

I-205 Steve Hutchison

- I-205- 1** The comment states that the project under the name Merriam Mountains was already rejected by the Board of Supervisors in 2010. The comment states that voters defeated the Lilac Hills Ranch project, which has similar characteristics and issues.

The County acknowledges the comment as expressing the opinion of the commenter. Please see **Response to Comment O-1-377**.

- I-205- 2** The comment states that project proponents and County staff agree that the project will support General Plan Guiding Principle 1, which suggests that the County accommodate a fair share of anticipated growth. The comment states that the General Plan has already apportioned future growth using appropriate land use regulations, which the project proposes to amend by adding density in otherwise rural/semi-rural lands. Refer to **Topical Response LU-1**. With the proposed General Plan Amendments, the Draft EIR finds the project would be consistent with the General Plan as evaluated in detail in Chapter 3.3, Land Use and Planning; and Draft EIR Appendix DD. (*See*, Section 3.3.3.2, Conflict with Plans, Policies, and Regulations, p. 3.3-21.) In undertaking this consistency evaluation, the Draft EIR analyzes whether the project was consistent with each of the “Guiding Principles” and policies of the County of San Diego General Plan (2011) and Subregional Plan. Based on this detailed review, the Draft EIR concluded impacts would be less than significant. (Draft EIR, p. 3.3-21 - 3.3-36, 3.3-38.). The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project.

- I-205- 3** The comment states that the project flouts Guiding Principle 2 by attempting to amend the general plan to allow the project for urban densities where it is not anticipated or recommended. The County does not concur. See Appendix DD, Land Use Consistency Analysis to review a project conformance analysis with Guiding Principle 2. The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project.

- I-205- 4** The comment states that the project must be governed by policies LU 1.2, 1.3, and 1.4. The comment states that LU 1.2 requires projects to comply with LEED ND standards, which has prerequisites for locating a project near existing infrastructure. The comment further states that the project is a clear example of leapfrog development and does not qualify for LEED ND. As stated in LU 1.2, “Prohibit leapfrog development which is inconsistent with the Community Development Model. Leapfrog development restrictions do not apply to new villages that are designed to be consistent with the Community Development Model, that provide necessary services and facilities, and that are designed to meet the LEED-

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Neighborhood Development Certification or an equivalent. For purposes of this policy, leapfrog development is defined as Village densities located away from established Villages or outside established water and sewer service boundaries. [See applicable community plan for possible relevant policies.”

The Project is consistent with these policies. As stated in Appendix DD, Land Use Consistency, for project conformance with land use policy LU 1.2, the Community Development Model is implemented by three Regional Categories: Village, Semi-Rural, and Rural lands. The project as proposed is consistent with the Community Development Model, because the Community Development Model has already applied an established Village Regional Category designation to a portion of the project Site. The project does not propose to create a new Village, or expand or reconfigure the existing Village area. The project is also within the established boundaries of the Vallecitos Water District. Please refer to Appendix DD for discussion of conformance with General Plan policies.

The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project.

- I-205- 5** The comment states that the project attempts to slide by Land Use Policy LU-2, which expresses the need to maintain rural character, by designating a portion of the site as open space. As stated in Appendix DD, Land Use Consistency, for project conformance with goal LU-2, the project would enhance the rural setting and character of the surrounding unincorporated area through its context sensitive land use plan in conjunction with its design guidelines and incorporation of key project features and amenities that build off the surrounding area.

The Twin Oaks Community began as a predominantly agricultural community north of an area known originally as Vallecitos de San Marcos, today, what is the City of San Marcos. Today, Twin Oaks supports a mix of land uses, including a range of housing types and lot sizes, small farms, nurseries, and ranchettes in its northern portions, the Twin Oaks Golf Course, an equestrian center and a handful of equestrian ranchettes, and retail, commercial, and light industrial uses. In keep with this character, the project includes over 20 acres of Community gardens and vineyards interspersed throughout the project as a locally grown, sustainable source of agriculture; an equestrian staging area and pathways and trails that connect all the way into the City of San Marcos and to the project’s eastern edge designed to accommodate equestrian users; conservation of nearly three quarters of the Site’s existing natural terrain, including prominent ridgelines, peaks, rock outcroppings, and drainages; a range of housing options to meet the needs of the North County Metro’s growing population; a variety of parks, including the Oak Grove Park, the Sierra

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Farms Park, and several other neighborhood parks, and a system of pedestrian pathways and trails that incorporate the more natural elements of the surrounding area, including oaks, clusters of boulders, and scenic vistas; and architectural design guidelines that draw from the character of the Site as well as the surrounding community.

The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project.

I-205- 6 The comment states that while the General Plan can be amended, the proposed amendment does not reflect the intent of the General Plan to consolidate density in areas where it already exists in order to achieve the efficiency of supporting infrastructure. See **Topical Response LU-1**. The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project.

I-205- 7 The comment states that Conservation and Open Space policies discourage ridgeline development (COS 12.1 and 12.2) while at the same time call for compact development of villages in respect of the Community Development Model. The comment states that the project will traverse the ridgeline that ascends from the intersection I-15 and Deer Springs Road among others farther west. As stated in Appendix DD, Land Use Consistency, for project conformance with policies COS 12.1, the proposed project would protect undeveloped ridgelines and steep hillsides by protecting nearly three quarters of the project Site in preserve and project open space. The project proposes to change a portion of the current Rural Lands General Plan designation on the project Site through a General Plan Amendment (GPA) to implement a Specific Plan. While the GPA would change a portion of the Rural Lands designation on the property, implementation of the project's proposed Specific Plan and Tentative Map would concentrate development and maximize preservation of the native habitat and existing ridgelines and steep hillsides on Site. Under the Specific Plan, the areas proposed for protection would be redesignated OS-C (Open Space-Conservation), the General Plan's most restrictive land use designation. Please see the responses to Goal/Policy/Objective COS-11.3 and COS-12, and the Newland Sierra Tentative Map and Specific Plan.

Furthermore, as stated in Appendix DD for project conformance with COS-12.2, the proposed project would require preservation of physical features such that structures would be located down and away from ridgelines and not silhouetted against the sky. The project proposes to avoid grading/landform alteration impacts to nearly three quarters of the Site, preserve many of the project Site's ridgelines and peaks, and use grade adaptive architecture and Site design that results in terraced pads that are

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context sensitive and conform to the underlying slope of the home Site. The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project.

- I-205- 8** The comment states that Guiding Principle 3 calls for the project to enhance the local economy, however, it will more likely displace existing businesses at the intersection of I-15 and Deer Springs Road. See Appendix DD, Land Use Consistency Analysis to review a project conformance analysis with Guiding Principle 3. The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project. The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project.
- I-205- 9** The comment states that the Draft EIR identifies listed endangered or threatened species and then expects to mitigate the impacts and proceed to build. The comment states that the project provides no scientific evidence to ensure that the sensitive species will be protected or preserved as required by Guiding Principle 4. See Appendix DD, Land Use Consistency Analysis to review a project conformance analysis with Guiding Principle 4. The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project.
- I-205- 10** The comment states that the fences proposed will impede wildlife transit in an area within the MSCP and near MSCP preserves. As stated in MM-BIO-8E, “To protect the proposed open space easements from unauthorized entry or disturbance, permanent post and rail fencing, or similar permeable fence, shall be installed along the boundaries of the biological open space.” The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project.
- I-205- 11** The comment states that the project admits the loss of important habitat for a variety of native species with the request for a Habitat Loss Permit. As stated in Section 2.4 Biological Resources, on page 2.4-6, “In order for the proposed project to obtain approval for the loss of coastal sage scrub and any associated incidental take of California gnatcatcher through the County’s Section 4(d) habitat loss permit (HLP) process, the proposed project must demonstrate conformance with overall programmatic goals and policies established for the San Diego County Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) subregion and make the specific findings applicable to issuance an HLP. A Draft HLP including 4(d) findings is included as Appendix H.” The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for

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- review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project.
- I-205- 12** The comment states that Deer Springs Fire Protection District will not be able to provide first responder support during a brush fire, that the project is a known Very High Fire Hazard risk area, and that it will have little ingress or egress. Potential impacts associated with fire hazards and evacuations have been adequately analyzed in Section 2.8 Hazards and Hazardous Materials as well as, Appendix N, Fire Protection Plan and Evacuation Plan. Mitigation has been provided when necessary to avoid or lessen potentially significant impacts. Also see **Topical Response HAZ-1**. The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project.
- I-205- 13** The comment states that little is said about consistency regarding Guiding Principle 6 in Section 2.13 Transportation and Traffic. The comment also states that it is unreasonable to for a project of this size to not have mass transit options, and that the proponents must be conditioned to provide connectivity to the Escondido Transit Center or other transit center. See Appendix DD, Land Use Consistency Analysis to review a project conformance analysis with Guiding Principle 6. The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project.
- I-205- 14** The comment states that current transit options in the General Plan don't exist because it anticipated projects of this scale to be built closer to existing facilities and resources. The comment also states that the project's bike and pedestrian paths are meant to promote multimodality, but given the topography of the site, few residences will be induced to utilize human powered modes to the extent anticipated in the EIR. The County acknowledges the comment and notes it expresses the opinions of the commentator, and does not raise an issue related to the adequacy of any specific section or analysis of the Draft EIR. The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project. No further response is required or necessary.
- I-205- 15** The comment states that there will be a direct impact to the I-15 between Deer Springs Road and Pomerado Road. The comment also states that the study area conveniently excludes other major proposed developments (i.e., Lilac Hills Ranch and Campus Park). As stated in Appendix R, Traffic Impact Analysis, the project's study area was determined using the San Diego County criteria, which requires an analysis of transportation facilities that would receive 25 or more peak hour trips from the proposed project. As shown in Table 9-1, Cumulative Projects Trip Generation Summary, the Campus Park project is listed as cumulative project number

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1 and the Lilac Hills Ranch project is listed as cumulative project number 170. The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project. No further response is required or necessary.

I-205- 16 The comment states Caltrans response to the Lilac Hills Ranch traffic study indicated that the impact would extend from the Riverside County line to Highway 78 at least. Therefore, the limited study area for the project likely underestimates the direct impact on I-15 and the study area should have extended from Riverside County line to I-8 to get a regional view of impacts. As stated in Appendix R, Traffic Impact Analysis, the project's study area was determined using the San Diego County criteria, which requires an analysis of transportation facilities that would receive 25 or more peak hour trips from the proposed project. The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project. No further response is required or necessary.

I-205- 17 The comment states that the Draft EIR states there is no mechanism for contributing to a mitigation effort for I-15 significant impacts by the project. The comment further states that Caltrans has stated that such a mechanism does exist and should be required a condition of approval for the project. As stated in Section 2.13 Transportation and Traffic, impacts to I-15 mainline would be mitigated by providing additional mainline capacity; however, there is no Caltrans program in place to implement the necessary improvements into which the project could contribute a fair share and, thus, there is no feasible mitigation that would reduce the identified impacts to less than significant. The County further refers the commenter to **Topical Response TR-2**. The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project. No further response is required or necessary.

I-205- 18 The comment is in regards to Guiding Principle 7, which relates to sustainability. The comment states that the project is an example of unsustainable, inappropriate, and undesirable growth. See Appendix DD, Land Use Consistency Analysis to review a project conformance analysis with Guiding Principle 7. The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project.

I-205- 19 The comment is in regards to Guiding Principle 9, which relates to the costs of infrastructure for new development. The comment states that costs generally exceed the tax revenues generated by the development even when they're located near existing infrastructure; thus, placing the project in its remote location will exacerbate

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those infrastructure costs. The comment also states that extending infrastructure to remote rural lands encourages leapfrog development. As stated in Appendix DD, Land Use Consistency, under project conformance for Guiding Principle 9, the project would be conditioned to require delivery, construction and/or funding of these improvements commensurate with the various phases of project development. The payment of impact fees or the equivalent would be required at the time of building permit issuance. The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project.

- I-205- 20** The comment states that the EIR does not adequately address the impacts of the project, determining that most are mitigable, avoidable, or insignificant in spite of the intentions of the General Plan. The County acknowledges the comment and notes it expresses the opinions of the commentator, and does not raise an issue related to the adequacy of any specific section or analysis of the Draft EIR. The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project. No further response is required or necessary.
- I-205- 21** The comment states that the Caltrans response letter for the Lilac Hills Ranch traffic study stated that the impact would extend from Riverside County line to Highway 78. This comment does not relate to the proposed project. The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project. No further response is required or necessary.
- I-205- 22** The comment states that the limited study area for the project likely underestimates the direct impact on I-15 and that the study area should have extended from Riverside County line to I-8. Per San Diego County criteria, analysis is only required of transportation facilities that that would receive 25 or more peak hour trips from the proposed project. The commenter suggests analysis of far beyond the scope of the project's study area and no analysis is required. The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project.
- I-205- 23** The comment states that Caltrans has stated that there is a mechanism in place for contributing funds to mitigate impacts on I-15 and the project should be required to pay into the fund as part of project approval. The project has not assumed any improvements to the I-15 mainline corridor for either the direct or cumulative impact analysis in the Draft EIR, the required traffic forecasting scenarios for conducting impact analyses. Instead, the project identifies both direct and cumulative impacts to

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- I-15 mainline as a result of the proposed project, and states that there is no Caltrans program in place toward which the project could make a fair-share contribution to mitigate its impacts, and identifies the impacts as significant and unavoidable. The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project.
- I-205- 24** The comment states that given all of the project’s impacts, the use of the term sustainability in connection with the project is preposterous. The County acknowledges the comment and notes it expresses the opinions of the commentator, and does not raise an issue related to the adequacy of any specific section or analysis of the Draft EIR. The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project. No further response is required or necessary.
- I-205- 25** The comment is in regards to Guiding Principle 9 and states that even when development is properly located near existing infrastructure, the costs to extend infrastructure generally exceeds the tax revenues generated by the development. The County notes the comment provides background information and does not raise an environmental issue within the meaning of CEQA. The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project. No further response is required because the comment does not raise an environmental issue.
- I-205- 26** The comment states that extending infrastructure to remote rural lands encourages additional leapfrog development that flouts most Guiding Principles and Policies of the General Plan. The County acknowledges the comment and notes it expresses the opinions of the commentator, and does not raise an issue related to the adequacy of any specific section or analysis of the Draft EIR. The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project. No further response is required or necessary.
- I-205- 27** The comment states that EIR does not adequately address the impacts of the project. The County disagrees with this statement. All potential environmental impacts have been adequately analyzed and disclosed in the EIR. The County will include the comment as part of the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the p