

Addendum to the Previously Certified Harmony Grove Village Final Environmental Impact Report (PDS2024-STP-24-007)

Technical Memorandum to Appendix F: Acoustical Assessment Report August 2025

This technical memorandum evaluates the Harmony Grove Village Live/Work Project (Project) modifications included in the Addendum to the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) certified in February 2007 with respect to acoustic impacts. An Acoustical Assessment Report dated July 2006 was included as Appendix F in the FEIR.

Background

The Harmony Grove Village FEIR (SCH No. 2004071004) analyzed the environmental effects of the Harmony Grove Village Specific Plan (Specific Plan) development located on approximately 468 acres in an unincorporated portion of San Diego County (County) within the North County Metropolitan Subregional Plan planning area. The Harmony Grove Village Specific Plan area is bounded by the City of Escondido to the east and the City of San Marcos to the north-northwest. The Harmony Grove Village Specific Plan, as originally approved, consisted of a mixed-use rural residential village consisting of 742 residential dwelling units, 45,000 square feet (s.f.) of commercial/retail uses (consisting of 25,000 s.f. of general commercial and another 16,500 s.f. of live/work space in the Village Center and 3,500 s.f. of retail associated with equestrian facilities), open space and park and recreational uses, an on-site wastewater reclamation facility, and various equestrian facilities, including an equestrian ranch for horse boarding and lessons. The proposed development also incorporated a number of related amenities and facilities, including park and recreation areas, a fire station, and an on-site wastewater reclamation facility (including a pump station and wet weather storage). The FEIR was certified and approved by the County Board of Supervisors in January 2007 in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The approved Harmony Grove Village Specific Plan designates two acres near the intersection of Country Club Drive and Country Living Way for up to 25,000 s.f. of office/retail use, with the caveat that the properties may instead be used for live/work units if there is not sufficient demand for retail and office uses. The Project applicant has determined that use of the property for office/retail is not economically viable and therefore wishes to develop live/work units at the Project site. The current proposal includes the development of up to 32 live/work units on the two acres currently designated for office/retail uses. The units would be developed as single-family home building types, with attached garages and separate entrances for the workspaces. Units would range from approximately 2,200 to 2,700 s.f. and would be compatible with the adjacent live/work homes completed and occupied at Harmony Grove Village. Both lots have been previously graded as part of overall Specific Plan development. Figure 1, *Site Plan*, provides the proposed site plan for the live/work units. The Project would require General Plan, Community Plan, and Specific Plan amendments with a Site Plan application to remove a Specific Plan footnote indicating that the 32 live/work units are counted within the 742 maximum residence total, and to allow individual units as condominiums on the Project site.

Summary of Project Changes (Relevant to Acoustic Impacts)

The proposed Project changes result in a land use change for a 2.9-acre area within the Harmony Grove Village Specific Plan from 25,000 s.f. of commercial retail space to up to 32 live/work dwelling units. While

this analysis conservatively assumes development of all 32 units that would be allowable under the Specific Plan, the Tentative Map proposes a total of 27 units. This Project does not propose changes to other on- or off-site components of the Harmony Grove Village Specific Plan, such as the water reclamation facility, roadway improvements, or equestrian facilities.

Analysis

Short-Term Construction Impacts

The 2007 FEIR identified potentially significant short-term (construction) noise impacts associated with general construction activities exceeding the County's construction noise limit (**Impact N I-1**), rock drilling and blasting activity (**Impact N I-2**), off-site improvement of Village Road (**Impact N I-3**), and off-site blasting and rock drilling (**Impact N I-4**). With mitigation measures identified in the 2007 FEIR, short-term construction impacts were reduced to a less than significant level.

With the currently proposed Project, construction would occur in the same general locations and require similar activities as the previously approved commercial development analyzed in the FEIR, except for mass grading of the site, which occurred on the Project site as part of overall Specific Plan area grading. As such, construction-related noise impacts would be similar to what was previously described in the 2007 FEIR. Mitigation Measure N M-1a is not applicable to the proposed Project, which is located near the southern Specific Plan boundary, as it exclusively applies to construction adjacent to the existing residences near the northern Specific Plan boundary. Because rough grading has previously occurred throughout the Specific Plan area, including on the proposed Project site, Mitigation Measures N M-2a, N M-2b, and N M-2c are not required for the Project. In addition, Mitigation Measures N M-3 and N M-4 would not apply to the proposed Project as they are specific to the construction of off-site Village Road improvements. Mitigation Measures N M-1b, N M-1c, and N M-1d remain applicable and would be implemented by the Project as the Project has the potential to result in similar short-term construction noise impacts. Mitigation Measure N M-1b would require that site deliveries and construction equipment use be limited to the time period allowed by the County's noise ordinance, including limiting site access and queuing of trucks outside of this time period. Mitigation Measure N M-1c would require advance notification to residents within 200 feet of construction activity. Mitigation Measure N M-1d would require noise monitoring to be conducted as part of a Noise Control Plan during the initial construction operation to ensure that the noise level complies with the County's noise ordinance limits. Construction noise impacts would remain less than significant with mitigation, consistent with the determination in the 2007 FEIR.

Long Term Operational Impacts – On-site Traffic Noise

The 2007 FEIR identified potential exterior noise exposure impacts at lots 224-227 adjacent to Harmony Grove Road; lots 236, 237, 243-248, 281, 571, 572, 575, 576, 581, 587, 593, 599, 600, 605, 610, 633, 650, 687, and 689 adjacent to Country Club Drive; and lots 616, 623, 638, 643, and 647-650 adjacent to Village Road. In addition, interior noise exposure impacts were identified at on-site residences located at the first or second floor level of lots 224-227, 236, 237, 243-248, 281, 571, 572, 575, 576, 581, 582, 587, 593, 599, 600, 605, 610, 611, 616, 623, 624, 630-633, 638, 639, 643, 647-650, 687, and 689 (**Impact N I-5**). Incorporation of mitigation measures N M-5a, N M-5b, N M-5c, and N M-5d would reduce this impact below a level of significance.

As the lots which comprise the Project site (74 and 75) were designated for commercial land uses, the FEIR did not analyze the exterior or interior noise exposure impacts on these lots specifically. The Project

proposes a land use change on these lots from commercial to residential. Therefore, the potential exterior and interior noise exposure impacts on the Project were analyzed in the Computer Aided Noise Abatement Model (CadnaA) using the 2030 traffic volumes, speeds, and fleet composition provided in the FEIR. Noise levels at the common exterior use areas were modeled to be 50.2 Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) at the seating area south of units 3 and 4 and 59.4 CNEL at the seating area east of units 26 and 27, below the residential exterior noise threshold of 60 CNEL considered in the FEIR. Therefore, Mitigation Measures N M-5b and N M-5c would not apply as no exterior noise impacts would occur.

Table 1, *Calculated Noise Levels at Residential Building Façades*, shows the resulting noise levels at the façades of residential units nearest to County Club Drive. Receivers were placed at all three floors of the proposed residential buildings; however, only the highest noise level calculated for each unit is reported in Table 1 below.

Table 1
CALCULATED NOISE LEVELS AT RESIDENTIAL BUILDING FAÇADES

Residential Unit Number	Noise Level (CNEL)	Exceed 60 CNEL?
5	55.3	No
6	62.2	Yes
17	59.4	No
18	64.9	Yes
20	58.8	No
21	60.9	Yes
22	65.2	Yes
24	57.0	No
25	64.0	Yes
26	59.6	No
27	62.0	Yes

Source: CadnaA

CNEL = Community Noise Equivalent Level

As shown in Table 1 above, traffic noise levels at the façades of the six live/work units with a direct line-of-sight to Country Club Drive (residences 6, 18, 21, 22, 25, and 27) would exceed 60 CNEL and could, therefore, result in interior noise levels exceeding the 45 CNEL residential interior noise threshold. Mitigation Measures N M-5a and N M-5d, as amended to include the Project lots and specified residences, would apply to these six units to ensure interior noise levels are adequately attenuated. Mitigation Measure N M-5a would require the Project Applicant to complete an acoustical analysis of interior and exterior noise levels and incorporate applicable mitigation measures should levels exceed the allowable sound level limit of the Noise Element of the County General Plan. Mitigation Measure N M-5d would require the Project Applicant to prepare an interior acoustical study and, should interior noise levels exceed 45 dB CNEL, incorporate noise attenuation features to reduce interior noise levels below 45 dB CNEL. Because the remaining Project units would be set back and shielded by other buildings from Country Club Drive traffic noise, interior noise levels would be below the applicable limits, and no mitigation is required. With mitigation incorporated, impacts would be less than significant, consistent with the determination in the 2007 FEIR.

Long Term Operational Impacts – Off-site Traffic Noise

The 2007 FEIR determined that traffic generated by the Specific Plan would result in a significant project-level and cumulative increase in noise levels at residences along Citracado Parkway between Avenida del Diablo and Valley Parkway (**Impacts N I-6 and N I-12**) and a significant cumulative increase in noise levels on Avenida del Diablo between Hale Avenue and Valley Parkway was also identified (**Impact N I-12**). These impacts could be mitigated through the installation of sound barriers; however, given their location in the City of Escondido, the FEIR concluded impacts would be significant pending City of Escondido approval of the sound barriers.

The Project modifications would result in a reduction in the number of vehicle trips generated by the Project. Based on the trip generation rates identified in the Substantial Conformance Review Memorandum prepared by Linscott Law & Greenspan Engineers ([LLG] 2024), the previously approved commercial use would produce 750 average daily trips (ADT), while the currently proposed Project would produce 368 ADT, resulting in a net decrease of 382 ADT. The reduced number of vehicle trips would result in reduced traffic noise attributable to the Project compared to what was previously anticipated in the FEIR. Traffic impacts to off-site receptors would be incrementally reduced compared to the approved Harmony Grove Village Specific Plan; however, the impact would remain significant, consistent with the determination in the 2007 FEIR.

Long Term Operational Impacts – Stationary Sources

The 2007 FEIR concluded that potentially significant impacts to on-site and off-site receptors would occur as a result of the following sources of operational stationary source noise: equipment proposed for the on-site water reclamation facility (**Impact N I-7**); the generator associated with the on-site pump station (**Impact N I-8**); use of the public announcement system at the Equestrian Ranch (**Impact N I-9**); and the use of outdoor equipment associated with the proposed fire station, church, school, and track and feed store (**Impact N I-10**). Each of these impacts was determined to be less than significant with mitigation.

The water reclamation facility, pump station, and equestrian facilities would not be part of the Project; therefore, stationary source noise impacts identified in the FEIR from their operation would not occur with the Project and Mitigation Measures N M-7a, N M-7b, N M-7c, N M-7d, N M-8a, N M-8b, N M-8c, N M-9a, and N M-9b would not be applicable to the Project. In addition, the Project does not propose a fire station or community institutional land use requiring outdoor equipment use and would, therefore, not be required to implement Mitigation Measure N M-10.

Stationary sources of noise associated with the proposed live/work units would be limited to standard residential heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment. The specific HVAC units to be installed for the Project are not known at this stage of Project development; however, the operation of the final units would be required to comply with the County Noise Ordinance limits related to hourly average noise levels. This would be consistent with the environmental design measure in the 2007 FEIR, which states that Specific Plan elements requiring stationary noise-emitting components (e.g., generators, outdoor mechanical equipment) shall comply with the County Noise Ordinance requirements for restriction of sound levels at property lines and will be required to demonstrate such compliance. No conflict with the property line limits is anticipated, as these units would be typical of residential development and similar in noise generation to those installed at surrounding residences with similar site plans. Stationary source noise impacts would be less than significant, consistent with the determination in the 2007 FEIR; therefore, no mitigation would be required.

Potential Roadway Design Speed Improvement Scenarios

The 2007 FEIR identified a number of potential roadway design scenarios along portions of Harmony Grove Road and Country Club Drive and proposed mitigation measures to reduce the impacts of construction noise (**Impacts N I-1 and N I-2**) and long-term operational traffic noise (**Impacts N I-11 and N I-13**) of these improvements. However, the currently proposed Project would not include this element of the Specific Plan analyzed in the FEIR and would not be required to implement Mitigation Measure N M-11. The significant impact at two residences along Country Club Drive would remain as a result of the Specific Plan even with implementation of Mitigation Measure N M-11; however, given the decrease in vehicle trips associated with the Project, no increase in the severity of this impact would occur with the Project and Mitigation Measure N M-11 does not apply to Project implementation.

Conclusion

The Project-related modifications would not result in new or substantially more severe acoustics impacts compared to what was concluded in the 2007 FEIR. The following Mitigation Measures from the 2007 FEIR remain applicable to the Project to reduce construction noise and on-site traffic noise impacts below a level of significance: N M-1b, N M-1c, N M-1d, N M-5a, and N M-5d. Mitigation Measures N M-5a and N M-5d would be amended to include the Project lots and residences, as shown below with underlined text noting additions to the text of the 2007 FEIR Mitigation Measures. In addition, the Project would implement the relevant environmental design measure identified in the 2007 FEIR related to stationary noise sources.

N M-5a On the Final Map, the Applicant shall:

Grant to the County of San Diego a Noise Protection Easement over the entire area of lots 74, 75, 224-227, 236, 237, 243-248, 281, 571, 572, 575, 576, 581, 582, 587, 593, 599, 600, 605, 606, 610, 611, 616, 623, 624, 630-633, 638, 639, 643, 647-650, 687 and 689, inclusive, of Tentative Map TM5365. This easement is for the mitigation of present and anticipated future excess noise levels on residential uses of the affected parcels. The easement shall require: Prior to the issuance of any building permit for any residential use within the Noise Protection Easement, the Applicant shall:

1. Complete to the satisfaction of the Director of the DPLU, an acoustical analysis performed by a County-certified acoustical engineer, demonstrating that the present and anticipated future noise levels for the interior and exterior of the residential dwelling will not exceed the allowable sound level limit of the Noise Element of the San Diego County General Plan (exterior 60 dB CNEL, interior 45 dB CNEL). Future traffic noise level estimates for Harmony Grove Road must utilize a Level of Service "C" traffic flow for a four-lane Collector road classification that is the designated General Plan Circulation Element buildout roadway classification. Future traffic noise level estimates for Country Club Drive must utilize a Level of Service "C" traffic flow for a Rural Light Collector road classification which is the designated General Plan Circulation Element buildout roadway classification.
2. Incorporate to the satisfaction of the Director of the DPLU all of the recommendations or mitigation measures of the acoustical analysis into the Project design and building plans. Preliminary analysis indicates that five-to-six foot sound walls may be required as mitigation (Figures 2.3-6 and 2.3-7).

N M-5d In reference to the Noise Protection Easement, an interior acoustical study shall be conducted prior to issuance of building permits for lots 74 (residences 21, 22, 25, and 27), 75 (residences 6 and 18), 224-227, 236, 237, 243-248, 281, 571-572, 575-576, 581, 582, 587, 593, 599, 600, 605, 610, 611, 616, 623, 624, 630-633, 638, 639, 643, 647-650, 687 and 689. The acoustical assessment shall ensure that the interior noise levels for each lot will not exceed 45 dB CNEL.

Based on the acoustical study, should noise levels at the second floor exceed the 45 dB CNEL limit, those residences on the lots listed may require air-conditioning or mechanical ventilation so that windows could be closed at an occupant's discretion. Sound-rated windows also may be required.