

### O-6 Bonsall Community

**O-6-1** The comment states that the Bonsall Sponsor Group appreciates the opportunity to review the Draft EIR. The comment notes that the following comments touch on several topics, including transportation and traffic, water quality, hydrology, geology, grading, land use and zoning, alternatives, noise, aesthetics, greenhouse gas (GHG), agriculture, energy, utilities, service systems, biology, and fire. The comment states that the commenter looks forward to the response to comments, because the Draft EIR has been difficult to review. 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.

The comment also states that the project is not consistent with the County General Plan. The County refers the commenter to **Topical Response LU-1** regarding the proposed project's consistency with the County's General Plan.

**O-6-2** The comment states that the project, under a different developer, has already been denied. The comment states that, although there is a housing problem in San Diego County, projects anticipated in the General Plan should be built out before any amendments to the County General Plan are approved. The comment states that the project would result in an unsolvable problem because the existing infrastructure and open spaces can no longer support the sprawl in the area. The comment also states that it should not be the responsibility of volunteers to rally public opinion to maintain the County General Plan. Please refer to **Topical Response LU-1**. In response to the comment regarding "leapfrog" development, the commenter is referred to Appendix DD, Land Use Consistency Analysis, specifically page 69, Policy LU-1.2, which does not apply to the proposed project because, as described therein:

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.

**O-6-3** The comment provides a summary of the impacts associated with the project. The County acknowledges the comment and notes that it restates information contained in the Draft EIR, and does not raise an environmental issue or objection to the Draft

## Comment Letter Responses

---

EIR's analysis. Statements of Overriding Considerations have been prepared as part of the Final EIR, which will be considered by the decision makers as part of the approval process, in compliance with 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 or necessary.

- O-6-4** The comment poses the question of how many significant and unavoidable impacts would need to occur for a project not to go forward. The County acknowledges the comment and notes it does not raise an environmental issue or objection to the Draft EIR's analysis. 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, as described in **Response to Comment O-6-3**, above, Statements of Overriding Considerations have been prepared as part of the Final EIR, which will be considered by the decision makers as part of the approval process, in compliance with CEQA. There is not a limit to how many impacts would prevent a project from being approved under CEQA.

- O-6-5** The comment asks if the mitigation measures proposed in the Draft EIR are valid and achievable and if they have been proven to be effective for large scale development.

The mitigation measures provided in the Draft EIR are feasible, as proposed and as required by CEQA, and will be implemented in accordance with the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) which is us to ensure all identified mitigation measures are properly implemented. Where these measures can be quantifiably shown to reduce impacts to a less than significant level, the Draft EIR has noted these impacts as reduced to less than significant with mitigation. Alternatively, where the Draft EIR cannot quantify where these measures are not quantifiable, such as Section 2.3, Air Quality, and Section 2.7, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, the Draft EIR has noted this as well. The Draft EIR also discloses where no feasible mitigation was identified to reduce an impact to a less than significant level and where such mitigation measure may not be able to be implements, but if permitted, would further reduce impacts (i.e., traffic mitigation measures in the City of San Marcos, see Draft EIR Section 2.13). Additionally, the Draft EIR discloses where mitigation is feasible, but impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.

- O-6-6** The comment asks if the County has the qualified personnel and resources to monitor, review, and manage the mitigation measures and requirements of the EIR. The comment asks if additional impacts would occur if the County does not have the qualified personnel. The County acknowledges the comment and notes it does not

## Comment Letter Responses

---

raise an environmental issue or objection to the Draft EIR's analysis. Accordingly, no further response is required or necessary.

Nonetheless, as stated in **Response to Comment O-6-5**, above, a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) is included with the Final EIR as required by CEQA to ensure the appropriate mitigation measures and project design features are implemented and the County will track that each such measure. Compliance with the MMRP, as well as Conditions of Approval, will ensure the appropriate measures are implemented.

**O-6-7** The comment asks if Planning and Development Services has prepared an estimate of the cost and man-hours required to monitor and manage the mitigation measures proposed in the Draft EIR. The County acknowledges the comment and notes raises economic, social, or political issues but it does not raise an environmental issue or objection to the Draft EIR's analysis. 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.

**O-6-8** The comment asks if mitigation measure M-UT-4 (water supply verification) is too late in the planning and building process, and if verification of adequate water supply should be performed prior to grading of individual phases of the project.

The County acknowledges the comment and notes it does not raise an environmental issue or objection to the Draft EIR's analysis. 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, as a point of clarification, M-UT-4 would be implemented "prior to recordation of a final map" as stated in the mitigation measure. M-UT-4 is proposed to ensure compliance with Section 66473.7 of the Subdivision Map Act (Senate Bill 221). Through verification of compliance with SB 221, M-UT-4 ensures that subsequent building permits issued pursuant to a Final Map would have adequate water supply.

**O-6-9** The comment provides a summary of the project's impacts associated with the construction of water infrastructure. The comment restates information contained in the Draft EIR 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 or necessary.

## Comment Letter Responses

---

- O-6-10** The comment provides a summary of the project’s impacts associated with water supply. The comment restates information contained in the Draft EIR 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 or necessary.
- O-6-11** The comment asks if HDR’s Water Supply Assessment (WSA) is accurate and valid and if the County has the process and expertise to validate the assessment. The comment asks why a second consultant was not used to assess the WSA.

The County reviewed the Draft EIR and appendices to the Draft EIR including the WSA; however, specific to the WSA, VWD reviewed and provided comments on the WSA prior to accepting the report.

It should be noted that the County did not rely solely on the project’s WSA. Instead, as required by law, the County, acting as lead agency under CEQA, included the WSA as an appendix to the publicly-circulated Draft EIR (see Draft EIR, Appendix S).

In the Draft EIR, the County pointed out that the WSA’s “role in the EIR process is akin to that of other informational documents concerning potential environmental impacts, such as traffic or air quality. Like those other documents, the WSA is an advisory and informational document (see *California Water Impact Network v. Newhall County Water District* (2008) 161 Cal.App.4th 1464)” (Draft EIR Section 2.14, page 2.14-28).

The Draft EIR makes clear the County did not rely solely on the WSA, but also based the project’s water supply and demand analysis on regional and local water supply documents adopted by water agencies, and information provided by experts on engineering and water resources — all of which was provided as technical appendices to the Draft EIR (see Draft EIR, Appendices S through V):

The section is based on regional and local water demand and supply information from the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD), the San Diego County Water Authority (Water Authority), and the Vallecitos Water District. In addition, other experts that provided data used or referenced in this section include (a) HDR, an engineering/architectural firm specializing in water resources management, (b) Dexter Wilson Engineering Inc. (Dexter Wilson), a water, wastewater, and recycled water engineering firm, and (c) GSI Water Solutions Inc. (GSI), a water resources firm with expertise in hydrogeology, hydrology, engineering, and

## Comment Letter Responses

---

environmental science. State and local laws and regulations are the sources for the water conservation regulatory standards referenced in this section.

Lastly, the Draft EIR makes clear that the County itself makes the ultimate water supply determination, not the urban water supplier, and that the County's determination is based on its review of the *entire* record, not just the WSA (Draft EIR Section 2.14 page 2.14-2):

The County of San Diego (County) must determine, based on the entire record, whether projected water supplies will be sufficient to satisfy the demands of the project, in addition to the demand associated with the existing and other planned future land use uses within the Vallecitos Water District potable water service area.

Based on its review of the WSA, the County did not note "flaws" in the WSA. A peer review by another consultant was not warranted because an expert with the County was available to review the WSA. See further **Topical Response UTL-1**.

**O-6-12** The comment asks if GSI's WSA is accurate and valid and if the County has the process and expertise to validate the assessment. The comment asks why a second consultant was not used to assess the WSA. Please refer to **Response to Comment O-6-11**.

**O-6-13** The comment provides a summary of the project's impacts associated with water supply, wastewater, and solid waste. The comment restates information contained in the Draft EIR 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 or necessary.

**O-6-14** The comment asks if the volume of solid waste haul trucks and their associated impacts to infrastructure, air quality, and traffic were considered.

Mobile source criteria air pollutant emissions and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions were calculated using CalEEMod. CalEEMod is a statewide land use emissions computer model designed to provide a uniform platform for government agencies, land use planners, and environmental professionals to quantify potential criteria pollutant and GHG emissions associated with both construction and operations from a variety of land use development projects. For mobile emissions estimates, CalEEMod provides a default fleet mix for several different land uses. The default fleet mixes, which were incorporated in the operational mobile emissions estimates for the project, includes a percentage of heavy heavy duty trucks. Solid waste haul trucks

## Comment Letter Responses

---

typically fall in the heavy heavy duty truck category; therefore, solid waste haul truck criteria air pollutant and GHG emissions were included as part of the analysis.

**O-6-15** The comment provides a summary of the impacts associated with energy consumption. The comment restates information contained in the Draft EIR 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 or necessary.

**O-6-16** The comment provides a description of the project and says that the project would be constructed on what is currently “unbroken rural land.” The comment states that the Draft EIR is “light on specifics of the buildings planned” as part of the project and therefore it is difficult to comment on aesthetics; however, aesthetic problems would arise no matter how well conceived the project might be. The comment expressed the commenter’s opinion, and addresses general subject areas, visual impacts, which received extensive analysis in 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.

Nonetheless, the County refers the commenter to Appendix C, Specific Plan, which includes project details regarding the anticipated building typologies in each neighborhood. Based on Appendix C, the Draft EIR identified a significant and unavoidable impact related to the visual change associated with removal of existing vegetation and alteration of existing terrain to accommodate proposed residential, commercial, and educational land uses and associated infrastructure. It was determined that the introduction of project elements would result in an adverse change to the primarily undisturbed chaparral-covered hill and valley terrain character of the project Site.

**O-6-17** The comment states that Deer Springs Road would need to be widened and widening the road would induce traffic, which would be a disturbance to the natural setting. The County acknowledges the comment and notes as a primary response that Deer Springs Road is currently operating at a failing level of service (LOS), prior to implementation of the proposed project. Please refer to Section 2.13, Transportation and Traffic, for an analysis of Existing Conditions. The County further notes that the General Plan anticipated the widening of Deer Springs Road to 6-lanes based on projected traffic volumes.

## Comment Letter Responses

---

The Draft EIR acknowledges induced vehicle travel would result for the proposed roadway capacity improvements to Deer Springs Road and Twin Oaks Valley Road (Draft EIR page 2.13-16, Appendix R-2 to the Draft EIR, Newland Sierra VMT Analysis to Respond to SB 743, prepared by Fehr & Peers, pages 25 to 28).

- O-6-18** The comment states that the project would disrupt the setting for the existing monastery and Golden Door Properties LLC, and that the project would result in the closure of those entities. The comment states that replacing the current residents with a huge housing complex would have aesthetic impacts. 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.

With respect to the comment regarding replacing current residents, the Draft EIR analyzed Displacement of Substantial Numbers of Existing Housing or People. As analyzed therein, impacts were determined to be less than significant (page 2.12-11) because “off-site improvements to Sarver Lane would require the demolition of existing houses located on four parcels” and the “applicant currently owns two of these parcels, one of which is vacant and uninhabitable...[and] has a recorded option to purchase the other two parcels. This displacement of existing housing and residents on four parcels would not be considered substantial as it would not necessitate the construction of additional housing elsewhere.”

- O-6-19** The comment states that any large housing complex that occurs in a rural unincorporated area would have an aesthetic impact, because it would serve as a reminder of devaluing nature. The comment states that the project would be an example of violating the County General Plan, and future developers would create similar developments throughout the County, with no guiding overview to manage resources. The comment states that future housing projects should be consistent with the County General Plan.

The County acknowledges the comment and agrees that the proposed project would result in significant and avoidable impacts related to aesthetics and visual resources. Accordingly, the Draft EIR concludes impacts to existing visual character and quality of the Site and surroundings would be significant and unavoidable (Impact AES-1).

With respect to the project’s compliance with the General Plan and other future projects, the County refers the commenter to Section 2.1.4, Cumulative Impact Analysis, which determined that the proposed project in combination with other

## Comment Letter Responses

---

cumulative projects would result in a cumulatively considerable impact. As stated on page 2.1-50:

[T]he cumulative projects identified in Table 1-10 would combine with the proposed project to change the existing composition of the visual environment. With implementation of the identified projects and the proposed project, the area would transition from primarily agriculture and rural residential land use development pattern to a more urban pattern of development. Physical changes associated with vegetation removal, grading, and the addition of residential development would adversely affect the viewshed and impacts would be considered cumulatively considerable.

Please see **Topical Response LU-1** addressing the commenter's concerns with General Plan consistency.

**O-6-20** The comment states that Draft EIR attempts to downplay the importance of agriculture in the area, by claiming that the project does not encroach into active, historic, or future farmland, and claiming that analysis using the County's Local Agricultural Resources Assessment (LARA) model is not warranted. The comment states that both of these claims contradict the Draft EIR, which demonstrates elsewhere that the project Site borders Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Unique Farmland, within the Zone of Influence.

The Draft EIR analyzes on-site direct impacts and off-site direct impacts to agricultural resources. As stated in Section 2.2 Agricultural Resources, page 2.2-9 through 2.2-10:

The project contains 31.7 acres of Farmland of Local Importance and the County's Guidelines only consider lands mapped as 'Farmland of Local Importance' to be a protected resource if the land was historically used for agricultural production. Therefore, due to the lack of historical evidence of agricultural production, the 31.7 acres is not considered to be a protected agricultural resource. The project Site also contains approximately 3.4 acres of Unique Farmland that would not be directly impacted by the project. Therefore, the project is not required to be evaluated using the LARA Model analysis. Impacts would be less than significant.

Therefore, the 31.7 acres of "Farmland of Local Importance" located on the project Site would not need to be evaluated using the LARA model.

As stated in pages 2.2-10 through 2.2-11:



### O-6 Bonsall Community

**O-6-1** The comment states that the Bonsall Sponsor Group appreciates the opportunity to review the Draft EIR. The comment notes that the following comments touch on several topics, including transportation and traffic, water quality, hydrology, geology, grading, land use and zoning, alternatives, noise, aesthetics, greenhouse gas (GHG), agriculture, energy, utilities, service systems, biology, and fire. The comment states that the commenter looks forward to the response to comments, because the Draft EIR has been difficult to review. 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.

The comment also states that the project is not consistent with the County General Plan. The County refers the commenter to **Topical Response LU-1** regarding the proposed project's consistency with the County's General Plan.

**O-6-2** The comment states that the project, under a different developer, has already been denied. The comment states that, although there is a housing problem in San Diego County, projects anticipated in the General Plan should be built out before any amendments to the County General Plan are approved. The comment states that the project would result in an unsolvable problem because the existing infrastructure and open spaces can no longer support the sprawl in the area. The comment also states that it should not be the responsibility of volunteers to rally public opinion to maintain the County General Plan. Please refer to **Topical Response LU-1**. In response to the comment regarding "leapfrog" development, the commenter is referred to Appendix DD, Land Use Consistency Analysis, specifically page 69, Policy LU-1.2, which does not apply to the proposed project because, as described therein:

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.

**O-6-3** The comment provides a summary of the impacts associated with the project. The County acknowledges the comment and notes that it restates information contained in the Draft EIR, and does not raise an environmental issue or objection to the Draft

## Comment Letter Responses

---

EIR's analysis. Statements of Overriding Considerations have been prepared as part of the Final EIR, which will be considered by the decision makers as part of the approval process, in compliance with 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 or necessary.

- O-6-4** The comment poses the question of how many significant and unavoidable impacts would need to occur for a project not to go forward. The County acknowledges the comment and notes it does not raise an environmental issue or objection to the Draft EIR's analysis. 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, as described in **Response to Comment O-6-3**, above, Statements of Overriding Considerations have been prepared as part of the Final EIR, which will be considered by the decision makers as part of the approval process, in compliance with CEQA. There is not a limit to how many impacts would prevent a project from being approved under CEQA.

- O-6-5** The comment asks if the mitigation measures proposed in the Draft EIR are valid and achievable and if they have been proven to be effective for large scale development.

The mitigation measures provided in the Draft EIR are feasible, as proposed and as required by CEQA, and will be implemented in accordance with the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) which is us to ensure all identified mitigation measures are properly implemented. Where these measures can be quantifiably shown to reduce impacts to a less than significant level, the Draft EIR has noted these impacts as reduced to less than significant with mitigation. Alternatively, where the Draft EIR cannot quantify where these measures are not quantifiable, such as Section 2.3, Air Quality, and Section 2.7, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, the Draft EIR has noted this as well. The Draft EIR also discloses where no feasible mitigation was identified to reduce an impact to a less than significant level and where such mitigation measure may not be able to be implements, but if permitted, would further reduce impacts (i.e., traffic mitigation measures in the City of San Marcos, see Draft EIR Section 2.13). Additionally, the Draft EIR discloses where mitigation is feasible, but impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.

- O-6-6** The comment asks if the County has the qualified personnel and resources to monitor, review, and manage the mitigation measures and requirements of the EIR. The comment asks if additional impacts would occur if the County does not have the qualified personnel. The County acknowledges the comment and notes it does not

## Comment Letter Responses

---

raise an environmental issue or objection to the Draft EIR's analysis. Accordingly, no further response is required or necessary.

Nonetheless, as stated in **Response to Comment O-6-5**, above, a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) is included with the Final EIR as required by CEQA to ensure the appropriate mitigation measures and project design features are implemented and the County will track that each such measure. Compliance with the MMRP, as well as Conditions of Approval, will ensure the appropriate measures are implemented.

**O-6-7** The comment asks if Planning and Development Services has prepared an estimate of the cost and man-hours required to monitor and manage the mitigation measures proposed in the Draft EIR. The County acknowledges the comment and notes raises economic, social, or political issues but it does not raise an environmental issue or objection to the Draft EIR's analysis. 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.

**O-6-8** The comment asks if mitigation measure M-UT-4 (water supply verification) is too late in the planning and building process, and if verification of adequate water supply should be performed prior to grading of individual phases of the project.

The County acknowledges the comment and notes it does not raise an environmental issue or objection to the Draft EIR's analysis. 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, as a point of clarification, M-UT-4 would be implemented "prior to recordation of a final map" as stated in the mitigation measure. M-UT-4 is proposed to ensure compliance with Section 66473.7 of the Subdivision Map Act (Senate Bill 221). Through verification of compliance with SB 221, M-UT-4 ensures that subsequent building permits issued pursuant to a Final Map would have adequate water supply.

**O-6-9** The comment provides a summary of the project's impacts associated with the construction of water infrastructure. The comment restates information contained in the Draft EIR 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 or necessary.

## Comment Letter Responses

---

- O-6-10** The comment provides a summary of the project’s impacts associated with water supply. The comment restates information contained in the Draft EIR 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 or necessary.
- O-6-11** The comment asks if HDR’s Water Supply Assessment (WSA) is accurate and valid and if the County has the process and expertise to validate the assessment. The comment asks why a second consultant was not used to assess the WSA.

The County reviewed the Draft EIR and appendices to the Draft EIR including the WSA; however, specific to the WSA, VWD reviewed and provided comments on the WSA prior to accepting the report.

It should be noted that the County did not rely solely on the project’s WSA. Instead, as required by law, the County, acting as lead agency under CEQA, included the WSA as an appendix to the publicly-circulated Draft EIR (see Draft EIR, Appendix S).

In the Draft EIR, the County pointed out that the WSA’s “role in the EIR process is akin to that of other informational documents concerning potential environmental impacts, such as traffic or air quality. Like those other documents, the WSA is an advisory and informational document (see *California Water Impact Network v. Newhall County Water District* (2008) 161 Cal.App.4th 1464)” (Draft EIR Section 2.14, page 2.14-28).

The Draft EIR makes clear the County did not rely solely on the WSA, but also based the project’s water supply and demand analysis on regional and local water supply documents adopted by water agencies, and information provided by experts on engineering and water resources — all of which was provided as technical appendices to the Draft EIR (see Draft EIR, Appendices S through V):

The section is based on regional and local water demand and supply information from the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD), the San Diego County Water Authority (Water Authority), and the Vallecitos Water District. In addition, other experts that provided data used or referenced in this section include (a) HDR, an engineering/architectural firm specializing in water resources management, (b) Dexter Wilson Engineering Inc. (Dexter Wilson), a water, wastewater, and recycled water engineering firm, and (c) GSI Water Solutions Inc. (GSI), a water resources firm with expertise in hydrogeology, hydrology, engineering, and

## Comment Letter Responses

---

environmental science. State and local laws and regulations are the sources for the water conservation regulatory standards referenced in this section.

Lastly, the Draft EIR makes clear that the County itself makes the ultimate water supply determination, not the urban water supplier, and that the County's determination is based on its review of the *entire* record, not just the WSA (Draft EIR Section 2.14 page 2.14-2):

The County of San Diego (County) must determine, based on the entire record, whether projected water supplies will be sufficient to satisfy the demands of the project, in addition to the demand associated with the existing and other planned future land use uses within the Vallecitos Water District potable water service area.

Based on its review of the WSA, the County did not note "flaws" in the WSA. A peer review by another consultant was not warranted because an expert with the County was available to review the WSA. See further **Topical Response UTL-1**.

**O-6-12** The comment asks if GSI's WSA is accurate and valid and if the County has the process and expertise to validate the assessment. The comment asks why a second consultant was not used to assess the WSA. Please refer to **Response to Comment O-6-11**.

**O-6-13** The comment provides a summary of the project's impacts associated with water supply, wastewater, and solid waste. The comment restates information contained in the Draft EIR 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 or necessary.

**O-6-14** The comment asks if the volume of solid waste haul trucks and their associated impacts to infrastructure, air quality, and traffic were considered.

Mobile source criteria air pollutant emissions and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions were calculated using CalEEMod. CalEEMod is a statewide land use emissions computer model designed to provide a uniform platform for government agencies, land use planners, and environmental professionals to quantify potential criteria pollutant and GHG emissions associated with both construction and operations from a variety of land use development projects. For mobile emissions estimates, CalEEMod provides a default fleet mix for several different land uses. The default fleet mixes, which were incorporated in the operational mobile emissions estimates for the project, includes a percentage of heavy heavy duty trucks. Solid waste haul trucks

## Comment Letter Responses

---

typically fall in the heavy heavy duty truck category; therefore, solid waste haul truck criteria air pollutant and GHG emissions were included as part of the analysis.

**O-6-15** The comment provides a summary of the impacts associated with energy consumption. The comment restates information contained in the Draft EIR 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 or necessary.

**O-6-16** The comment provides a description of the project and says that the project would be constructed on what is currently “unbroken rural land.” The comment states that the Draft EIR is “light on specifics of the buildings planned” as part of the project and therefore it is difficult to comment on aesthetics; however, aesthetic problems would arise no matter how well conceived the project might be. The comment expressed the commenter’s opinion, and addresses general subject areas, visual impacts, which received extensive analysis in 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.

Nonetheless, the County refers the commenter to Appendix C, Specific Plan, which includes project details regarding the anticipated building typologies in each neighborhood. Based on Appendix C, the Draft EIR identified a significant and unavoidable impact related to the visual change associated with removal of existing vegetation and alteration of existing terrain to accommodate proposed residential, commercial, and educational land uses and associated infrastructure. It was determined that the introduction of project elements would result in an adverse change to the primarily undisturbed chaparral-covered hill and valley terrain character of the project Site.

**O-6-17** The comment states that Deer Springs Road would need to be widened and widening the road would induce traffic, which would be a disturbance to the natural setting. The County acknowledges the comment and notes as a primary response that Deer Springs Road is currently operating at a failing level of service (LOS), prior to implementation of the proposed project. Please refer to Section 2.13, Transportation and Traffic, for an analysis of Existing Conditions. The County further notes that the General Plan anticipated the widening of Deer Springs Road to 6-lanes based on projected traffic volumes.

## Comment Letter Responses

---

The Draft EIR acknowledges induced vehicle travel would result for the proposed roadway capacity improvements to Deer Springs Road and Twin Oaks Valley Road (Draft EIR page 2.13-16, Appendix R-2 to the Draft EIR, Newland Sierra VMT Analysis to Respond to SB 743, prepared by Fehr & Peers, pages 25 to 28).

- O-6-18** The comment states that the project would disrupt the setting for the existing monastery and Golden Door Properties LLC, and that the project would result in the closure of those entities. The comment states that replacing the current residents with a huge housing complex would have aesthetic impacts. 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.

With respect to the comment regarding replacing current residents, the Draft EIR analyzed Displacement of Substantial Numbers of Existing Housing or People. As analyzed therein, impacts were determined to be less than significant (page 2.12-11) because “off-site improvements to Sarver Lane would require the demolition of existing houses located on four parcels” and the “applicant currently owns two of these parcels, one of which is vacant and uninhabitable...[and] has a recorded option to purchase the other two parcels. This displacement of existing housing and residents on four parcels would not be considered substantial as it would not necessitate the construction of additional housing elsewhere.”

- O-6-19** The comment states that any large housing complex that occurs in a rural unincorporated area would have an aesthetic impact, because it would serve as a reminder of devaluing nature. The comment states that the project would be an example of violating the County General Plan, and future developers would create similar developments throughout the County, with no guiding overview to manage resources. The comment states that future housing projects should be consistent with the County General Plan.

The County acknowledges the comment and agrees that the proposed project would result in significant and avoidable impacts related to aesthetics and visual resources. Accordingly, the Draft EIR concludes impacts to existing visual character and quality of the Site and surroundings would be significant and unavoidable (Impact AES-1).

With respect to the project’s compliance with the General Plan and other future projects, the County refers the commenter to Section 2.1.4, Cumulative Impact Analysis, which determined that the proposed project in combination with other

## Comment Letter Responses

---

cumulative projects would result in a cumulatively considerable impact. As stated on page 2.1-50:

[T]he cumulative projects identified in Table 1-10 would combine with the proposed project to change the existing composition of the visual environment. With implementation of the identified projects and the proposed project, the area would transition from primarily agriculture and rural residential land use development pattern to a more urban pattern of development. Physical changes associated with vegetation removal, grading, and the addition of residential development would adversely affect the viewshed and impacts would be considered cumulatively considerable.

Please see **Topical Response LU-1** addressing the commenter's concerns with General Plan consistency.

**O-6-20** The comment states that Draft EIR attempts to downplay the importance of agriculture in the area, by claiming that the project does not encroach into active, historic, or future farmland, and claiming that analysis using the County's Local Agricultural Resources Assessment (LARA) model is not warranted. The comment states that both of these claims contradict the Draft EIR, which demonstrates elsewhere that the project Site borders Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, and Unique Farmland, within the Zone of Influence.

The Draft EIR analyzes on-site direct impacts and off-site direct impacts to agricultural resources. As stated in Section 2.2 Agricultural Resources, page 2.2-9 through 2.2-10:

The project contains 31.7 acres of Farmland of Local Importance and the County's Guidelines only consider lands mapped as 'Farmland of Local Importance' to be a protected resource if the land was historically used for agricultural production. Therefore, due to the lack of historical evidence of agricultural production, the 31.7 acres is not considered to be a protected agricultural resource. The project Site also contains approximately 3.4 acres of Unique Farmland that would not be directly impacted by the project. Therefore, the project is not required to be evaluated using the LARA Model analysis. Impacts would be less than significant.

Therefore, the 31.7 acres of "Farmland of Local Importance" located on the project Site would not need to be evaluated using the LARA model.

As stated in pages 2.2-10 through 2.2-11:



## Comment Letter Responses

---

Off-site improvements associated with the proposed project are outlined in Chapter 1 of this EIR. They include improvement of Sarver Lane, Deer Springs Road, and Twin Oaks Valley Road to meet current County of SD (and City of San Marcos) standards, intersection improvements, drainage improvements, and improvements to the I-15/Deer Springs Road interchange.

For the widening of Deer Springs Road, this analysis evaluates the impacts from Option B (construct the segment of Deer Springs Road from I-15 to 1,500 feet west of Mesa Rock Road as a four-lane 4.1A Major Road) because it represents the largest area of potential off-site impacts. Although the project Site was determined to not be an important agricultural resource, any impacted off-site agricultural operations were conservatively assumed to be important agricultural resources in this analysis and would require full mitigation for any impacts.

The off-site improvements associated with the project would result in impacts to the following FMMP designations: approximately 5.68 acres of Prime Farmland, and 0.14 acre of Farmland of Statewide Importance (see Figures 2.2-2a through 2.2-2c). These direct off-site impacts to Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance would account for a total of 5.82 acres, and most of these impacts would occur within existing roadway rights-of-way, making these areas potentially unavailable for agricultural use in the future. Based on this, the project would result in significant impacts to approximately 3.82 acres of important agricultural resources and require mitigation. See Table 2.2-1, Off-Site Impact Summary.

Pursuant to the County's Guideline for Determining Significance, for direct impacts, a 1:1 mitigation ratio would be required for 5.82 acres of impacts to agricultural resources that meet the soil quality criteria for Prime Farmland and Farmlands of Statewide Importance and that are available for agriculture (County of San Diego 2007). Therefore, the project must mitigate for 5.82 acres of off-site project impacts, which is the total acreage of the parcels that is impacted and that contain Prime Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance. Prior to mitigation, impacts would be **potentially significant (Impact AGR-1)**.

While the final configuration and design of the Caltrans interchange improvements at I-15/Deer Springs Road are not known at this time, and while alternative interchange improvements are still under consideration, such improvements are not expected to affect significant agricultural resources as defined by CEQA, because such improvements would be implemented within the

## Comment Letter Responses

---

disturbed I-15 corridor, and not within or adjacent to any existing, significant agricultural, farmland, timberland, or forest resources. Once Caltrans selects the proposed interchange improvement among the alternatives to be considered, Caltrans can and should assess, or cause to be assessed, whether the proposed interchange project and its alternatives will have a potentially significant impact on any significant agricultural, farmland, timberland, or forest resources.

Therefore **M-AGR-1** is proposed, which requires the following:

**M-AGR-1** The applicant shall purchase mitigation credits through the County of San Diego's (County) Purchase of Agricultural Easements (PACE) program. The County's PACE program is an approved mitigation banking method, which uses in-lieu fees to purchase PACE credits to offset agricultural impacts. Each acre of land permanently protected with an agricultural conservation easement under the PACE program would equate to one mitigation credit. Therefore, prior to issuance of a grading permit, the applicant shall mitigate for the 5.82 acres of assumed impacts at a 1:1 ratio by the purchase of 5.82 mitigation credits through the County's PACE program.

As concluded in Section 2.2.7, implementation of mitigation measure M-AGR-1 would fully mitigate potential direct off-site impacts (and impacts would be less than significant).

Although the project does not encroach into active or historic farmland within the project Site, the Draft EIR recognizes that the project would have off-site impacts to Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance; therefore, **M-AGR-1** is proposed in the Draft EIR.

**O-6-21** The comment states that page 79 of the report states that on-site farming ended in the late 1960's and that this is inconsistent with what is stated elsewhere in the Draft EIR. As stated on page 29 of Appendix F, Agricultural Resources Technical Report for the Newland Sierra Project:

Historical aerial photographs show use of the surrounding areas to the south and west of the project Site for agricultural purposes. In the late 1970s agricultural operations surrounding the project Site included orchards to the west near Twin Oaks Crest Drive and to the south near Deer Springs Road. Additional orchards to the south and west of the project Site were in operation during the 1980s and many of the existing agricultural uses immediately surrounding the project Site have remained in operation. Various commercial

## Comment Letter Responses

---

greenhouse operations also exist to the south of the project Site. On the southern edge of the project Site a small portion of the adjacent orchards that are primarily located off Site along Deer Springs Place encroach slightly onto the project Site. These orchards, which are based off Site with the exception of this small encroachment, began operation in the 1980s and have continued in relatively the same proximity to the present day.

Based on a review of the County's available GIS aerial mapping, the project Site does not contain a history of agricultural production. In addition, there are no current agricultural operations occurring on the project Site in this area. No other agricultural operations currently exist on the project Site and the primary agricultural operation areas for existing off-site agricultural operations that slightly encroach into the project Site boundary are located outside of the project Site boundary.

However, page 79 of Appendix F, Agricultural Resources Technical Report for the Newland Sierra Project, states:

As described in Section 1.4.2, On-Site Agricultural Resources, previous agricultural uses on the project Site ceased operation more than 45 years ago in the mid to late 1960s. Based on a review of the County's available Geographic Information Systems (GIS) aerial mapping, the project Site does not contain a history of agricultural production.

Therefore, based on the available data, the project Site does not have a history of agricultural production, aside from a small portion of adjacent orchards which encroach slightly onto the project Site, and there is no inconsistency in the Draft EIR.

- O-6-22** The comment states that fallow agricultural land is more consistent with the character in the community, versus the proposed project, which would close all options to any future decision on possible land uses. The comment states that the County is experiencing growth in small farm and boutique local food providers and that open land in the County is vanishing. The comment states that the project should remain rural until a use which is more compatible with the General Plan is proposed.

The County acknowledges the comment and notes it expresses the opinion 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. For the benefit of the public and decision-makers, additional information is provided below

## Comment Letter Responses

---

regarding the feasibility of the project Site for agricultural uses, as suggested by the comment.

An analysis was conducted (Appendix GG to the Draft EIR) of the suitability of the project Site for agricultural uses and an Agricultural Alternative was considered (Section 4.3.1.2). This analysis concludes less than 18 percent of the project Site (approximately 300 acres) would qualify as “Productive Lands” with a high agricultural potential, generally those portions of the project Site with flatter lands with deeper soils that would be suitable for vineyards and olive trees. As explained below, an Agricultural Alternative was considered and rejected because it failed to meet all of the Project Objectives with the exceptions of Objective #5. More specifically, as stated on page 4-9 of the Draft EIR:

The Agriculture Alternative also would not meet the project’s underlying purpose, which is to implement a new mixed-use planned Community near existing and planned infrastructure, services, and jobs proximate to the North County I-15 corridor. The Agricultural Alternative would not preserve substantial open space through permanent dedication and management, nor create compact, sustainable neighborhoods or facilitate a multi-modal transportation network linked to regional transportation mobility options. In addition, the alternative would not provide recreational opportunities or accommodate existing, planned, or future growth in north San Diego County by providing a diverse range of housing opportunities with a mixed-use Town Center.

As stated on page 4-9, “The Site has substantial limitations for agricultural productivity. Only a small portion of the Site has potential for intensive agricultural production with minimal to no opportunity for expansion over time. Substantial portions of the Site are either inaccessible or are too rocky to be productive. Small-plot-intensive farming would likely have the highest returns; however, this form of farming requires suitable soils and has a high water demand. As indicated in the Agricultural Alternative Study (Appendix GG), although wine grapes and oil olives could potentially be profitable in the long-term on this Site, returns would not be realized for 20 to 30 years. The capital investment required to establish these types of operations is considered high risk and sensitive to market and weather fluctuations and the rising cost of water.”

The Draft EIR also found that this alternatives “would contribute more than 100 ADTs to Deer Springs Road,” and therefore “would be required to widen and improve Deer Springs Road to meet the County’s four-lane Major Road classification.” The agricultural alternative also would increase the disturbed area (which equates to the limits of grading and fuel modification zones (FMZs) by approximately 311 acres,

## Comment Letter Responses

---

decreasing the amount of open space by the same amount compared to the proposed project.

Please refer to **Topical Response LU-1**, regarding General Plan consistency.

- O-6-23** The comment states that the Bonsall Sponsor Group performed a review of the Draft EIR. 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.
- O-6-24** The comment states that the Draft EIR lacks a cohesive layout of issues, which made the review of the document difficult. The County notes the comment provides the commenter's opinion and acknowledges the comment as an introduction to specific comments that follow. Responses have been provided to each of the specific comments raised where they are addressed by the commenter below. Specifically, these issues are addressed at **Responses to Comments O-6-25 through O-6-158**.
- O-6-25** The comment states that impacts associated with project grading have not been fully addressed in the Draft EIR. The comment refers to the Seismic Refraction Study, prepared by Leighton and Associates (Appendix J of the Draft EIR), which states that soil profiles, at a depth below 15 feet, would experience average seismic velocities of 11,000 feet per second. The comment states that this would exceed the 7,000 feet per second threshold. The comment states that the requirement for blasting activities would have a significant noise and vibration component that will impact nearby receptors.

Section 2.6 of the Draft EIR, page 2.6-14 states:

It is anticipated that the surficial soils and upper highly weathered portion of the granitic rock may be excavated with conventional heavy-duty construction equipment. Localized areas within the upper portion of the Site may require heavy ripping and/or localized blasting. Cut areas are expected to be only marginally rippable and would likely require generalized blasting. Blasting is anticipated below 10 to 20 feet of the surface and in outcrop areas. Care should be taken to avoid overblasting/overbreaking of cut slopes. Any loose material remaining on the cut slope faces should be scaled, by hand if necessary, to clean slope faces of loose, easily erodible material.

Therefore, it was assumed in the Draft EIR that blasting would be required for areas that are marginally rippable. Vibration and noise impacts associated with

## Comment Letter Responses

---

blasting were analyzed in Section 2.10, Noise of the Draft EIR. Blasting noise and vibration impacts were identified as potentially significant (Impact N-7 and N-9).

Section 2.10, page 2.10-29 states:

**Impact N-7** The locations where blasting may be necessary is not known at this time. Also, other details such as blast-charge weights are not known at this time; thus, air-blast overpressures cannot be predicted. Since it is feasible that some damage to nearby structures may occur, impacts associated with blasting would be potentially significant.

Section 2.10, page 2.10-30 states:

**Impact N-9** Because the blasting locations, necessary geotechnical data, and blasting and materials handling plans are not known at this time, it is not possible to conduct a noise analysis assessing the proposed blasting and materials handling associated with the proposed project. Therefore, for purposes of this analysis, impacts would be potentially significant.

However, mitigation measures M-N-5 and M-N-8 are proposed to require the preparation of a blast drilling and monitoring plan (M-N-5) and vibration monitoring plan, which would mitigate impacts to a less than significant level. Therefore, there would be a less than significant impact to nearby receptors.

- O-6-26** The comment states that most of the grading area to be cut would be below a depth of 15 feet and therefore blasting would be required on a daily basis. The comment states that the Draft EIR does not specifically address the anticipated blasting schedules and impacts associated with blasting.

Please refer to **Topical Responses AQ-2** and **AQ-3** regarding blasting activities and the anticipated project schedule.

- O-6-27** The comment states that the Draft EIR did not analyze alternatives to the proposed site grading. The comment states that the impacts associated with blasting operations could be mitigated by altering the grading concept. The comment states that if the grading of 150-plus foot high cut slopes could be avoided, blasting impacts could be avoided and natural landforms could be maintained. The comment also provides Table 3 from the Seismic Refraction Study, prepared by Leighton and Associates (Appendix J of the Draft EIR).

CEQA does not require that a lead agency explore all possible alternatives. Rather, Section 15126.6 of the CEQA Guidelines states, “An EIR shall describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would

## Comment Letter Responses

---

feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project, and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives. An EIR need not consider every conceivable alternative to the project.”

Therefore, the Draft EIR is only required to consider a reasonable range of alternatives of which would avoid or lessen significant impacts associated with the proposed project.

It should be noted that the proposed project would not result in a significant and unavoidable noise and vibration impact associated with blasting and grading activities, because mitigation measures M-N-5 and M-N-8 are proposed, which would mitigate impacts to a less than significant level. However, the proposed project would result in significant and unavoidable impacts to visual character and quality and air quality construction impacts associated with blasting and grading activities.

Five of the alternatives considered in the Draft EIR (Chapter 4), would require less total grading quantities, when compared to the proposed project: the No Project (No Build) Alternative, the Existing General Plan Alternative, CDFW/USFWS Land Planning Alternative A, CDFW Land Planning Alternative B, and CDFW Land Planning Alternative C.

The No Project (No Build) Alternative, CDFW/USFWS Land Planning Alternative A, CDFW Land Planning Alternative B, and CDFW Land Planning Alternative C would avoid, reduce, or substantially lessen air quality and aesthetic impacts associated with grading; however, would not meet all of the project objectives. The Existing General Plan alternative would avoid, reduce, or substantially lessen air quality impacts associated with grading, but would result in greater significant aesthetic impacts.

Therefore, the County disagrees with the comment’s implication that alternatives to the proposed grading plan were not analyzed in the Draft EIR.

- O-6-28** The comment states that the project’s grading activities would significantly alter vegetated landforms in the project area. The comment states that according to the Seismic Refraction Study, prepared by Leighton and Associates (Appendix J of the Draft EIR), significant amounts of oversized rock would be generated, requiring rock fill grading operations, which would be extremely noisy and involve use of heavy equipment. The comment states that the Draft EIR fails to address aesthetic impacts associated with grading and the proposed changes to the existing landforms.

## Comment Letter Responses

---

The Draft EIR identified a significant and unavoidable impact related to the visual change associated with removal of existing vegetation and alteration of existing terrain to accommodate proposed residential, commercial, and educational land uses and associated infrastructure. It was determined that the introduction of project elements would result in an adverse change to the primarily undisturbed chaparral-covered hill and valley terrain visual character of the Site (Draft EIR Section 2.1).

Therefore, the County disagrees with the comment's implication that aesthetic impacts associated with grading and the proposed changes to the existing landforms were not analyzed in 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.

- O-6-29** The comment states that the size of the Preliminary Grading Plan PDF drawings provided on the County website were excessively large, making viewing of the files very difficult. The comment states that the drawings could have been reduced to allow for reasonable public review. The County notes that hard copies of the Tentative Map and Preliminary Grading Plan were available at the County for review during the public review period. Therefore, the public was provided the opportunity to review the Preliminary Grading Plan, both via the electronic version online and at the County Planning and Development Service. No further response is required or necessary.
- O-6-30** The comment states that the project grading cut and fill quantities and the anticipated grading schedule are not discussed in the body of the Draft EIR.

The commenter is directed to Section 3.1, Construction Emissions Estimates and Methodology, in Appendix G, Air Quality Technical Report, which presents the methodology and assumptions to estimate criteria air pollutant emissions associated with project construction. Section 3.1.1 discusses construction equipment and vehicle trips methodology and assumptions, Section 3.1.2 presents blasting emissions methodology, and Section 3.1.3 presents rock crushing emissions methodology. Table 14, Construction Phasing and Equipment List, provides a summary of the assumed construction phases and associated type of equipment and quantity. Construction grading estimates by activity for Phase 1 and 2 are provided in Table 15. A summary of the construction analysis assumptions is also presented in Draft EIR Section 2.3, Air Quality, in Section 2.3.4.2, Construction Emissions Estimates and Methodology.

In summary, the Draft EIR and its Air Quality Technical Report (Appendix G) provide a detailed discussion of the grading quantities and anticipated grading schedule. Thus, the County does not concur with the comment's assertion the Draft EIR does not provide this information. As the comment raises no more specific issue



## Comment Letter Responses

---

with the assumptions detailed in the Draft EIR, no more specific response can be provided.

- O-6-31** The comment states that the Draft EIR does not provide the percent of the project Site that would require blasting.

While blasting is anticipated to be needed to break up bedrock at the project, it is presently infeasible to determine the exact locations, timelines, and quantities for blasting as the bedrock is located below ground surface (Draft EIR page 2.10-17). For this reason, at the current stage of project design, a blasting study has not been completed, and no specific blasting timelines, blast numbers, or locations are proposed or available (Draft EIR page 2.10-24).

However, as explained in **Topical Response AQ-2**, the Draft EIR explains that blasting (and the associated drilling that precedes blasting) would only occur between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. (Draft EIR page 2.10-21). It is also anticipated, based on prior projects, that blasting would occur at 2- to 3-day intervals with no more than one blast per day (Draft EIR page 2.10-24). Blasting is also expected to generally occur in localized areas at the center of the project and along roads within the project (Draft EIR pages 2.6-14 and 2.10-24).

Additionally, the Draft EIR states, “[e]stimated emissions of NO<sub>x</sub>, CO, and SO<sub>x</sub> from explosives used for on-site blasting were determined using emission factors in Section 13.3 (Explosives Detonation) of AP-42<sup>199</sup> (EPA 1980); and PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions were determined using Section 11.9 of AP-42 (EPA 1998)” (Draft EIR page 2.3-23). The maximum amount of explosive used per day was estimated at between 17 and 19 tons. Again, the analysis employed conservative assumptions, as use of AP-42 emission factors “may overestimate emissions for blasting of hard rock” for this project (Draft EIR, Appendix G, Air Quality Technical Report, Section 3.1.2, Blasting Emissions Methodology, pages 59–60).

- O-6-32** The comment states that provided the length of construction and anticipated blasting, grading, and hauling of materials, it is unlikely that proposed project would have a low to no impact regarding construction noise. The comment also states that operational noise, associated with the expansion of Deer Springs Road, would likely result in significant impacts. The comment inquires how the commenter can be ensured that the project would not have significant noise impacts and if testing would

---

<sup>199</sup> AP-42, Compilation of Air Pollutant Emissions Factors, is a publication of the EPA’s emission factor information based on source test data, material balance studies, and engineering estimates (<https://www.epa.gov/air-emissions-factors-and-quantification/ap-42-compilation-air-emission-factors>).

## Comment Letter Responses

---

be required. The comment states that the noise, traffic congestion, dirt and debris, and character of the community would be impacted if the project is approved.

The comment addresses general subject areas, which received extensive analysis in Section 2.10 Noise of the Draft EIR. The comment expresses the commenter's opinion with respect to the analysis in the Draft EIR, and 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.

As to operational noise impacts on Deer Springs Road, the commenter is referred to Section 2.10, specifically pages 2.10-10 and 2.10-11 for the analysis of direct traffic noise impacts, which were determined to be less than significant. Cumulative traffic noise was considered in Section 2.10.4.1 and impacts were identified to three properties along Deer Springs Road (see Draft EIR pages 2.10-26 and 2.10-27). These impacts were determined to be significant and unavoidable.

Regarding how the project can be ensured not to have additional significant noise impacts, the County directs the commenter to PDF 33-38, which require certain measures to be implemented during the construction phase of the proposed project, as well as M-N-1 through M-N-8, which will be implemented as part of the MMRP.

The comment addresses general subject areas, "noise, traffic congestion, dirt and debris, and character of the community," which received extensive analysis in Section 2.10, Noise; Section 2.13, Transportation and Traffic, Section 2.3, Air Quality; Section 2.1, Aesthetics; and Section 3.3, Land Use and Planning, of 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.

- O-6-33** The comment states that Draft EIR did not address wildlife connectivity in the portion of the Bonsall Sponsor Group planning area, which is designated as open space. The comment states that the comments to follow need to be addressed and that an answer of "less than significant" is not acceptable.

The County acknowledges the comment and notes it expresses the opinions of the commenter. Please refer to **Topical Response BIO-2**. The Draft EIR thoroughly evaluated wildlife movement in Section 2.4, Biological Resources, including East/West movement that would be ensured through setting aside the northern portion of the project Site, including all the area within the Bonsall Community Planning

## Comment Letter Responses

---

- Area, as permanent open space preserve. 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.
- O-6-34** The comment restates Comment Letter O-1.5, Newland Sierra Draft EIR Connectivity Review, from Megan Jennings dated August 2017. The County acknowledges the comment and refers the commenter to responses to **Comment Letter O-1.5**. No further response is required and the comment does not raise any new issues related to the analysis in the Draft EIR. 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.
- O-6-35** The comment states that the residents in the area surrounding the project Site have concerns about traffic and the impacts of levels of service on the surrounding roads and highways. The comment states that traffic conditions are worse than they were ten years ago and that they have no reasonable expectation that traffic conditions will get better in the future because they have not gotten any better over the last 50 years. The comment addresses traffic impacts, which received extensive analysis in the Draft EIR (Section 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. 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.
- O-6-36** The comment states that the Draft EIR references two traffic mitigation funds that developers are required to contribute to, to alleviate the intolerable conditions, the TIF and the associated RTCIP fund. The comment states that it is their opinion that these funds fall far short of what should be required in the way of contribution by developers and asks why developers are not required to put more money in the pot to alleviate and mitigate the bad conditions they create. Section 2.13.3.2, County of San Diego Transportation Impact Fee Program/Ordinance, explains what the TIF program and RTCIP fund is, how the funds are calculated, and how the funds are used. 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.
- O-6-37** The comment states that throughout the Draft EIR, LOS D is accepted by the County and the applicant as the minimum acceptable service level for road infrastructure, and

## Comment Letter Responses

---

- this is a clear case of lowering standards to increase official acceptability of bad circumstances and projects. The comment reiterates the County's description of what LOS D means as identified in the General Plan Mobility Element Table M-3. The comment also states that County should only consider LOS A, B, and C as acceptable and LOS D, E and F, as clearly unacceptable. The County acknowledges the comment and notes it expresses opinions about what acceptable levels of service should be. 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.
- O-6-38** The comment states that the applicant supplied a lengthy expose of transportation and traffic impacts, but that the Draft EIR traffic section doesn't come to a complete conclusion as to how the proposed mitigation will improve the existing unsatisfactory traffic conditions around the project. Section 2.13, Transportation and Traffic, Tables 2.13-39 and 2.13-40, identify what the LOS is at impacted intersections and roadway segments prior to, and post, mitigation for the Existing Plus Project scenario. Similarly, Tables 2.13-41 and 2.13-42, identify what the LOS is at impacted intersections and roadway segments prior to, and post, mitigation for the Existing Plus Project Plus Cumulative Projects scenario. 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.
- O-6-39** The comment opines the use of the phrase "less than significant" when analyzing impediments the project will impose on local road infrastructure. The comment further states that when all the "less than significant" impacts that the project will generate are combined into one cumulative impact, the result will be a huge unavoidable major impact. A cumulative impact analysis was included in Section 2.13.9.4 of Section 2.13, Transportation and Traffic. As stated on page 2.13-66, this analysis was based on a combination of the existing traffic volumes plus the project traffic volumes plus the cumulative projects traffic volumes on the road network analyzed by the project. Some cumulative impacts were identified as significant and unavoidable after proposed mitigation because the facilities are under the jurisdiction and control of Caltrans or the City of San Marcos and, thereby, are subject to their concurrences and approval. 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.
- O-6-40** The comment states that Deer Springs Road has historically been a rural two-lane road and the applicant suggests that it should become a four-lane thoroughfare. The comment also states that a previous study suggested that six lanes would be more appropriate and that there is a real problem as to whether the six-lane analysis is

## Comment Letter Responses

---

being used for the four-lane road in perusal of projected traffic impacts. The comment correctly states that both options for Deer Springs Road propose a buildout of four-lanes. Traffic impacts are determined by adding the projected traffic to be generated by the project to the existing baseline conditions (i.e., Deer Springs Road being two lanes). Once potential impacts are determined, then mitigation measures are applied to reduce impacts (i.e., Deer Springs Road being built to four lanes). Tables 2.13-40 and 2.13-42 in Section 2.13 show what the impacts to Deer Springs Road would be prior to mitigation, as a 2-lane road, and after mitigation, as a four-lane road. The six-lane configuration was not used to analyze potential traffic impacts associated with the proposed project.

**O-6-41** The comment states that aesthetically, such a major revision to Deer Springs Road with all the required grading that will be needed which will be a major step toward the further urbanization of the whole area. Potential aesthetic impacts associated with the improvements to Deer Springs Road were analyzed in Section 2.1, Aesthetics. Growth inducing impacts of widening Deer Springs Road were analyzed in Section 1.8. 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.

**O-6-842** The comment states that there is nothing in the Draft EIR that illustrates the configuration of the I-15 interchange and that it would be helpful if there was a schematic representation included in the written description. The comment states that in their opinion, the only thing a new improved interchange will do is allow more vehicles to be dumped at a faster pace on a seriously overloaded and failing interstate.

The configuration of the I-15 interchange has not been designed or approved by Caltrans, thus no illustration was provided in the Draft EIR. As stated in Section 2.13.1, the project applicant presently is coordinating with Caltrans on the preparation of a Project Study Report-Project Development Support (PSR-PDS) document for the design and ultimate construction of improvements at the I-15/ Deer Springs Road interchange that, once implemented, would mitigate the project's identified significant impacts. The purpose of the PSR-PDS document is to define the purpose and need for any proposed improvements, identify a reasonable range of alternatives (i.e., interchange configurations), and develop an action plan for implementation of the improvements. In 2014, in response to the project's traffic impact analysis, which identified significant direct and cumulative impacts to the Interchange, the project applicant initiated the PID process with Caltrans to begin evaluating different configurations for mitigating impacts to the Interchange. 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.

## Comment Letter Responses

---

- O-6-43** The comment states that the main north/south artery that will serve the proposed development is the I-15, thus, it should be evaluated in some manner to illustrate the project's impact on it, and what the impact of I-15 will be on the residents of the proposed development. The comment also states that the peak AM traffic load will be 1,601 daily trips and that PM trips will be 2,059. Potential impacts to freeway segments, including I-15, were analyzed in Section 2.13, Transportation and Traffic, for both the Existing Plus Project scenario (Section 2.13.9.3) and the Existing Plus Project Plus Cumulative Projects (with and without Mountain Meadow Road connection) scenario (Sections 2.13.9.4.1 and 2.13.9.4.2). Also see Tables 2.13-18, 2.13-28, and 2.13-30.
- O-6-44** This comment suggests that additional studies be performed to measure the time it takes during the AM and PM peak hours to go from the geographic center of the project Site to I-15, I-215, I-163, and I-5 via SR-78 west. The comment further suggests that as part of these measurements, accidents and lost time involved in holding up traffic, should not be excluded from the calculations. This type of information is not required to be a part of an EIR under CEQA. This comment does not challenge the adequacy of the EIR, raise a significant issue, or dispute the content 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 project.
- O-6-45** The comment states that the Draft EIR does not attempt to measure the proposed projects impact on I-15 and local road infrastructure coupled with all the other projects proposed or approved that will impact the freeway or nearby communities. A cumulative impact analysis was included in Section 2.13.9.4 of Section 2.13, Transportation and Traffic. As stated on page 2.13-66, this analysis was based on a combination of the existing traffic volumes plus the project traffic volumes plus the cumulative projects traffic volumes on the road network analyzed by the project. Based on research of potential projects to be developed in the project area, and consultations between County staff and LLG, a two-step process was used to estimate total cumulative projects volumes. The first step was to use the SANDAG Series 12 model, which incorporates the reasonably foreseeable cumulative projects to be constructed within the County of San Diego. Because the model did not include a comprehensive listing of cumulative projects within the City of San Marcos, the next step was to estimate the total cumulative traffic that would be generated by city projects and manually add that traffic to the volumes obtained from the 2020 model. The resulting model includes all reasonably foreseeable development that may be constructed by project buildout. Specifically, 171 projects in San Diego County and 22 projects within the City of San Marcos are included in the model. Refer to Section 9.1 and Table 9-1 of the TIA for detailed discussion of cumulative project trip volume

## Comment Letter Responses

---

methodology and a full list of cumulative projects used for the analysis (Appendix R). 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.

- O-6-46** The comment reiterates a statement made in the Draft EIR regarding the proposed shuttle service and its effect of reducing automobile trips and essentially contributing to a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. The comment asks who would pay for the subsidization for the residents, and if this is a new mantra for developers to reduce calculated traffic congestion because the roads that surround their projects aren't of sufficient capacity to accommodate the new development. 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. 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.

Nonetheless, the County refers the commenter to Appendix R-3, Newland Sierra TDM Program – VMT Reduction Evaluation. It is anticipated that the subsidy would be provided through the HOA or other assessment mechanism and would be managed by the TDM Coordinator. As explained in Appendix R-3, “Coordinators are responsible for developing, marketing, implementing, and evaluating TDM Programs; dedicated personnel on staff makes the TDM Program more robust, consistent and reliable.” Table 2 of Appendix R-3 “sets forth the applicable performance metrics and targets for each strategy identified ... to ensure implementation of the VMT reduction strategies consistent with the analysis presented in this evaluation.”

- O-6-47** The comment states that the Draft EIR included a discussion of the new traffic evaluation system being pushed by CEQA and explains how the new rating system works. The comment states that CEQA puts a great amount of trust in “Traffic Demand Management,” which appears to be a complicated procedure to process and apply. The comment further states that the CEQA system is flawed and asks where the consideration is of the time vehicles are caught in queues on roads and highways of insufficient capacity idling and generating great quantities of greenhouse gasses. 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.

- O-6-48** The comment states that, despite the road mitigation efforts, it will not alleviate existing traffic conditions because nothing is proposed for enhancing I-15 or SR-78.

## Comment Letter Responses

---

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.

**O-6-49** The comment states that this project is a large leapfrog project that sits in a figurative traffic handling bottle with a very restricted neck that in the final analysis will invalidate any satisfactory outcome. The County does not concur. County General Plan Guiding Principle LU-1.2 addresses leapfrog development. Draft EIR Section 3.3, Land Use and Planning, analyzes the project's consistency with the goals, policies and objectives of the General Plan. Appendix DD specifically addresses the proposed project's consistency with the County's Guiding Principles and concludes that Policy LU-1.2 is not applicable to the project Site because, 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.

**O-6-50** The comment states that the project is being analyzed for its impacts on the areas existing residents and through traffic, but asks why the problems that a new project's residents will face is never adequately considered. The comment further states that these problems could lead to a feeling of buyer's remorse, and bad-mouthing of the project's developer and the government who allowed it to go forward. The project has been analyzed under CEQA for its potential impacts on the environment both during and after construction. Thus all potential impacts and benefits of the project would be experienced by existing residents as well as future residents. Regarding buyer's remorse, 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.

**O-6-51** The comment states that it is unclear whether Sarver Lane from the project boundary south to Deer Springs Road intersection will become a County Public road along its entire length, or have sections that will continue to remain a Private Road. Sarver Lane from the project boundary south to Deer Springs Road intersection would become a County public road along the entire length. As shown in Figure 1-26 a portion Sarver Lane would be designated as a 2.2E Modified Light Collector with no median and a portion would be designated as a 2.2F Modified Light Collector with a



## Comment Letter Responses

---

- reduced shoulder. 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.
- O-6-52** The comment states that the Draft EIR didn't provide adequate disclosure of impacts for Sarver Lane Private and Public ROW, impacts to existing driveways, drainage, brush management easement rights, and temporary construction easements required off Site of the project Site. The County does not concur with the comment. The proposed project would include widening Sarver Lane as shown on the project Tentative Map and Preliminary Grading Plans. The Draft EIR has evaluated the environmental impacts of these improvements. With respect to existing easement rights, 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. 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.
- O-6-53** The comment states that design exception requests #3 and #4 to decrease the width of travel lanes and lower design speed are inappropriate given the Emergency Access significance of Sarver Lane to existing residents and future project population. The County does not concur with this comment. Appendix N-2, Evacuation Plan for Newland Sierra, was prepared to analyze potential impacts related to evacuations, including the proposed improvements to Sarver Lane. As concluded in Section 2.8, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, impacts related to evacuation would be considered less than significant.
- O-6-54** This comment is regarding Sarver Lane from the project southern boundary to Deer Springs Road and whether or not it becomes a Public road. The comment states that currently, only the first 1,500 feet of Sarver Lane north of Deer Springs Road is a County Public Road. See **Response to Comment O-6-93**. 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.
- O-6-55** This comment states that the Preliminary Grading Plan does not have adequate resolution to determine impacts. The comment states that there is not enough resolution to determine impacts to existing driveways along Sarver Lane off Site of the project, drainage, construction easements, brush management easements, and drainage easements. The comment requests that a ROW analysis be performed and

## Comment Letter Responses

---

lists items that should be included in the ROW analysis. Please see **Response to Comment O-6-94**. No further response is required or necessary.

**O-6-56** This comment is regarding design exception requests #3 and #4 and the decrease in width of travel lanes and lower design speeds. The comment states that the reduced travel land width and design speed of the project's major westerly access point for 6,600 future residents plus existing residents seems to the public as inappropriate. The comment requests that the County states its position on design exceptions #3 and #4 and the rationale for the County's proposed position to accept or deny the requests. Please see **Response to Comment O-6-95**. No further response is required or necessary.

**O-6-57** The comment states that the County acknowledges 19 direct impacts (9 intersections and 10 road segments) and 26 cumulative impacts to regional transportation network elements. The comment also states that given the need to acquire ROW from 20 parcels to widen Deer Springs Road and an additional 30 parcels to widen Twin Oaks Valley Road, the use of Eminent Domain seems likely. The comment further states that the Eminent Domain proceedings will take a lot of time to acquire needed ROW.

As identified in Section 2.13.11, Significance of Impacts Prior to Mitigation, the Existing Plus Project scenario would have 19 direct impacts (9 intersections, 9 road segments, and 1 freeway segment); the Existing Plus Project Plus Cumulative Projects scenario would have 25 direct impacts (11 intersections, 12 road segments, and 2 freeway segments); the City of San Marcos Horizon Year 2035 Cumulative Analysis – Full Road Network Buildout scenario would have 1 direct impact (1 road segment); and the City of San Marcos Horizon Year 2035 Cumulative Analysis – Modified Road Network Buildout scenario would have two direct impacts (one intersection and one road segment).

Regarding the need to acquire ROW to widen Deer Springs Road and Twin Oaks Valley, 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. Nonetheless, the County refers the commenter to Section 2.13.12, Transportation and Traffic Mitigation Measures, specifically M-TR-9 and M-TR-10, which would require these improvements be completed prior to issuance certificates of occupancy for the 58th (for Deer Springs Road) and 40th (for Twin Oaks Valley Road) dwelling units. 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.

**O-6-58** The comment states that no information is provided on design, cost or schedule on the scope of required solutions to the traffic impacts the project creates. Final engineering

## Comment Letter Responses

---

designs for the proposed improvements have not yet been prepared; however, preliminary design and impact footprints for the proposed improvements have been included in the Draft EIR. Regarding the costs for such improvements, this type of information is not required to be included in a CEQA document. As stated on page 2.13-104, the timing of implementing each mitigation measure is based on the number of “Equivalent Dwelling Units” (EDU) that would trigger the significant impact. Each mitigation measure identifies a specific EDU trigger for when the impact would occur and when the improvement needs to be completed. 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.

**O-6-59** The comment states that M-TR-1 is ineffective mitigation for direct and cumulative impacts to the I-15 ramp because rather than saying the developer is unwilling to pay for any Caltrans improvements, the County offers a circular discussion that faults the Caltrans planning process, and provides no information whatsoever. The comment also says that the remedy for this defect is to not process the EIR until Caltrans jurisdiction mitigations can be quantified and disclose to the decision makers and the public. The County disagrees for the following reasons. As stated in Section 2.13, on page 2.13-101, the I-15/Deer Springs Road interchange improvements are included in the County’s *Transportation Impact Fee (TIF)/Transportation Needs Assessment Report (2012)* as a necessary improvement that will be funded partially by the development. As stated on page 2.13-35, TIF fees are deposited into local Community Planning Area accounts, regional accounts, and regional freeway ramp accounts. TIF funds are only used to pay for improvements to roadway facilities identified for inclusion in the TIF program, which includes both County roads and Caltrans highway facilities. TIF funds collected for a specific local or regional area must be spent in the same area. By ensuring TIF funds are spent for the specific roadway improvements identified in the TIF program, the CEQA mitigation requirement is satisfied, and the Mitigation Fee Act nexus is met. Therefore, the project will contribute a fair share contribution to the I-15 interchange improvements. 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.

**O-6-60** The comment states that without engineering preliminary design, an estimate of mitigation costs, an implementation schedule, funding sources, binding commitments, and a schedule assessment, is required to determine if the project’s impacts will be mitigated in the timeframe in which the project’s traffic loads enter the network and a decision without this would be flawed. The comment also asks if there is enough money available to fix I-15 to handle the project’s impacts. The County acknowledges

## Comment Letter Responses

---

- the comment and directs the commenter to Section 2.13, Transportation and Traffic. As concluded in Section 2.13.13, “No feasible mitigation exists to mitigate the project’s impact to the segment of I-15 between Deer Springs Road and Pomerado Road (Impact TR-18). Therefore, Impact TR-18 is considered significant and unavoidable.” Further, “As it relates to the project’s cumulative impact to the segment of I-15 between Old Highway 395 and Pomerado Road (Impact TR-41), no feasible mitigation exists to mitigate the project’s impact to less than significant. Therefore, Impact TR-41 is considered significant and unavoidable.” Thus, as required under CEQA, the Draft EIR has identified the proposed project’s impacts and identified that no such mitigation exists to feasibly reduce these impacts. No further response is required.
- O-6-61** The comment states that the County, the developer, and the opponents all agree that the project creates massive direct and cumulative impacts to regional road networks under the jurisdiction of the County, City of San Marcos, and Caltrans. The comment asks if the project will pay or if the taxpayers would pay to subsidize direct and cumulative project impacts. See Section 2.13.3.2, County of San Diego Transportation Impact Fee Program/Ordinance, which explains the funding process for collecting impact fees from new development to construct new or expanded road, highway, interchange, and intersection facilities in the unincorporated County necessary to accommodate new development. 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.
- O-6-62** The comment asks what the impacts are of I-15 Deer Springs Road ramp improvements and other direct and cumulative impacts to Caltrans jurisdiction Roads and intersections required for project mitigation. The comment addresses general subject areas, which received extensive analysis in 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.
- O-6-63** The comment asks what the impacts are of the mitigations and if they’re feasible. The comment addresses general subject areas, which received extensive analysis in the Draft EIR. If a mitigation measure was found to be infeasible, an explanation is provided after the identified mitigation measure as listed in Section 2.13.12. 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.
- O-6-64** The comment asks who is providing the funding for the improvements proposed as mitigation and can they reasonably be completed in time to mitigate project impacts.

## Comment Letter Responses

---

See Section 2.13.3.2, County of San Diego Transportation Impact Fee Program/Ordinance, which explains the funding process for collecting impact fees from new development and construct new or expanded road, highway, interchange, and intersection facilities in the unincorporated County necessary to accommodate new development. As stated in Section 2.13.12, each significant impact that would result in the City of San Marcos and/or Caltrans jurisdictions, implementation of the recommended improvements is outside the jurisdiction and control of the County of San Diego. However, in the case of San Marcos, 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.

In the case of Caltrans, as stated in Section 2.13.1, the planning, environmental review, design, and construction of the I-15/Deer Springs Road interchange are subject to a three-phase process that will involve separate CEQA/NEPA review under the jurisdiction of Caltrans. At the conclusion of that process, the project applicant anticipates approval from Caltrans to build the new interchange. Construction of a new interchange would mitigate the project's impacts at the interchange to less than significant.

Nevertheless, while the project applicant is working with the City of San Marcos and Caltrans towards implementation of those road improvements necessary to mitigate the project's identified significant direct and cumulative impacts within the respective jurisdiction, because the County does not have jurisdiction and control over the construction of these improvements, the County cannot be assured of their timely and effective implementation. 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.

- O-6-65** The comment states that there is a potential 5- to 10-year disconnect between the need for mitigation and the feasible completion of the mitigation. The comment asks for answers regarding funding as these numbers are not included in the Draft EIR and the public needs to know who will be paying. See **Response to Comment O-6-106**. 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.
- O-6-66** The comment expresses concern regarding evacuation procedures during wildfire. The comment states that the Evacuation Plan shows an evacuation route using Par Valley Road to Gopher Canyon and Twin Oaks to Gopher Canyon, which will already be at level F and thus sending people into a parking lot. The comment further

## Comment Letter Responses

---

states that the FPP doesn't take into consideration what other Fire Protection Districts have in their plans as far as evacuation routes, and that it assumes the Newland Sierra project is the only residential project that would be evacuating during a fire. Please see **Topical Response HAZ-1**. No further response is required.

- O-6-67** The comment states that weather, fuel, and terrain are the three items that affect the likelihood of a fire starting, how fast it moves, and its power and difficulty to control. The County notes the comment provides factual background information and restates information provided in the Draft EIR, 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.
- O-6-68** The comment states that they need to inform the County that the Draft EIR did not include a fire plan or discussion of any concerns regarding all the fuel in the open space and how they are going to handle the issue of a wildfire starting in this area with proposed trails and horseback riding in the high fuel terrain. A Fire Protection Plan and an Evacuation Plan were included as Appendices N-1 and N-2, respectively, in the Draft EIR. The comment addresses general subject areas, which received extensive analysis in 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 because the comment does not raise an environmental issue.
- O-6-69** The comment states that the goal should be to design a project that can stand-alone without first responders because multi-fire events often occur. The comment states that it should be recognized that creating a "Fire-Adapted Community" requires a system or chain of proactive actions before, during, and following a wildfire, or a Community Wildfire Protection Plan approved by the County that defines each of the areas including the fuel load within each designated portion of the project. 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.
- O-6-70** The comment states that the traffic study (Section 2.8, Ingress and Egress) should align the project's population density with the traffic engineer's study for evacuation purposes. The comment states that the study should review daily traffic flows overlaid with accelerated evacuation traffic. The comment further mentions that gates

## Comment Letter Responses

---

are another issue and should be initiated by any first responder. See Draft EIR Appendix N-2, Evacuation Plan, Section 4.2, Roadway Capacities and Maximum Evacuation Time Estimates. Regarding gates, North Twin Oaks Valley Road may be available for travel north to Vista Valley Country Club or Gopher Canyon Road, but would require three private gates to be opened by law enforcement for passage (Appendix N-2 page 18). 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.

**O-6-71** The comment states that every resident living in the development must be made aware of the serious wildland fire threat and fire history of the area, and that residents must learn and accept their personal responsibility for living in a dangerous wildfire environment. 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.

**O-6-72** The comment states that there is financial liability of possibly converting current State Responsibility Areas (SRA) to a Local Responsibility Area (LRA), which gives fire suppression liability to the State/CalFire. The comment also states that the EIR should discuss the potential impact of reclassification of this area from a SRA to a LRA, which means the County may incur higher fire suppression costs in the future. The County acknowledges the comment and notes that it 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 Deer Springs Fire Protect District, as the Local Agency Having Jurisdiction, has reviewed and approved the proposed project's Fire Protection Plan (Appendix N-1), as has the San Diego County Fire Authority. Deer Springs Fire Protection District and the project applicant have negotiated a Fire Fee Agreement which will ensure adequate funding for district-wide capital facilities. Further, property tax assessments are anticipated to fund ongoing operations of existing Deer Springs Fire Protection District fire stations to continue to serve the project Site within standard travel times.

**O-6-73** The comment states that growth in these wildland fire prone areas needs to be addressed as part of a cumulative approach and failure to do so may compromise public safety success. A cumulative impact analysis related to wildfire hazards is

## Comment Letter Responses

---

provide in Section 2.8, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Section 2.8.4, Cumulative Impact Analysis.

- O-6-74** The comment states that the primary responsibility of public officials is life safety, if egress decisions are altered, it must be more important in the planning phase. The County acknowledges the comment and notes that it 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.
- O-6-75** The comment states that the Draft EIR evaluates a total of 11 alternatives, 9 of which are studied in detail and two of which are considered but rejected. The comment restates information contained in the Draft EIR 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 or necessary.
- O-6-76** The comment reiterates the summary of the No Project Alternative as detailed in the Executive Summary on page S.O-7 item S.5.1, and then states that this is wrong and misleading. The comment states that the community does not want blasting for 10 years or to be overloaded with traffic. The comment further states that by assuming none of the open space would be permanently preserved is a misleading remark because it's listed to be included in the North County MSCP and will protect the wildlife corridors whereas Newland Sierra development will block natural corridors. As stated in Section 1.2.1.12, Construction, all grading activities, blasting, and rock-crushing operations are anticipated to be completed by the end of 2022 when major earthwork activity would be completed for both phases. Traffic impacts associated with the project were adequately analyzed in Section 2.13, Transportation and Traffic. Regarding the project's status within the Draft North County MSCP and the project's impacts on wildlife corridors, see **Topical Responses BIO-1** and **BIO-2**.
- O-6-77** The comment restates comments from **Comment Letter O-1.7**. Please refer to **Responses to Comments O-1.7-53** through **O-1.7-59**.
- O-6-78** The comment restates comments from **Comment Letter O-1.7**. Please refer to **Responses to Comments O-1.7-8** through **O-1.7-21**.
- O-6-79** The comment reiterates a statement made in Section 2.3, Biological Resources, which states that 72 percent of the Site acreage would be preserved. The comment states that this is misleading since 212 of those acres would be off Site. The comment states that the 212 acres in Ramona are for gnatcatcher, but that area does not have nesting or



## Comment Letter Responses

---

- foraging habitat, and asks why that is allowed. See **Response to Comment R-6-133**. 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.
- O-6-80** The comment restates comments from **Comment Letter O-1.7**. Please refer to **Responses to Comments O-1.7-23, O-1.7-24, O-1.7-25, O-1.7-29, and O-1.7-30**.
- O-6-81** The comment states that the project Site is classified as a PAMA area with a 75 percent conservation goal under the draft North County MSCP Plan; however, the Draft EIR states that the classification has changed to a hardline area in the most recent draft plan, without concurrence from the Wildlife Agencies, and that reliance on a draft plan for take authorization would be improper until the plan is adopted. In response, the project Site is not located in PAMA and is not required to conserve 75 percent of the project's acreage. As detailed in the Draft EIR, the project has been identified as a proposed hardline area in the draft North County MSCP Plan, which means both the project's development areas and biological open space areas have been incorporated into the overall conservation strategy of the draft plan (Draft EIR pages 2.4-6 and 2.4-82). The County acknowledges that the draft North County MSCP Plan is currently in draft form and has not yet been approved. See **Topical Response BIO-1 – North County MSCP**. 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.
- O-6-82** The comment suggests that a wildlife movement alternative be prepared because a wildlife connectivity expert determined that the project would result in significant and potentially unmitigable impacts to core linkages in the Merriam Mountain area (M. Jennings 2017). See **Topical Response BIO-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.
- O-6-83** The comment restates comments from **Comment Letter O-1.7**. Please refer to **Response to Comment O-1.7-62**
- O-6-84** The comment states that the Draft EIR's GHG section provides a good amount of emphasis on how the project will mitigate the GHG impacts, but the true GHG violation will lie in its initial construction and lasting impacts on the surrounding area. The comment states that all contentious issues in the Draft EIR are typically treated with an overly optimistic assessment. The comment addresses construction and operational GHG impacts, which received extensive analysis in 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 Letter Responses

---

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

**O-6-85** The comment reiterates the project’s estimated GHG emissions with and without the GHG reduction features, and then states that if construction were to go over the “approximate 10 year timeframe,” then the amount of additional GHG emissions could be significant. The Draft EIR recognizes that impacts from construction GHG emissions would be significant; however, M-GHG-1 proposes that the applicant purchase and retire carbon offsets in order to offset 100 percent of the project’s construction GHG emissions. 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.

**O-6-86** The comment states that the impact of adding over 28,000 daily trips into/out of the development cannot be fully calculated and is not adequately weighted in the Draft EIR’s GHG analysis. An analysis of vehicle emissions based on the 28,862 average daily trips generated by the project is provided in Section 2.7, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Section 2.7.3.1, Generate Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Either Directly or Indirectly, that May Have a Significant Impact on the Environment, starting on page 2.7-30. 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.

**O-6-87** The comment states that Caltrans has just started the first phase of planning for the I-15 interchange, but the Draft EIR states on page 2.13-11 that Caltrans has no program in place to improve traffic on I-15. The comment states that I-15 is currently operating at LOS F and because of this the Draft EIR has no way to predict the traffic backing up at Deer Springs Road and I-15, and the resulting increase in GHG emissions. Regarding the fact that Caltrans has no program in place to expand the I-15 between Deer Springs Road and Pomerado Road, the commenter is correct. As stated on page 2.13-11, impacts to the I-15 Mainline from Deer Springs Road to Pomerado Road would be mitigated by providing additional mainline capacity along this stretch of I-15. 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 impact to less than significant.

Regarding the resulting increase in GHG emissions, the Draft EIR provided extensive analysis on project generated traffic and resulting GHG emissions in Section 2.7, Greenhouse Gas Emissions. The County will include the comment as part of the Final

## Comment Letter Responses

---

EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project. No further response is required or necessary.

**O-6-88** The comment states that there are 25 significant and unavoidable locations where traffic will be negatively impacted and that improvements should be made prior to the project, because it will surely translate into more traffic standing still, which will increase the amount of GHG released beyond the ability to accurately calculate. 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.

**O-6-89** The comment states that it is impossible to predict who will move to the new development and that regardless of the rules-of-thumb the Draft EIR used to estimate vehicle miles traveled, new home buyers are looking for lower prices in North County although they live and rent homes farther south. The comment also states that Escondido and San Marcos have no announced big changes in employment numbers, so there's no reason to believe new homes would go toward people working nearby. The County acknowledges the comment and notes it raises economic issues that do 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. No further response is required because the comment does not raise an environmental issue.

Nonetheless, the comment addresses general subject areas, which received extensive analysis in Section 2.13, Transportation and Traffic, of 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.

**O-6-90** The comment states that the Draft EIR does not take into account the many other housing projects that could potentially add traffic to the impacted roadways, which would create additional GHG emissions, regardless of vehicle miles traveled. As stated in Section 2.7, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, on page 2.7-46, "Due to the global nature of the assessment of GHG emissions and the effects of global climate change, impacts can currently only be analyzed from a cumulative impact context; therefore, this EIR's analysis includes the assessment of both project and cumulative impacts." Thus all other cumulative development projects were taken into consideration when determining GHG impacts. The County will include the comment as part of the Final

## Comment Letter Responses

---

EIR for review and consideration by the decision-makers prior to a final decision on the project. No further response is required or necessary.

**O-6-91** The comment asks if the off-site mitigation parcel to offset GHG emissions is the same 212-acre site being used for gnatcatcher, and if the site will be increased once actual GHG emissions are totaled based on the GHG emissions the project would create and continue to create for every year that additional traffic pollutes the environment. The off-site mitigation parcel is not being used to offset GHG emissions. As stated in Section 2.7, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, on page 2.7-52, with implementation of mitigation measures M-GHG-1 through M-GHG-3, the project achieves carbon neutrality (i.e., a net zero emissions level) thereby resulting in *no* net increase in GHG emissions relative to existing environmental conditions. 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.

**O-6-92** The comment reiterates a statement made in Appendix H-1 on page 178 that the mitigation property is better than the project Site because it connects segments of the Cleveland National Forest and San Diego County Park; however it appears that the mitigation site is a small island not bordering either the National Forest or the parks. The mitigation parcel provides better golden eagle foraging habitat and better wildlife movement potential than the project Site because the site provides for connectivity between segments of the Cleveland National Forest located approximately 2 miles to the east and west, and San Diego County Parks land located approximately 3 miles to the north and south. This site supports more Engelmann oak resources (100+ trees versus the three on the project Site) and other sensitive resources (e.g., ringtail).

The comment is correct in that the off-site mitigation site does not directly connect to U.S. Forest Service lands or County Park lands. The Draft EIR has been revised to correct this misstatement, and the Final EIR will note that SR-78 is adjacent to the mitigation site.

**O-6-93** The comment states that the preference would be to not develop an area not designated in the County's General Plan and that it would clearly be better to develop the mitigation site in Ramona, rather than carve up one of the last undeveloped areas west of I-15. 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.

## Comment Letter Responses

---

- O-6-94** The comment states that maintaining a property that releases 0 MT of GHG is not mitigation for the 100 MT of GHG a day that would be released by the project. The comment states that the only way to mitigate would be to remove 100 MT of GHG somewhere else. The off-site mitigation parcel is not being used to offset GHG emissions. As stated in Section 2.7, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, on page 2.7-52, with implementation of mitigation measures M-GHG-1 through M-GHG-3, the project achieves carbon neutrality (i.e., a net zero emissions level) thereby resulting in *no* net increase in GHG emissions relative to existing environmental conditions. 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.
- O-6-95** The comment states that it's important to follow the lead of the State of California, regarding climate change action, rather than the Federal government which has decided to work against the science of climate change. The County acknowledges the comment and notes it expresses opinions about how the County should deal with climate change. 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.
- O-6-96** The comment states that the Draft EIR is hard to read and misleading, and it's unreasonable to expect residents to live in a project while blasting takes place for 10 years. As stated in Section 1.2.1.12, Construction, of the Draft EIR, "All grading activities, blasting, and rock-crushing operations are anticipated to be completed by the end of 2022 when major earthwork activity would be completed for both phases." 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.

INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK