

Meeting Date: October 01, 2025
Agenda Item No. 04
Batch No. 07
Distributed: September 29, 2025

From: [Kaylarch](#)
To: [Lawson-Remer, Terra](#); [Anderson, Joel](#); [MontgomerySteppe, Monica](#); [Desmond, Jim](#); [Aguirre, Paloma x](#); [Potter, Andrew](#); [FGG, Public Comment](#); [Worlie, Paul](#); [LaVelle, Kyle](#); [Hayes, Andrew](#); [Yuen, Jeffrey](#); [Henson, Eric](#); [McDonald, Hunter](#); [Lynch, Dahvia](#); [Harbert, Amy](#); [Slovick, Mark](#); [efhgtr@gmail.com](#); [Lorenzana, Bianca](#); [Montagne, Sarah](#); [mcquead@rsf-fire.org](#); [ashcraft@rsf-fire.org](#); [hillgren@rsf-fire.org](#); [malin@rsf-fire.org](#); [stine@rsf-fire.org](#); [Nicoletti, Vince](#)
Subject: [External] The proposed development in Harmony Grove is unsafe and should not be approved.
Date: Friday, September 26, 2025 7:42:18 PM

To: County staff and elected representatives:

I became a California licensed Landscape Architect in 1989. Prior to this I was a Biological Technician in the USFS. I am professionally trained and experienced to defend and serve intelligent planning and for this reason I oppose the development in Harmony Grove. Several years ago the project was found to be unsafe and was sent back to the developer to overcome the hazards. It is still unsafe.

Rather than leapfrog developments for the wealthy, please fund and support housing development for the very low income citizens of San Diego county. SRO's used to be the best economical solution for housing people with limited finances. Manufactured tiny homes with stick-built and air-conditioned facilities with showers/bathrooms, kitchens and gathering facilities are another more recent way to house needy people.

Sincerely,

Katherine "Kay" Stewart,
CA Landscape Architect #2967

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: [Stephanie RUMSEY](#)
To: [Lawson-Remer, Terra](#); [Anderson, Joel](#); [MontgomerySteppe, Monica](#); [Desmond, Jim](#); [Aquirre, Paloma x](#); [Potter, Andrew](#); [FGG, Public Comment](#); [Worlie, Paul](#); [LaVelle, Kyle](#); [Hayes, Andrew](#); [Yuen, Jeffrey](#); [Henson, Eric](#); [McDonald, Hunter](#); [Lynch, Dahvia](#); [Harbert, Amy](#); [Slovick, Mark](#); [efhtc@gmail.com](#); [Lorenzana, Bianca](#); [Montagne, Sarah](#); [mcquead@rsf-fire.org](#); [ashcraft@rsf-fire.org](#); [hillgren@rsf-fire.org](#); [malin@rsf-fire.org](#); [stine@rsf-fire.org](#); [Nicoletti, Vince](#)
Subject: [External] Please help protect us: No to HGVS w/o a secondary egress
Date: Friday, September 26, 2025 8:20:25 PM

Dear Supervisor Lawson-Remer and Supervisor Desmond,

Please help protect us.

Fires around the country have only gotten bigger. They move faster and are more difficult to put out.

1. I wanted to include [THIS short clip](#) from the 2014 Cocos fire. Gridlock & chaos occurred here 11 years ago.

We experienced something similar during the June 12th Claro fire. San Elijo Rd was a parking lot. I spent 30 min trying to get back to my home in Elfin Forest to be ready to evaluate early. The fire department was stuck in the same traffic.

2. I also wanted to share this PBS documentary [Inside the LA Firestorm: the REAL story](#) after the LA fires this January. Very compelling... not about getting trapped due to lack of egress.... but about how the nature of fires has changed.

What was OK in 2018 is not OK for 2025. Please. We aren't going to be able to get out of here.

Sincerely,
Stephanie Rumsey

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [Stephanie RUMSEY](#)
To: [FGG, Public Comment](#)
Subject: [External] Please help protect us: No to HGVS w/o a secondary egress
Date: Friday, September 26, 2025 9:26:43 PM

Dear San Diego County Board of Supervisors,

Please help protect us.

Fires around the country have only gotten bigger. They move faster and are more difficult to put out.

1. I wanted to include [THIS short clip](#) from the 2014 Cocos fire.
Gridlock & chaos occurred here 11 years ago.

We experienced something similar during the June 12th, 2025 Claro fire. San Elijo Rd was a parking lot. I spent 30 min trying to get back to my home in Elfin Forest to be ready to evaluate early. The fire department was stuck in the same traffic.

2. I also wanted to share this PBS documentary [Inside the LA Firestorm: the REAL story](#) after the LA fires in Jan.

Very compelling... about how the nature of fires has changed. What might have seemed OK in 2018, we know is not safe in 2025. Fire departments cannot handle fires with this type of ember cast.

Please. We aren't going to be able to get out of here.

Sincerely,
Stephanie Rumsey

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [Laurel Maguire](#)
To: [Lawson-Remer, Terra](#); [Anderson, Joel](#); [MontgomerySteppe, Monica](#); [Desmond, Jim](#); [Aguirre, Paloma x](#); [Potter, Andrew](#); [FGG, Public Comment](#); [Worlie, Paul](#); [LaVelle, Kyle](#); [Hayes, Andrew](#); [Yuen, Jeffrey](#); [Henson, Eric](#); [McDonald, Hunter](#); [Lynch, Dahvia](#); [Harbert, Amy](#); [Slovick, Mark](#); [efhgte@gmail.com](#); [Lorenzana, Bianca](#); [Montagne, Sarah](#); [mcquead@rsf-fire.org](#); [ashcraft@rsf-fire.org](#); [hillgren@rsf-fire.org](#); [malin@rsf-fire.org](#); [stine@rsf-fire.org](#); [Nicoletti, Vince](#)
Subject: [External] Prioritize Safety
Date: Friday, September 26, 2025 10:19:22 PM

Dear Members of the San Diego County Board of Supervisors,

I am writing to you as a concerned resident and environmentalist regarding the proposed Harmony Grove Village South project. I urge you to reject this development, as it epitomizes urban sprawl that threatens to undo all the hard work the County has done on its Climate Action Plan and its efforts to limit sprawl and encourage infill.

The project is not served by transit and will increase the county's Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) as it is significantly higher than the County-wide average. And it will generate more GHGs than it is claiming it can offset. In addition, during the next wildfire, the potential for gridlock will pose a serious risk to the nearby communities. Independent experts have shown that, due to inadequate secondary egress, it poses a serious entrapment risk. This is absolutely unacceptable in view of the recent Palisades and Altadena evacuation catastrophes.

Increased VMT and driving distances will lead to greater carbon emissions, more sprawl and further contribute to climate change. The community itself is mostly rural, known for its wildlife, open space reserves, and natural beauty. We must protect areas like this from irresponsible developments that prioritize profit over public safety and ecological integrity.

Additionally, the site is listed as a Priority Conservation Area in the Multiple Species Conservation Area (MSCP) North draft. It is directly adjacent to lands supporting state and federal endangered least Bell's vireo, federally threatened coastal California gnatcatcher, the endangered Southwestern Willow flycatcher and near the Escondido Creek which supports the proposed federal threatened status Southwestern pond turtle.

The position of this project within the wildland urban interface (WUI) flies in the face of a wide body of research that shows that these are the communities that suffer the most losses during wildfire events. This community has already experienced the devastating effects of wildfires numerous times over the years (most recently, the Cocos Fire), with limited evacuation infrastructure.

I strongly urge you to consider the long-term implications of approving the Harmony Grove Village South project.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Crystal Karges](#)
To: [Lawson-Remer, Terra](#)
Cc: [Anderson, Joel](#); [MontgomerySteppe, Monica](#); [Desmond, Jim](#); [Aguirre, Paloma x](#); [Potter, Andrew](#); [FGG, Public Comment](#); [Worlie, Paul](#); [Yuen, Jeffrey](#); [McDonald, Hunter](#); [Henson, Eric](#); [LaVelle, Kyle](#); [Hayes, Andrew](#); [Harbert, Amy](#); [Lynch, Dahvia](#); [Slovick, Mark](#); [efhgtc@gmail.com](#); [Lorenzana, Bianca](#); [Montagne, Sarah](#)
Subject: [External] Please Vote NO on HGVS — Our Families Deserve Safety, Not Sprawl
Date: Saturday, September 27, 2025 4:35:01 PM

Dear Chairperson Lawson-Remer, Board and Staff:

Please enter this letter into the public record for the October 1st HGVS agenda item.

I'm writing as a concerned mother and county resident whose family has long cherished the wildlands of Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove as a vital reprieve from urban life. In the coming days, you'll be asked to reconsider the Harmony Grove Village South (HGVS) project—a large subdivision proposed in a box canyon within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, surrounded by roughly 15,000 acres of highly flammable open space—a proposal with a long history of community opposition, environmental concerns, and legal failure.

This is not just about land. It's about lives, safety, and justice.

The prior Board's approval was overturned by the Court of Appeal for CEQA violations—especially around wildfire evacuation, greenhouse gas emissions, and the lack of a required secondary access road. Since then, our wildfire reality has only grown more dire. Proceeding as if conditions were unchanged since 2015 is out of step with current risks.

The project's lack of a legally compliant secondary egress is a clear violation of state fire code. The County's own safety guidance—"always have two ways out"—is contradicted by a plan that proceeds without one. Approving HGVS under these conditions would set a harmful precedent that weakens life-safety standards countywide. Public documents suggest external pressure to relax secondary-access standards. We respectfully request strict adherence to current fire code and evacuation best practices. No developer should receive an exemption from laws designed to protect lives.

As a mother of five, the idea of being trapped in a fire-prone canyon with only one road in and out is terrifying. Our communities have already endured devastating wildfires. Approving a project that fails to meet updated fire codes and places hundreds more families in harm's way would be unconscionable.

This is also about place. HGVS would sit beside one of San Diego's most cherished and fragile ecosystems. Building here threatens the Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve, surrounding habitat, and the endangered wildlife that depend on intact corridors. Our children deserve access to nature, clean air, and safe communities—not an overbuilt fire trap where escape routes are inadequate and open space is erased.

We are not anti-housing. We are pro-safety, pro-community, and pro-accountability. Responsible housing does not mean bypassing legal requirements, silencing community voices, or exposing residents to preventable danger.

To approve this project without enforcing current fire codes or requiring a basic standard of safety would not only be a failure of public duty—it would set a dangerous precedent of

administrative overreach and arbitrary decision-making, inviting further litigation and unnecessary taxpayer expense.

- **Chair Lawson-Remer:** Thank you for your leadership on climate and community safety—please continue it here by rejecting unsafe sprawl.

- **Supervisor Anderson (D2):** Inland communities you represent have suffered deeply from wildfire; your vote carries profound moral weight.

- **Supervisor Montgomery Steppe (D4):** Equity includes rural, working families; please stand for fire-safe, lawful planning that doesn't sacrifice them.

- **Supervisor Desmond (D5):** This project sits in your district. You've spoken for responsible growth—this is the line to draw.

- **Supervisor Aguirre (D1):** As a newer voice on the Board, your stewardship sets countywide precedent; safeguarding public safety and open space here matters everywhere.

We understand development pressures are real. But they cannot come at the expense of human lives, legal precedent, and the environmental legacy we leave our children.

We urge you to stand with residents, environmental advocates, and fire safety experts — not billionaire developers — and vote NO on the re-approval of HGVS. The stakes are simply too high to ignore.

This isn't a new project. It's a rebranded version of one that was already found illegal in court — and it still fails to meet legal, safety, and ethical standards.

Please vote NO on HGVS. Let's not gamble with lives, open space, or the integrity of our planning process. Let's protect what's left—for all our children, and for generations to come.

Respectfully,

Crystal Karges
Escondido Resident

From: [Doral Fredericks](#)
To: [Lawson-Remer, Terra](#); [Anderson, Joel](#); [MontgomerySteppe, Monica](#); [Desmond, Jim](#); [Aguirre, Paloma x](#); [Potter, Andrew](#); [FGG, Public Comment](#); [Worlie, Paul](#); [LaVelle, Kyle](#); [Hayes, Andrew](#); [Yuen, Jeffrey](#); [Henson, Eric](#); [McDonald, Hunter](#); [Lynch, Dahvia](#); [Harbert, Amy](#); [Slovick, Mark](#); [efhgtc@gmail.com](#); [Lorenzana, Bianca](#); [Montagne, Sarah](#); [mcquead@rsf-fire.org](#); [ashcraft@rsf-fire.org](#); [hillgren@rsf-fire.org](#); [malin@rsf-fire.org](#); [stine@rsf-fire.org](#); [Nicoletti, Vince](#)
Subject: [External] HGVS = Gridlock, Danger, and Lost Lives
Date: Saturday, September 27, 2025 4:47:53 PM

Dear Chair Lawson-Remer and Members of the Board,

I survived the Cocos Fire unscathed. Not all my neighbors fared as well. The terror of that event is still with me. The uncertainty of knowing whether or not our house survived. We saw the fire on the hill and it moved very fast down towards Harmony Grove Spiritualists and the area where HGV South is being proposed. There is nothing scarier than seeing your neighbors wrestle livestock trailers and unruly animals to try to get them out in time. The evacuation took at least 2 hours. And that was before any developments in the community.

As a community, we're well aware of the fire danger. We keep "go bags" at the ready. We load our trailers every time there is a red flag warning. Some of my neighbors are third generation residents and have seen the many fires (once a decade) that have ravaged this little valley. We've lost hundreds of homes over the years and even suffered fatalities. We are all prepared for the next wildfire. What we are not prepared for, however, is the entrapment that is in store for us with a community that continues to accept (and support) additional housing but without any major improvements in the evacuation infrastructure.

We barely made it out during the Cocos Fire and that was a few hundred cars and dozens of livestock trailers. If HGV South is built, the total number of vehicles evacuating during the next fire will number in the thousands. Nationally renowned evacuation experts have analyzed the area and estimate it will take 7 hours to evacuate, but the fire arrives within an hour or two. This can only mean entrapment.

We cannot gamble with human lives just because a billionaire from Colorado throws a bunch of money at our fire district, our unions and our elected officials. Please vote no on Harmony Grove Village South or at least require a secondary access. Put community safety ahead of development interests.

Thank you for your leadership and for protecting the people you represent.

Sincerely,

Doral Fredericks

From: [Stephanie Pincetti](#)
To: [Lawson-Remer, Terra](#); [Anderson, Joel](#); [MontgomerySteppe, Monica](#); [Desmond, Jim](#); [Aguirre, Paloma x](#); [Potter, Andrew](#); [FGG, Public Comment](#); [Worlie, Paul](#); [LaVelle, Kyle](#); [Hayes, Andrew](#); [Yuen, Jeffrey](#); [Henson, Eric](#); [McDonald, Hunter](#); [Lynch, Dahvia](#); [Harbert, Amy](#); [Slovick, Mark](#); [efhtc@gmail.com](#); [Lorenzana, Bianca](#); [Montagne, Sarah](#); [mcquead@rsf-fire.org](#); [ashcraft@rsf-fire.org](#); [hillgren@rsf-fire.org](#); [malin@rsf-fire.org](#); [stine@rsf-fire.org](#); [Nicoletti, Vince](#)
Subject: [External] HARMONY GROVE VILLAGE SOUTH
Date: Saturday, September 27, 2025 5:00:53 PM

In historic San Diego style, Marcel Arsenault, has hired twice convicted felon, Jesus Cardenas to work behind the scenes to get this project approved and this “coalition” is nothing more than a front.

I grew up in San Diego and have watched its beautiful back country be overwhelmed by crude land development, often permitted by greasing various hands. Its seems this is continuing today.

Apparently, Mr. Arsenault, the Colorado billionaire has reatesda fake coalition (with a canceled non-profit status) and tries to pass it off as legitimate “advocates” . He has thrown nlarge sums of money, \$170,000 to be exact, into local political campaigns and the union to get them on board, funneling money to both sides of the aisle. He has offered a “voluntary contribution” \$850,000 to the Fire District to get their support and more egregiously has hired fire consultants who have “convinced” the fire district and the County to ignore fire safety and waive fire safety requirements for this deathtrap of a project.

Since the project’s first approval in 2018, we’ve seen increasingly violent and destructive wildfires. More than 50,000 homes have been destroyed around the state, millions of acres burned and upwards of 1,000 deaths. In 2020, the project’s approvals were fully rescinded and now the Board has another shot at voting for it. Would you not insist on protecting this community based on the latest standards? Require secondary access, require better evacuation infrastructure?

When the next fire comes through our little valley (statistically once every 7-10 years), will you be the reason people are entrapped as they were in Paradise and Pacific Palisades? Or will your conscience be clear that you did the right thing?

Respectfully,

Stephanie Pincetti

[Redacted signature block]

[Redacted address block]

[Redacted contact information]