

I-225 Jerry Kaufman (2)

Comment Letter I-225

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Re: NEWLAND SIERRA, LOG NO. PDS2015-ER-15-08-001; SCH NO. 2015021036. PROJECT NUMBERS: PDS2015-GPA-15-001, PDS2015-SP-15-001, PDS2015-REZ-15-001, PDS2015-TM-5597, PDSXXXX-HLP-XXX

The Newland Sierra proposal and its Draft Environmental Impact Report represent a well-conceived plan to address the key planning issue we face in North County: the choice between addressing our housing shortage versus transforming the I-15 corridor with big-box style development.

The DEIR should be reviewed in the context of San Diego's housing deficit, which is driving up prices for potential homebuyers throughout the county, forcing people to move to Riverside County. When they go, they take away potential employees for our local businesses, and tax revenue and economic output from our cities and the county.

If those movers are fortunate enough to keep their jobs, their long commutes will pump GHGs into the atmosphere and clog our roads and highways, while siphoning spending away from local businesses.

The simple solution to this problem is to build more homes. The catch is that they must be the right type, developed in the right way, at the right price point, and with the right planning, infrastructure improvements and community amenities.

The DEIR is thorough in showing that Newland Sierra is precisely the type of development the county needs, with best practices, impressive design features, more than 1,000 acres of protected open space, and what would be the first carbon-neutral master planned community of its size in San Diego County, and possibly the state.

The DEIR is more than sufficient and gives a clear picture of the impacts and effects this project would have - most of which can be mitigated with their proposed actions.

I appreciate that the DEIR looks at what we end up with if Newland Sierra does not go forward. That property, based on current zoning, gives us 99 upscale ranchettes and 2 million square feet of high-density commercial development. To translate, that means a handful of new homes for very wealthy individuals, along with a concrete island lined with Costcos, Walmarts, Home Depots and chain restaurants.

Although it has yet to be developed, the property will be developed in the near future. North County has so little land left open for development that this property will go quickly.

The impact report paints a thorough picture of what Newland Sierra will provide the community, but also needs to be compared to the impacts of leaving the zoning as is.



Comment Letters

As a resident who values open spaces, real communities and environmental protection, I will take Newland Sierra's plans for new neighborhoods and open space over a gated enclave and club shopping any day of the week. It's the better choice for all of North County.

This Draft Environmental Impact Report steps through a sound plan that will benefit this region. I strongly urge that this EIR be certified, and applications for new zoning and a General Plan amendment proceed.

I appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely,



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I-225-3
Cont.