

I-380 Verna Sundquist

I-380-1 The comment states the commenter recently visited the Zen Buddhist Center and that it is a quiet retreat center that will be greatly impacted by the proposed Project. The comment states that Religious Organizations and Religious practices are protected under the Religious Freedom Restoration Act and the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act.

The county acknowledges the comment. Relative to the statement that the Zen Center will be “greatly impacted” by the proposed Project, the comment does not raise any specific issue regarding the DEIR analysis and, therefore, no more specific response can be provided or is required. The commenter is referred to O-3 for responses to comments raised by the Hidden Valley Zen Center. 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.

With respect to the comment regarding the Religious Freedom Restoration Act and Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act, the commenter is referred to Response to Comment O-1-226. 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. No further response is required or necessary.

I-380-2 The comment states that “no real environmental impact study has been done to see how this affects the quiet retreat site of the Zen Buddhist Center” or impacts to habitat, wildlife and native plants.

With respect to the comment regarding how the proposed Project would affect the Zen Buddhist Center, the commenter is referred to the above response. The comment expresses the opinion of the commenter and does not raise any specific issue regarding the DEIR analysis and, therefore, no more specific response can be provided or is required.

With respect to the proposed Project’s impact to habitat of wildlife and the area of native plants, the comment addresses general subject areas, which received extensive analysis in Section 2.4, Biological Resource the Draft EIR. The comment does not raise any specific issue regarding that analysis and, therefore, no more specific response can be provided or 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.

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- I-380-3** The comment states the “construction noise and traffic will ruin the tranquility of the Center” and unusable as a quiet retreat site.

The comment addresses general subject areas, Construction Noise and Traffic, which received extensive analysis in the Draft EIR, specifically Sections 2.10, Noise and 2.13, Transportation and Traffic. The comment does not raise any specific issue regarding that analysis and, therefore, no more specific response can be provided or is required.

With respect to the comment about the ongoing use of the retreat site, the County acknowledges the comment and notes it raises an issue (continuing use of another property) that does not appear to relate to any physical effect on the environment. 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-380-4** The comment states the plan was voted down by County residents last fall but that it keeps coming back in another form that has no more changes or validity than the previous plan and that County residents don not want this urban sprawl.

The County does not concur with this comment. The Proposed Project, Newland Sierra, is different from the Lilac Hills project, which was defeated by voters during an initiative measures in November 2018.

With respect to the comment regarding County residents not wanting “this urban sprawl,” 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.

Nonetheless, the County notes that the proposed Project includes a mixed use Town Center with up to 81,000 square feet of commercial space which would be utilized by project residents and the surrounding community as there is no close similar shopping center. The Town Center includes a K-8 school site and a park site, which would also be available for use by the surrounding community.

- I-380-5** The comment states that roads are not adequate for evacuation in the event of a fire, and that traffic is already very heavy on Twin Trails and Deer Springs.

With respect to the comment regarding traffic gridlock, the County acknowledges the comment and directs the reader to **Topical Response HAZ-1**, which address fire evacuation planning and traffic gridlock. As explained in **Topical Response HAZ-1**,

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the Draft EIR notes that while prior evacuations within the project vicinity have experienced traffic congestion, the project includes improvements to Deer Springs Road, which would increase capacity of the main evacuation route compared to the existing condition. Further, when compared to the existing condition, improvements to other road segments and intersections would expand the traffic network capacity to assist evacuation efforts for the surrounding community.

The Evacuation Plan (DEIR, Appendix N-2) also provides that “fire and law enforcement official will identify evacuation points before evacuation routes are announced to the public. Evacuation routes are determined based on the location and extent of the incident and include as many pre-designated transportation routes as possible.” Accordingly, the Draft EIR, Appendix N-2 “defers to Law Enforcement and Office of Emergency Services” because, “among the most important factors for successful evacuations in urban settings is control of intersections downstream of the evacuation area.”

With respect to existing traffic conditions, the County agrees with the comment and notes that the DEIR analyzes Existing Conditions in Section 2.13.2.3 and Tables 2.12-1, 2.13-2, 2.13-3 and 2.13-4. As analyzed in the DEIR, several roadway segments, intersections, and freeway segments operate at LOS E or LOS F under existing conditions.

I-380-6 The comment requests the Board of Supervisors “honor” the General Plan zoning for 99 units. The County acknowledges the comment and notes it expresses general opposition for the project, but does not raise any issue concerning the adequacy of the Draft EIR. For that reason, the County provides no further response to this comment.

I-380-7 The comment states that enough money has been spent and the proposed Project will “end up on another ballot which will be defeated because the Newland Sierra Plan is a bad plan and enough residents in the County know it is a bad plan in so many ways.”

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.

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