) have been retained. Landscaping will be planted on all the graded slopes to minimize the impact of the development proposed on the hillsides.

Development in Floodplains

A portion of Planning Area 1 is located within the fringe of the existing 100-year Horse Ranch Creek and San Luis Rey River floodplains. The southern portion of Planning Area 1 is adjacent to San Luis Rey River and the western portion of Planning Area 1 is adjacent to Horse Ranch Creek. Due to the re-alignment of SR-76, a Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR) was submitted to the County and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The CLOMR was approved and issued on November 22, 2005 (Case Number 05-09-1045R). Based on the proposed SR-76 alignment and the hydraulic analysis associated with the CLOMR, the northern limits of the San Luis Rey floodplain have been revised and are no longer impacting the southern portion of Planning Area 1 or the proposed alignment of SR-76. The Horse Ranch Creek floodplain is currently not defined by FEMA; however, 100-year existing and proposed floodplain analysis have been performed for the portion of Horse Ranch Creek adjacent to the Proposed Project. Based on the hydraulic analysis it has been determined that Planning Area 1 impacts the eastern fringe of the 100-year floodplain. To mitigate for the Proposed Project’s impact to the floodplain and not adversely impact adjacent and upstream property owners, the proposed grades associated with Planning Area 1 are significantly above the 100-year water surface elevations. In addition, the creek crossing at Pankey Road (proposed Pala Mesa Drive) will be improved to convey the 100-year flow rate. All regulations and ordinances relating to floodplains will be satisfied, including the Resource Protections Ordinance and the Watershed Protection Ordinance.

8.4 I-15 CORRIDOR SCENIC PRESERVATION GUIDELINES

The purpose of the I-15 Guidelines is to (1) protect and enhance scenic resources within the I-15 Corridor planning area while accommodating coordinated development that harmonizes with the natural environment; (2) establish standards to regulate the visual quality and the environmental integrity of the entire corridor; and (3) encourage scenic preservations and development practices compatible with the goals and policies of the five community and subregional planning areas encompassed by the I-15 Corridor area, when appropriate.

Site Planning Standards

The design of the Proposed Project reinforces the attributes of the adjacent sites by maintaining a portion of the agricultural groves, preserving viewsheds, minimizing grading, and providing a wetland buffer. There is one wetland buffer provided on the site near the western edge of Planning Area 1. Walkways and trails have been planned using historically used trails to provide a network of paths. Appropriate setbacks between buildings will be provided. No ridge line

development is proposed and earthen berms and barriers have been used to buffer noise. Landscaping will be utilized to minimize the visual impact of any barrier.

Parking and Circulation Design Standards

Safe and adequate space has been dedicated toward parking and internal circulation. Residential parking lots have been avoided with single-loaded streets and private garage parking. Parking areas have been located within the interior of the development. Landscaping has been included in parking and driveway areas to screen the parking areas from street views.

Site Lighting Standards

The overall lighting concept for the community is to be energy-efficient, screen or shield the source wherever possible, and be effective for safety and security. The signage for entries shall be well lit in order to assist visitors, but the fixtures will be shielded horizontally. Special landscape lighting shall be limited to key areas and carefully controlled. County standards and the Light Pollution Code shall be adhered to for all street and walk areas.

Landscape Design Standards

The landscape design standards have been incorporated into the design of Meadowood. A portion (49.3 acres) of the citrus and avocado groves will remain. Trees, shrubs, and plantings have been proposed that are compatible with the rural and natural setting of Fallbrook's agricultural heritage and to help screen the development from the I-15 and other public view points. Conceptual landscape plans have been developed for each planning area and are included in the Proposed Project's development plans. See Section 8.5 for further details.

Public Utilities and Safety Standards

During the Specific Plan Amendment development, NCFPD provided detailed fire protection development standards concerning roadway widths, secondary access, fuel modification zones, water supply and fire hydrant spacing. These standards are incorporated in the design and are required as part of implementing permits' conditions. Utilities will be placed underground and transformers will be hidden and screened with plantings and/or walls.

Development Standards for Steep Topography and Natural Features

Hillside development has been integrated with the existing topography and landforms. No development will occur on ridge lines. Only a minimal amount of grading is located in areas defined under the RPO as "steep slopes." This area makes up less than 10% of the RPO steep slopes area, as depicted in Figure 5-2. . All graded (manufactured) slopes and the areas in front of retaining walls will be appropriately landscaped.

Architectural Design

The architectural design as detailed in the I-15 Corridor Scenic Preservation Guidelines has been incorporated into the design of Meadowood. The buildings have been limited to two stories and

a 35-foot maximum height limit. The roof lines, shadow patterns, colors and architectural detailing have been offset to provide relief and visual contrast. Roofs and facades will be earth-toned to blend with the existing environment. Conceptual elevations, lot plottings and example architecture are shown in the Residential Guidelines, Appendix 2. While elevations and floor plans are subject to change, they will adhere to the Scenic Preservation Guidelines. The signage proposed will be limited to the entrance to the Site and smaller entrance signage to each of the planning areas. The proposed signs will comply with signage guidelines as specified in the I-15 Corridor Scenic Preservation Guidelines.

8.5 CONCEPTUAL LANDSCAPE PLAN

The conceptual landscape plan implements the guidelines from the Fallbrook Design Guidelines and the I-15 Corridor Scenic Preservation Guidelines, while also satisfying the requirements of the County's Landscape Water Conservation Design Manual.

Streetscape Plan

The design theme of the community will be greatly enhanced by a successful streetscape design. This theme is shown in the Conceptual Landscape Plan. Streets shall include landscaping, decomposed granite trails, paved walks, entry identity markers, seat walls, distinct paving at key roadway nodes, and special lighting. Medians and rights-of-way will be planted to create a pleasant experience. The landscaping will be located beyond the minimum clear recovery zone from the face of the curb and will not create a line-of-sight obstruction at the edge of the travel way. The HOA established will be responsible for the maintenance of the landscaping within the right-of-way.

The main entry drive is a divided boulevard with a 106' right-of-way. The boulevard has a 14' median that is planted with large canopy trees, ornamental plantings, and native perennials. An encroachment removal agreement will be sought from the County, allowing medians and the edge of the rights-of-way to be planted with trees to create a pleasant experience, per the requirements of the Fallbrook Design Guidelines. The Applicant has coordinated with the County to determine the number and spacing of the trees and ensure the vegetation proposed within the rights-of-way will not cause a line-of-sight obstruction. The rustic quality of the Fallbrook area is characterized in this boulevard development. The existing groves will be conserved and maintained by the HOA along the primary and secondary roadways whenever possible to create the feeling of a harmonious relationship between new development and existing agricultural land.

Generous open space along the street, and clear site signage, will make this experience easy to navigate for first-time visitors.

The following streetscape elements shall be designed at primary and secondary roads:

- Special entry treatments at key nodes (walls, signage, plantings, gateways);
- Streetscape plantings;
- Special safety lighting; and

- Pedestrian walks.

The streets are designed to accommodate pedestrian and vehicles in an interesting way through the use of feature plantings, street furniture, special lighting, and graphics. The materials are designed to make the experience comfortable and consistent with the feeling of the community.

Entry Treatments

The entry treatments for the Proposed Project are identified on the Conceptual Landscape Plan. This plan includes community entry off SR-76 as well as the neighborhood entries.

Community Entry: The community entry shall be designed to capture the character and feel of the Fallbrook region. This includes a stone wall for community identity. The signage wall becomes the gateway for the community and is illuminated at night as a glowing marker in the landscape. Citrus groves are conserved at the edges to reflect the character and beauty of the regional agriculture. The boulevard is developed with canopy trees, ornamental plantings and native perennials. The entry provides a strong landscape statement that is welcoming and fitting for the development as a part of the Fallbrook community.

Neighborhood Entries: The neighborhood entries are designed to be special decision points along the major streets. These entries include low stone identity markers, pedestrian walks and ramps, special lighting and enhanced landscape development. Wherever possible, the existing groves are conserved and become part of the neighborhood entry experience.

Pedestrian Circulation

The pedestrian walkways along streets are developed to provide a comfortable and shady network of walkways for the community. Trails, comprised of decomposed granite, are developed to provide access along important native and developed landscape areas. These walkways and trails are designed to create a strong connection to the natural beauty of the Site. Stone seat walls, special native plantings, lighting, and varying walkway widths make the pedestrian network a successful community amenity.

Landscaping

The landscape development for the Proposed Project shall be designed in a consistent way that captures the spirit of the Fallbrook region. Drought tolerant native plantings will contrast with the existing citrus and avocado groves. Development projects within the community shall include consideration of the following:

The Groves: The existing citrus and avocado groves shall be conserved whenever possible. Grasslands or mulch shall be an appropriate ground cover for these areas. The conservation of these groves is important to the character of the Proposed Project.

Slope Plantings: Slope plantings shall be developed to hold the slope with non-invasive, fast growing plantings that provide seasonal interest and beauty. The rustic qualities of native vegetation of the region shall be used in these areas whenever possible.

Preservation of Native Vegetation: Existing mature native vegetation shall be preserved where feasible to maintain the character of the rustic landscape. All invasive species shall be removed to avoid danger to native plant species.

Fuel Modification Zones: Brush management shall be provided for all sensitive buffer areas in accordance with the FPP prepared for the Proposed Project. The landscape design for these areas shall follow the County guidelines for fire management. These areas shall also maintain the character and beauty of the region through plantings that provide fire safety.

Irrigation: All new plantings shall be irrigated and maintained to establish the natural characteristics of the materials. Whenever possible, irrigation shall emphasize the use of low-precipitation spray-heads, drip emitters and buffers. The irrigation systems shall be 100% automatically controlled and lawn and shrub systems shall be separate. Native vegetation shall not be irrigated after permanent establishment.

Planting Palette

The character and beauty of the region shall be expressed through the selection of plant materials for the community. The contrast of the existing groves against the rustic feel of native species and ornamental grasses will be designed to create a strong composition. The character of key areas in the community is defined by the landscape treatments.

Street Plantings: Street plantings along the primary and secondary theme roads shall include large canopy shade trees such as *Quercus agrifolia* (Coastal Live Oak), *Quercus Virginiana* (Southern Live Oak), *Liquidamber styraciflua* (Sweet Gum), *Koelreuteria bipinnata* (Chinese Flame Tree), *Platanus acerifolia* (London Plane Tree), and *Platanus racemosa* (California Sycamore). Existing groves shall be conserved to provide seasonal interest along the roadway edge treatment. The plantings along the road shall express the seasonal beauty of the region through indigenous materials. Ornamental plantings and native perennials shall be planted in mass along the streets and walkways. The informal feel of the landscape will soften the edges and provide a unified theme for the streets and edge treatments. Special ornamental trees will be planted at key entry nodes along the streets. These include trees such as: *Schinus molle* (California Pepper), *Prosopis velutina* (Arizona Mesquite), *Parkinsonia aculeate* (Mexican Palo Verde), *Koelreuteria bipinnata* (Chinese Flame Tree), and *Cassia leptophylla* (Gold Medallion Tree)..

8.6 COMMUNITY DESIGN GOAL, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Goal

To create a community that is respectful of the strong rural character of the Fallbrook region. The Meadowood Specific Plan Amendment is created to ensure the visual compatibility of future development in the Proposed Project.

Objective CD-1: Create a distinctive, rustic and native feel through landscape in the Proposed Project.

Policies

CD-1.1 All subdivision applications in Planning Areas 1 and 4 shall be subject to the Fallbrook Design Guidelines, Section 8.3 of this element.

CD-1.2 All subdivision applications in Planning Areas 1, 4 and 5 shall be subject to the I-15 Corridor Scenic Preservation Guidelines, Section 8.4 of this element.

CD-1.3 All streets are subject to the landscape design guidelines of the Fallbrook Design Guidelines and I-15 Scenic Preservation Guidelines through the review of subdivision applications to enhance the identity of the Proposed Project as viewed from the streets.

CD-1.4 All development shall comply with the County’s Dark Sky Ordinance.

Objective CD-2: Preserve the visual landscape character of rural Fallbrook and the special scenic beauty within the viewshed of the I-15 Corridor.

CD-2.1 Conserve 49.3 acres of agricultural groves within the Project Site to ensure that the visual character of the Site is maintained into the future.

CD-2.2 Development within the “B” Designator shall be subject to site plan review, consistent with the I-15 Scenic Preservation Guidelines and the Fallbrook Community Design Guidelines.

Objective CD-3: Preserve existing steep slope areas.

Policies

CD-3.1 The steep sloped areas shall be preserved in dedicated biological open space easements prior to the final map being recorded. Such easements can be dedicated on the face of the final map. The only exceptions are the areas that are defined as allowed encroachments under the RPO. These areas include trails, grading for the fire access road, grading associated with the reservoirs and minor fringe grading associated with the development, as long as such grading does not exceed 10% of the total RPO steep sloped area within the Proposed Project..

CD-3.2 Grading, excavation; placement of materials; clearing of vegetation; construction, erection, or placement of any building or structure; vehicular activities, except as authorized under policy CD-3.1.; trash dumping; or use for any purpose other than as open space within the steep sloped areas is prohibited.

Objective CD-4: Maintain the natural appearance of all manufactured slopes.

Policies

CD-4.1 Prior to occupancy of the nearby residences, the corresponding manufactured slopes shall be planted per the approved landscape plan.

CD-4.2 The HOA will be responsible for the maintenance of the manufactured slopes.

Objective CD-5: Maintain natural topography to the maximum extent possible.

Policies

CD-5.1 The roads shall be curved to follow the natural contours of the lands as best as possible.

CD-5.2 Grading shall be minimized and the Proposed Project shall not construct excessively tall retaining walls.

Objective CD-6: The multi-family units shall be arranged in a configuration to create a sense of neighborhood character.

Policies

CD-6.1 Units shall incorporate front doors that face the private or public street or private usable space that opens out to a common area.

CD-6.2 Entrances into the two multi-family areas shall be limited so that a sense of neighborhood character is retained.

CD-6.3 Central parks and/or recreation centers will provide central meeting and recreation opportunities.