

I-78 Mary Clarke

Comment Letter I-78

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County of San Diego  
Planning and Development Services  
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SENT BY E-MAIL

RE: Comment letter, Newland Sierra project, Draft Environmental Impact Report

Dear Planning and Development Services:

It has come to my attention during the review and comment period for the Newland Sierra project's Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) that several projects in process in the vicinity of the Newland Sierra project have been mentioned by other commentators as not being included in the Cumulative Impacts Analysis. In particular, the San Marcos Highlands project in San Marcos and the County of San Diego has been mentioned as not being included in the Cumulative Impacts Analysis.

I have been closely following the progress of the San Marcos Highlands project for many years, and I am writing to clarify the status of that project as it stands as of today.

The San Marcos Highlands project was given final approval by the City of San Marcos in December, 2016. However, since about 52 percent of the project site is in the County, the City of San Marcos must annex that portion of the project. The annexation has not occurred and is in dispute.

The County has opposed the San Marcos Highlands project due to its excessive development and severe environmental impacts. The County General Plan would allow about 29 homes to be built in the County portion of the project, and the Conservation Subdivision Program requirements should be applied, possibly further reducing the number of homes.

The San Marcos Highlands project, as approved by the City of San Marcos, places about 136 homes in the County portion of the project – that's out of a total of 189 homes in the project. This density in the County is far above the 29 homes allowed by the General Plan.

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In addition, the removal of about 75 acres of coastal sage scrub in an area designated as a Pre-approved Mitigation Area in the North County MSCP and the severe constraint of an important wildlife corridor are in dispute in the San Marcos Highlands project.

The point here is that, in any future Cumulative Impacts Analysis for the Newland Sierra project, the San Marcos Highlands project should not be included in the configuration that was approved by the San Marcos City Council. If it is included in a future Cumulative Impacts Analysis, the total number of dwelling units should reflect the number allowed by the County General Plan in the County portion of the project. In addition, the issues related to the constraint of the wildlife corridor and the removal of coastal sage scrub must be taken into account.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on issues related to the Newland Sierra project and the DEIR.

Sincerely,

Mary H. Clarke



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