



SAN LUIS OBISPO

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** February 6, 2017

**To:** Lillian Macleod, Principal Planner

**FROM:** Judith Malamut, AICP

**SUBJECT:** Responses to Additional Comments on the Dixon Ranch EIR

This memorandum responds to a request from the County on January 25, 2017 that LSA provide responses to the additional comments on the Dixon Ranch Final EIR per the document attached to this memorandum identified as *GVA public comment to BOS – 3/8/16\_p2*.

The document begins with opinions from the commenter that “HDR is not an entitlement – it’s a General Plan Amendment” and that “General Plan criteria has not been met to change 4 lots into 605.” The commenter also identifies the following points:

- “75 percent of the project perimeter abuts the Rural Region (RR)
- Access is from the RR
- Visual Impact is on the RR
- CR boundary to be considered by the BOS in 2016”

The topics identified above were considered in the Final EIR as follows: the location of the project is identified in Chapter III, Project Description, land uses at the project site and in the vicinity as well as zoning and General Plan policies were identified and evaluated in Section IV.A Land Use and Planning Policy; access to the project site is evaluated in Section IV.C Transportation and Circulation; visual impacts were evaluated in Section IV.N Visual Resources and also see Master Response 2 in the Response to Comments Document. The Board did not direct staff to consider revising the CR boundaries at the hearing held on October 2016.

**Density Transition.** In regards to the comment regarding whether an appropriate density transition is provided per Policy 2.1.1.2, there is actually no mention of requiring an “appropriate density transition” in Policy 2.1.1.2. However, Policy 2.2.1.2 states that in Rural Regions, Low Density

Residential shall provide the transition between Community Regions and the rural areas of the County. The existing General Plan land use designations for the project site are Low Density Residential and Open Space. As part of the approval process, the applicant is requesting amendments to the General Plan designation to High Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, and Open Space. As described in the Draft EIR starting on page 95, the proposed land uses would be consistent with the Community Region planning area under Policy 2.2.1.1 and as illustrated in Table 2-1 in the General Plan. Additionally, the adjacent Green Springs Ranch subdivision, as Low Density Residential and located in the Rural Region, provides an appropriate transition of development density between the proposed project and the surrounding rural areas, and as such the project is consistent with the General Plan. See also the Response to Comments Document, Master Response 1 that describes General Plan land use consistency and the compatibility of the proposed project with adjacent land uses including the Rural Region.

**Rural Character.** In response to the comment regarding whether the rural character of the area is maintained per Goal 2.2, as stated in Master Response 1:

One of the fundamental objectives of El Dorado County's General Plan is to direct intensive development to the identified Community Regions and Rural Centers. Objective 2.1.1 of the General Plan's Land Use Element states that the purpose of the Community Regions is to "Provide opportunities that allow for continued population growth and economic expansion while preserving the character and extent of existing rural centers and urban communities, emphasizing both the natural setting and built design elements which contribute to the quality of life and economic health of the County." Pursuant to Policy 2.1.1.2, Community Regions "...define those areas that are appropriate for the highest intensity of self-sustaining compact urban-type development or suburban-type development within the County...". By directing growth to the Community Regions and Rural Centers, the General Plan helps protect the County's agricultural lands, open space, and natural resources.

Master Response 1 goes on to state:

Some commenters stated, incorrectly, that the proposed project is inconsistent with adjacent land uses, especially in the Green Springs Ranch subdivision. As shown in Figure IV.A-1 (page 85 of the Draft EIR), existing or planned residential development is located to the north, south, east and west of the project site.

Approximately 30 percent (84 acres) of the project site would be maintained as open space and would include parks, landscaping, open spaces and trails. The majority of neighboring parcels that abut the project site would be located next to Open Space (Lots D, F, H, J, and K) or the Village Park. Of the 605 single-family residential parcels included in the proposed project, only 19 parcels (3 percent of the total residential parcels) would immediately border neighboring properties. These 19 parcels would have the following characteristics: one parcel would be the 5-acre site that contains the existing Dixon Family residence; four parcels would be estate residential large lots (between 3.0 and 3.3 acres); three parcels would be estate residential lots (between 1.0 to 1.1 acres); and 11 parcels would be hillside lots (between 12,054 to 16,407 square feet), thereby providing adequate buffering and transitions to smaller lots toward the center of the proposed development.

As currently proposed, the majority of Green Springs Ranch parcels that are adjacent to the project site would be immediately adjacent to proposed Open Space or Parks (Open Space Lots D and F, and a small portion of Village Park Lot A). One Green Springs Ranch parcel would be located immediately adjacent to Lot 6; however, Lot 6 would be 3.3 acres and would include only one single-family residence. The parcel immediately west of Green Springs Road would be immediately adjoining five lots to its north. These lots would be developed with one single-family home each, for a total of five homes. These five lots would be between 12,054 and 13,476 square feet in size, with one lot (Lot 551) adjoining the adjacent property for only 1 foot along the 90-foot width of the lot. Furthermore, three of these lots include a 25-foot drainage easement at the rear of the property, and no structures would be located within the easement. Finally, all development would be required to incorporate rear yard setbacks; proposed setbacks are shown in Tables III-4 and III-5 (page 73) of the Draft EIR.

Therefore, the project does maintain the rural character of the area by ensuring that open space or larger lots are placed in locations adjacent to existing low density development (e.g., the Green Springs Ranch subdivision), and by meeting the fundamental objectives of El Dorado County's General Plan by directing intensive development to the identified Community Regions and Rural Centers.

**Water Supply.** The comment that there is insufficient water supply per General Plan Policy 5.2.1.9, is responded to in the Response to Comments Document (see Master Response 5: Water Supply and Service and Responses B11-5 and B25-98) as well as in the Addendum to the Final EIR dated February 3, 2017 (see Issue 1. Water Availability). In short, County staff and EID have determined that there is sufficient public water available to serve the project.

**Oak Woodlands.** Master Response 4: Oak Woodlands in the Response to Comments document provides a lengthy and detailed response to the commenter's opinion that oak tree retention standards cannot be met per 7.4.4.4 Option A. The County has determined that with the implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-2a and BIO-2b (as revised), the project is consistent with General Plan Policy 7.4.4.4 and Public Resources Code Section 21083.4 and thereby concludes that the impacts to oak woodlands are reduced to a less-than-significant level.

**Road Safety.** The comment asks "Is road *safety* in the RR prioritized above *capacity*? (Policy 5.1.3.2)" The potential effects of the project on all roads and intersections in the vicinity of the project were evaluated in Draft EIR Section IV.C, Transportation and Circulation in regards to whether the project would increase hazards and reduce safety or result in inadequate emergency access. In regards to potential effects on public safety and emergency access, the EIR found that the effects of the project would be less-than-significant with implementation of Mitigation Measure TRANS-9. Additionally, the issue of roadway safety was discussed in Master Response 3: Traffic Safety along Green Valley Road in the Response to Comments Document, and emergency medical response also was discussed as Issue 2 in the Addendum to the Final EIR.

**School Capacity.** In response to the commenter's opinion that local elementary and high schools do not have capacity for the project, the potential effects of the project on schools were evaluated in the Draft EIR Section IV.M, Public Services. The analysis found that although new students would be

generated with implementation of the project, with the payment of school impact fees to the Rescue Union School District and El Dorado Union High School District, as required, there would be no significant impact on schools and therefore, no mitigation measures are required. Additionally outreach to schools was addressed as Issue 3 in the Addendum to the Final EIR.

**Public Transportation.** A response to the comment regarding lack of access to public transportation was provided in Response B12-3 in the Response to Comments Document. As stated in November 2015:

There is currently no public transit service in the immediate project vicinity. El Dorado County Transit Authority (EDCTA) provides public transportation within El Dorado County. EDCTA operates the Cameron Park local bus route which runs between Missouri Flat Transfer Center (in Placerville) and Cameron Park. This route runs Monday through Friday and starting at 8:00 a.m. at Missouri Flat Transfer Center and has additional service every 3 hours. The last stop is 6:50 p.m. at Missouri Flat Transfer Center. The closest stop (#15) is located at Cambridge Road and Green Valley Road, approximately 3 miles east of the project site. The Cameron Park bus route also stops that the Cambridge Park & Ride which is discussed below.

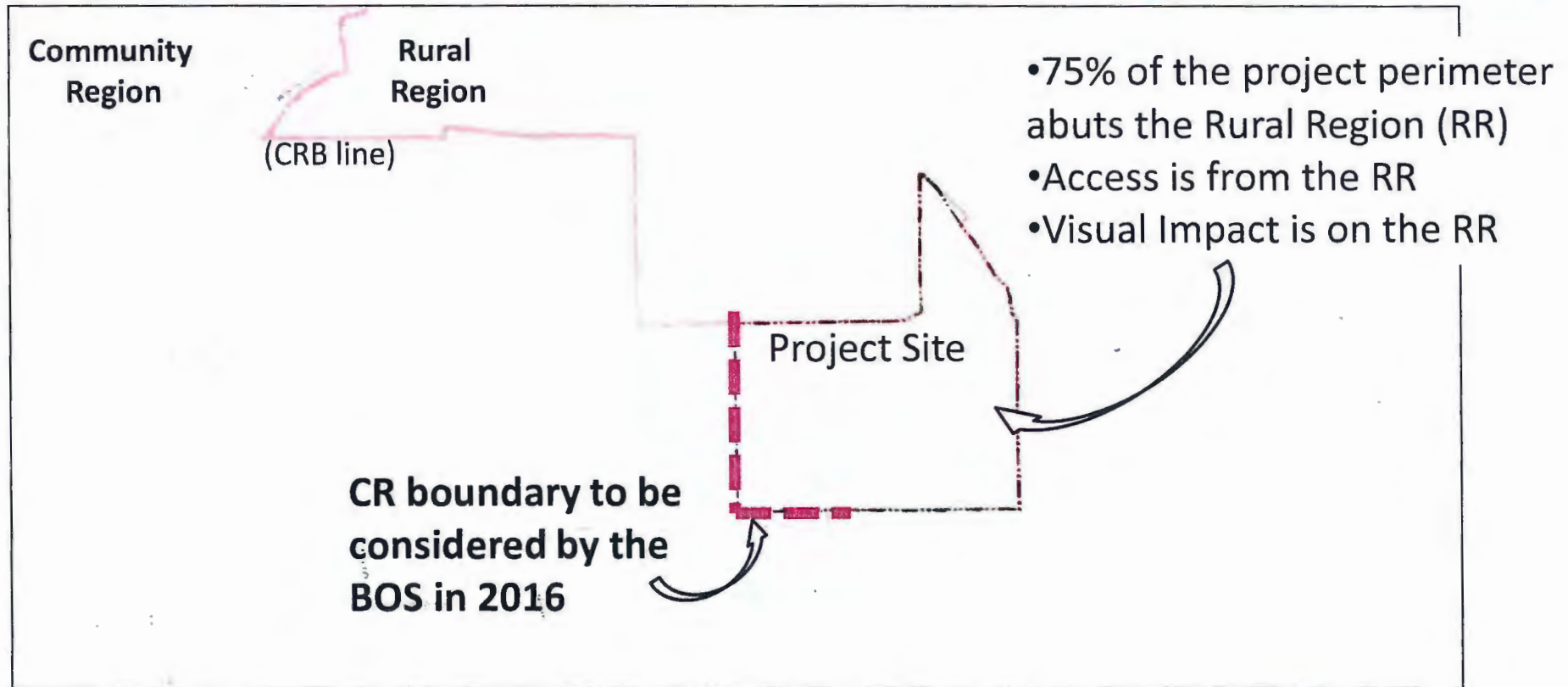
The EDCTA also operates services between Placerville and Downtown Sacramento. The closest station for this route is located at the Cambridge Park & Ride located on Cambridge Road just north of SR-50, approximately 6.3 miles southeast of the project site. The El Dorado Hills Park & Ride is located at the intersection of Post Street and White Rock Road just south of SR-50, approximately 9 miles southwest of the project site. This route stops in El Dorado Hills, Cameron Park (two stops), Shingle Springs, Diamond Springs, and Placerville (two stops), as well as downtown Sacramento.

Additionally, EDCTA operates a Dial-a-Ride service for senior and disabled passengers. The Dial-a-Ride runs Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The project would not block access to public transportation, and no significant impact would result in regards to public transportation.

# HDR is not an entitlement- it's a General Plan Amendment

## General Plan criteria has not been met to change 4 lots into 605



- Is an appropriate density transition provided? (Policy 2.1.1.2) **No.**
- Is the rural character of the area maintained? (Goal 2.2) **No.**
- Is Water Supply sufficient per the Gen Plan? (Policy 5.2.1.9) **No.**
- Can oak tree retention standards be met? (7.4.4.4 Option A) **No.**
- Is road *safety* in the RR prioritized above *capacity*? (Policy 5.1.3.2) **No.**
- Do local elementary and high schools have capacity? (Policy 2.2.5.3) **No.**
- Is there access to public transportation? (2.2.5.3) **No.**