NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF AN
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
FOR THE COYOTE HIGHLANDS SUBDIVISION PROJECT

Project Owner: Coyote Highlands LLC
File Number: 3009 - 74 - 36 - 10CST
Assessors Parcel Number(s):
817-23-006, 817-23-009, 817-23-012, 817-24-002, 825-29-005

As the Lead Agency, the County of Santa Clara will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed Coyote Highlands Subdivision and would like your views regarding the scope and content of the environmental information to be included in the EIR. The EIR may be used by your agency when considering approvals for the project.

A brief description of the proposed project, its site boundary, and a summary of the potential environmental effects are attached.

According to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) the deadline for your response is 30 days after receipt of this notice. However, an earlier response, if possible, would be appreciated. Please identify a contact person and send your response to:

County of Santa Clara Planning Office
Attention: Mark Connolly
County Government Center
70 West Hedding St., 7th Floor, East Wing
San Jose CA 95110
(408) 299-5786

Prepared by:
Mark Connolly, Planner III

Approved by:
Rob Eastwood, Principal Planner, AICP

Signature

Date

Mark Connolly

1/30/12

Signature

Date

1/30/12

Board of Supervisors: Mike Wasserman, George Shirakawa, Dave Cortese, Ken Yeager, Liz Kniss
County Executive: Jeffrey V. Smith
Introduction

The purpose of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is to inform decision-makers and the general public of the environmental effects of a proposed project that an agency may implement or approve. The EIR process is intended to provide information sufficient to (a) evaluate a proposed project and its potential for significant impacts on the environment, (b) to examine methods of reducing adverse (significant) impacts; and (c) to consider alternatives to the project.

The EIR for the proposed project will be prepared and processed in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as amended. In accordance with the requirements of CEQA, the EIR for the Coyote Highlands Subdivision will include the following:

- A summary of the project description, impacts & mitigation measures, and alternatives;
- A project description;
- A description of the existing environmental setting, environmental impacts, and proposed mitigation measures;
- Cumulative Impacts;
- Alternatives to the proposed project; and
- CEQA required environmental consequences, including (a) and significant environmental effects which cannot be avoided if the project is implemented; (b) any significant irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources; (c) the growth inducing impacts of the proposed project; and (d) effects found not to be significant.

Project Location
The project site is located in the east foothills of Santa Clara County near the border of the City of Morgan Hill, at the terminus of Maple Avenue, as shown in Figure 1. The subject site in total encompasses 567 acres of undeveloped hillside, as shown in Figure 2.

Project Description
The proposed project entails a 25-lot Subdivision of a 567-acre site. The project would result in the creation of 25 residential lots ranging in size from approximately 3.45 to 10.76 acres, as well as several open space lots. The Open Space area would encompass 508 acres and the developable area would be 59 acres. Access to most of the new lots would be from an extension of Maple Avenue, except for Lot 1, which would be accessed from Carey Avenue. The Maple Avenue extension will be offered for dedication as an emergency vehicle access route joining Oak Canyon Drive in Morgan Hill.

Future residences would be served by individual septic systems, and a new communal water supply system would be installed using new groundwater wells.

Potential Environmental Effects of the Project
The EIR will identify the significant environmental effects anticipated to result from implementation of the proposed project. Primary environmental topics addressed will include:

A. Aesthetics and Visual Resources

The project site is currently an undeveloped hillside that is largely surrounded by single-family residential development. The project would involve developing the site with 25 residential lots, which could alter the appearance of the site once the residences and associated roads and infrastructure are constructed. The project is located in a Santa Clara Valley
B. *Air Quality and Greenhouse Gases*

The proposal would involve fuel combustion emissions during both construction of the subdivision improvements, as well as construction of future residences. The EIR will evaluate construction emissions from grading and building activities, as well as fugitive dust emissions during earthmoving operations. The EIR will also include analysis of the long-term emissions resulting from occupancy of the residences.

C. *Biological Resources*

The project site is known to contain endangered species habitat for a variety of special status species, including the California Red Legged Frog and California Tiger Salamander. A Biology report has been submitted and will be peer reviewed as part of the EIR. The EIR will describe special status, threatened, and endangered species and their habitat on the project site. The EIR will describe biological resources impacts that are anticipated to occur as a result of the proposed project. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted.

D. *Cultural Resources*

Based on past investigations prepared for the project site, it appears that there is potential for archaeological resources to occur within the project area. The EIR will present findings of a cultural resources evaluation that identifies and describes how the proposed project would impact cultural resources (both historical and prehistorical). Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted.

E. *Geology, Soils and Seismicity*

Geologic maps of the project site show that the site contains seismic hazard zones and identified hazards (faults, landslides etc.). The EIR will describe geology, seismology and soil conditions of the site with respect to the proposed subdivision. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted.

F. *Hydrology & Water Quality*

The EIR will describe hydrology and storm water quality impacts, based upon preliminary grading plans for the proposed roadway and improvements and future development of each lot. The groundwater availability for future wells to support the proposed 25 lots will also be addressed. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted.

G. *Land Use, Planning and Recreation*

The EIR will address the project’s compatibility with the County’s General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and any other planning or policy documents that relate to development of the subject property. The EIR will also address the project’s compatibility with the surrounding single-family residential development. The EIR will analyze potential project effects on existing recreational uses in the project vicinity.

H. *Noise*

The EIR will assess the potential noise impacts of project construction. The analysis in the
EIR will quantify the potential noise levels generated by project construction activities, describe how such noise would attenuate to the nearest sensitive receptors, assess project noise impacts, and address any mitigation measures that could reduce any significant noise impacts of the project.

I. Public Services

The EIR will include an analysis of whether local police, fire, and other emergency services have the capacity to serve the 25 proposed residences at the project site, and whether the proposed roadway will provide adequate access for these services. The EIR will also analyze the capacity of the local school system to absorb the demand likely to be created by the addition of 25 new residences on this site. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts as warranted.

J. Traffic and Transportation

The proposed residential development would add additional traffic trips to Maple Avenue. The EIR will include analysis of the traffic study submitted by the applicant and will assess the amount of traffic that would be generated by the development. Also, the impacts of this new traffic on roadway segments and intersections in the area will be analyzed. Where appropriate and possible, the EIR will include mitigation measures to reduce the significant project impacts on traffic and transportation to a less than significant level.

K. Utilities

The EIR will include analysis of any adverse impacts generated by providing water, electricity and other utilities. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts as appropriate.

In addition to the primary issues listed above, the EIR will also include discussion of the following areas:

L. Alternatives
The EIR will describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the proposed project, including the No Project Alternative.

M. Growth Inducing Impacts
The EIR will discuss methods by which the proposed project will directly or indirectly induce economic, population, or housing growth.

N. Cumulative Impacts
The EIR will include a Cumulative Impacts section which will address the significant cumulative impacts of the proposed project when considered with past, present, and probable future projects producing related or cumulative impacts, or projections contained in applicable land use documents of regional or area-wide conditions contributing to the cumulative impact.
Community Scoping Meeting for an
Environmental Impact Report (EIR):

Coyote Highlands Subdivision

Project Owner: Coyote Highlands LLC
File Number: 3009 - 74 - 36 - 10CST
Assessors Parcel Number(s): 817-23-006 817-23-009 817-23-012 817-24-002, 825-29-005

The County of Santa Clara is hosting a community “scoping” meeting to accept public comments regarding the preparation of an EIR.

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Future residences would be served by individual septic systems, and a new communal water supply system would be installed using new groundwater wells.

An EIR will be prepared to assess the potential environmental impacts related to this proposed project. You are invited to attend this meeting for the purpose of assisting County staff in identifying potential impacts that need to be addressed in the EIR. As part of this scoping process, the County is particularly interested in asking for specific feedback regarding viewpoints used to evaluate visual impacts from the subdivision. Oral and written comments are welcome. If you have any questions, please call Mark Connolly at 408-299-5786, or via e-mail at: mark.connolly@pln.sccgov.org. The date and time is below, followed by a map of the location.
Date: Thursday February 16, 2012
Time: 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Location: El Toro Room at the Community and Cultural Center
17000 Monterey Road
Morgan Hill, CA 95037