

I-34 Allen Binns (1)

- I-34-1** The comment states that there needs to be a freeway interchange at the northeast area of the project so that fire engines from the Deer Springs Fire station at Circle Road (Station 11) can access the Mesa Neighborhood in a shorter amount of time. The comment asks what the response time would be in this scenario. The comment also asks what the response time would be with an entrance at the northeast corner of the project. As stated in Section 3.5 Public Services, on page 3.5-14, “a GIS-based travel time coverage modeling effort was conducted to determine if the proposed project meets the General Plan’s 5-minute travel time standard.²¹⁰ A route analysis was also performed to determine the best route between a minimum of two points based on the parameters chosen. The analysis includes only response from Station 12 throughout the proposed project and surrounding areas where roads provide access. Modeling results indicate that Station 12 can reach the entire project Site within 5 minutes of travel, consistent with the General Plan Safety Element.” Therefore, modeling that involves an interchange and entrance on the northeast side of the project area is not necessary.

Furthermore, page 3.5-14 of the Draft EIR also states that, “Initial fire response for the improved portions of the project Site would be provided by DSFPD’s Station 12, due to its proximity that enable travel times within 5 minutes to all improved areas. In addition to Station 12, Stations 11 and 13 also can respond to the proposed project within 10 minutes to round out the effective firefighting force. Further, the San Marcos Fire Protection District, the Escondido Fire Department, and other North County fire agencies are parties to automatic aid or mutual aid agreements. These agreements provide additional resources during emergency conditions. Wildland areas adjacent to the proposed project are the responsibility of CAL FIRE due to their State Responsibility Area designation. DSFPD, along with other area agencies, respond simultaneously with CAL FIRE for wildland fires through a coordinated local agency response system.”

- I-34-2** The comment states that if someone lives in the Mesa neighborhood they would have to drive south on Deer Springs to go north on I-15. The comment asks how this contributes to the traffic gridlock and to pollution. Residents of the project’s Mesa Neighborhood would have access to Deer Springs Road at Sarver Lane and Mesa Rock Road. They will be able to travel east on Deer Springs Road from both of these project access points to access the I-15 freeway. Potential traffic impacts associated with future residences have been adequately analyzed in the Draft EIR; specifically in

²¹⁰ The Project Facility Availability Form (Appendix E to the Fire Protection Plan) provided by the DSFPD Fire Chief provides Fire Department input regarding travel time.

Comment Letter Responses

Section 2.13 Transportation and Traffic and Section 2.3 Air Quality. Please also see **Topical Response TR-3**.

- I-34-3** The comment asks how people are supposed to evacuate if a fire is coming from Deer Springs Road if all the project's entrances/exits are on Deer Springs Road. As stated in Section 1.0 Project Description on page 1-8, "The project Site would have two primary access roads along Deer Springs Road at Mesa Rock Road and Sarver Lane, with an additional access point at Camino Mayor off North Twin Oaks Valley Road." See **Topical Response HAZ-1**.
- I-34-4** The comment asks if the bike share program will be free, coin-operated, or paid for by the HOA fees. The project proposes that the cost of bike rentals will be borne by the Homeowners Association and; therefore, free for individual users in the community. The cost for a bicycle rental to the resident has not been determined; however, as described in the TDM Program, the community's transportation coordinator is responsible for managing/monitoring the TDM measure to ensure that they are effective.
- I-34-5** The comment asks what the difference would be in CO₂ emissions if the project site was built out according to the General Plan vs. the proposed project. As stated in Section 4, Alternatives, on page 4-18, "Construction emissions under the Existing General Plan Alternative would be reduced when compared to the project due to the smaller amount of cut and fill on site. During operation, this alternative would result in six percent (6%) fewer average daily trips (ADTs), resulting in slightly lower transportation-related operational emissions in the off-peak periods compared to the project. Overall, this alternative would result in reduced impacts compared to the proposed project due to reduced construction and transportation-related emissions."
- I-34-6** The comment asks how the project will help with the homeless problem and affordable housing problem. Regarding the homeless problem, the County acknowledges the comment and notes it raises economic, social, or political issues that do not appear to relate to any physical effect on the environment. Please also see **Response to Comment I-32-5**.
- I-34-7** The comment asks what the difference in pollution would be during the construction phase if the project site were built in conformance with the General Plan vs. the proposed project. As stated in Section 4, Alternatives, on page 4-18, "Construction emissions under the Existing General Plan Alternative would be reduced when compared to the project due to the smaller amount of cut and fill on site. This comment is included in 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.

Comment Letter Responses

- I-34-8** The comment asks how many lanes would be built over the I-15 freeway and who will be paying for it. The project applicant would fund 100% of the interchange improvements. Please see **Topical Responses TR-1 and TR-2**. This comment is included in 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-34-9** The comment asks who will pay to widen Twin Oaks Valley Road south of Buena Creek Road. Potentially significant impacts were identified for Twin Oaks Valley Road south of Buena Creek Road to the intersection of Cassou Road that would be mitigated by M-TR-5. Although this improvement would be within the City of San Marcos, as stated in Section 2.13 Transportation and Traffic on page 2.13-104, “the project applicant is expected to gain the concurrence and approval of the City of San Marcos to build and contribute funding as mitigation for the identified improvements to Twin Oaks Valley Road and associated intersections, thereby resulting in mitigation of the project’s direct and cumulative impacts in San Marcos to less than significant.” The commenter is also referred to the **Responses to Commenter Letter A-4**. This comment is included in 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-34-10** The comment asks how many trips per day the shuttle to the Escondido Transit Center will have per hour and what will the hours of operation be. Appendix R3, Newland Sierra TDM Program – VMT Reduction Evaluation, to the Draft EIR, on page 13 of 26, states:

“For the Newland Sierra development, the proposed shuttle service would cover the entire development area and provide service to transit hubs, Park-and-Ride lots, commercial areas, parks, and residential communities. While NCTD does not currently have plans to expand service to this area, the proposed shuttles would take users from the residential areas and commercial center to the Escondido Transit Center, approximately 10 miles away. This reasonably allows for *30 minute headways between shuttles* and connects Newland Sierra residents to the SPRINTER light rail and BREEZE bus lines. ... As to frequency, transit headways would be reduced by 100% since there is no existing service on the Newland Sierra development site.”

Based on this information, and information from CAPCOA, the total VMT reduction is projected at 1.2%, to be achieved at project build-out. If the shuttles run at 30-minute intervals, the total number of trips would be approximately 32 over a 16-hour period (assuming a 6:00AM to 10:00PM service).

Comment Letter Responses

I-34-11 The comment asks if the shuttle will be in operation for construction workers for the 10-15 years or more of construction. As stated on page 24 of 26 of Appendix R3, the shuttle is not anticipated to meet its target for trip reduction until project buildout. Further, no credit was taken for any construction worker trip reduction as part of the construction trip worker analysis.

Regarding the number of years of construction, as stated in Section 1.0 Project Description on page 1-20, “Build out of the Community is anticipated to occur in two phases over approximately 10 years in response to market demands and in accordance with a logical and orderly expansion of roadways, public utilities, and infrastructure.”

I-34-12 This comment is the same as **Comment I-34-5**. Refer to **Response to Comment I-34-5**.

I-34-13 This comment states that the comments to follow are in regards to the pamphlet that was distributed at the public meeting and that the pamphlet was deceptive. The County acknowledges the comment as an introduction to comments that follow. This comment is included in the Final EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project.

I-34-14 This comment states that the pamphlet from the public meeting states that “every home in Newland Sierra will be solar powered.” The comment asks if that means they will be operational and ready to use, or if they will be constructed on the roofs and then it becomes the homeowners’ responsibility to hook them up. The County notes the comment does not raise an issue within the meaning of CEQA. Nonetheless, the County directs the reader to **PDF-22**, which states, “Solar panels shall be required on all residential units. Where feasible, roof-integrated solar panels should be considered to minimize visual impacts. All light fixtures along public roads shall be solar powered. The project can use centralized solar arrays (e.g., a solar array on top of a shade structure in a parking lot) to implement this requirement.” (DEIR, p. 1-14) Solar panels will be required to be constructed as part of the Site Plan process, with each new home being built with the solar panels installed prior to Certificate of Occupancy. Therefore, the solar panels would be operational and ready for use upon completion of each home and prior to transfer to the homebuyer.

I-34-15 The comment asks if the residential garages will be wired for electric vehicle charging or if they will be operational. The County notes the comment does not raise an issue within the meaning of CEQA. Nonetheless, the County directs the reader to **PDF-23**, which states, “The garages of all single-family homes shall include an electric vehicle charger in the garage, and electric vehicle charging stations shall be installed in 3 percent of the Town Center’s commercial core parking spaces.” Similar to solar panels, electric vehicle chargers will be required to be installed as part of the

Comment Letter Responses

home construction process, with each home being built with the EV chargers installed prior to Certificate of Occupancy.

I-34-16 The comment asks if every residential unit will have a garage and if that means there will be 2,135 garages. The County notes the comment does not raise an issue within the meaning of CEQA. Nonetheless, the proposed project is required to meet the County's standards for parking, including Section 6758 of the County Zoning Ordinance which requires off-street parking spaces for residential uses; however, such parking spaces are not required to be in garages. Appendix C, Specific Plan to the DEIR shows development standards for various product types. As shown in Figures 38 – 46, parking is intended to be provided in garages; however, no credit was taken for PDF-23 and parking is not required to be provided in garages. This comment is included in 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-34-17 This comment asks if the “pre-plumbed grey water systems” will be operational or not. The County notes the comment does not raise an issue within the meaning of CEQA. Nonetheless, the County directs the commenter to PDF-26, which states, “All single-family homes shall be plumbed for greywater systems for use in private yards.” Each homeowner will have the decision to connect residential appliances to the installed grey-water system; however, this connection is not required, nor has any credit been assigned for use of grey-water systems.

I-34-18 This comment asks what the road grade of Deer Springs Road currently is and what will the road grade will be after it is fixed by Newland Sierra.

The County directs the commenter to the Tentative Map and Preliminary Grading Plan included as “Additional Items” to the Public Review Draft EIR. Deer Springs Road is currently built with a maximum grade of 7%. The project’s proposed improvements to Deer Springs Road would maintain this road grade of 7%, which would comply with the County’s Public Road Standards for a 4.1B Major Road with Intermittent Turn Lanes which allows for a maximum of grade of 7%.

I-34-19 This comment asks when the Buena Creek roundabout at the intersection of Monte Vista Drive is being built or if this is just another “pie in the sky” idea to pacify people who live in the Buena Creek area. As stated in Section 2.13, Transportation and Traffic on page 2.13-7, “Two mitigation options exist for this impact. This impact would be mitigated by providing a traffic signal and reconfiguring the intersection with the following: southbound – one shared left/right turn lane, westbound – one through lane, and one right-turn lane with right-turn-overlap phasing, and eastbound – one left-turn lane, and one through lane. Alternatively, this impact would be mitigated

Comment Letter Responses

by building a roundabout at this intersection. Both of these mitigation options would provide adequate peak hour operations and mitigate the corresponding impact to less than significant.” The FEIR has been revised to clarify only “one” of these measures is required to mitigate the impact.

- I-34-20** The comment states that the Draft EIR needs to be revised and recirculated. The County acknowledges the comment and notes it expresses the opinions of the commenter, 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.