

**CLERK OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
EXHIBIT/DOCUMENT LOG**

MEETING DATE & AGENDA NO. 10/01/2025 # 04

STAFF DOCUMENTS (Numerical)

No.	Presented by:	Description:
1.	Staff	22-page PowerPoint Presentation
2.		
3.		
4.		

PUBLIC DOCUMENTS (Alphabetical)

No.	Presented by:	Description:
A.	Lisa Ross, Ron Askeland, Michael King	4-page PowerPoint Presentation
B.	Jon Becker, David Kovach, Mike Huff	168- page document
C.		
D.		
E.		

**OFFICIAL RECORD
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
County of San Diego**

Exhibit No. 1

Meeting Date: 10/01/2025 Agenda No. 04

Presented by: Staff



County of San Diego

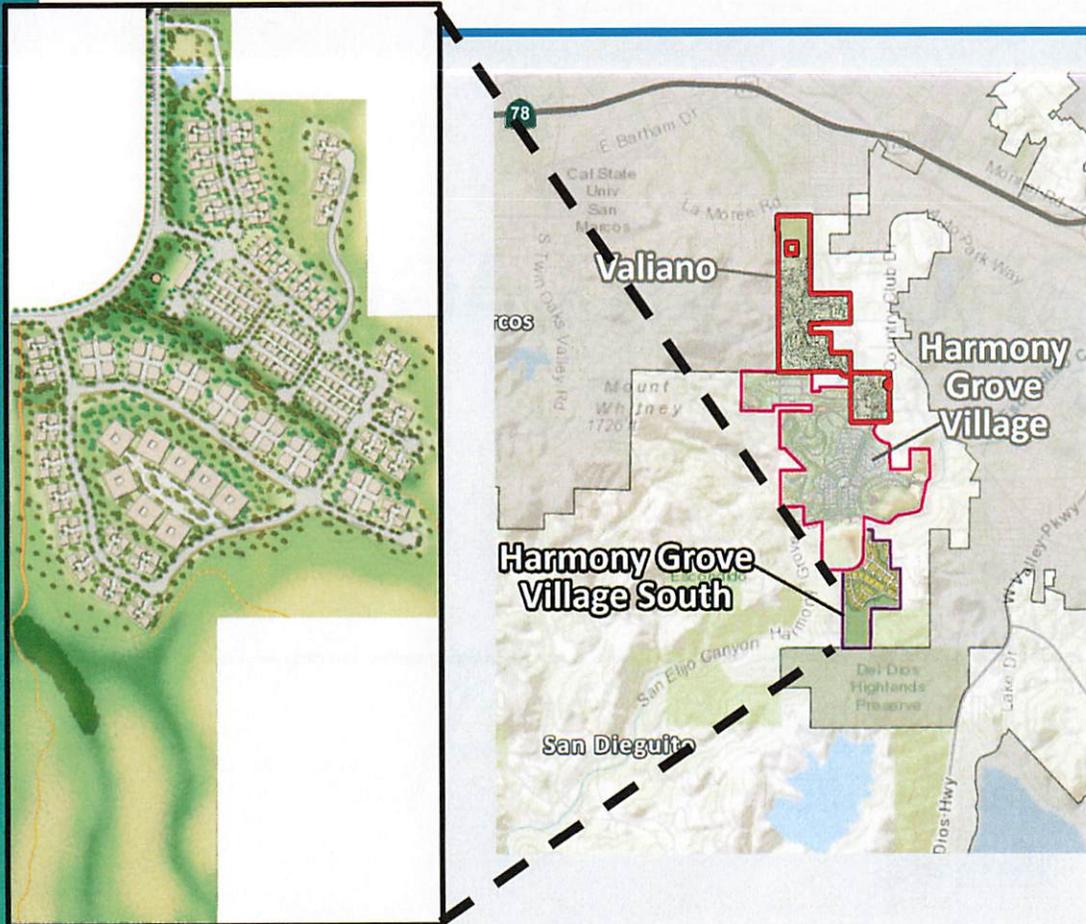
HARMONY GROVE VILLAGE SOUTH PROJECT

Board of Supervisors

October 1, 2025

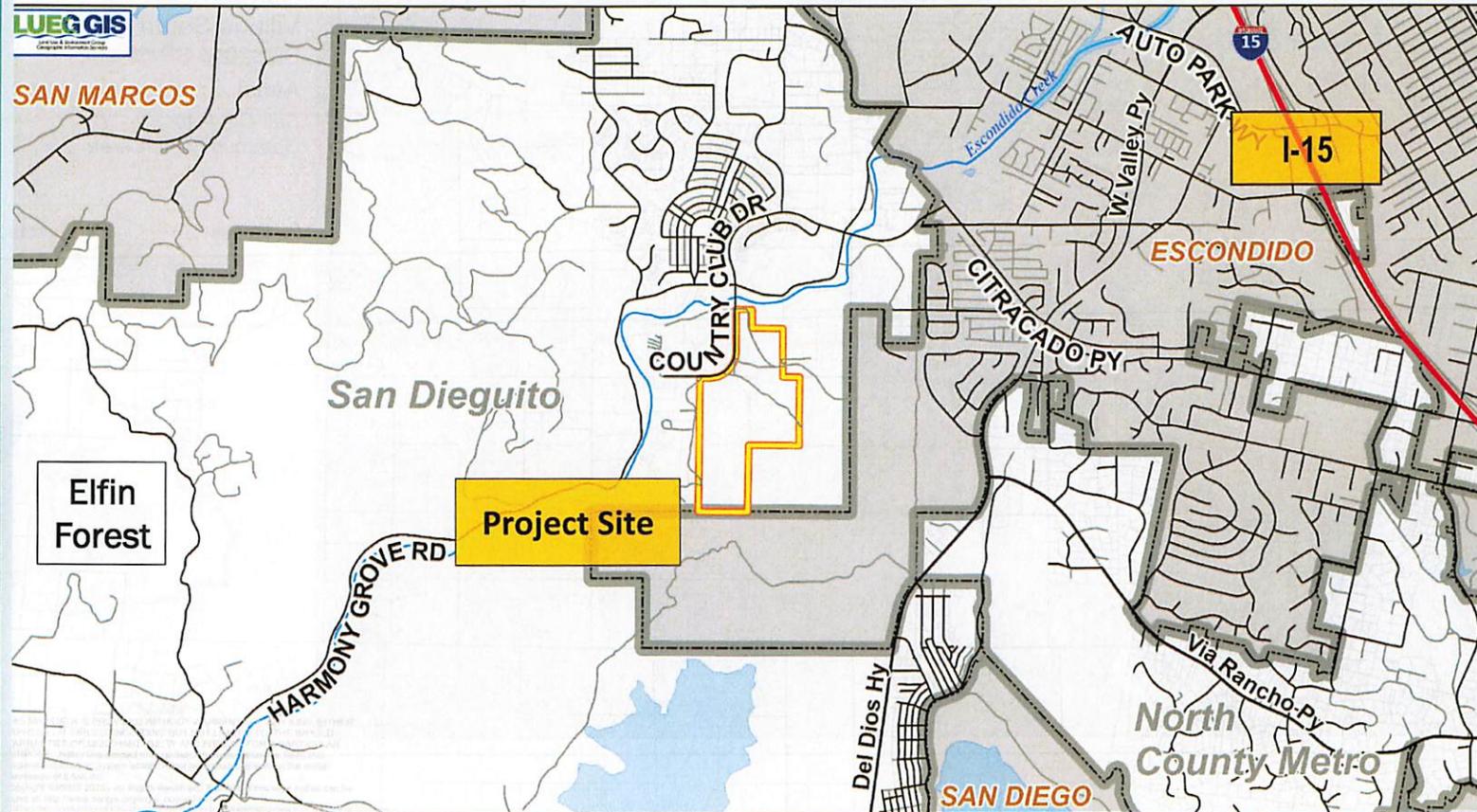
Item #4

Project Description

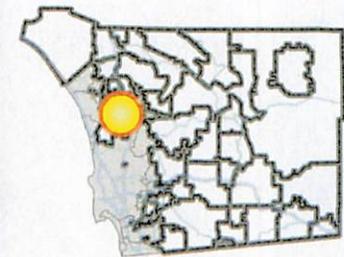


- 453 dwelling units
 - Three Single-Family housing types
 - Two Multi-Family housing types
 - 10% of total housing to be affordable
- 5,000 square feet of commercial / civic use
- 2 miles of multi-use trails
- 34.8 acres of biological open space
- 4 acres of public and private parks

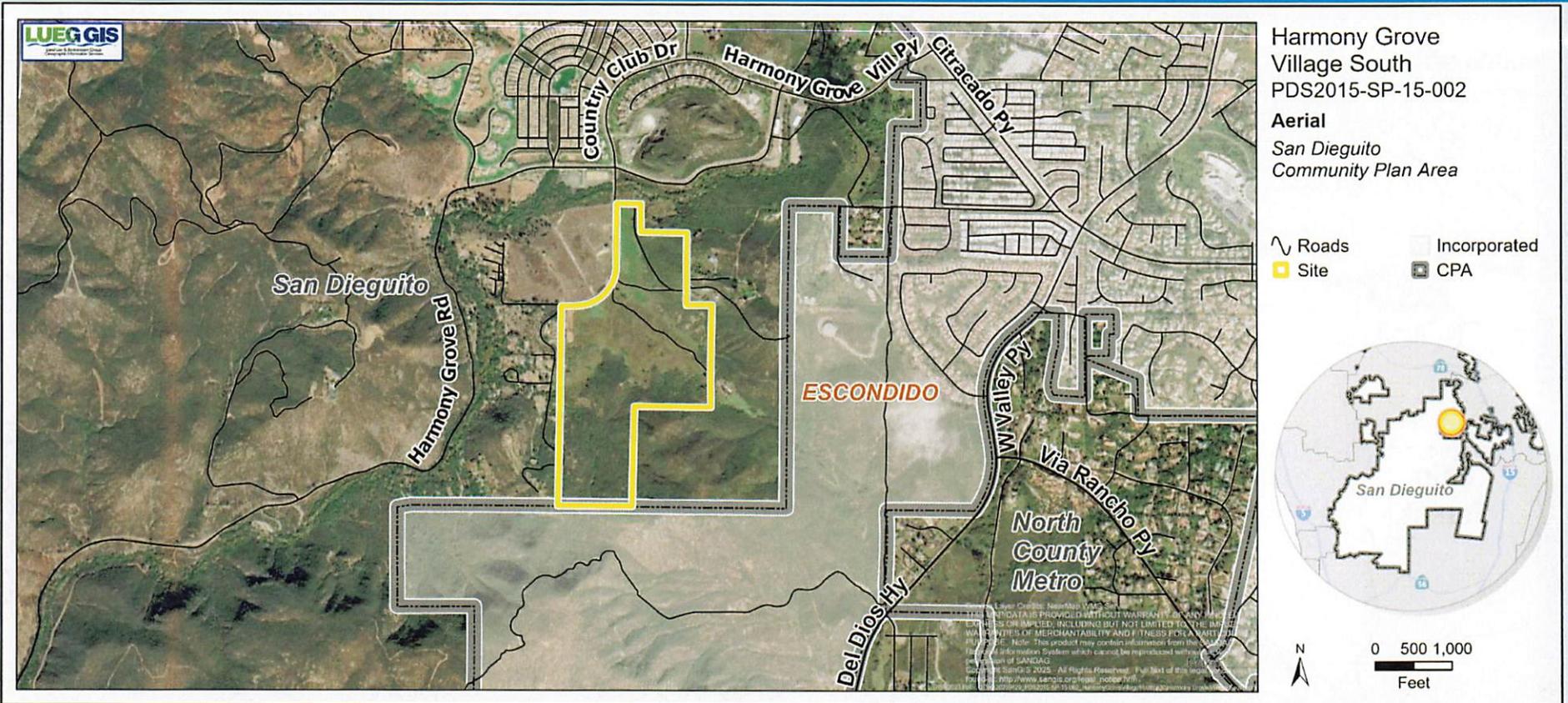
Vicinity Map



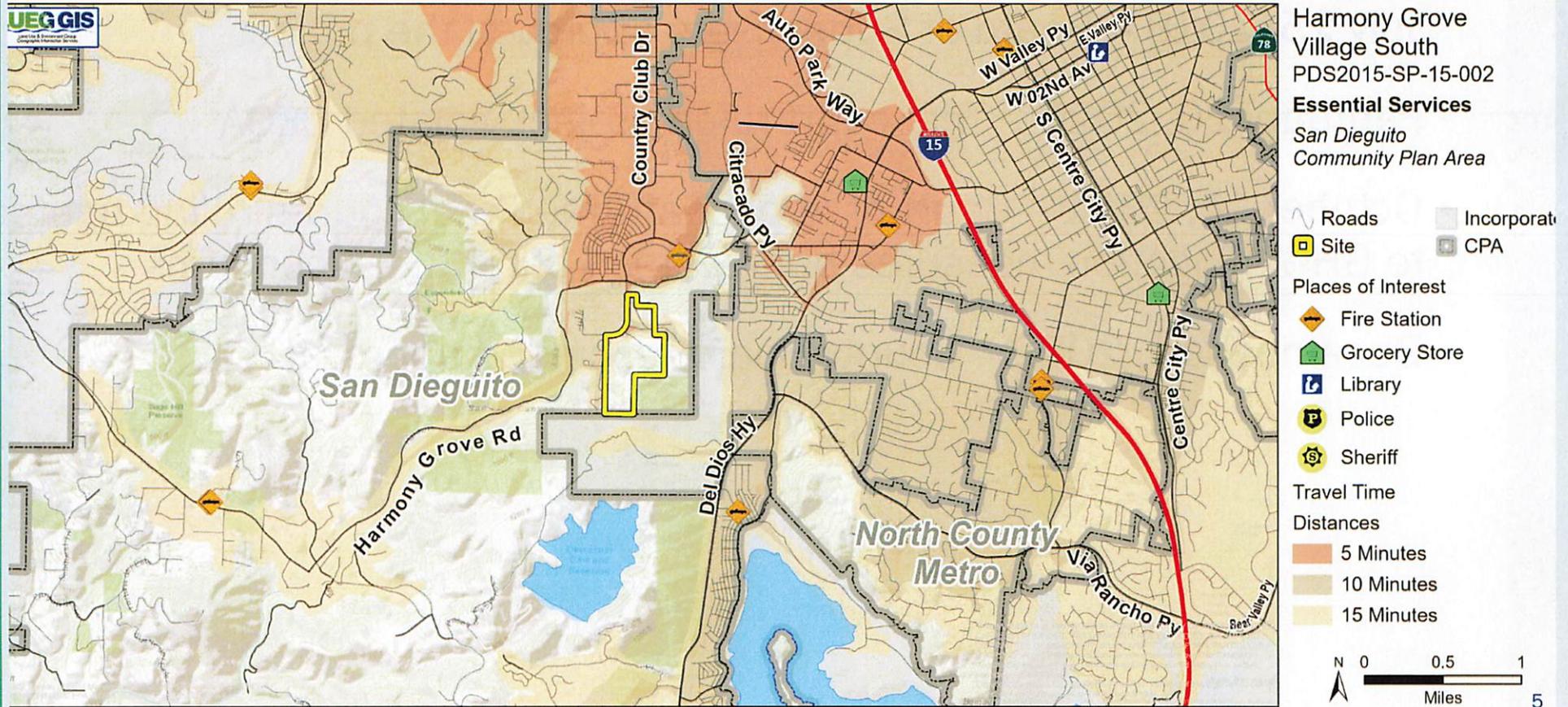
Harmony Grove
Village South
PDS2015-SP-15-002
Vicinity
San Dieguito
Community Plan Area



Project Site



Project Location



Project Background

- **July 25, 2018** – Board of Supervisors approved the project
- **February 20, 2020** – Trial court ruled project violated CEQA
- **October 14, 2021** – Court of Appeal affirmed trial court's ruling related to GHG mitigation measures but reversed other CEQA concerns
- **December 14, 2022** – County Board rescinded approval

Res Judicata and Board Discretion

- “Res judicata” - a matter already judged and settled by a court
 - Once a court makes a final decision on an issue or fact, it cannot be relitigated
- Board of Supervisors has discretion and can:
 - Approve the Project
 - Deny the Project; or
 - Request additional information or analysis

CEQA Issues

- Green House Gas Mitigation Measure
- Affordable Housing Condition



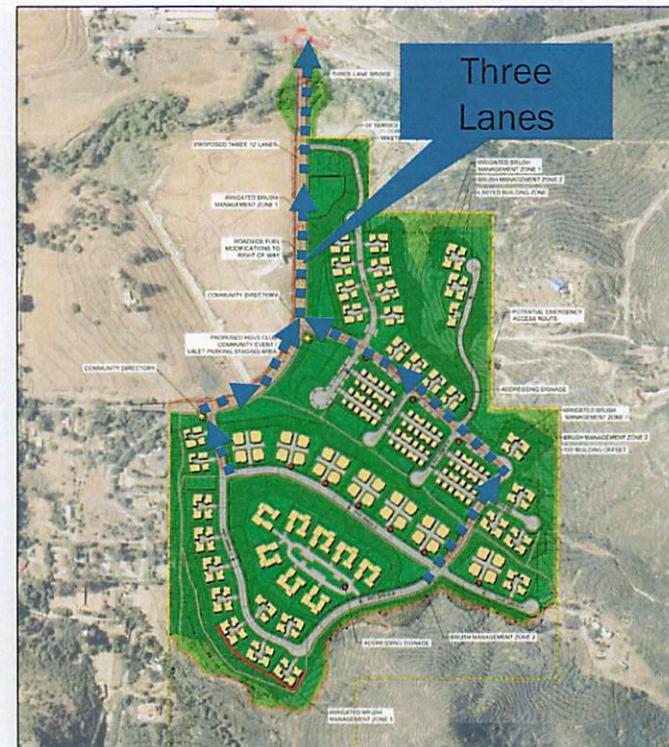
Fire Safety

- Lack of secondary access
- Evacuation during the 2014 Cocos Fire
- Updates to guidelines relative to wildfire
- Potential changed conditions to an off-site dirt road (Johnston Road)
- New projects proposed for the north end of Country Club Drive and one on Harmony Grove Village Parkway



Fire Safety

- Third Travel Lane for Country Club Drive from intersection of Harmony Grove Road to southern most project entrance
- Exceeds parking requirements and includes parking management to reduce the potential for roadway obstructions for emergency vehicles
- Provide additional fuel modification
- Ignition resistant construction within Fire Mitigation Zones
- Increased water supply and fire hydrants
- Community Building/Club House (temporary refuge/staging area)



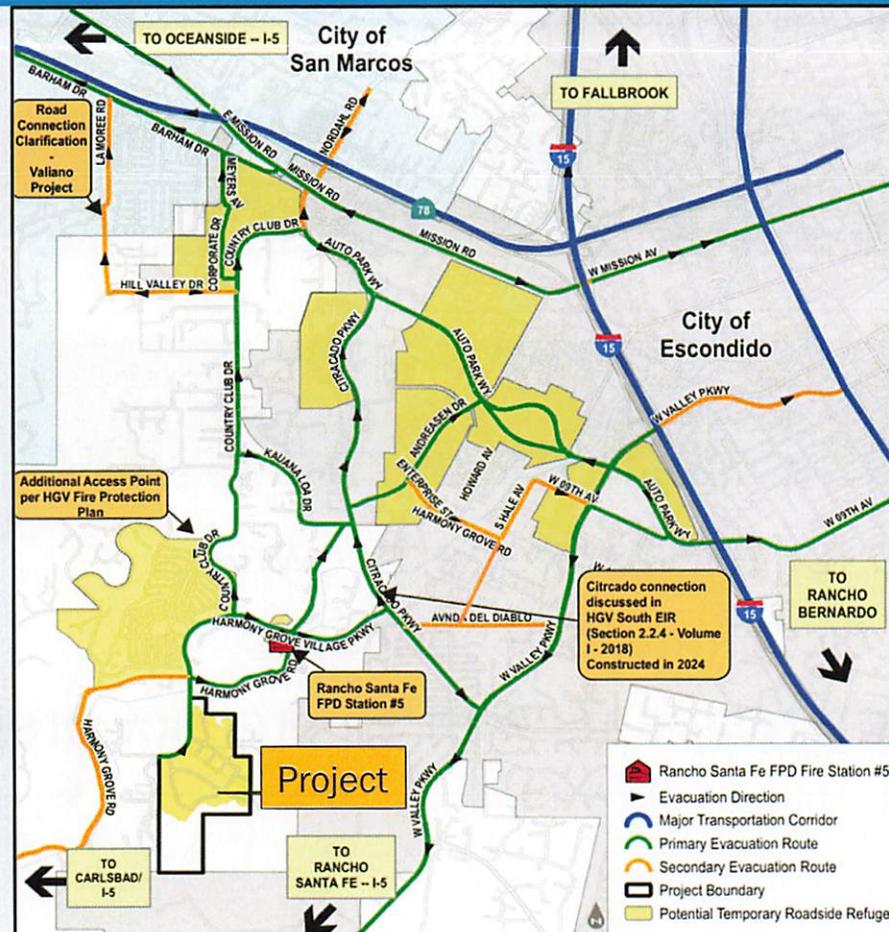
Emergency Evacuation

2014 Cocos Fire

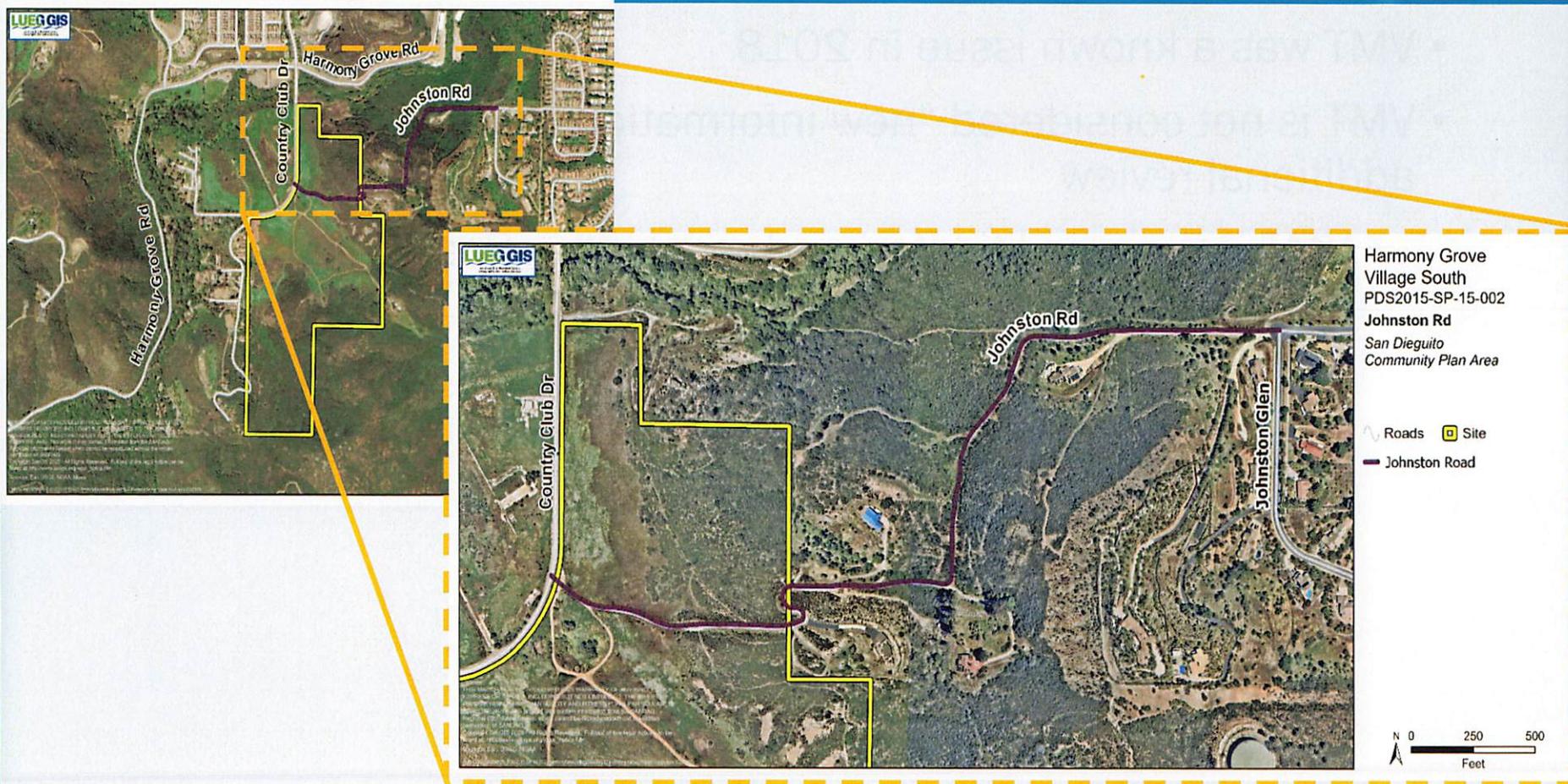
Project Specific Emergency Evacuation Plans

- Developed for future property owners
- Response to community concerns
- Assist future residents with emergency preparedness

Fire Safety



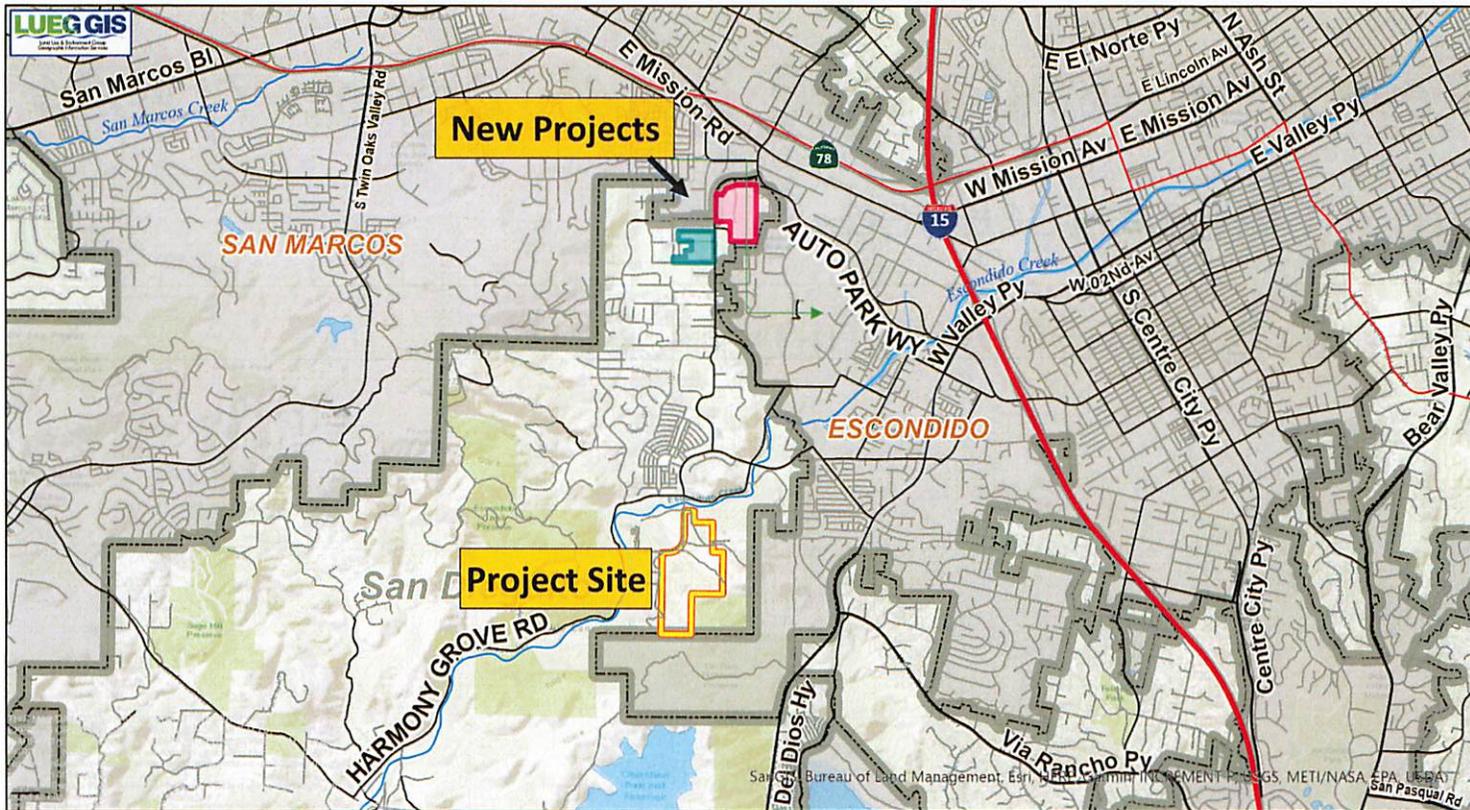
Johnston Road Connection



Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)

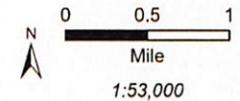
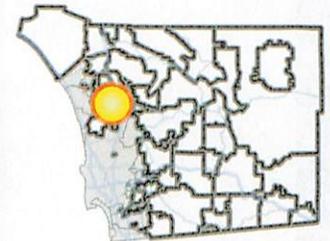
- VMT was a known issue in 2018
- VMT is not considered “new information” that would require additional review
 - VMT issue was litigated and resolved – Res Judicata applies

New Projects in the Area



Harmony Grove Village South
 PDS2015-SP-15-002
 Vicinity
 San Dieguito Community Plan Area

- Roads
- Site
- Parcels
- Incorporated
- CPA
- Seguro Battery Energy Storage
- Solaris Business Park



San Diego Bureau of Land Management, Esri, Intel, Community Development, LUEGGIS, METI/NASA, EPA, USGS, San Pasqual Rd

CEQA Public Review

- Public Review Period August 22, 2014 – October 7, 2024
- 80 comment letters received
- Responses to comments within Final EIR

CPG and PC Recommendations

Community Planning Group

- On April 5, 2018, the San Dieguito CPG recommended denial of the project by a vote of 11-0-0-2.
- On October 7, 2024, the San Dieguito CPG provided a letter recommending denial.

Planning Commission

- On August 22, 2025, the Planning Commission recommended approval of the project by a vote of 5-0-1-0-0.

Actions to Consider

Option 1

- Approve the Project and Certify the EIR

Option 2

- Deny the Project

Option 3

- Request additional staff analysis and return to the Board

Recommendations

Approve

- CEQA Findings and Certify EIR
- Resolution Approving the General Plan Amendment
- Resolution Approving Specific Plan
- Resolution Approving Conditions for Vesting Tentative Map
- Ordinance Changing Zoning Classification of Certain Property the Elfin Forest-Harmony Grove Subarea and San Dieguito Community Plan
- Site Plan
- Major Use Permit



County of San Diego

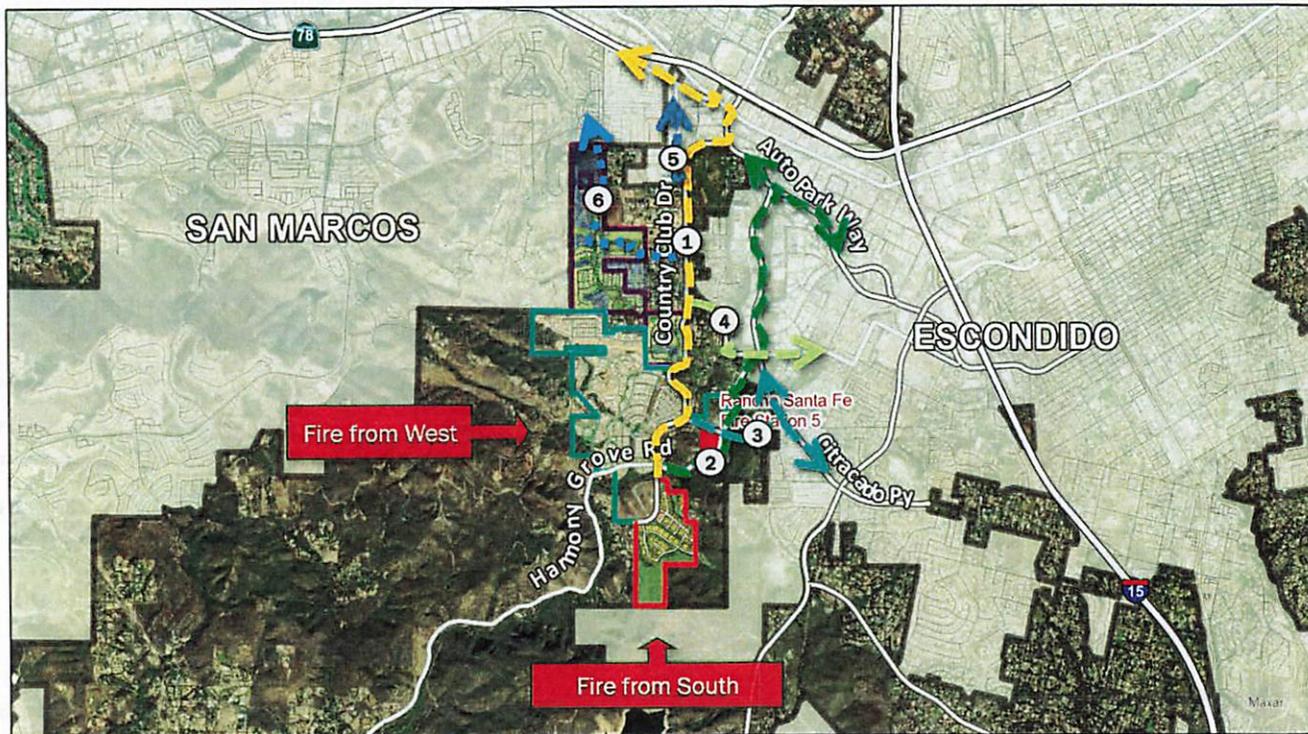
HARMONY GROVE VILLAGE SOUTH PROJECT

Board of Supervisors

October 1, 2025

Item #4

Evacuation Scenarios

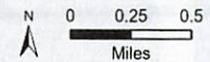


Harmony Grove,
Harmony Grove Village
& Valiano

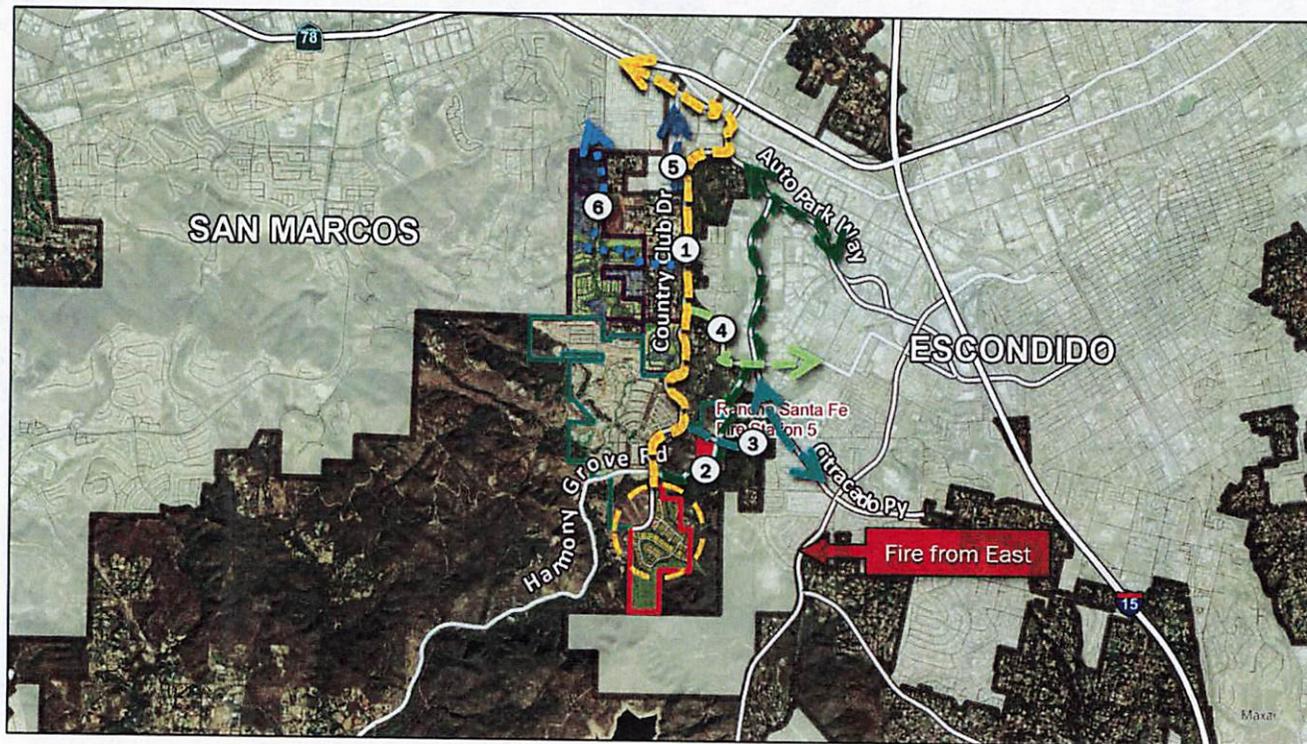
Evacuation Routes

PROJECT SITES

-  Valiano
-  Harmony Grove
-  Harmony Grove South
-  Incorporated Area
-  Shelter in place



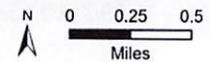
Evacuation Scenarios



Harmony Grove, Harmony Grove Village & Valiano
Evacuation Routes

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-  Valiano
-  Harmony Grove
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**OFFICIAL RECORD
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
County of San Diego**

Exhibit No. A

Meeting Date: 10/01/2025 Agenda No. 04

Presented by: Lisa Ross, Ron Askeland, Michael King

SIERRA CLUB SAN DIEGO

- Over 12,000 members in San Diego & Imperial Counties
- Oldest and largest environmental organization in the country
- Defending everyone's right to a healthy world

Lisa Ross, Chapter Chair
Ron Askeland, Conservation Chair
Michael King, Chapter Organizer North County
Peter Andersen, Conservation Vice-Chair



**SIERRA
CLUB**

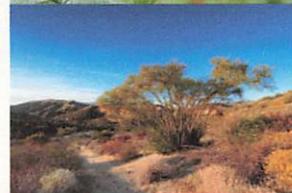
SAN DIEGO CHAPTER

Explore, Enjoy &
Protect The
Planet

1

Sierra Club Opposition

- 01 New EIR required
- 02 Not Infill
- 03 Endangered Species threatened
- 04 Board discretion to disapprove



2

Deny The Project



- Deny the Harmony Grove Village South project as proposed.
- Require a new Environmental Impact Report (EIR) with Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) analysis under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and SB 743.
- Direct staff to prepare findings of denial citing inconsistency with the Climate Action Plan and wildfire evacuation constraints.
- Engage CalFire and the California Attorney General's Office regarding wildfire safety and legal risk.

3

New EIR required

- Court of Appeal mandate
- 2024 County Climate Action Plan conflict
- Recent legal changes



4

Project Not Infill

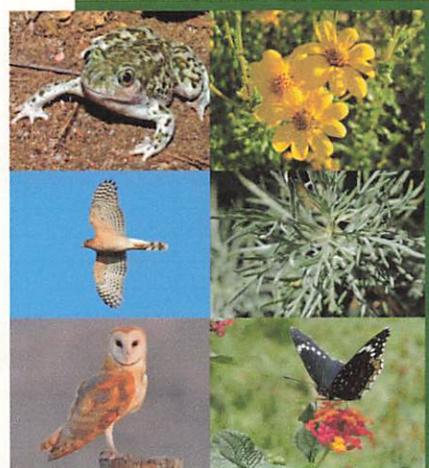
- Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) not consistent with SB 743
- Analysis of VMT required
- Fire risk inconsistent with State guidelines



5

Endangered Habitat Threatened

- Priority Conservation area adjacent
- Plants, Reptiles, Migratory Birds, Amphibians, Bats, Butterflies
- Mitigation unworkable



6

Approval Discretionary

- Attorney General Wildfire "Best Practices"
- Invalidated VMT thresholds
- Sprawl development



OFFICIAL RECORD
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
County of San Diego

Exhibit No. B

Meeting Date: 10/01/2025 Agenda No. 04

Presented by: Jon Becker, David Korach, Mike Huff

LAW OFFICES

NORTON MOORE & ADAMS

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October 1, 2025

VIA EMAIL ONLY

Honorable Chair Lawson-Remer San
Diego County Board of Supervisors
1600 Pacific Highway,
County of San Diego
San Diego, CA 92123
E-Mail: PublicComment@sdcounty.ca.gov

Re: Board of Supervisors meeting October 1, 2025, Item 4 (HGV South)

Dear Honorable Chairperson Lawson-Remer and Board of Supervisors;

This firm represents RCS-Harmony Partners, LLC (RCS), the developer of a master-planned community commonly known as the "Harmony Grove Village South Project" (Project or HGV South) located within the Harmony Grove Subarea of the San Dieguito Community Plan Area. This letter has been prepared to correct just some of the misstatements in a letter submitted last night by Shute, Mihaly and Weinberg (Law Firm), representing homeowners who live nearby the Project.

First, the Law Firm misinterprets the statement in Fire Chief McQuead's letter, dated September 17, 2025. They contend that he admitted that the Project could and should not be approved today because of the lack of secondary access. However, nothing is further from the truth. Chief McQuead recites what has been consistently said, when a project is submitted for review without secondary access, the Fire Department will determine whether modifications can be made to meet or exceed the intent of the Fire Code. He specifically states (emphasis added):

"addressed how a fire district such as our Fire District can research and apply modifications that meet or exceed the intent of the code. In particular, my comment was intended to apply to a new project coming before our Fire District

today without secondary egress, which our *Fire District would during the review process look at and identify any potential modifications that could mitigate secondary egress.*”

Second, existing case law provides the County Board of Supervisors (Board) with significant discretion when considering whether a proposed development is consistent with its general plan. The courts give great deference to an agency’s determination that a project is consistent with its general plan. The courts consider legislative bodies that adopt general plans as having a “unique competence” to interpret their own policies. (*No Oil, Inc. v. City of Los Angeles* (1987) 196 Cal.App.3d 223, 243 and *Eureka Citizens for Responsible Gov’t v. City of Eureka* (2007) 147 CA4th 357.) The term substantial evidence in this instance means that a determination of general plan consistency will be reversed only if, based on the evidence before the local governing body, “a reasonable person could not have reached the same conclusion.” (*No Oil, Inc. v. City of Los Angeles*, supra, 196 Cal.App.3d 223, at p. 243.)

To set the appropriate context, the Board approved entitlements for the Project and certified its FEIR on July 25, 2018. Included among these entitlements were amendments to the County’s General and Community Plans that changed the designation of the Project site from Semi-Rural to Village, reclassified permitted uses, and made associated changes to the Community Plan to implement the Project. The Project did not result in any changes or amendments to any of the policies of the County’s General Plan, as adopted in 2011; rather, it applied the existing General Plan policies to the Project.

After several years of litigation, the California Court of Appeal, Fourth Appellate District, Division One (“Appellate Court”) determined that because the General Plan’s policies and goals include a compulsory commitment to increase the supply of affordable housing for large-scale residential projects like the Project, the absence of any such affordable housing component is inconsistent and nonconforming to those policies. (*Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Town Council et al. v. County of San Diego and RCS*, 37-2018-00042927 (“Appellate Decision”), page 73.) However, the Appellate Court still found the Project consistent with the Community Plan and SANDAG’s Regional Plan. (Appellate Decision, pages 3 and 67.)

The Project is now conditioned to provide an affordable housing component that will include 10 percent of the project’s total dwelling units as on-site affordable housing. These affordable housing units will be nestled among the Project’s market rate units and will have the same amenities as the market units located nearby. The affordable units will enjoy community gardens, parks, and open space, as well as being located near major job centers

Finally, the trial court explicitly found that the Project was consistent with the County’s General Plan, Community Development Model, and Policy LU 1-4 (expansion of an existing village), *which was not overturned* by the Appellate Decision. The trial court stated:

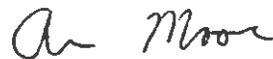
“The Harmony Grove Project is designed to conform to the existing topography, centers development close to Harmony Grove Village to place a greenbelt next to

the Del Dios Preserve will be accommodated by the General Plan's road network and will not result in the reduction of services to other residents. It seeks to preserve the community character by, among other things, by replicating the existing rural, farmhouse style homes and is contiguous with Harmony Grove Village." (Superior Court of California, County of San Diego, Judge Bacal, filed July 21, 2020, trial court decision, pages 6-7)

The County's Planning & Development Services staff conducted a detailed analysis of the project for consistency with the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance and other applicable regulations, policies and ordinances as well as a thorough review of the project's potential impacts on the environment in accordance with CEQA. After PDS's review and analysis, PDS staff recommends certification of the Environmental Impact Report, and approval of the Project, finding it consistent with the General Plan. PDS also recommends approval of the Resolution approving the Vesting Tentative Map PDS2018-TM-5626 which includes those requirements and conditions necessary to ensure that the project is implemented in a manner consistent with State law and County of San Diego regulations. PDS is uniquely qualified to interpret its General Plan and is part of the evidence before the Board today. The County of San Diego (County) Planning Commission also recommended approval and certification of the documents, respectively on August 22, 2025.

The opponents to the Project want the Board to reconsider the County's previous decision to approve the Project, once again asserting the same arguments about the Project's inconsistency with the policies of the General Plan, including the Community Development Model and the Village boundaries of the General Plan that was originally raised in their first lawsuit against the Project. However, they lost those arguments and want nothing more than another bite of the apple. Yet to clear there is substantial evidence in the record for the Board to approve the Project as being consistent with its long-standing goals and policies.

Very truly yours,
NORTON MOORE & ADAMS



Ann Y. Moore

LAW OFFICES

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September 30, 2025

VIA EMAIL ONLY

Honorable Chair Lawson-Remer
San Diego County Board of Supervisors
1600 Pacific Highway,
County of San Diego
San Diego, CA 92123
E-Mail: PublicComment@sdcounty.ca.gov

Re: Board of Supervisors meeting October 1, 2025, Item 4 (HGV South)

Dear Honorable Chairperson Lawson-Remer and Board of Supervisors;

This firm represents RCS-Harmony Partners, LLC (RCS), the developer of a master-planned community commonly known as the "Harmony Grove Village South Project" (Project or HGV South) located within the Harmony Grove Subarea of the San Dieguito Community Plan Area. The County Board of Supervisors (Board) originally approved entitlements for the Project and certified the Project's FEIR (2018 FEIR) on July 25, 2018. After several years of litigation, the Project entitlements and the accompanying revised FEIR (2025 RFEIR) will be reconsidered by the Board, at its Oct 1, 2025, meeting. The County of San Diego Planning Commission recommended approval and certification of the documents, respectively on August 22, 2025.

This correspondence has been prepared to address a video-taped excerpt from a September 17, 2025, community meeting, in which Chief McQuead, when receiving repeated questions, said "today you could not pass that project without secondary." (Chief McQuead is the Fire Chief with the Rancho Santa Fe Fire District (RSFFD), which is the Fire Authority Having Jurisdiction for the Project.) This statement has been taken out of context to support a particular narrative that the Project is not fire safe, which is not based on the record or the Chief's previous statements.

In fact, Chief McQuead was present at the August 22, 2025, Planning Commission hearing, where he provided testimony in response to the Commission's questions regarding the Project. (See August 22, 2025, hearing, beginning at approximately 2 hours, 19 minutes, and continuing to 2 hours, 29 minutes.) It is notable that he did not make a similar statement.

Instead, he discussed the technical team's approach to fire fighting and evacuation. Chief McQuead specifically noted that his predecessor Fire Chief Tony Michel (who reviewed and accepted the Project's Fire Protection Plan, along with numerous other fire experts) when presented "all the facts" on solutions, methods and measures for the Project concluded that the Project met the intent of the Fire Code. In particular Chief McQuead has emphasized that the following improvements are of particular importance:

- A portion of County Club Drive being improved to three lanes, with two lanes for egress and one lane for emergency access;
- Citra ado Parkway having since been improved in 2018 into a four-lane road connecting from West Valley Parkway into the industrial park; and
- HGV bridge built over Escondido Creek, providing options for evacuations into Escondido or even into San Marcos.

Chief McQuead specifically noted that these improvements would benefit the existing residents in addition to Project residents. As the Chief said:

"We're talking about a Project today, but I've got to deal with a fire that's going to happen today...to meet the biggest incident objective, and that is life safety. And that's twofold – that's not only for the fire fighters and the resources that we ordered going into the incident, but it is also the civilians, the residents that are in the pathway of that fire, or any kind of emergency...one of those big things like we said is evacuation...That three-lane road – as an incident commander – keep it simple. Clear direction, move. That's it."

Moreover, secondary access is not "required" when the dead-end road length is exceeded. The Fire Code requires a level of safety, which can be provided by secondary access, or through a detailed and rigorous process of alternative measures. This is exhaustively discussed in the Project's original FEIR and upheld by the California Court of Appeal Fourth Appellate District, Division One. (Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Town Council et al. v. County of San Diego and RCS, 37-2018-00042927, Court of Appeal, Fourth Appellate District (Division One), filed October 14, 2021.)

Chief McQuead was provided the full text of the draft Fire/ Evacuation discussion in the Project's 2025 RFEIR. reviewed it and provided minor comments regarding additional evacuation tools that are available today. At no time did he provide any comments regarding changes to standards or Fire Codes that gave him pause.

Most notably, however, *there has been no change to these code requirements* since the Project was approved. The Project not only complies with all of the code requirements but would actually exceed six of them. The matrix below lists the requirements of the Fire Code in effect in 2018 and in 2023 (current code).

Item	2014 Code	2023 Code	Current Code Compliance	HGV South Requirement
Fire Flow	2,500 gpm	2,500 to 3,000 gpm	Exceeds	2 x 2,500 dual system = 5,000 gpm
Hydrants	350 feet spacing	Same	Exceeds	300 feet spacing
Road Width	24 foot spacing	Same	Exceeds	24 to 36 feet (one extra travel lane)
Turning Radii	28 feet inside edge	Same	Meets	28 feet inside edge
Grade	Max 20%	Same	Meets	Under 20%
CBC Chapter 7A	Apply all construction ignition-resistant requirements	Same	Meets	Applies stringent Chapter 7A
Hose Pull	150 feet	Same	Meets	150 feet
Turnarounds	Required for lanes over 150 feet	Same	Will Meet	Final project layout/interior streets will be processed through Site Plan Review. RSFFPD will review plans for Fire Code conformance
FMZs	100 feet	Same	Exceeds	FMZs include 110 to 200 feet
Response Time	5 minutes	Same	Exceeds	Less than 3 minutes
Dead End Road Length	800 feet (modifications allowed)	Same	Meets	Findings made and affirmed by the Fire Agency Having Jurisdiction (FAHJ)
Parking	52 spaces	Same	Exceeds	7+ times (343)
Gates	Gates allowed	Same	Meets	No gates proposed

A similar finding is made relative to changes to the Fire Code Guidelines addressing modifications to proposals for secondary access in response to dead-end road length. The matrix below provides a simplified version of the discussion detailed on RFEIR pages 8-123 through -125, and again on pages 8-168 through -187. The analyses confirmed that the Project *met* not only the

five criteria identified in the 2010 Code *and* the 2024 Code, but also the additional two administrative clarifications added to the 2024 Code.

Fire Code 2010 Guidelines: 5.7.1 Required Findings for Alternatives to Standards	Yes?	Fire Code 2024 Guidelines: 5.10.3 Required Findings for Alternatives to Standards
Code authorizes fire code official to approve modification with Findings.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Same, Done
1. Special individual reasons make strict letter of the code impracticable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Same, Done "material facts support need for modification" = "individual reasons"
2. Modification complies with intent and purpose of code	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Same, Done "and provides same practical effect"
3. Modification does not lessen health, life, and fire safety standards	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Same, Done
4. Documentation of modification must appear in FPP and in FAHJ files	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Same, Done
5. Map shows proposed location of the mitigation/exception measures	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Same, Done "if applicable"
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6. Identify specific section(s) for modification Done 2018 FPP identified Section 503.1.3, Dead End Road Lengths
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7. Details of the modification or mitigating measure proposed e 2018 FPP "Findings and Mitigation Conclusion." 26 measures combine to provide highly defensible community, offer equivalent egress, and provide contingency planning if site evacuation is deemed unsafe (pp. 36-42)

The inescapable conclusion is that the Project analyses were (and are) consistent with applicable code elements, and in fact, that the Project has been conservatively designed. The technical professionals who authored, reviewed, and ultimately approved the Project Fire Protection Plan and Evacuation Plan had over 500 years of combined professional experience, and ensured that codes would be met and/or exceeded. It is therefore inexplicable that McQuead's statement could be interpreted to mean that **this Project** could not be approved "today." After all, the standards "today" have been subject to detailed review and Project consistency has been confirmed.

Chief McQuead has since provided a letter, dated September 24, 2025, in which he clarifies his earlier statements made at the community meeting. He states his confidence in the fire professionals involved in the original evaluation and references the alternative measures (modifications) that meet or exceed the Fire Code, reiterating that "Our Fire District continues to support the County approved HGVS Fire Protection Plan and Wildland Evacuation." (This letter

is attached as Exhibit 1, and incorporated herein by this reference) He states (emphasis added):

The modifications [CAL FIRE, County Fire Authority and our Fire District] identified and implemented to mitigate secondary egress can enhance our Fire District's ability to better serve and protect both the existing residents and future ones during wildfires, structure fires, medical aids, and swift water rescue.

Regardless, as directly stated by the Court of Appeal the County was entitled to believe its fire officials. The court states(emphases added):

To the extent respondents challenge those [fire protection] measures as inadequate or ineffective mitigation, we conclude the board was entitled to choose to believe the fire officials who signed off on them... [and t]he EIR's conclusion that Project fire safety measures reduce fire hazards to a level of insignificance is supported by substantial evidence, namely the fire-related expert studies. (Appellate Decision, page 55)

And,

“We conclude the EIR’s discussion of evacuation routes and timing satisfies CEQA requirements.” (Appellate Decision, page 51)

As shown in the detailed Project review of fire safety issues and as indicated above, the analyses approved in 2018 are directly relevant to today. The analyses are not outdated. *Current standards are met or exceeded.* Therefore, the use of Chief McQuead’s poorly worded and off the cuff statement cannot erase his more reasoned and thoughtful analysis provided in the past regarding the issue of secondary access. Nor does it take away from the conclusions of the fire professionals that the County justifiably relied on.

Very truly yours,
NORTON MOORE & ADAMS



Ann Y. Moore

Enclosure

EXHIBIT 1



Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District

P.O. Box 410 • 18027 Calle Ambiente • Rancho Santa Fe • California 92067-0410
Tel. (858) 756-5971 • Fax (858) 756-4799

Board of Directors
James Ashcraft, President
John Tanner
Nancy Hillgren
Kevin Barnard
Tucker Stine

Fire Chief
Dave McQuaad

September 24, 2025

Dear CAO Ebony Shelton,

I would like to address any confusion that may have resulted from my response to a question during an Elfin Forest community meeting on September 17, 2025, regarding the Harmony Grove Village South (HGVS) project and the issue of secondary egress. Fire Districts such as our Fire District do address secondary egress for projects that are within our jurisdictional area. Fire Districts such as our Fire District can allow modifications whenever there are practical difficulties involved in carrying out the provision of the County of San Diego Consolidated Fire Code. My comment at the September 17, 2025, community meeting addressed how a fire district such as our Fire District can research and apply modifications that meet or exceed the intent of the code. In particular, my comment was intended to apply to a new project coming before our Fire District today without secondary egress, which our Fire District would during the review process look at and identify any potential modifications that could mitigate secondary egress. My comment was not intended to be directed to the Harmony Grove Village South (HGVS) project as I only became the Fire in Chief in December of 2021, was not involved with the review process in Harmony Grove Village South (HGVS) project. The Elfin Forest community did not come into the jurisdictional control of our Fire District until January of 2017. It is my understanding that prior to January 2016 the Harmony Grove Village South (HGVS) project had been in review and study by the County of San Diego and Cal Fire for several years. I am confident in the collaboration of professionals who represented Cal Fire, County Fire Authority and our Fire District that a thorough review was done and that they after several years of review applied key modifications and accepted the 2018 HGVS Fire Protection Plan and Evacuation using the County of San Diego 2014 Consolidated Fire Code. The modifications they identified and implemented to mitigate secondary egress can enhance our Fire District's ability to better serve and protect both the existing residents and future ones during wildfires, structure fires, medical aids, and swift water rescues.

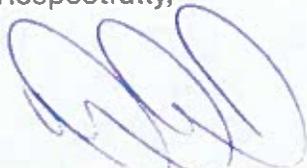
The HGVS Fire Protection Plan and Evacuation Plan as mentioned was reviewed by Cal Fire and the County Fire Authority lead by Fire Chief Tony Mecham and county prevention staff. As stated above with the reorganization of the Rancho Santa Fe Fire

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Protection District and CSA 107 in 2016, the HGVS Fire Protection Plan and Evacuation Plan was also reviewed and accepted by then Fire Chief Tony Michel and Fire Marshal Marlene Donner. I respect Fire Chief Tony Michel's knowledge of the fire code and his ability to articulate the fire code that promoted our mission statement to protect life, property and environment through education, preparedness, prevention and emergency response for those we serve. I endorse and support the modifications he provided to mitigate the issue of no secondary egress of the Harmony Grove Village South project. The County of San Diego 2014 Consolidated Fire Code was used by all three fire agencies to thoroughly review and accept the HGVS Fire Protection Plan and Evacuation Plan. Additionally, the work, insight, knowledge and years of experience between Fire Chief Mecham, Fire Chief Michel and prevention staff was instrumental in identifying key modifications to meet and/or exceed the intent of the code and successfully mitigate the practical difficulties of no secondary egress in the HGVS Fire Protection Plan and Evacuation Plan.

It is my understanding that the project was approved in 2018 and then subject to litigation which resulted in the project being sent back to the County of San Diego to address a couple of issues. Our Fire District requested clear direction from County PDS staff in 2024 to understand our role, if any, regarding the already County approved 2018 HGVS Fire Protection Plan and Evacuation Plan. The Fire District was told in writing and verbally that no additional input was needed regarding fire safety plan as those items were litigated, appealed and upheld by the Appellate Court. However, the County did state that the fire district will be asked to speak to the district's position that the project is safe and complies with all applicable requirements in place at the time the application was deemed completed in 2015. The Fire District did not review or provide any further input to the County based on the direction given. Our Fire District continues to support the County approved HGVS 2018 Fire Protection Plan and Wildland Evacuation.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dave McQuead', written over a horizontal line.

Dave McQuead, Fire Chief
Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District

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September 30, 2025

VIA EMAIL ONLY

Honorable Chair Lawson-Remer San
Diego County Board of Supervisors
1600 Pacific Highway,
County of San Diego
San Diego, CA 92123
E-Mail: PublicComment@sdcounty.ca.gov

Re: Board of Supervisors meeting October 1, 2025, Item 4 (HGV South)

Dear Honorable Chairperson Lawson-Remer and Board of Supervisors;

This firm represents RCS-Harmony Partners, LLC (RCS), the developer of a master-planned community commonly known as the "Harmony Grove Village South Project" (Project or HGV South) located within the Harmony Grove Subarea of the San Dieguito Community Plan Area. The County Board of Supervisors (Board) originally approved entitlements for the Project and certified the Project's FEIR (2018 FEIR) on July 25, 2018. After several years of litigation, the Project entitlements and the accompanying revised FEIR (2025 RFEIR) will be reconsidered by the Board, at its Oct 1, 2025, meeting. The County of San Diego (County) Planning Commission recommended approval and certification of the documents, respectively on August 22, 2025.

The following information (Exhibit 1 herein) has been prepared to address the letters that have been received by the County opposing the Project and the various issues raised regarding the 2025 RFEIR. Most of the letters are largely duplicative of prior comments that were previously submitted during the course of its long history-since its original approval in 2018. For instance, one letter in particular re-submits letters provided by Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Town Council (EFHGTC)-hired

consultants that were provided in response to the original circulation of the Draft EIR in 2017. The vast majority of these commenters provide address issues related to fire safety and/or evacuation, a topic assessed by the California Court of Appeal as wholly settled.

Other letters appropriately respond to the August 2024 recirculation of greenhouse gases (GHG) data provided in Recirculated Subchapter 2.7 and Associated Documents. These have also been previously answered, with no new information being received during the public review period ending on October 7, 2024, through the Planning Commission Hearing date of August 22, 2025.

As fully explained by the County in the 2025 RFEIR, only the issues related to the Recirculated Subchapter 2.7 and Associated Documents are subject to further legal challenge and would be relevant for consideration; all other issues have been resolved. As detailed in the Project Global Responses: Res Judicata and New Information, and Lack of Need for Recirculation, no relevant new information was or has been provided in the numerous comment letters.

For purposes of the record, this additional response (Exhibit 1, attached and incorporated here) is provided to address the concerns raised by many of the letters provided to the Board of Supervisors before the public hearing, even though such matters were beyond the scope of the 2025 RFEIR.

Very truly yours,
NORTON MOORE & ADAMS



Ann Y. Moore

Enclosure

EXHIBIT 1

The letters addressed below were received post August 22. Where issues have already been fully addressed, it is so noted, together with the location of that information. Comments which currently provide slightly new or different statements are addressed below. *No new issues have been raised that in any way would change FEIR conclusions as to impact significance under CEQA.*

Misstatements of Law/Inaccurate Allegations

False statements were made regarding Court of Appeal legal findings, developer redesign of the Project, and supposed irregular payments made by the developer.

Incorrect Statements Regarding Project Safety and Appeal Court Findings. Incorrect statements have been made that the Project “was found to be unsafe and was sent back to the developer to overcome the hazards. Other similar false statements include that “The prior Boards’s approval was overturned by the Court of Appeal for CEQA violations—especially around wildfire evacuation, greenhouse gas emissions [GHG], and the lack of a required secondary access road.”

The statements above are untrue. As addressed in Global Responses: Res Judicata and New Information, as well as 2024 Fire /Evacuation, the only two issues questioned by the Court of Appeal were the GHG mitigation measure under CEQA, and lack of affordable housing relative to General Plan consistency. Both of those issues have been fully resolved. With regard to safety, a mere *sampling* of what the Court of Appeal actually said was (emphases added):

[T]he Project would include a layered fire protection system designed to current codes with ‘site-specific measures that will result in a Project that is less susceptible to wildfire than surrounding landscapes and that would facilitate firefighter and medical aid response as well as project resident evacuation in a wildfire emergency. (Appellate Decision, page 35)

Further, the EIR and its supporting wildfire-related studies do not ignore a scenario where evacuation routes become unusable. The EIR and fire plan evaluate ‘the potential for impairment of a single road by vehicle congestion, condition of terrain, climatic conditions or other factors,’ explaining that the Project adopted an alternative approach to implement fire protection and evacuation measures that meets fire code requirements. Widening Country Club Drive was not the sole method to lessen the risks. The Project clusters residential development so as to minimize proximity of homes to wildland fuels and create a defensible perimeter, and the Project proposes a contingency plan for moving people to temporary refuge locations such as homes or the club house... (Appellate Decision, page 54-55).

We conclude the EIR’s discussion of evacuation routes and timing satisfies CEQA requirements (Appellate Decision, page 51).

Respondents' arguments concerning the analysis of evacuation times are unavailing. The EIR engaged in a calculation of the evacuation time on Country Club Drive using the capacity of vehicles per hour, in keeping with the formula set out in the County's Operational Area Emergency Operations Plan (Appellate Decision, page 53).

Because the safety analyses related to fire and evacuation were found adequate by the Court, the statement that the Project was returned for redesign are unfounded and untrue. No additional response is necessary on that point.

Additional more specific allegations regarding fire and evacuation comments are addressed in this letter under the heading "Fire Safety and Evacuation."

Voluntary Contributions. The statement regarding " 'voluntary contributions' made to the Fire District to get their support" is not factual and untrue. The \$850,000 amount referenced was *not* a voluntary contribution but actually represents a development fee (based on the estimated number of units) that any developer would pay as part of a fee program that is routinely applied to new projects. This amount has not been paid in advance and will be paid only if the Project is approved.

Fire Safety and Evacuation

The majority of comments received state incorrect or misconceived concerns that have proven incorrect after years of discussion by County experts on these topics. The following are the facts that have been litigated and resolved through years of litigation:

- secondary access *is not a mandatory* requirement in response to dead-end road length
- the Project has proven that it *cannot* provide secondary access
- beyond engineering constraints, surrounding homeowners continue to say no to even emergency access across their property (see letter from Coast Law Group)
- the Project complies with or exceeds all relevant current fire code requirements
- projected evacuation times have been addressed in the Evacuation Plan and confirmed by a third- party expert (Rohde) versus statements from a geologist from Utah who had not visited the site or surroundings prior to providing his estimates of evacuation timing
- the Project would improve both Country Club Drive (CCD)/Auto Park Way as well as CCD/Harmony Grove Road (HGR) intersections proving the statement false that "Country Club Drive would funnel traffic toward a 'limited -capacity intersection network'"
- CCD, HGR, and HGV Parkway are or would be widened with maintained and irrigated landscaping and therefore are not "narrow, vegetation-lined two-lane collectors"
- the Project is a fire-hardened master planned community consisting of fire hardened homes surrounded by a "sea" of fire-hardened, irrigated and maintained fuel modification zones (FMZs) and is not analogous or equivalent to only some "fire-hardened" homes that are typically isolated or surrounded by older and *not* fire-hardened homes

- the Project area is not at all similar to areas burned in the Camp, Pacific Palisades, Altadena, or Maui fires (and therefore would not be subject to the same effects)
- the Project's location has been clearly identified as within a VHFHSZ , and appropriately addressed through application of Chapter 7A and other design features that have been reviewed and accepted by fire agencies
- location within a VHFHSZ indicates hazard as opposed to risk, or potential impacts
- the Project site has been clearly identified as within a wildland urban interface (WUI); and appropriately analyzed as such in the EIR
- the Project is not commercial in nature, nor would it site structures “on the top of steep hills” or in particularly rough topography
- the potential for increased human-caused ignitions has been previously and adequately addressed
- the Project is a new compact, fire-hardened community with irrigated FMZs that cannot be compared to less dense development that has been characterized as leading to increased wildfire ignitions
- the Project is not located with a “bowl”
- the Project has thoroughly addressed large animal evacuation and has addressed such evacuations even though large animals will not be allowed in this development

Although unrelated to the focus of Project recirculation, each of these issues was extensively addressed and clarified in 2018 responses to comments and/or Global Response: 2024 Fire / Evacuation, as well as in individual responses to comments as appropriate that are posted to the County Project website. These include not only the comments received during public review ending on October 7 during GHG recirculation, but also additional late comments filed through January 2025. *Most recently*, these issues were addressed in the letter to the Board addressing the letters received or comments made August 19 through 22, 2025, immediately prior to and during the Planning Commission hearing.

Attorney General's Guidelines. Specifically related to the Attorney General's Guidelines, note that the FEIR Global Response: 2024 Fire / Evacuation addressed the Attorney General Guidelines in full. In terms of their intended use the Attorney General Guidelines state (emphasis added):

This document does not impose additional requirements on local governments or alter any applicable laws or regulations. Rather, it is intended to provide guidance on some of the issues, alternatives, and mitigation measures that should be considered during the environmental review process (AG Guidance Document, Introduction page 2).

As explained in the global response, the Guidelines ***are in fact guidelines, they are not requirements.*** Local decision-making agencies also determine what is acceptable for evacuation plan content and it varies by jurisdiction (RFEIR page 8-174). The AG's best practices are meant to be “guidance” designed to help lead agencies to comply with CEQA when considering projects

in wildfire-prone areas. In any event, San Diego County has been far ahead of the curve in terms of these requirements for almost two decades. The County's locally relevant policies and guidelines provide the best practices for evaluating and mitigating wildfire exposure and risk as applicable in the Project context. Please refer to Global Response: 2024 Fire / Evacuation, which discusses the AG Guidelines.

In other words, this document has no legal effect. Instead, the Appellate Court, the final arbitrator of the legal adequacy of such matters, determined that the 2018 FEIR was CEQA-compliant concerning wildfire-related impacts. Therefore, this information is not material or significant, and *res judicata* applies to this comment. In addition, recirculation under CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5 is not required. For the sake of discussion, even if the AG Guidelines were given the same weight as the law (which is not the case), *res judicata* would still apply. The same issues that were unsuccessfully raised in the previous lawsuit cannot be raised again, by using the AG Guidance Document as a pretext for doing so. This would allow the same parties in the last litigation to reassert the same CEQA issues about the same project involving the same FEIR and the same findings based solely on a guidance document.

Most importantly, as explained below, the AG Guidance Document does not raise any issues that have not already been considered and analyzed in the 2018 FEIR. Although the guidance is in no way binding, the Project's fire-related analyses are consistent with it.

The Guidance document calls out mitigation considerations to apply to building design and defensible space, which would reduce likelihood of fires within projects, as well as the risk of them spreading beyond Project boundaries. In fact, the buffer concept developed by CAL Fire had the original mission of protecting open space and keeping fires from spreading into wildlands. This includes clustered development and substantial buffers. As described in the point-by-point analysis of the Guidance in Global Response: 2024 Fire / Evacuation, the Project is consistent with the Guidance, and in fact proposes measures above and beyond what is recommended. It is also noted that over certain densities, ignitions go down. Anecdotally, the clustered HGV project has been inhabited since 2015. No wildfires are known to have started there. This is borne out by Syphard et al. 2007:

...it appears that when human population density and development reach a certain threshold density, ignitions decline, and this is likely the result of diminished and highly fragmented open space with fuels insufficient to sustain fire. In addition, above a certain population threshold, fire suppression resources are likely to be more concentrated in the WUI.

The Project resembles these characteristics and is therefore unlikely to result in increased fire frequency.

Some commenters contend, as previously stated in their arguments against the 2018 FEIR, that the density of this Project increases the fire risk. Now, these same opponents are basing the same

arguments on “extensive research done on California fire structure loss.” They incorrectly contend that closely spaced homes are at the most risk; potential for new construction, landscaping, and fuel breaks promote flammable invasive grass growth; absence of viable protection if evacuation fails; potential for additional homes to “overwhelm emergency services;” that the Project proposes updates to “a single lane bridge” in place of potential secondary access; that congestion experienced from Citracado to Del Dios in the morning, or an accident on I-15 can back up Citracado to Harmony Grove and that is a concern for trying to get out during evacuations; that up to five hour evacuations may occur in San Elijo Hills even with the “benefit of wide roads with multiple lanes;” and that “a lot more new businesses with potential hazardous materials” have been added to the area. A statement is also made that the Project barely met “the 2018 standards.” A final related note is concern over a phrase reported as made at the Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Town Council community meeting on September 17 by a “Deputy Chief” that “you better get used to sheltering in place because evacuation is not likely to be safe.” These concerns are briefly addressed here.

Closely spaced homes and promotion of invasive grass growth. Regarding closely spaced homes, it should be understood that closely spaced homes like those in the Palisades wildfire in January 2025 are indeed more likely to result in home-to-home ignitions. ***This is due to the vulnerability of those structures that were not built to ignition resistant standards and do not include interior sprinklers.*** However, most of the accepted research acknowledges that higher density, clustered buildings built to the ignition-resistant standards like the Project, that is required in fire hazard severity zones, with defensible space, result in extremely low incidents of damage and are recommended by the Governor’s Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (formerly California Office of Research and Planning), as noted in their Fire Hazard Planning Technical Advisory. The clustered pattern allows for a larger agricultural buffer (or green spaces and fuel modification zones) “between the development and wildlands, requires less fire suppression resources, and is easier to defend” (Moritz and Butsic 2020). Further, the California Attorney General’s Office in their Wildfire Planning Guidance state (emphasis added):

Project Density: Project density influences how likely a fire is to start or spread, and how likely it is that the development and its occupants will be in danger when a fire starts. Local governments should strive to increase housing density and consolidate design.

Concerns over the growth of flammable invasive grass species following development ***do not apply*** to HGV South as all disturbed areas would be converted to non-vegetation land covers or would be part of actively maintained landscapes and fuel modification zones (FMZs), which would not enable establishment and proliferation of invasive grasses. Project implementation would result in a substantially **less flammable** vegetative setting than currently exists.

As shown on FEIR Table 1-1, *Project Landscape Palette*, the only relevant plants (Cucamonga brome, Tomcat clover, and small fescue) in a non-irrigated area would be used for short-term pad

stabilization following grading (which would, in and of itself, remove potentially flammable vegetation). ***The Project's fuel modification buffers would be in place prior to grading and would present a buffer between wildland areas and the graded pads during the period from pad creation to build out.*** Following implementation, the developed footprint of the Project would consist of either fire-hardened structures, or irrigated areas, with the Project surrounded by substantial fuel management zones. Just a few relevant passages are provided here from the Fire Protection Plan (FPP). As stated on pages 38 and 49, respectively, of the FPP:

Landscaping would be inspected annually and maintained on an ongoing basis. Plan and landscape review would be by Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District's [RSFFPD's] Fire Prevention Specialist/Urban Forester. This would assure that the use of highly flammable species is prohibited and that appropriate plant densities would be maintained.

Plants used in the fuel modification areas or landscapes will include drought-tolerant, fire resistive trees, shrubs, and groundcovers. The plantings will be consistent with RSFFPD's Suggested Plant List for Defensible Space (Appendix I). The intent of the list is to provide examples of plants that are less prone to ignite or spread flames to other vegetation and combustible structures during a wildfire.

The conclusion, as stated on page 55 of the FPP is (emphasis added): "The requirements in this document meet or exceed fire safety, building design elements, ***fuel management/modification, and landscaping recommendations*** of the applicable codes."

Viable Protection if Evacuation Fails. The commenters set up scenarios that are not assumed by the emergency agencies responsible for evacuation and protecting life during wildfires. They state, for example, that "there are no U.S. population-level SIP [shelter in place] standards for WUI fires, and no operational evidence that thousands of residents could survive entrapment inside standard homes." First, absence of a specific standard does not mean that a package of carefully compiled features will fail to provide a safe haven. The statement is immaterial to the reality of analysis. RSFFPD established the first designated Shelter in Place communities and they have been tested by wildfire (e.g., 2007 Witch Creek Fire) and performed as designed with virtually no structural damage. HGV South follows the design and fire protection features and ***actually exceeds them in some key areas*** so that it, too, could offer the contingency option of on-site, temporary refuge if considered safer than evacuation. However, like the five shelter in place communities, HGV South would prioritize evacuation. Second, the commenters throw out a red herring, stating that community members "could not survive entrapment inside standard homes." The fire professionals working on this Project agree that that is not a good strategy. Sheltering inside older community homes, however, ***is not*** what is proposed by the Project, ***or*** by the RSFFPD evacuation plans. Rather, if a fire is moving too fast or suddenly shifts direction and evacuation is judged unsafe, people with "standard" homes are directed to refuge locations identified in existing plans. It is assumed that Harmony Grove residents will shelter at HGV South (should the Project be built),

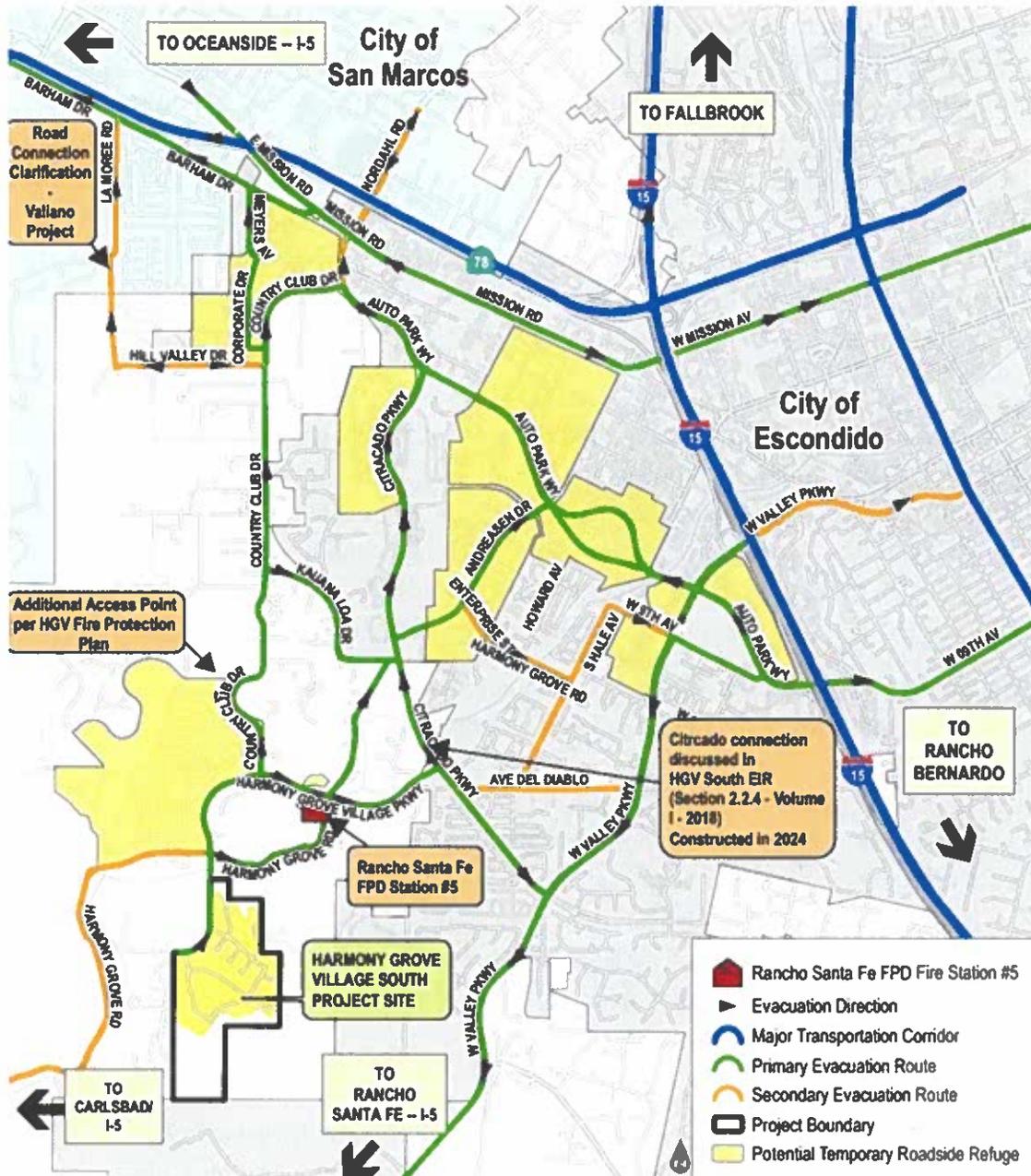
existing HGV, or the developed areas in adjacent cities, as clearly shown on the evacuation planning graphic included in multiple HGV South documents (see depiction on the next page). As such, the overall plan addresses the community as a whole, and not just individuals.

Although not formally designated a shelter in place community, the Project is designed to be fire-hardened and would provide a place of temporary refuge if emergency professionals decide staying on site is preferable to evacuation. As noted throughout prior evacuation and temporary refuge discussions of the 2018 FEIR, community members would be welcome to temporarily refuge at HGV South, just as they are currently directed to HGV and other refuge areas identified on the evacuation schematic below.

Emergency Services. Project implementation would not overwhelm emergency services. The 2018 FEIR addressed public services in Section 3.1.8, *Public Services*, which reviewed potential impacts to both fire responders and police service levels. As noted in the subchapter, No significant impacts were identified for fire or police protection services. As concluded on page 3.1.8- 10, development would not result in adverse effects:

beyond the incremental impacts usually addressed through the payment of developer fees, taxes or service fees. These would reduce the proposed Project's impacts to below a level of significance because these requirements would ensure that the districts would have adequate funds to provide for upgraded facilities in accordance with their improvement plans in a timely manner, and allow for retention of emergency services provision at levels of service consistent with comparable areas in the County.

Update to a single-lane bridge rather than secondary access. This comment is confusing. It misstates the Project plans. The current infrastructure being improved is an Arizona crossing of a creek. ***The Project would build a three-lane bridge with associated amenities*** in place of an at-grade crossing and would connect that to a three-lane plus additional improvements of Country Club Drive where it abuts Project frontage.



Congestion Effects/Anticipated Length of Evacuation in San Elijo Hills. The comments are noted, but not determinative of conclusions. First, routine congestion is understood and irritating. It does not, however, necessarily reflect concerns for evacuation. Those events are handled separately from normal traffic flow patterns, with roads closed and roads opened up to accommodate evacuation patterns as directed by emergency managers. Relative to potential time frame of evacuations (regardless of location); although potentially uncomfortable, the goal of evacuation is to get everyone out alive.

As indicated by the San Diego County Sheriff's Department (SDCSD) during the HGV South Planning Commission Hearing (Planning Commission Hearing [https://sdcounty.granicus.com/player/clip/2657?view_id=12&redirect=true] at approximately 4 hours 37 minutes), SDCSD is confident it can evacuate HGV and the Elfin Forest area. They indicated that evacuations are not comfortable and that there is confusion and waiting. It is understood that waiting to be moved may engender a sense of unease, but as an active participant, it is not possible to evaluate the overall considerations taken into account by emergency professionals. Although some evacuees may not be moving, SDCSD indicates that they would be directed to move if they were considered at high risk. Movement in any one lane or route may be halted while another area at higher risk is moved with priority.

In fact, Captain Brown's testimony specifically noted his having faced "far greater challenges" and completed successful evacuations in areas that were not "adjacent to 'city-ish' property." For context, while contrasting the Harmony Grove location with other evacuations, Captain Brown specifically noted that: "It's a mile or two to get you to a concrete jungle. That is a lot different than taking you 20 miles through wilderness or down Wildcat Canyon Road." Even closer than the "concrete jungle," are a number of the identified refuge sites, shown on the depiction above.

New Businesses. No location or specifics were given, and this comment is not understood. Excluding industrial uses in the developed urban commercial/industrial zones in Escondido, such uses are speculative at best. New business uses have been proposed for the northern extent of Country Club Drive (Solaris and Seguro projects). It is possible that the commenter is alluding to these as Solaris (a light industrial/commercial project) and the Seguro project (a battery storage facility). A third possibility is the Yoz project, proposed to be a multi-use facility offering religious services, mortuary, and other related services. That facility would be located across the street from the Harmony Grove Fire Station, off of HGV Parkway. None of these projects has been built, and review is either still ongoing or has been paused. As stated in Global Response: 2024 Fire / Evacuation:

For all three projects, if any one (or all) of these projects is approved, the restrictive design and operational requirements would result in there being no significant and unmitigated impacts. If a project fails to meet safety requirements, the County could deny the project, and no effect (even a less than significant one) would occur.

2018 Standards. The statement that the Project "barely meets the 2018 standards from when the [P]roject first was voted on" is absolutely untrue. It has been consistently demonstrated (refer to Volume III of the FEIR and specifically Global Response: 2024 Fire / Evacuation) that the Project continues to meet or exceed all relevant current Fire Code requirements. There is also a definitive discussion of this in the September 30, 2025, letter provided to the Board regarding comments received prior to Planning Commission.

Sprawl / (Incorrect) Anticipated Increase in VMT / Lack of Transit

General topics previously addressed in detailed responses to comments received following the 2024 recirculation of Subchapter 2.7 and Associated Documents include:

- inapplicability of the 2024 Climate Action Plan Fire Safe and Vehicle Miles Traveled alternative
- the County's use of a traffic impact methodology allowed under CEQA at the time of EIR completion was consistent with CEQA and does not require analysis under subsequent new standards, such as VMT under the County's Transportation Study Guidelines
- Although the infill analysis provided in Subchapter 2.7 was based on a methodology that was subsequently eliminated, the location of the Project and surrounding land uses discussed are not in doubt
- The Project is consistent with the 2022 CARB guidance, as analyzed in the 2025 FEIR

The argument about VMT in relation to the CAP is *much ado about nothing* because the Project mitigates to net zero. The commenter is fixated on VMT as a CAP measure. However, the 2025 RFEIR illustrates that the Project's GHG emissions **would avoid 100 percent of the emissions** on annual basis starting in year one, which delivers 2045 neutrality from day one. ***This includes emissions related to Project construction and operation, and Project-related transportation sources.*** This Project would therefore far exceed the CAP goals. Since the CAP does not require zero net GHG emissions the Project would be far more conservative than what the CAP would otherwise allow.

Specifically relevant to the Fire Safe and Vehicle Miles Traveled Alternative, the FEIR notes that, as stated in the CAP Update (CAP Final SEIR at 5-25 [emphasis added]):

*[B]ecause the County would not prohibit development of properties outside of the fire safe and VMT efficient overlay, it is assumed for the purpose of this analysis that half of the growth that would have occurred outside of the overlay would instead be developed in these areas. Although the Board "adopted" this Alternative, staff would need to "integrate" the Alternative into existing, ongoing planning efforts within Planning & Development Services, such as the Sustainable Land Use Framework. This could involve new technical studies, program development, outreach, and environmental review to support incorporation of the Alternative into existing County programs and initiatives as a component (Statement of Proceeding, Minutes of the September 11, 2024, meeting of the Board). At this point, the integration and final form of the Alternative have yet to be finalized. In any event, the assertion that the Project conflicts with the adopted CAP policies is incorrect. **The Project does not conflict with the CAP and will not have a significant impact on GHG emissions because once mitigated it will have net zero emissions.***

Also as stated on FEIR pages 8-128 and -129;

Several comments state the Project should have conducted a VMT analysis because of the County's adoption of the 2022 TSG. Although the new CEQA Guidelines for VMT became effective in 2020 under SB 743, it would not be considered significant "new information" because the underlying information was otherwise known or should have been known when the 2018 FEIR was certified. (Olen Properties Corp v. City of Newport Beach, 93 CA5th at 280-281.) In Olen Properties Corp, the court held the change in the CEQA Guidelines from level of service to VMT was not significant new information because the underlying issue was known when the Olen EIR was prepared in 2006. The court explained that CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 (the section requiring use of VMT to analyze traffic impacts) operates "prospectively" and subsequent changes to the guidelines are not "new information" triggering a subsequent EIR. Otherwise, the court reasoned, any change to the CEQA Guidelines would trigger the preparation of an EIR for every project. Similarly, the issuance of new GHG threshold guidelines did not constitute significant new information because the underlying information related to GHG emissions was otherwise known or should have been known since the 1990s. (Concerned Dublin Citizens v. City of Dublin, 214 Cal.App.4th at 1319, 1320. See also Citizens for Responsible Equitable Environmental Development (CREED) v. City of San Diego [2011] 196 Cal.App.4th 532) [the court found that the effects of GHG on climate change were known or could have been discovered with the exercise of reasonable diligence for an EIR initially certified in the early 1990s].)

The commenter's statement that *Olen Properties Corp v. City of Newport Beach* does not apply here because the case was based on a supplemental EIR, misses the point. As stated in *Olen*, VMT was known since 2006, the same commenter could have raised the issue of VMT, and in fact did, as related to GHG, but this issue has been resolved. In other words, res judicata, applies. Moreover, new CEQA guidelines, whether GHG or VMT, do not trigger a supplemental or subsequent EIR because the courts have consistently determined new guidelines are not new information. Similarly, for purposes of res judicata, this is not new information. The commenter and the public have had ample opportunity, and did, raise this issue in prior litigation.

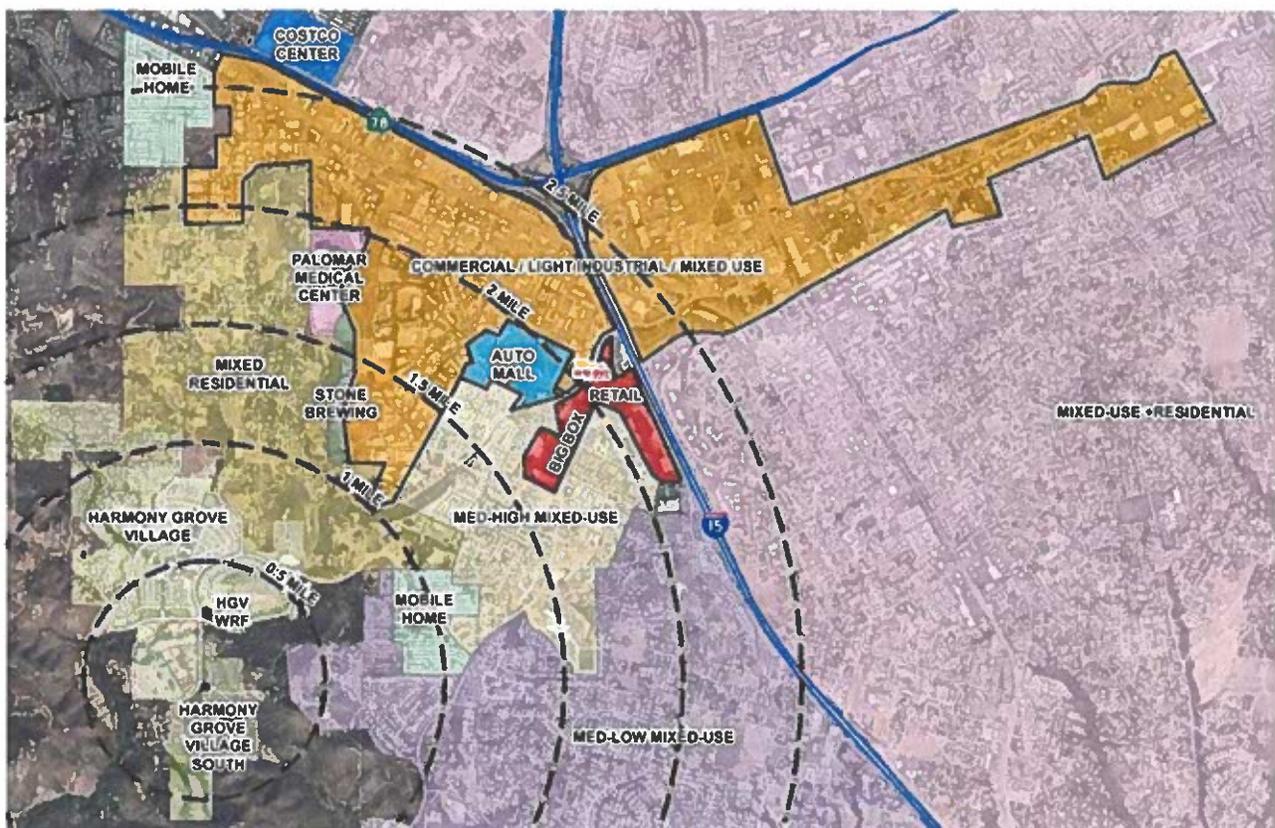
Comments stated that the Project's VMT is "significantly higher than the County-wide average" and that the Project would lead to increased driving distances or sprawl, which would subsequently undo the "hard work done by the County on the CAP." One comment also notes that there is no public transit to the site. In a comment related to greenhouse gas emissions, one commenter notes that the County's natural landscape onsite is a "carbon sink."

Sprawl / VMT. The contention that the Project would either lead to, or constitute an element of, sprawl, has been repeatedly debunked. This has been discussed exhaustively in global responses

prepared for the Project in 2018 (Project Consistency with General Plan Policy LU-1.4 and General Plan/Community Plan Amendments CEQA Impact Analysis) as well as in the 2025 FEIR Global Response: Res Judicata and New Information, and, of course, in numerous individual responses to comments.

At this point, before moving on to address the VMT element, a single graphic (included in both the 2028 and 2025 FEIRs) is being provided below. This clearly shows that the Project is not removed from development, but rather, it shares boundaries with areas already containing developed lots, in close proximity to urban resources.

Project VMT has been litigated and is now precluded from further argument per the principle of res judicata. It is noted, however, that it was identified as slightly below the regional average based on the TIA. As discussed throughout the RFEIR and responses to prior comments, the Project is consistent with County and regional land use plans and policies addressing VMT and sprawl.



As noted by the Court of Appeal:

[W]e must conclude the Project is consistent: the EIR evaluated the associated land uses; reflects County's effort to move future development closer to cities, shopping and employment centers; shows the Project is consistent with vehicle mileage projections; and encourages local walking in keeping with the plan (Appellate Decision, page 66).

Related statements that an increase in VMT will lead to greater carbon (GHG) emissions and significant climate change impacts are also unfounded. As provided in Subchapter 2.7, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*, of the RFEIR, the Project would result in net-zero GHG emissions via offset of Project emissions with new solar energy, as required by mitigation measure M-GHG-1. Statements that the Project will “generate more GHGs than it is claiming it can offset” are unsubstantiated and do not provide relevant details to which a response can be provided – the RFEIR demonstrates there would be no net increase in GHG emissions with Project implementation.

Although the Project is not being processed under the CAP, it is in no way inconsistent with it. This has been discussed in detail in recirculated Subchapter 2.7, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*, as well as in responses to comments. The lack of issues associated with VMT; the proximity to goods, services, and jobs; and the effect of net zero GHG emissions means that the Project would not have an adverse effect on County implementation of the CAP.

Public Transit. Statements that there is no public transit service to the Project site are immaterial as the FEIR claims no reduction in Project trips or VMT based on transit. The Project site is in the vicinity (within 3 miles) of the Nordahl Road station. It is beyond the Project’s purview to bring transit service to the Project site. Nonetheless, the Project would reserve a turnout for a future bus stop at the Center House in the event service is extended to this area in the future. The Project will also include two electric vehicles as an amenity of the HOA for residents to use and could potentially use to commute to the nearby Nordahl Road station.

Vegetation Removal and CO₂. The comment identifying natural vegetation as a “carbon sink” alludes to loss of sequestration, or the amounts of carbon dioxide (CO₂) removed from the atmosphere by vegetation. The Project has accounted for this, and would plant 2,045 trees, a number substantially in excess of trees currently on site. As stated on page 2.7-26 of the FEIR (emphasis added):

Development under the Proposed Project would also result in changes in CO₂ sequestration from the atmosphere. By removing existing vegetation, the Project would result in a one-time carbon exchange. Emissions from this land use change have been estimated according to the IPCC protocol for vegetation. It should be noted that the loss of sequestered carbon estimate would be offset as the Proposed Project would also plant new landscape trees which would sequester additional carbon through each growth cycle, resulting in increasing amounts of sequestered carbon each year for the life of the tree.

Increased Traffic / Degradation of Quality of Life

Concern was voiced over exacerbation of traffic issues based on addition of 453 homes.

Traffic is not one of the issues addressed in 2024 recirculation, and as such, is beyond the scope of these comments. It is noted, however, that the Project traffic analysis was found adequate during the CEQA challenge to this Project. Some points of clarification are provided, however. As

discussed in 2018 FEIR Subchapter 2.2, *Transportation/Traffic*, excluding even for the segment of SR-78 west of Nordahl Road, which would operate at an unacceptable LOS in the Existing Plus Cumulative Plus Project scenario, Project traffic in conjunction with cumulative traffic along this segment would not exceed the applicable significance criteria. Notably, ***all traffic impacts to roadway segments analyzed in the 2018 FEIR are calculated to operate at acceptable level of service (LOS) D or better with identified mitigation.*** It is also noted as a point of clarification that the Project would not add 4,500 daily trips to area roadways as conservatively analyzed in the Project *Traffic Impact Analysis*. TIA Attachment H documents a reduction in trips from 4,500 (a conservative estimate at the time based on an assumption that 450 single family residences could be constructed), to a more accurate 4,010 trips based on the current Project description proposing 193 single-family residences (generating 1,930 ADT) and 260 multi-family residences (generating 2,080 ADT). ***Project assessed impacts would therefore be lower than identified, although no change is proposed to required mitigation.***

Linking traffic to quality of life is noted. As stated above, the Project would adequately (in fact, conservatively based on the lower number of anticipated trips) mitigate for increased use of roads. Hot spots would not be generated, and traffic flow would be maintained at acceptable levels. This would continue to allow access for County residents to regional opportunities for employment, shopping, medical services, entertainment, etc., contributing to a high level of quality of life.

Noise on Avenida del Diablo

One commenter asserts that additional traffic from HGV has generated significant noise impacts along Avenida Del Diablo and “constructing more homes” (presumably referring to the Proposed Project) would generate “unbearable” traffic and noise for residents east of Harmony Grove.

Based on County criteria for traffic analysis, the Project TIA assessed “roads and intersections that will receive 25 peak hour trips (two-way peak hour total).” Avenida Del Diablo would not receive this level of Project-generated trips and was not assessed. The Avenida Del Diablo intersection with Citracado Parkway was assessed in the TIA based on County criteria and no significant impact to the operation of this intersection was identified. Project impacts to traffic noise were considered based on the TIA-studied roadway segments. Where traffic contributions to area roadways did not result in a traffic effect, substantial increases in Project-related off-site traffic noise similarly would not occur.

Biological Resources

A few comments were received on issues related to biological resources, including general concerns over loss of native vegetation and animal species. These concerns were all addressed via survey, and impact and mitigation identification as appropriate in the Project *Biological Technical Report* (BTR) as well as the 2018 FEIR (and both 2018 and 2015 responses to comments). Specific statements addressed concern over a “priority conservation area in the MSCP [Multiple species Conservation Program]” division of important wildlife habitat, disruption of a wildlife corridor,

threatening the (incorrectly described) “pristine nature” of the creek, and location of the Project adjacent to lands with least Bell’s vireo (LBV), California gnatcatcher (CAGN), southwestern willow flycatcher SWWF), and southwestern pond turtle. All of these topics were previously addressed in the 2018 FEIR, litigated and resolved by the courts.

MSCP, Wildlife Habitat, Wildlife Corridor. The Project identifies adequate mitigation in accordance with County requirements as well as Draft MSCP North County Plan ratios for mitigation. As such, the Project would contribute to, rather than adversely affect, existing conservation efforts.

The Project site is identified as pre-approved mitigation area (PAMA) in the Draft MSCP North County Plan. As discussed in FEIR Subchapter 2.3, *Biological Resources*, however, these areas of the site do not substantially contribute to the conservation targets for the local area. This is because site areas mapped as PAMA do not contain resources that would substantially contribute to the conservation targets for the local area. In fact, following an on-site resource agency visit, ***recommendations in the joint U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife letter focus on off-site mitigation*** areas rather than proposing retention of existing site conditions.

The Project would not substantially interfere with wildlife movement. As discussed on FEIR page 2.3-49:

The southern portions of the site facilitate east-west wildlife movement and the eastern boundary of the site facilitates north-south movement. Wildlife also move east-west within the Escondido Creek corridor just to the north of the site. The existing residential uses and construction of HGV development limits wildlife connectivity to the north, east, and west. The Project would conserve 34.8 acres of land in the southern portion of the site in a BOS easement, thus continuing to allow for wildlife to access the Project site from the south, east, and west. The Project further includes landscaped slopes and thinned-native habitat within the fuel modification zones along the eastern boundary of the site, thereby conserving some north-south movement functions

Project implementation would not result in long-term adverse effects on the creek. In fact, as a result of Project action, benefits would accrue to Escondido Creek relative to flow and elimination of invasive non-native species.. HGV South would provide a missing piece to up- and down-stream improvements of the overall Creek. Replacement of the Arizona crossing with a new bridge and implementation of Project restoration would locally provide an enhanced and contiguous Creek corridor. Removal of invasives and re-habilitation with native species would expand extent, and improve quality and function of native habitat, and improvements would support east-west connectivity and movement of animal/bird species, separating terrestrial wildlife moving along the creek from vehicles.

Beyond that, removal of existing creek fill would eliminate an existing “sink” area that traps pollutants washing down from upstream; the new bridge would eliminate existing pollutant sources (from people, vehicles, pets, trash) associated with the current at grade crossing, and making the flow channel wider would return this location to more natural flow conditions and allow for lateral dispersion and enhanced floodplain processes. (Creek width would not be so narrow – this would help alleviate scour, erosion, downcutting, and other processes resulting from previous channelization etc. that have affected the creek’s natural hydrology)

Sensitive Species. Although the precise concerns related to the noted species are not identified, it is noted that the Biological Technical Report (BTR) addresses sensitive species, and they were also discussed in the 2018 FEIR as appropriate. Impacts were identified for both CAGN and LBV. For CAGN, impacts were assessed based on encroachment into habitat used by a breeding pair in the eastern part of the Project. For LBV, it was noted that LBV were known from the creek, but no birds were noted within the Project footprint. For both species, all the County categories of review were completed (e.g., direct, or indirect impact [e.g., night lighting], nesting success, foraging, and potential for cumulative impacts). Mitigation was identified as appropriate, and update confirmation surveys would be completed if the Project is approved. Potential impacts were identified as less than significant following mitigation.

Relative to SWWF, Appendix D (Special Status Animal Species Potential to Occur) to the BTR documented ‘very little potential habitat’ within Escondido Creek to the north of the Project, and that the creek was unlikely to support the species. The species was not identified during field surveys. For the pond turtle, it was noted that suitable aquatic habitat occurs to the north of the site along Escondido Creek; however, the habitat is of low quality. The species was not identified during field surveys and the potential to occur was considered low.

It is noted that Goal 4 of the MSCP to: protect the Escondido Creek Floodplain for water quality and sensitive species (with Southwestern pond turtle and LBV specifically named) and to maintain natural flow regimes. The consistency analysis in Appendix G determined that

The Project has been specifically designed to avoid the Escondido Creek floodplain, with avoidance buffers of 100 feet from the edge of riparian canopy protected by an additional 100 feet of limited building zone easement, for a total setback of 200 feet. The Project would enhance the biological and hydrologic function of Escondido Creek at the Country Club Drive crossing to a condition superior to what currently exists.

This is consistent with the benefits to the creek and species described above.

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September 30, 2025

VIA EMAIL ONLY

Honorable Chair Lawson-Remer
San Diego County Board of Supervisors
1600 Pacific Highway,
County of San Diego
San Diego, CA 92123
E-Mail: PublicComment@sdcounty.ca.gov

Re: Board of Supervisors meeting October 1, 2025, Item 4 (HGV South)

Dear Honorable Chairperson Lawson-Remer and Board of Supervisors;

This firm represents RCS-Harmony Partners, LLC ("RCS"), the developer of a master-planned community commonly known as the "Harmony Grove Village South Project" ("Project" or "HGV South") located within the Harmony Grove Subarea of the San Dieguito Community Plan Area. The County Board of Supervisors (Board) originally approved entitlements for the Project and certified the Project's FEIR (2018 FEIR) on July 25, 2018.

After several years of litigation, the California Court of Appeal, Fourth Appellate District, Division One (Appellate Court in its Appellate Decision) found that the 2018 FEIR complied with CEQA except for one environmental issue related to its GHG mitigation measure. The Entitlements were also determined to be consistent with the County's General Plan except for providing an affordable housing component.¹

¹ Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Town Council et al. v. County of San Diego and RCS, 37-2018-00042927, Court of Appeal, Fourth Appellate District (Division One), filed October 14, 2021. Sierra Club v. County of San Diego (December 21, 2021) (case No. 37-2018-00043084-CU-TT-CTL).

RCS has corrected the GHG mitigation measure and added an affordable housing component to the Project to comply with the Appellate Decision. Subchapter 2.7 of the 2018 EIR has been wholly replaced with a new Subchapter 2.7 that includes the new mitigation measure, updates the GHG analysis, and revises related Project Design Features. A new 2024 Global Climate Change Report prepared by Ldn Consulting, Inc., the 2024 Updated ConSol Evaluation, the Off-site Solar Panel Installation for GHG Mitigation, and Set Aside Fund Review were also included to replace and augment analogous 2018 EIR documents (referred to collectively as “new Subchapter 2.7.”) The new Subchapter 2.7 is included in the 2025 Revised Final EIR (2025 RFEIR).

After careful examination of the changes made to the Project, the County determined that because the Project has not changed and is within the scope of the previously certified 2018 EIR, only the portion of the EIR that pertains to the GHG mitigation measure had to be amended and recirculated for public review.

The Project entitlements and the 2025 RFEIR was considered by the County of San Diego Planning Commission on August 22, 2025, wherein they recommended approval and certification of the documents, respectively. Immediately prior to the Planning Commission hearing on the Project the County received a total of 61 letters on the 2025 RFEIR; 46 in opposition to the Project and 15 in support. It is expected that the Board will receive similar communications and hear similar testimony.

This correspondence has been prepared to address the comments received by the County opposing the Project and the various issues raised regarding the 2025 RFEIR. Some letters addressed GHG-relevant issues or General Plan compliance issue of affordable housing. Those comments / issues are addressed first in the discussions below, as issues for which information has been presented since 2018 and which are before the Board.

Generally, letters in support noted lack of regional housing; support for the Project’s affordable housing component, as well as its overall commitment to more “attainable,” or “middle-market” homes; contributions to sustainability and electrical grid reliability through clean energy commitments (net zero emissions and charging stations in every garage) and environmental stewardship (including set aside of approximately 35 acres, or 31 percent of the property, into permanent protected open space); and job creation through use of local union labor. While germane to Board consideration, these comments do not raise issues associated with environmental analyses completed for the Project and do not require response.

It is noted that the great majority of the comments against the Project were focused on fire safety or evacuation; both items are *beyond the scope* of the 2025 RFEIR. A number of the current letters were also verbatim in content and identified similar concerns that have already been decided after years of litigation. Such matters are controlled by the principles of *res judicata*, a Latin term

meaning “a matter judged.” Under this principle, once a court decides a particular issue or finding of fact in a final ruling, that issue or fact is considered settled, and parties are generally precluded from relitigating the same issue or fact. Allowing such claims to be relitigated would impose significant burdens on parties and the courts could lead to inconsistent rulings or judgments that create confusion and inefficiency and would be unfair to the party that has already prevailed in previous litigation.

In conclusion prior communications and the responses are available on the Project website for reference at https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/pds/Current_Projects/hgvs.html. For purposes of the record, however, this additional response (please see Exhibit 1) is provided to address the concerns raised by many of the letters provided to the Planning Commission before the public hearing, even though such matters were beyond the scope of the 2025 RFEIR. For ease of reference, a letter sent to the Planning Commission, dated August 18, 2025, on behalf of RCS, and discussed in the response herein, is also attached as Exhibit 2 and incorporated herein.

Very truly yours,
NORTON MOORE & ADAMS



Ann Y. Moore

Attachments

EXHIBIT 1

**Combined Response to Comments Received between August 19 and 21, 2025
prior to Planning Commission Hearing
and
Testimony Presented at Planning Commission Hearing, August 22, 2025**

Prior communications on the 2025 FEIR / Revised FEIR and the responses to them are posted on the County Project website and are available for reference. In the interest of continued clarification, this additional response is provided. Each of the issues summarized below is answered, and inaccuracies in the comments are addressed.

Greenhouse gas (GHG) and housing issues are addressed as items 1 and 2. These are the issues the Court of Appeal found to be deficient in the 2018 FEIR and were corrected during 2024 recirculation of EIR Subchapter 2.7 and Associated Documents. Fire safety and evacuation issues are addressed as item 3, with smart growth/sprawl addressed as item 4. Although the Court of Appeal specifically found those issues to have been adequately analyzed, these are important community issues and the facts bear reiteration. Finally, issues raised regarding County process or non-CEQA issues are discussed as items 5 and 6, respectively, in order of the list and reference page numbers below. *None of the issues raised require changes to Project design or the analyses before the Board for consideration.*

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ISSUES RAISED / QUESTIONS ANSWERED

1. GHG ANALYSIS AND MITIGATION

Comments related to GHG analysis and mitigation received prior to the Planning Commission meeting reiterate prior comments provided and answered within the RFEIR. The following clarifications and references to locations of previous responses are provided for reference but do not contain new information related to GHG analysis or mitigation. References in the comment letter from Shute, Mihaly, and Weinberger (SMW) to two attachments provided as part of the comments on the 2024 GHG recirculation were addressed in responses to Letters ReO6c and ReO6d; no new information related to those attachments or associated responses in the RFEIR is provided in the current comment letter.

GHG Targets and 2022 CARB and 2021 SANDAG Planning Documents. One letter repeats the same incorrect statement that the Project’s analysis of GHG emissions did not consider current statewide GHG reduction targets and associated planning documents, including the California Air

Resources Board (CARB) 2022 Scoping Plan and a 2021 San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) updated regional plan. These plans were, however, appropriately addressed in the FEIR and were available for review during 2024 recirculation of Subchapter 2.7, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*. As the SANDAG Regional Plan focuses on land use planning related to VMT and project location, comments related to these topics are also addressed below.

2022 CARB Scoping Plan. More specifically, the 2022 CARB Scoping Plan was discussed on pages 2.7-13, -18, -19, -30, -33, 34, 38, and -41 of recirculated Subchapter 2.7. The RFEIR analyzed the Project in light of the 2022 CARB Scoping Plan, finding it consistent with the goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2045 by achieving no net increase in GHG emissions. Specifically recirculated Subchapter 2.7 states (emphasis added):

...the Project would attain a net zero MT CO₂e increase in GHG emissions, which is consistent with AB 1279, and on track for meeting the SB 32 and EO S-3-05 reduction targets, as well as consistent with the recently approved (2022) Scoping Plan update which lays out the sector-by-sector roadmap for California to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045 (see page 2.7-30).

As excerpted from RFEIR page RTC-ReO6a-21 (emphasis added):

By achieving no net increase in GHG emissions, the Project demonstrates consistency with the statewide GHG reduction target of achieving carbon neutrality by 2045. The Project exceeds the requirements of the 2022 CARB Scoping Plan by offsetting GHG emissions by 100 percent at the time of full occupancy much sooner than the 2045 neutrality requirement."

SANDAG Updated Regional Plan. Subchapter 2.7 of the RFEIR includes a discussion of the Project's consistency with Regional Plan goals and the updated SANDAG 2021 Regional Plan (also known as San Diego Forward), as discussed on pages 2.7-16, -17, and -30 through -32 of recirculated Subchapter 2.7. As explained in the 2025 FEIR, while San Diego Forward **does not regulate land use** or supersede the exercise of land use authority by SANDAG's member jurisdictions (i.e., the County of San Diego), it does provide direction and guidance on future regional growth (i.e., the location of new residential and non-residential land uses) and transportation patterns throughout San Diego County. The County determined (page 2.7-31, emphasis added) that:

By locating the Proposed Project near existing and planned infrastructure, services, and jobs in a compact pattern of development, while at the same time promoting sustainability among its residents, the Project has been designed around the guiding principles of the General Plan. Developing the Proposed Project in this manner meets a number of the objectives of San Diego Forward, AB 32, and SB 375.

While the Project site was not identified for development in SANDAG's San Diego Forward 2020 forecasted development pattern maps, the Project site location was identified for development consistent with the 2011 General Plan in the SANDAG 2035 forecast development pattern map, and is in-line with the SCS GHG benefits as the Project would support and/or provide a range of housing types, services and jobs in a compact pattern of development located within 0.5 mile (a 10-minute walk) of commercial and civic facilities, and is located near to transit stops and employment centers. This in turn, would reduce the size of required infrastructure improvements and the number and length of automobile trips. It is also noted that SANDAG has identified the average trip length as 7.9 miles. As noted above, the average distance of Project trips was calculated by LLG to be 7.88 miles, which is consistent with 7.9 (see Appendix C to 2018 EIR Appendix J).

Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). The same parties (Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Town Council; EFHGTC) to the original litigation involving the same project (HGV South) repeatedly also raise the same issue of VMT, including the same assertion that the VMT calculations are incorrect. They raised this same objection to the Project's VMT analysis in their June 2, 2017, comment letter to the 2018 EIR, arguing that: "[t]he project related vehicle miles traveled (VMT) estimate" lacked consistency and accuracy (Comment O3b-17).

Moreover, EFHGTC raised the issue of VMT in their 2018 petition for a writ of mandate challenging the County's approval of the Project and 2018 EIR. Their 2018 petition states:

The EIR for HGVS failed to make any attempt to quantify either the increase in VMT caused by these projects or transportation- related energy consumption on a cumulative basis. According to calculations prepared by the Town Council, based on evidence in the record, these cumulative projects would cause VMT to increase by 644,739 miles every day, or over 235 million new VMT per year. This is an astonishing impact that must have been, but was not, analyzed as a potentially significant cumulative impact (Petition, page 22).

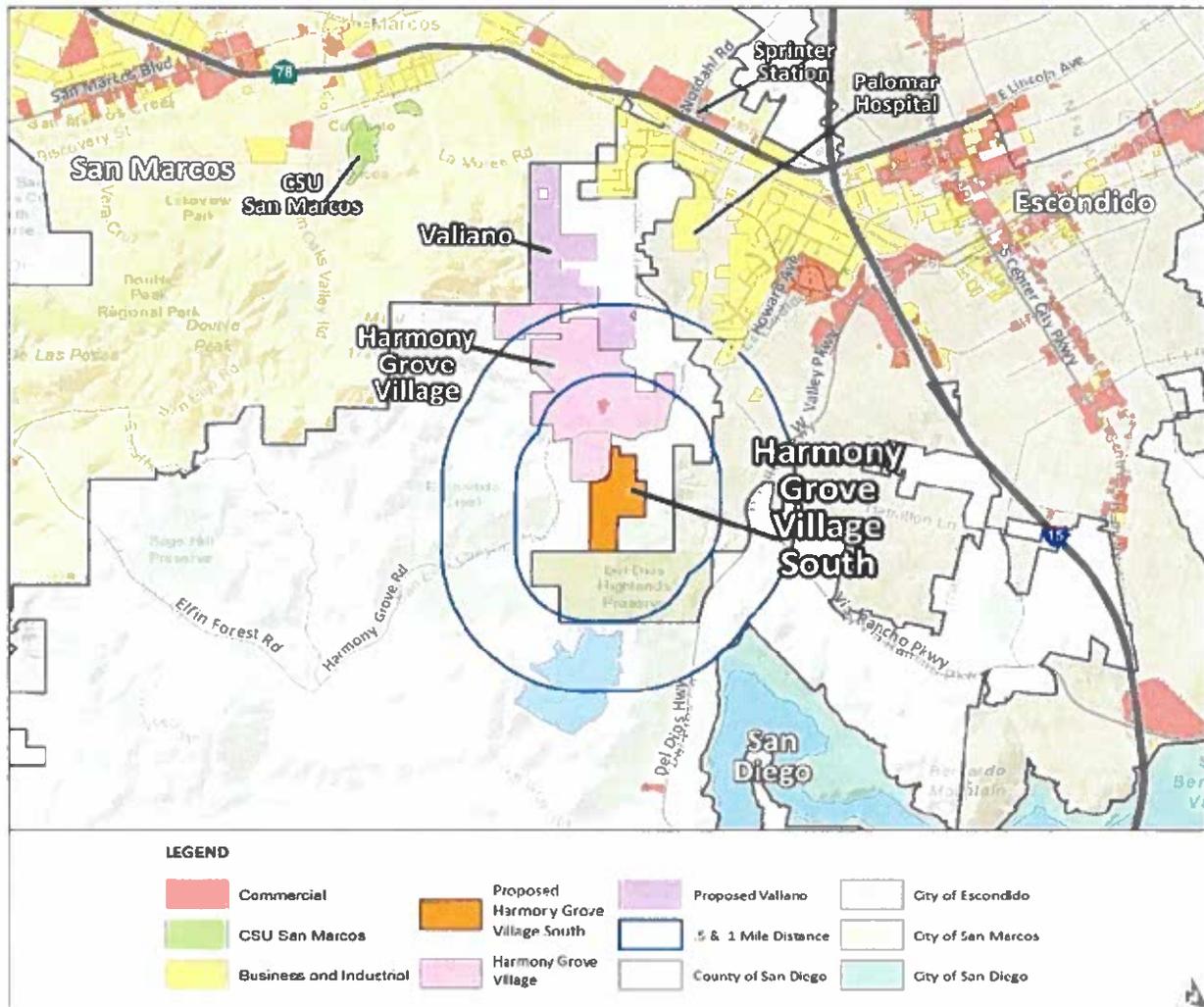
The VMT issue, however, was resolved by the Appellate Court in 2021. The Appellate Court found that the 2018 EIR adequately addressed this issue, concluding that: "[a]ccording to the EIR, SANDAG's average trip length is 7.9 miles, and the average distance for Project trips was calculated to be 7.88 miles." Also, "the analysis of the Project's efforts to reduce vehicle emissions through design, location, and minimization of off-site vehicle trips complied with the County's efforts to reduce sprawl and associated emissions" (Appellate Decision, pages 63-64). See also Global Response: Res Judicata and New Information. The Appellate Court goes on to specifically state:

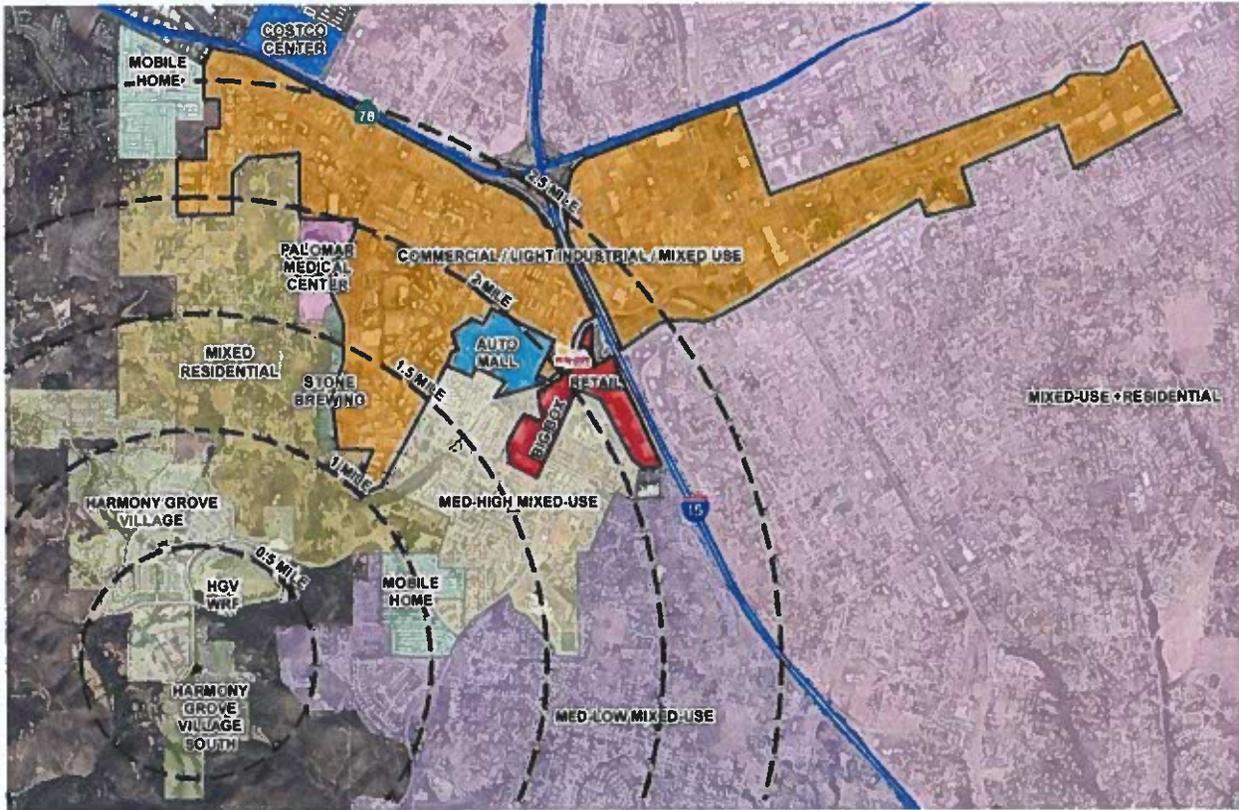
[W]e must conclude the Project is consistent: the EIR evaluated the associated land uses; reflects County's effort to move future development closer to cities, shopping and employment centers; shows the Project is consistent with vehicle mileage

projections; and encourages local walking in keeping with the plan (Appellate Decision, page 66).

With respect to VMT, therefore, this issue was previously litigated and is now precluded from further argument because of res judicata. The commenters had an opportunity to raise this issue, did so, and the Appellate Court rendered its decision on this matter.

Location of the Project. Commenters consistently paint the Project as being located in an isolated area when this is incorrect. Proximity to services is clearly depicted in the FEIR (see the following figure included in the 2018 Staff Report, as well as an excerpt from Figures 2.7-1 and 8.3.6-1, *HGV + HGV South Adjacent Land Uses*, included below).





It is impossible to ignore that:

The Project site is in close proximity to incorporated cities with a population over one million (one-third of the County) which support 600,000 jobs. The Project site is in proximity to two cities: it is south of San Marcos and southwest of Escondido. Within 3 miles to the north is the Nordahl Sprinter station in San Marcos and the Escondido Transit Center is located to the east. The Project is also within 1 - 2.5 miles southwest of a confluence of regional transportation connectors (Interstate 15 and State Route 78) as well as a concentration of urban and mixed land uses that include Palomar Hospital, Stone Brewery, numerous “big box” retail stores with surrounding retail, apartment complexes, multiple mobile home parks, a large-scale (eighteen-brand) automobile mall, and expansive light-industrial/commercial employment center (Escondido Research and Technology Center). California State University San Marcos is also located south of East Barnham Drive and across South Twin Oaks Valley Road from the Kaiser Permanente San Marcos Medical Center (RFEIR, pages 8-153 and -154).

Excess Energy and Delivery to SDG&E. The same commenter also notes disagreement with how electrical energy generation and demand is managed between the Project and the utility provider (SDG&E). The commenter suggests that emissions avoidance disclosed in the 2024 recirculated Subchapter 2.7 exceeds the amount of emissions to be avoided via delivery of excess

energy to the grid, and that associated subsequent mitigation (based on offsetting the remaining Project emissions) would be insufficient. The commentor provides an oversimplified approach.

Comments regarding GHG emissions reduction from on-site solar energy production are also duplicative of comments previously made and responded to in the RFEIR. While no new issues are raised in the August 2025 comment letter, the commenter expresses confusion with the responses provided in the RFEIR. The following briefly summarizes relevant portions of associated responses for the comments previously made and provides additional clarification.

To address questions regarding methodology assuming no solar, the GHG analysis uses a scenario without on-site solar in which electricity would be fully supplied by SDG&E. The utility provider (SDG&E) provides power to the Project using a grid mix consisting of both renewable and non-renewable energy sources dictated by the state's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS). The RPS is one of California's key programs for advancing renewable energy. The program sets continuously escalating renewable energy procurement requirements for the state's load-serving entities.¹ The RPS is calculated by taking the total energy produced by renewables (such as solar) divided by the total energy generation, including non-renewables.

As it relates to GHG emissions calculations used in Project analysis, whenever a project is added to the grid interconnection, the total demand for that project must still be accounted for by the utility provider. This ensures that SDG&E would always be able to provide power in kilowatts (kW) to a project regardless of on-site renewable generation that is sized to meet the project's total annual energy consumption in kilowatt hours (kWh). The grid must be able to meet Project power demand when solar sources are not producing energy such as during the evening hours or weather events when the sun is obstructed. The grid must also be able to perform seasonally when energy from solar may be less, such as during the winter months when power produced is less than during the summer. The main point is that on an annual basis, the total PV generation (kWh) will balance with total demand, resulting in zero net energy use annually. As stated in the GHG analysis and additionally discussed below, the Project would also put additional clean energy into the grid.

The added solar energy added by the Project to the grid would be accounted for by SDG&E via an interconnection agreement that is required when the solar panels are installed. The Project's electrical demand combined with its new on-site renewable solar energy would be integrated into SDG&E's portfolio in combination with the utility provider's existing energy portfolio. The result is a revised RPS reflecting both the Project's demand and the additional renewable supply. It should be recognized that a single project by itself would have a minimal effect on the RPS when compared to the thousands of gigawatt hours generated annually by SDG&E. However, cumulatively, when many sources of new construction with new solar are added to the grid, the

¹ The RPS is established under Senate Bill (SB) 1038, SB 1078, SB 1250, SB 107, SB X1-2, SB 350, and SB 1393. These laws set goals for retail sellers of electricity and local publicly owned electric utilities (POUs), collectively referred to as load-serving entities (LSEs), to increase the amount of renewable energy they procure.

RPS will be noticeably increased. In fact, this has added to the RPS increase over the past two decades.

The Project's GHG analysis follows methodologies that are used by the state to quantify the effects of new code requirements on GHG emissions. For instance, when the effects of the 2022 Energy Code were quantified as they relate to solar requirements for new construction, the state showed that the new construction could result in either a decrease or increase in electrical demand, but ultimately all situations showed a decrease in GHG emissions through implementation of the new code requirements.² This demonstrates that the Energy Code requirement that new construction install solar has a real effect on the utilities' electrical supply/demand and cannot simply be removed or assumed to be zero as the commenter suggests. Using the commenter's methodology, the state would keep the electricity energy supply side of the equation the same for the utility with zero increase or decrease for new construction and would show no associated increase or decrease in GHG emissions. This would make it impossible to show the utility providers' progress in reaching the RPS goals set by the state. Therefore, the RFEIR is consistent with the state's methodology showing avoidance of GHG emissions when solar is installed even though new demand is added to the grid through new construction.

Without on-site solar provided by the Project, the Project energy demand would be met entirely by SDG&E's existing portfolio which includes non-renewable resources (fossil fuel), as noted above. However, with the on-site Project solar, each kWh generated by the new solar directly offsets a portion of the electricity demand from the non-renewable (fossil fuel) portion of the grid and allows the excess renewable energy to continue to existing uses, reducing their fossil fuel consumption. This is clearly assumed in GHG avoidance documentation used to estimate GHG reductions by the State of California when implementing the 2022 Energy Code through comparisons to the 2019 Energy Code. As such, in a comparative analysis of the pre- and post- Project SDG&E portfolio, the amount of non-renewables in the grid mix would be reduced since renewables do not offset renewables (i.e., renewables simply are added to the grid, while access to non-renewable sources will be reduced or ultimately eliminated as the kWh become redundant as required by the state's RPS mandates). As a result, the avoided GHG emissions from solar exceed the average grid emissions intensity, producing greater net GHG benefit than would otherwise be achieved through RPS alone. Therefore, when renewables such as solar are added to the grid, the achieved RPS for the utility increases because renewables only eliminate use of non-renewables.

As noted above, each kWh of on-site solar generated with the Project reduces demand for non-renewable generation by SDG&E. This approach is not unique to the Project; it is also the same methodology used in preparing Climate Action Plans (CAPs). CAPs begin with a GHG emissions inventory and then project future GHG emissions. After this, CAPs identify reduction strategies to meet state targets. Installation of solar is a typical reduction strategy seen in CAPs.

² Impact Analysis: 2022 Update to the California Energy Code. <https://www.energy.ca.gov/publications/2023/impact-analysis-2022-update-california-energy-code>.

When on-site solar energy generation exceeds a project's demand, the surplus electricity (i.e., energy above that needed to serve the project) would be fed back to SDG&E. Therefore, the project reduces GHG emissions from non-renewable generation in two ways: (1) by meeting its own demand with renewable energy, and (2) by supplying excess renewable energy to the grid for other customers. While solar output varies with weather and time of day, the energy accounting within the GHG analysis uses annualized GHG emissions. Each kWh generated by the Project's solar system directly displaces a kWh that would otherwise have been produced by non-renewable sources, making the GHG reduction credit both appropriate and conservative.

Crediting reduced GHG emissions to solar installation can be understood in the same way efficiency improvements are credited for modern LED lightbulbs in building codes. When an LED bulb is purchased, the labeling now lists what the equivalent brightness is as it compares to an equivalent incandescent bulb. The comparison is in watts (watts is not a measurement of luminosity but is recognized as such to have a certain brightness). An LED lightbulb with a 60-watt equivalent means the LED bulb (which is typically 5 to 6 watts when lit) appears as bright as an incandescent bulb that is 60 watts when illuminated. Therefore, when on, it avoids approximately 55 watts of power. After years of use, regulations began to eliminate the manufacturing of incandescent bulbs, forcing users to transition to more efficient technologies, which has also been reflected in energy codes of the past. These bulbs avoided and continue to avoid energy at a rate tied to the quantity of lights. Solar is no different in that for every kWh generated by a solar panel, an equivalent kWh of energy is not required to be produced by the grid operator. Since renewables cannot offset renewables (i.e., solar panels do not replace or turn off existing panels, they reduce the non-renewables needed by the utility) full non-renewable avoidance is therefore assumed for the Project GHG analysis.

When the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod) software was first developed, SDG&E did not provide specific energy emissions intensity factors to the model developers. As a result, an assumed intensity of approximately 720 pounds of CO₂ per megawatt-hour (lb/MWh) was applied based on surrounding regional utilities. That default intensity included some renewable contribution. Limited documentation indicated that about 10.5 percent of the electricity supply was renewable, which translated to a non-renewable intensity of 805.02 lb/MWh. This value was carried forward in CalEEMod from 2011 through about 2020 until more accurate, utility-specific intensity factors became available. The Project's 2018 GHG analysis relied on the 805.02 lb/MWh factor and, to maintain consistency and conservatism, the 2024 analysis also applied this same conservative intensity factor.

It is conservative because according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), natural gas-powered electrical generation (which generally is considered one of the lowest GHG producing nonrenewable sources) is 970 lb/MWh³, as reflected in the RFEIR. The GHG Analysis

³ U.S. Energy Information Administration. How much carbon dioxide is produced per kilowatt hour of U.S. electricity generation? (<https://www.eia.gov/tools/faqs/faq.php?id=74&t=11>)

conservatively used an emissions factor of 805.02 lb/MWh, which was derived using CalEEMod's historic intensity described above. Thus, each kWh of solar energy generated by Project solar panels effectively avoids this amount of carbon dioxide emissions and reduces reliance on energy otherwise derived from non-renewable sources. In other words, while it could be defensibly argued that each kWh of renewable generation offsets 970 lb/MWh of GHG emissions, the Project GHG analysis conservatively used 805.02 lb/MWh. If the EIA source of 970 lb/MWh had been used, an additional 17 percent (or roughly 350 to 360 metric tons carbon dioxide equivalent [MT CO₂e]) of GHG emissions avoidance could have been taken. The Project analysis is more conservative in considering the lower emissions avoidance factor derived from CalEEMod as discussed above.

This conservative approach is carried through into the Project's calculation of avoided emissions from solar generation. Based on the emissions factor for non-renewable energy sources from SDG&E described in the 2024 *Global Climate Change Report*, the generation of 6,300 megawatt hours (MWh) of renewable energy from on-site solar panels would avoid approximately 2,310 MT CO₂e of GHG emissions. There is no change to the GHG emissions calculations necessitated by these comments (i.e., commenter tables accompanying the comment(s) do not question or disagree with the basic Project electrical generation numbers or exceedance of energy demand required by the Project). Therefore, mitigation measure M-GHG-1 remains adequate to reduce the Project GHG emissions impact below a level of significance based on the net-zero threshold established in the EIR.

GHG Significance Threshold. The comment also incorrectly states that (despite the Project resulting in no net increase in emissions over existing conditions, and being, therefore carbon neutral by design), the County used an inappropriate significance threshold for assessment of impacts. The commenter points to two attachments provided (and answered) as part of the comments received on the 2024 GHG recirculation.

The threshold of significance considered in the FEIR was established by the County in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4, and the analysis appropriately relies upon a threshold based on the exercise of careful judgement and believed to be appropriate in the context of this particular Project: net zero GHG emissions. The CAP was not relied upon for Project GHG analyses. Reliance upon net zero as an end goal provides a far more conservative emissions analysis than would compliance with the CAP, which would have allowed for some emissions that would not be considered significant and therefore would not require mitigation. As a result, and as described above regarding current GHG emission targets and plans, the Project having net zero GHG emissions does not conflict with current state or local goals and plans for GHG reduction. No change to the GHG significance threshold is required or appropriate.

The CAP states that a project "would normally have a cumulatively considerable contribution to climate change impacts if it is found to be inconsistent with the County's Climate Action Plan." Consistency with the CAP is based on (1) consistency with growth projections and land use assumptions and (2) consistency with the CAP Checklist as stated in the County Guidelines for

Determining Significance for Climate Change (see Appendix 8 of the 2024 CAP). Projects with GPAs cannot be streamlined through the CAP via reliance on the Checklist. Conclusions must be accomplished through a project-specific analysis that determines project-specific GHG emission impacts. That is precisely what has occurred here – a project-specific analysis taking into account emissions and their offsets through project design features (PDFs) and mitigation that were fully disclosed. However, because the Project results in net-zero emissions (i.e., basically an extension of existing conditions, or conditions similar to if the Project was not built at all), there is no conflict with the now-adopted CAP.

Under the CAP, the approved threshold is based on the General Plan allowed land use. The specific Project site would allow up to 220 homes per zoning and would be required to include CAP measures to comply. Under the 2024 CAP, there is no specific methodology identified for attaining CAP consistency for GPAs. The commenter should recognize that qualitatively 220 homes (or, in fact, any number of General Plan consistent homes) even with all the CAP measures incorporated, (e.g., CAP-required levels of EV charging infrastructure, electric appliance installation, solar panel installation, etc.) would not achieve or be required to have net zero emissions. The Project would have fewer emissions than would be assumed under a General Plan project consistent with the CAP.

In a related statement, the commenter claims that the EIR obscures the difference between existing conditions and existing zoning. This comment is only meant to confuse the reader. For context, if the Project were evaluated strictly under a General Plan consistency and CAP Checklist threshold following construction, operational annual CO₂e emissions would occur from area, energy, mobile, solid waste, and water sources. Emissions from a General Plan-consistent single-family development of 220 residences on the Project site would not be required to meet net zero standards. Since the Project has committed to achieving *net zero* GHG emissions, these requirements are not only met but exceeded, demonstrating compliance with the CAP and the CEQA threshold for GHG emissions used in the RFEIR.

The HGV South Project analyses use a net zero benchmark in the opening year (2030), which as stated above, is more conservative than the CAP's threshold associated with approved General Plan land use designations. Statements that the Project “must now correctly analyze” or “reduce the Projects impacts to a level of insignificance” are misleading and incorrectly classify CEQA significance since the net-zero threshold exceeds CAP requirements in the County and state GHG emission reduction requirements calling for net neutral emissions by 2045. As the commenter states, the state's 2045 goal is an 85 percent reduction below 1990 levels. This is not equivalent to net zero since 1990 emissions were well above zero. The GHG Analysis and Project GHG emission reductions go well beyond the County and state goals of achieving net neutrality in 2045 *by achieving net-zero in the year 2030*.

As noted above, the commenter claims that the EIR obscures the difference between existing conditions and existing zoning. This comment is only meant to mislead the reader. *The Project*

GHG analyses described above claim no emissions reduction (or other calculation of net change) based on existing zoning. The mention of existing zoning is related to CAP assumptions for GHG emissions that could be generated at the Project site under existing zoning. This information was provided for clarity relative to CAP assumptions but ***was not used*** to credit the Project with GHG emissions reduction. **It does not affect the ultimately net-zero emissions of the Project that inform the determination of significance.**

The RFEIR is highly conservative and is a model for future projects in achieving a net zero emission goal at the onset of the Project. No change is proposed to the above 2030 analysis or the less than significant CEQA conclusions based on attaining net zero emissions in 2030. It is noted, however, that cumulatively through 2045 the state seeks to attain net neutrality (defined as 85 percent below 1990 levels). The HGV South Project would be one of only a few projects with the gold standard of net zero Project emissions in 2030 and continuing to lessen past 2030 as better technologies are implemented (i.e., as reduced vehicle emissions, more efficient lighting/appliances become available).

Surety of Solar Panel Installation. One letter questioned how the County could require “follow-through” on solar panel installation requirements identified in Project mitigation measure M-GHG-1 when staff could not force HGV to build approved project elements. Completion of certain project elements of a specific plan, such as construction of retail spaces or an equestrian center, is reliant on market demand and economic viability, versus mitigation measures that have clear timing and enforcement triggers monitored by the County as lead agency.

For HGV South, compliance with M-GHG-1 must occur before the first grading permit for the Project can be issued by the County. The solar panels, generating a total of 1,720 kW, are required to be installed on an existing building(s) that does not currently utilize solar energy, is not required to install solar, and is located within the County of San Diego. The Applicant is required to provide a report to the County that proves compliance with the various requirements of M-GHG-1, again before issuance of the first grading permit for the Project can occur.

Moreover, mitigation measure M-GHG-1 is replete with redundant measures and multiple safeguards to ensure that mitigation will be enforced. First, the homeowners’ association (HOA) is required to:

- Monitor the solar system using the module-level monitoring application
- If any solar equipment is found to need repair or replacement, the HOA is responsible for such work being completed as needed in order to maintain the equivalent amount of solar power generated by such panels
- If the repair work is not paid for by the insurance carrier, the HOA will be responsible for ensuring that the repair work is completed
- Annual maintenance and monitoring program will be conducted

- During maintenance, the HOA is responsible for replacing or repairing any of the solar panels as needed in order to maintain the equivalent amount of solar power generated by such panels
- A set aside fund held by the HOA and initially funded by the Applicant will be adjusted each year by the HOA, based on the annual indexed increases in construction costs and expenses consistent with the California Construction Cost Index or similar construction industry standard index, through a reserve study prepared by a qualified consultant, hired by the HOA. The set aside funds may be used to enforce the provisions of the mitigation measure, if needed

The owner of the off-site building will also be required to maintain a policy of insurance to cover the repair or replacement of the solar system. This is fitting, because it is the property owner who benefits from the presence of the solar panels on that owner's property (e.g., lowered electrical bills, greater energy dependability) and the system is being installed at no cost to that owner. The property owner's insurance policy will also name the HOA and County as additional insureds so that payment is always ensured. Additionally, a Covenant recorded against the off-site property shall require the property owner to maintain and/or replace such panels as necessary if the HOA/County does not complete the repair work. The multiple insurance policies and obligations spelled out in the mitigation measure ensure that the maintenance will occur (be enforced). Finally, the County is authorized to enforce the terms and conditions of the mitigation measure and may use the set aside fund to do so.

The issue of mitigation measure enforcement was answered. As stated on page RTC-ReI21-5:

The mitigation measure approved by the County ensures that the individuals who benefit from the Project (residents, off-site property owner, and ultimately the County) are responsible for mitigation following initial set up and funding by the Project Applicant. "Follow through" is the responsibility of the County should the HOA falter. This is normal and appropriate as the County is the lead agency under CEQA responsible for enforcement of mitigation measures.

2. HOUSING

County Delivery of Housing. One letter notes that based on the 2024 Housing Report, the County is ahead of schedule to meet its RHNA allocation for 2029, and that the Project is not needed by the County in meeting its long-term regional need for housing based on the 2024 County Housing Report. Similar comments were provided by the EFHGTC in the July 16, 2025, letter written on their behalf to the Planning Commission. The EFHGTC contends that the Project need not be approved, because the County "no longer has a housing shortage." They contend that "based on the 2024 County Housing Report, the County is well ahead of its RHNA goals with respect to Moderate and Above Moderate affordability categories." The following is excerpted from a letter

provided to the Planning Commission, dated August 18, 2025, in response to these statements (emphasis added)⁴.

However, according to the California Housing Partnership, the County's housing situation is a mixed bag, with some progress being made, but with persistent challenges in affordability and homelessness. They conclude that although the County is on track to meet its overall housing goals, providing housing for its residents remains a significant challenge due to rising housing costs (San Diego County 2025 Affordable Housing Needs Report, May 2025. available at: <https://chpc.net/housingneeds>).

This lack of housing contributes to scarcity and high housing prices that put a strain on the general welfare of all County residents. The Nonprofit Institute of the School of Leadership and Education Sciences paints an even more dire picture:

Housing in 2024 received a thumbs-down rating, primarily attributed to the exorbitant costs associated with both renting and purchasing homes. Only 1 in 10 residents in San Diego County can afford a median-priced home, painting a stark reality of the housing crisis. The prices of median-rate housing and fair market rent have continued to climb in the past 10 years, heightening concerns about the accessibility and affordability of housing for San Diegans. The housing crisis continues to persist in our region and is a pressing emergency. (available at: "https://www.sandiego.edu/soles/centersand-institutes/nonprofit-institute/signatureprograms/dashboard/housing.php).

Nor is the Project's affordable housing the sole reason for the County to approve the Project. The County has identified the following benefits: overall economic benefits (tax revenues); employment opportunities (both increased options and "close-in employment relationship"); social benefits (related to support of existing HGV); provision of a diverse mix (including affordable) of housing; promotion of walking and bicycling; access to employment, education, recreation, entertainment, shopping, and services; social health amenities; full consistency with the County General Plan relative to proximity to a village and amenities, and proximity to urban medical, shopping, educational, and job opportunities; recreational benefits (dedication of public park uses, increased existing and planned regional trail connectivity); biological benefits and open space (with over 31 percent of the site being in a biological open space easement adjacent to an abutting preserve, and enhancement to the biological environment of Escondido Creek); enhanced safety (improvement of access to the south of Escondido Creek in emergency events during both wildfire and flood events, based on a widened roadway, additional travel lane, and a bridge), as well as increased emergency service fees; and addition of renewable energy resources into the SDG&E

⁴ Please see letter sent to the Planning Commission and dated August 18, 2025, attached as Exhibit 2 to this letter and incorporated herein.

grid. These benefits accrue regardless of the County's provision of housing elsewhere and provide a diverse suite of reasons why the Project brings value.

Assertions that meeting a minimum mandatory number of housing units satisfies the shortfall in available housing within the County – to say nothing of the shortfall in affordable and middle market housing – is contrary to the statements of the housing professionals noted above as well as the common knowledge of San Diego County residents searching for dwellings in general and cost-effective options in particular. Meeting a RHNA commitment does not eliminate the value of providing additional housing, especially when partnered with the associated benefits listed in the paragraph above.

Site Development with Fewer Units. One commenter conflates the Board’s discretion to approve or deny the Project with the role of res judicata in situations such as this, where there has been previous litigation over the Project. To be clear, the County has consistently explained that the Board has discretion to approve or deny the Project. As stated in in the RFEIR, Section 8.7.3.1, page 8-153:

“The County agrees that *the Board has the discretion to approve or deny the Project.*”

Moreover, the Staff Report to the Planning Commission (July 22, 2025) states:

“Since the previous Board approvals have been rescinded, *the Planning Commission has discretion to recommend approval or denial of the project*” (Staff Report, page 2).

Once the Board has made a decision to approve or deny the Project, that decision is afforded deference by the courts and carries a strong presumption of regularity and will not be overturned unless the agency has abused its discretion, or if findings do not support the determination or are not supported by substantial evidence (RFEIR, page 8-153). Indeed, the Board is free to deny the Project, so long as it is not arbitrary, capricious, or without evidential support. (No Oil, Inc. v. City of Los Angeles, 196 Cal.App.3d at 243.)

However, *if* the Board were to subsequently approve the Project, finding it consistent *once again* with the General and Community Plans, its decision would be governed by res judicata *in that* the commenter could not raise *the same issues* related to consistency that the courts have already ruled upon in previous litigation. (*Atwell v. City of Rohnert Park* [2018] 27 Cal.App.5th 692.) In spite of the commenter’s attempt to confuse, the *Atwell v. City of Rohnert Park* decision is on point, res judicata applies to the adoption of new findings by the legislative body when a project remains unchanged, there is no change in the material facts, and the same claims are being raised as in the original lawsuit. (*Atwell v. City of Rohnert Park* (2018) 27 Cal.App.5th 692, 701, and 702.)

The RFEIR is not using res judicata as a sword and a shield, rather this commenter would like nothing more than to continue to relitigate the same issues over and over again, hoping for a

different outcome. Yet res judicata prevents a continuous cycle of litigation over the same issues preventing inconsistent rulings, confusing judgments, judicial inefficiency, and unfairness to all involved in such litigation.

The letter also states that Project documents have not “meaningfully engage[d]” or considered that the Project site is already zoned for up to 220 homes on 0.5-acre lots (prior to addressing issues of environmental sensitivity/steep slopes). However, this is simply not true. The potential that a project could occur with a smaller number of units was directly addressed in the 2018 (and 2025) FEIR in both of the General Plan Consistent alternatives (General Plan Consistent with Septic Alternative [49 single-family residences; SFR]; and General Plan Consistent with Sewer Alternative [119 SFR]). These alternatives are described and compared with Proposed Project benefits and impacts on pages 4-9 through 4-21, and summarized on pages S-12 and 13, of the FEIR. Both were ultimately rejected as they would not satisfy Project objectives to the same or greater level than the Proposed Project. Note that a third alternative was also evaluated during responses to comments received prior to 2018 approval – the EFHGTC “Council Alternative.” This additional alternative suggested construction of 119 units and associated utility and recreational uses. It was discussed and rejected in the 2018 FEIR on pages RTC-RO3-64 through -70. None of those alternatives would require a GPA relative to residential density.

The goal of CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6 is to demonstrate the ability to avoid or minimize significant impacts while feasibly attaining most of the objectives. The nature of alternatives addressed in the FEIR was a specific element of Project litigation. The trial court⁵ specifically reviewed the alternatives reviewed, as well as the alternative proposed by EFHGTC prior to 2018 FEIR certification and found that there was no improper rejection of smaller development alternatives. This issue has been raised, litigated, and the County’s document was found adequate under CEQA. The issue is closed.

3. FIRE AND EVACUATION

The great majority of the comments both written and presented at Planning Commission concerned fire safety and were focused on evacuation concerns. However, with reference to fire and evacuation issues, please note the Court of Appeal’s overall conclusion:

“We conclude the EIR contains a CEQA-compliant discussion of the potential wildland fire risks or exacerbation caused by the Project and the fire risks in the Project’s vicinity” (Appellate Decision, page 3).

Additional discussion for clarification is provided below but has been thoroughly discussed and analyzed by the County in the Responses to Comments for the recirculated Subchapter 2.7 even though such topics were not relevant to that recirculation.

⁵ Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Town Council vs County of San Diego, Case No: 37-2018-00042927-CU-TT-CTL.

Past Fires. A number of commenters voiced experience with area fires (e.g., 1996 Harmony Grove, Cedar, Cocos, or “multiple” fires/evacuations; or noted Palisades Fire gridlock). As discussed throughout responses to comments provided to 2024 and 2025 commenters, even direct experience with fires and/or evacuations is not necessarily relevant to a future fire. Fire events are dependent upon specifics that will unfold only during that event. Thus, events that have occurred in different habitats, different topography, and with different levels of development, are not material. For example, during the Camp Fire, residents of Paradise, located within a conifer forest, had to travel nearly 10 miles through forested landscapes to an urbanized area out of harm's way. HGV South is within a grassland and low shrub landscape with less than a mile to urbanized landscapes. Paradise did not include fire-adapted master planned communities, but rather scattered, mostly older structures. The fire environments are drastically different, as are the fire protection features that *were not* in place in Paradise but *would be* in the Project.

The other example often cited by the commenters is the 2014 Cocos Fire, arguing that vehicle congestion during this evacuation event indicated that the evacuation was unsuccessful. However, Captain Brown in 2018 disagreed with this conclusion, testifying that the Cocos Fire evacuation was in fact a success because there was no loss of life during this fast-moving wildfire. (Global Response: 2024 Fire / Evacuation. Section 8.7.4.1, page 8-163.) Moreover, the conditions that surrounded the Cocos Fire evacuation have since improved but were not considered in the comments. For example, the Cocos evacuation process occurred before completion of all roadway improvements by HGV, which included improving segments of Country Club Drive (CCD) and providing a new road to the east (HGV Parkway, which provides an enhanced route east and out of the valley through an HGV-built bridge connection over Escondido Creek into Escondido). These improvements were required to be completed as part of the HGV project and were described in the 2018 FEIR.

It should also be noted that there is a fire station located off HGV Parkway that was built by HGV, road improvements as additionally discussed below, and fire hardening of those roads with fuel modification zones (FMZs) and ongoing maintenance. This was directly addressed in Global Response: 2024 Fire / Evacuation. No additional response is necessary.

Safety Code Updates. Letters noted belief that the County had been remiss in approving the Project in 2018 and would be more so now. Concern was stated regarding belief that the devastating Camp Fire had resulted in stricter codes that the County and fire agencies are ignoring in the interest of approving the Project. These commenters frequently stated that the codes and regulations current during Fire Protection Plan (FPP) and Evacuation Plan authorship had been updated, but that the Project was being allowed to ignore them and is relying on outdated requirements (often cited as restricted to 2015). This is a substantial and important misunderstanding. **To be clear, the Project is NOT relying on outdated requirements.** The Project incorporates Code elements that meet or exceed the current regulations and is consistent with state planning documents.

Building codes addressing fire and evacuation safety were strengthened starting in 2008. As discussed in the FPP and in responses to comments in both 2018 and currently, the County had, and has, some of the strictest requirements for new build required anywhere in the United States.

Revised, updated, and/or new documents relevant to Project analyses were reviewed to ensure that the Project met new standards proposed since 2018 approval. Analysis was provided in both global and individual responses to comments for the following important updates:

- 2014 v. 2023 Code Requirements
- 2010 v. 2024 Secondary Access Modification Requirements
- 2022 California Attorney General Guidelines
- 2022 Statewide Assessment

The summary matrix provided below allows for quick review of some of the more critical current code elements and Project consistency with them. For ease of reference, commenters are additionally referred to focused compiled discussions and associated matrices in Global Responses: Res Judicata and New Information, as well as 2024 Fire / Evacuation. As shown in the matrix below, relative to important issues such as CBC Chapter 7A, hydrant spacing (and associated numbers of hydrants), water pressure, absence of gates, provision of adequate emergency vehicle turn around spacing and removal of parking from potential travel lanes (and more), and provision of enhanced FMZs, again, the **Project meets or exceeds all current Code requirements.**

The strict compliance with the Code requirements means that the Project is not “loosening” requirements under the codes, or “ignoring rules, regulations, and codes.” Rather, the emphatic conclusion is that **the Project complies with today’s Code requirements.**

Item	2014 Code	2023 Code	Current Code Compliance	HGV South Requirement
Fire Flow	2,500 gpm	2,500 to 3,000 gpm	Exceeds	2 x 2,500 dual system = 5,000 gpm
Hydrants	350 feet spacing	Same	Exceeds	300 feet spacing
Road Width	24 foot spacing	Same	Exceeds	24 to 36 feet (one extra travel lane)
Turning Radii	28 feet inside edge	Same	Meets	28 feet inside edge
Grade	Max 20%	Same	Meets	Under 20%
CBC Chapter 7A	Apply all construction ignition-resistant requirements	Same	Meets	Applies stringent Chapter 7A
Hose Pull	150 feet	Same	Meets	150 feet

Item	2014 Code	2023 Code	Current Code Compliance	HGV South Requirement
Turnarounds	Required for lanes over 150 feet	Same	Will Meet	Final project layout/interior streets will be processed through Site Plan Review. RSFFPD will review plans for Fire Code conformance
FMZs	100 feet	Same	Exceeds	FMZs include 110 to 200 feet
Response Time	5 minutes	Same	Exceeds	Less than 3 minutes
Dead End Road Length	800 feet (modifications allowed)	Same	Meets	Findings made and affirmed by the Fire Agency Having Jurisdiction (FAHJ)
Parking	52 spaces	Same	Exceeds	7+ times (343)
Gates	Gates allowed	Same	Meets	No gates proposed

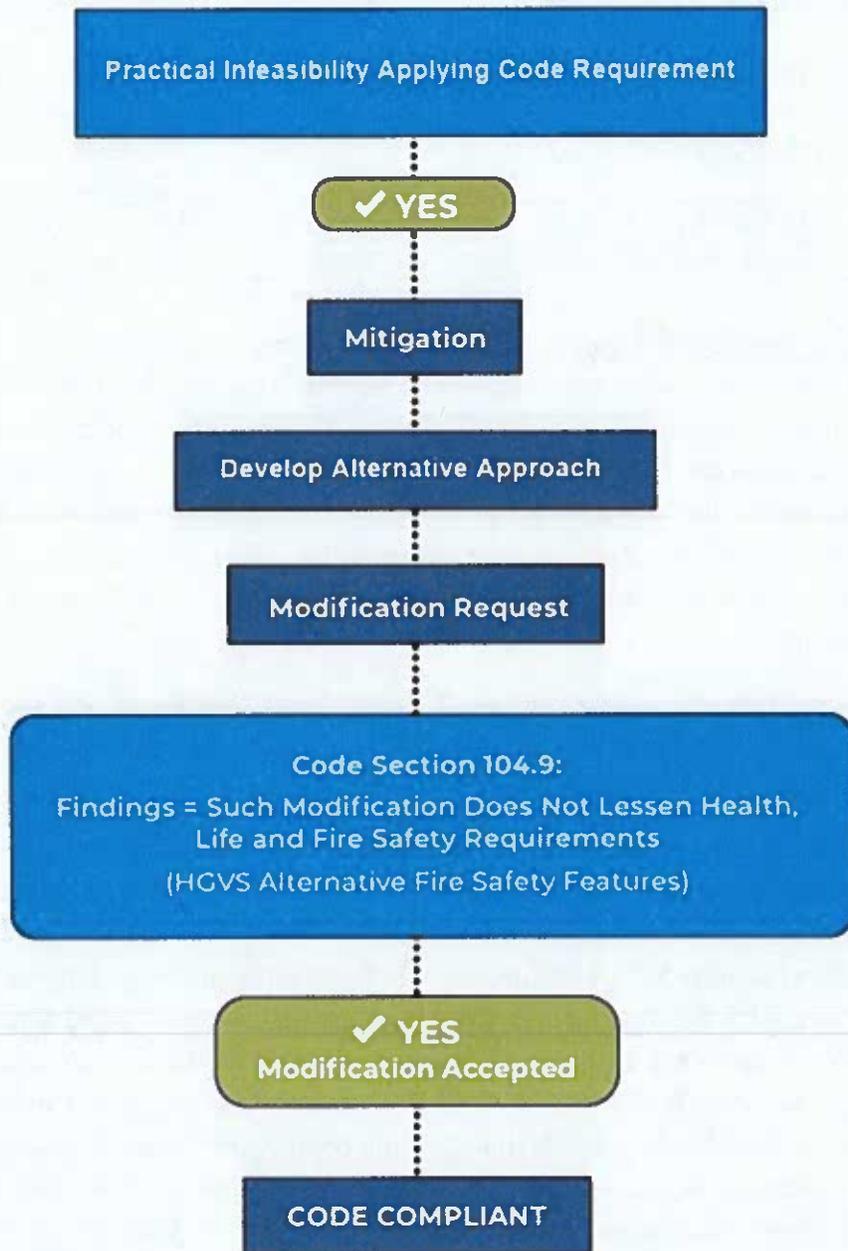
Secondary Access Determined Impracticable. Commenters have consistently stated that the Project (and the Appellate Court) relied on connection to Johnston Road for secondary access purposes but the road is currently impassable. These comments conflate the minor role connection to Johnston Road plays as one component of the alternative compliance measures that were applied to the Project relative to *alternative compliance* as opposed to a designated secondary access. To be clear, connection to Johnston Road was not designated as a secondary access route, nor did the Project rely upon connection to Johnston Road for secondary access. The Court of Appeal clearly understood this point:

“The Project residents *could not use the road [Johnston Road] for secondary access*, but “the roadway would be available for use to connect to Johns[t]on Road (a public roadway to the east)...”

In fact, the oft-repeated request for such secondary access is a thinly veiled request for outright Project denial. **It is well-documented that such access was thoroughly evaluated and found to be infeasible.** Review showed that it would be impossible to build a road wide and flat enough to meet County roadway standards. In addition, the noted opposition from property owners with land crossed by that access by that dirt road further complicated the issue. Legal access rights from those property owners were not available. This appears to still be the case. A letter was filed by Coast Law Group (see Letter ReO2 in 2025 FEIR Volume III) threatening the County with lawsuit even if evacuees are directed to use the route by emergency professionals, much less any (not proposed) Project-related improvements. (This is, by the way, incorrect as the California Regulatory Code allows for evacuation over private roads without private owner permission in case of emergency.) Therefore, the route was identified as infeasible. ***If the Board makes approval***

dependent upon such provision, the infeasibility of providing it will render the approval invalid, and the many benefits of the Project will not be realized by the County and neighboring residents.

As explained in the Project's FPP (Dudek 2018), the Project requested a modification from the dead-end road length requirements of the County's Consolidated Fire Code (Fire Code Section 503.1.3). (The typical mitigation for exceeding the dead-end road length is to provide secondary access, however, if secondary access is found impracticable (infeasible), a project can meet the intent of the Fire Code by proposing alternative compliance measures.) The Code-specified path for Code modification is schematically depicted below.



Eight separate potential secondary access routes were evaluated, including a dirt road that led to Johnston Road to the east (the dirt road connection to Johnston Road commonly referred to as “Johnston Road” by commenters). As detailed in the FPP (pages 20, 33-35), and FPP Appendix C, all of the potential routes had a number of constraints due to topographic and ownership constraints, including connection to Johnston Road, and were therefore determined to be impracticable (infeasible). Because this was the case for all routes, the Project proposed meeting the intent of the Fire Code relative to dead-end road length through a combination of measures that would provide an equivalent system of fire safety. Nothing has changed regarding the abutting topography or ownership constraints in the intervening years. Therefore, nothing has changed relative to the assessment of formal secondary access as being impracticable.

The FPP describes in detail the measures meeting or exceeding Code that provide a system of fire safety to address the requested dead end road length modification and the inability to provide secondary access (FPP pages 35-52). The proposed list of measures is shown below.



Community Preparation and Hardening

- Site-wide and extended FMZs (Fuel Modification Zones)
- Ember-resistant vents
- Landscape plan review and annual inspections
- Restricted landscaping next to buildings
- Trash enclosures 10 feet from buildings
- Fire Flow exceeding standard
- Fire hydrants exceeding code
- Exceed Chapter 7A building hardening
- Annual fire operation contribution
- Automatic and Mutual Aid Agreements
- Fast response from existing fire station



Increased Evacuation Capacity

- Third Travel Lane
- New Bridge Crossing
- Opticom signaled intersection
- Three Separate Egress Points
- No gates or speed bumps
- Potential Private Dirt Road Connection
- Parking Management Plan
- 7x parking spaces



Community/Infrastructure/Planning

- Community building – refuge site
- Shelter in place capability
- Continuity with urban areas
- Road maintenance entity
- Signage/Way-Finding Plan
- Emergency preparedness plan
- Evac coordination with OES

As shown, the alternative compliance measures included a range of items, with one of the most significant being provision of an additional travel lane for all roads on site that are within 800 feet of Project structures (see FPP heading “Access and Parking”), to requiring contingency planning if evacuation from the site would be considered unsafe (see FPP heading “Emergency and Evacuation Planning”).

The oft-referenced connection to Johnston Road was listed as one of 6 items under the alternative compliance measure labeled as “Access and Roads” in the Project’s FPP among the total of 26 measures. The FPP described this dirt road as traversing the HGV South site connecting to County Club Drive (CCD) on the west and Johnston Road to the east. Three to four off-site residences currently have access rights across the Project site but HGV South does not have access rights to the off-site portion of the road that would allow access to the public roadway to the east. The FPP explicitly stated that the road did not meet the Fire Code, and varied in width, surface, and grade. Thus it was *not* recognized as a secondary access route (FPP, page 40). But because the dirt road connected with Johnston Road to the east and was at that time accessible by vehicles (and continues to have a substantial portion of the road still accessible, as substantiated by the three to four off-site residences that used and continue to use at least portions of the dirt road) it could potentially be available for use in an emergency situation should CCD not be available. Therefore, it was listed as one of many alternative compliance measures shown above.

The suite of compliance measures was reviewed and approved by the emergency and fire professionals responsible for responding to emergencies. The RSFFPD fire chief has gone on record as finding that the intent of the code has been met and would not lessen health, life, and fire safety requirements. Representatives of RSFFPD, the San Diego County Sheriff’s Department (SDCSD), and CAL Fire have variously confirmed these findings at Project hearings in both 2018 and 2025. The information was summarized in FEIR Section 3.1.3, *Hazards and Hazardous Materials*, reiterated in 2018 FEIR Volume II in Global Responses: Adequacy of Emergency Evacuation and Access, as well as in FEIR Volume III Global Responses: Res Judicata and New Information, and 2024 Fire / Evacuation.

The matrix below provides a simplified version of the discussion detailed on RFEIR pages 8-123 through -125, and again on pages 8-168 through -187. The Project analyses met not only the five criteria identified in the 2010 Code and the 2024 Code, but also the additional two administrative clarifications added to the 2024 Code.

Fire Code 2010 Guidelines: 5.7.1 Required Findings for Alternatives to Standards	Yes?	Fire Code 2024 Guidelines: 5.10.3 Required Findings for Alternatives to Standards
Code authorizes fire code official to approve modification with Findings.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Same, Done
1. Special individual reasons make strict letter of the code impracticable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Same, Done “material facts support need for modification” = “individual reasons”
2. Modification complies with intent and purpose of code	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Same, Done “and provides same practical effect”
3. Modification does not lessen health, life, and fire safety standards	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Same, Done
4. Documentation of modification must appear in FPP and in FAHJ files	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Same, Done
5. Map shows proposed location of the mitigation/exception measures	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Same, Done “if applicable”
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6. Identify specific section(s) for modification Done 2018 FPP identified Section 503.1.3, Dead End Road Lengths
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7. Details of the modification or mitigating measure proposed Done 2018 FPP “Findings and Mitigation Conclusion.” 26 measures combine to provide highly defensible community, offer equivalent egress, and provide contingency planning if site evacuation is deemed unsafe (pp. 36-42)

The conclusion of the fire professionals was cited by the Court of Appeal on pages 48 and 49 of the Appellate Decision:

Both the San Marcos Station Commander and a CAL FIRE Unit Chief testified before the Board and agreed the Project’s evacuation plan was sufficient, the CAL FIRE Unit Chief describing the addition of a third lane as a “game changer.”

And in an associated footnote, the Court cites:

The San Marcos Station Commander said: “I reviewed this particular plan and the other ones for what infrastructure they have, the ability to move them, how many people there are, and I’m confident we can evacuate these people given the situation. Now, people want to talk about what particular road we’ll use, how will this happen, what about the existing people. I first have to see the situation to tell

you what I would do, but I've done it before. My agency has done it many times, and I think we've gotten very good in this county of how to evacuate people. I like the three-lane bridge. Choke points bridges [sic] are generally a problem when moving people. Three lanes give you alternatives... Having three [lanes] is a route game changer as far as two lanes out and one still to get in. And then if there's a problem in the roadway—a medical problem—something always happens—it still doesn't completely tie up traffic. So I've looked at it. I'm confident. I understand there are residents that disagree with me. But I've been doing this for going on 28 years and I've been involved in every major fire and we're able to get people out.

The FPP accounted for Johnston Road not being used for evacuation. Even if Johnston Road was unusable as described by the commenters, the potential inability to use that road does not affect the Project's overall fire safety because this concern was contemplated by the FPP that included contingencies for temporary refuge should evacuation not be possible. As stated in the FEIR on page 8-173, the potential for emergency responders to direct use of the dirt road was not relied upon in safety findings by the Court of Appeal. The Court addressed the possibility that that evacuation may be unavailable:

Further, the EIR and its supporting wildfire-related studies do not ignore a scenario where evacuation routes become unusable. The EIR and fire plan evaluate 'the potential for impairment of a single road by vehicle congestion, condition of terrain, climatic conditions or other factors,' explaining that the Project adopted an alternative approach to implement fire protection and evacuation measures that meets fire code requirements. Widening [CCD] was not the sole method to lessen the risks. The Project clusters residential development so as to minimize proximity of homes to wildland fuels and create a defensible perimeter, and the Project proposes a contingency plan for moving people to temporary refuge locations such as homes or the club house... (Appellate Decision, page 54-55 [emphasis added]).

The Appellate Court goes on to explain that the County is entitled to believe its fire officials, experts by virtue of their jobs and years of experience, over the opinion of other experts who provide competing conclusions or opponents to the Project.

To the extent respondents challenge those measures as inadequate or ineffective mitigation, we conclude the board was entitled to choose to believe the fire officials who signed off on them... [and t]he EIR's conclusion that Project fire safety measures reduce fire hazards to a level of insignificance is supported by substantial evidence, namely the fire-related expert studies (Appellate Decision, page 55).

Degraded Johnston Road Connection. Regarding the degraded state of the dirt road connecting to Johnston Road, it is possible that abutting property owners have ceased whatever amount of maintenance they previously provided. As stated above, the road was considered "passable" by

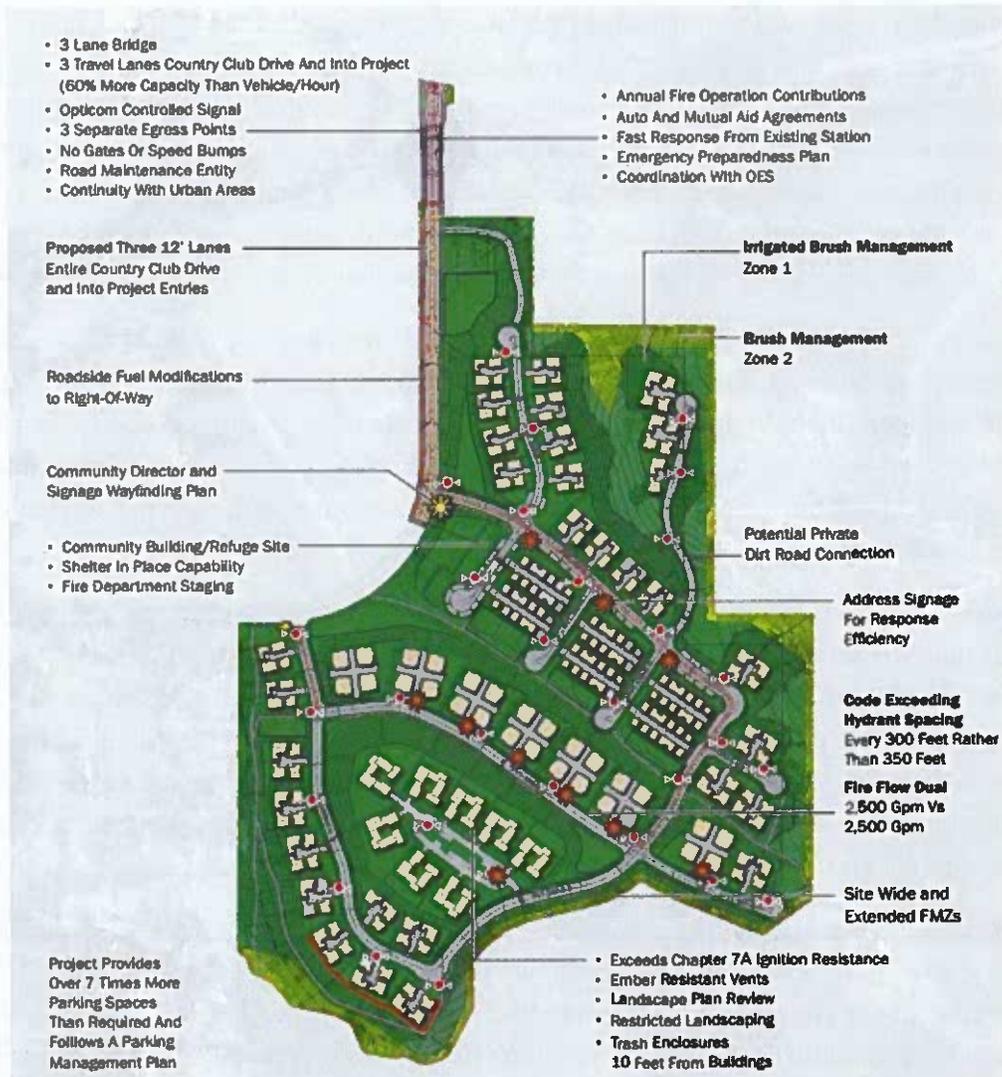
some vehicles by the fire professionals that prepared and/or reviewed the FPP during initial Project review. The route was also expressly addressed in Project responses to comments for the 2025 FEIR, with corrections shown regarding some commenter-submitted photos. (Some photos appear to have not been taken from/of the road based on background photo elements.) It is also noted that a boulder is now located on route. Not present at 2018 Project approval (and in fact, not present based on satellite photographs from May 18, 2024), the boulder shows up by September 11, 2024, following circulation of the GHG updates and knowledge that the Project was moving forward.

Regardless, as referenced in brief clips from a video at the Planning Commission hearing, one resident appears to have relatively recently driven the road. Based on that information alone, it appears that the road (including boulder removal, which could be simply pushed to the side) could be passable and returned to 2018 conditions (i.e., “existing” conditions for CEQA purposes) and would be a logical action for the existing homeowners who live amongst the wildland fuels to undertake in an emergency.

There have also been a number of other misstatements made related to secondary access. First, not having a designated secondary access road is not a violation of California Fire Code. Second, not “every other project” is required to have secondary access, and the Fire Code does not contain a “minimum requirement” of multiple exits. This has been repeatedly clarified in responses to comments. In fact, the Fire Code contemplates that there may be some instances where secondary access is impracticable/infeasible and allows alternative measure(s) to meet this requirement (e.g., alternative compliance).

This has been addressed exhaustively in 2025 FEIR responses to comments as well as in the discussion above under the heading “Secondary Access Determined Impracticable.” As stated above, nothing about the infeasibility of providing secondary access has changed. Similarly, nothing has changed about the conservative nature of the fire-hardened Project being proposed for Board consideration. Following review of 2024/25 comments and responses, the findings of the Fire Authority Having Jurisdiction (FAHJ) also have not changed.

Third, the Project is not seeking a “waiver.” Rather, as explained earlier, complying with the Fire Code in this manner is not a waiver of a code requirement, rather it is considered alternative compliance that allows for dead end road lengths to exceed 800 feet without a designated secondary access road. Again, the Project’s compliance with the Fire Code means the Project is not “loosening” requirements under the codes, or “ignoring rules, regulations, and codes.” The emphatic conclusion is rather that **the Project complies with the relevant codes**. The compliance finding reflects numerous strict design requirements. As indicated in the matrix above, and as illustrated below, the Project proposed a suite of design measures that are the equivalent of secondary access in terms of safety. These were and are detailed in the FPP and FEIR Section 3.3.3, *Hazards and Hazardous Materials* and depicted on Figure 3.1.3-1, *Fire Protection Features*, of the 2018 and 2025 FEIRs. Alternative features also were highlighted in Global Response: Res Judicata and New Information, and are additionally shown below, again based on the original Figure 3.1.3-1.



Evacuation Constraints and Timeframe. References were made to the tragic loss of an Elfin Forest resident during the 1996 Harmony Grove Fire evacuation.⁶ One commenter relayed a response generated by AI to his queries on evacuation. This latter comment is not additionally addressed below. AI is not relied upon for evacuation planning. Based on the information provided, the AI “model” did not contain the many specifics regarding meteorology, roadway options, temporary refuges, fire station proximity, presence of on-site emergency professionals, etc. that

⁶ Per the Olivenhain Fire Safe Council discussion of area fire history (<https://www.olivenhainsfc.org/fire-history>, accessed 8/26/25) the October 21, 1996, fire started west of HGR about 1.0 mile north of Questhaven Road. The blaze raced through Elfin Forest toward Olivenhain before the wind changed course and the fire went into La Costa instead. Three Olivenhain structures burned, and one neighbor was tragically lost. As described in Global Response: 2024 Fire / Evacuation on page 8-164: this tragic death “is not relevant to the current Project. Fire planning, fire-resistant building requirements, evacuation planning, fire station location, and physical conditions related to roads and development in the Project vicinity have changed within the last approximately 30 years. While Mr. Hammond’s loss was tragic, it does not affect adequacy of the Project environmental analyses relative to fire safety.

the actual Project evaluation included; nor could it incorporate the detailed “hands on” knowledge of the local fire experts.

Commenters (including the petitioner in the previous litigation) also noted that additional homes have been added or are planned to be added to the area since the Cocos Fire (HGV, Valiano, and proposed HGV South) which would further complicate and restrict evacuation compared to the Cocos experience, referencing an evacuation analysis provided by the commenter’s Utah-based consultant. Other related comments, relying on the Utah consultant, contend that the “single-lane [CCD] and Harmony Grove Road [HGR]” will be burdened by these additional residents all exiting in a major regional emergency.

However, these comments fail to consider the significant road improvements and changes in the fire environment that accompany these new projects. Specifically:

- HGV provided road improvements that included improving segments of CCD, construction of a bridge connection over Escondido Creek, and construction of a new road to the east (HGV Parkway, which provides an enhanced route east and out of the valley through the HGV-built bridge connection into Escondido). These improvements were contemplated in the 2018 FEIR and have since been completed. See also FEIR Table 8.3.5-1, Harmony Grove Village Roadway Network Assumption Status.
- The Valiano project (approved by substantial conformance, December 6, 2024) will add a new fire emergency access road from Hill Valley Drive to La Moree within the City of San Marcos, providing an alternative route to the north separate from CCD.
- Construction of Citracado Parkway has since been completed as projected in the 2018 FEIR (see detailed discussion in Global Response: 2024 Fire / Evacuation) and would further facilitate future evacuation efforts. The roadway was actually completed in 2024, providing access from CCD all the way to Auto Park Way, delivering drivers directly into urban Escondido.
- The Project will construct CCD with three minimum 12-foot-wide travel lanes, from the intersection of HGR and CCD to the southernmost Project entrance, providing additional capacity for emergency vehicle access and evacuation. The Project will include three access points with CCD, a short distance (from 0.1 to 0.25 mile) to HGR. At this point, there are at least three different route options toward urbanized Escondido or San Marcos (see depiction below regarding access/egress roads).

Similarly, such comments do not contemplate the decreased risk of home ignition within new developments, such as the Project, HGV or Valiano. Projects within fire hazard zones are required to provide levels of planning, ignition-resistant construction, access, water availability, fuel modification, and construction materials and methods that have been developed specifically to allow safe development within these areas. Moreover, master-planned communities like HGV are built at land use densities that are not only safer for the residents within HGV but the developments can also function as large, irrigated fire breaks that would be expected to modify fire spread by

preventing large scale wildland fires from spreading across that project site. (Refer to Global Response: 2024 Fire / Evacuation for additional discussion.) As illustrated in the diagram above, the Project includes a number of measures that exceed the Fire Code, including FMZs that surround the development footprint and exceed County and RSFFPD standards. The Appellate Court concluded that the Project identified several PDFs that functioned as:

a layered fire protection system designed to current codes with “site-specific measures that will result in a Project that is less susceptible to wildfire than surrounding landscapes and that would facilitate firefighter and medical aid response as well as project resident evacuation in a wildfire emergency (Appellate Decision, page 35).

Finally, expecting evacuation to occur all at once in any location is unrealistic and simply not done. As explained in detail in the RFEIR (pages 8-162 and 8-163) the recent evolution of evacuation management has incorporated technological solutions for evacuating smaller populations as part of a phased approach which meters evacuating vehicles out over a longer timeframe when advantageous to do so. However, evacuations that include large populations involve traffic congestion and are managed events. The SDCSD during the HGV South Planning Commission Hearing in 2018⁷, expressed confidence that SDCSD could safely evacuate HGV and the Elfin Forest area.

The comments provided by the Utah consultant were answered in full in responses to Comment Letters O6a and O6b and with respect to res judicata in Section 8.7.1.5 of the RFEIR, page 8-107. Analogous comments were also made in 2018 by another consultant hired by EFHGTC. The Court’s response was succinct and similarly would apply to the conclusions of the new Utah consultant. As stated on page 8-114 of the FEIR:

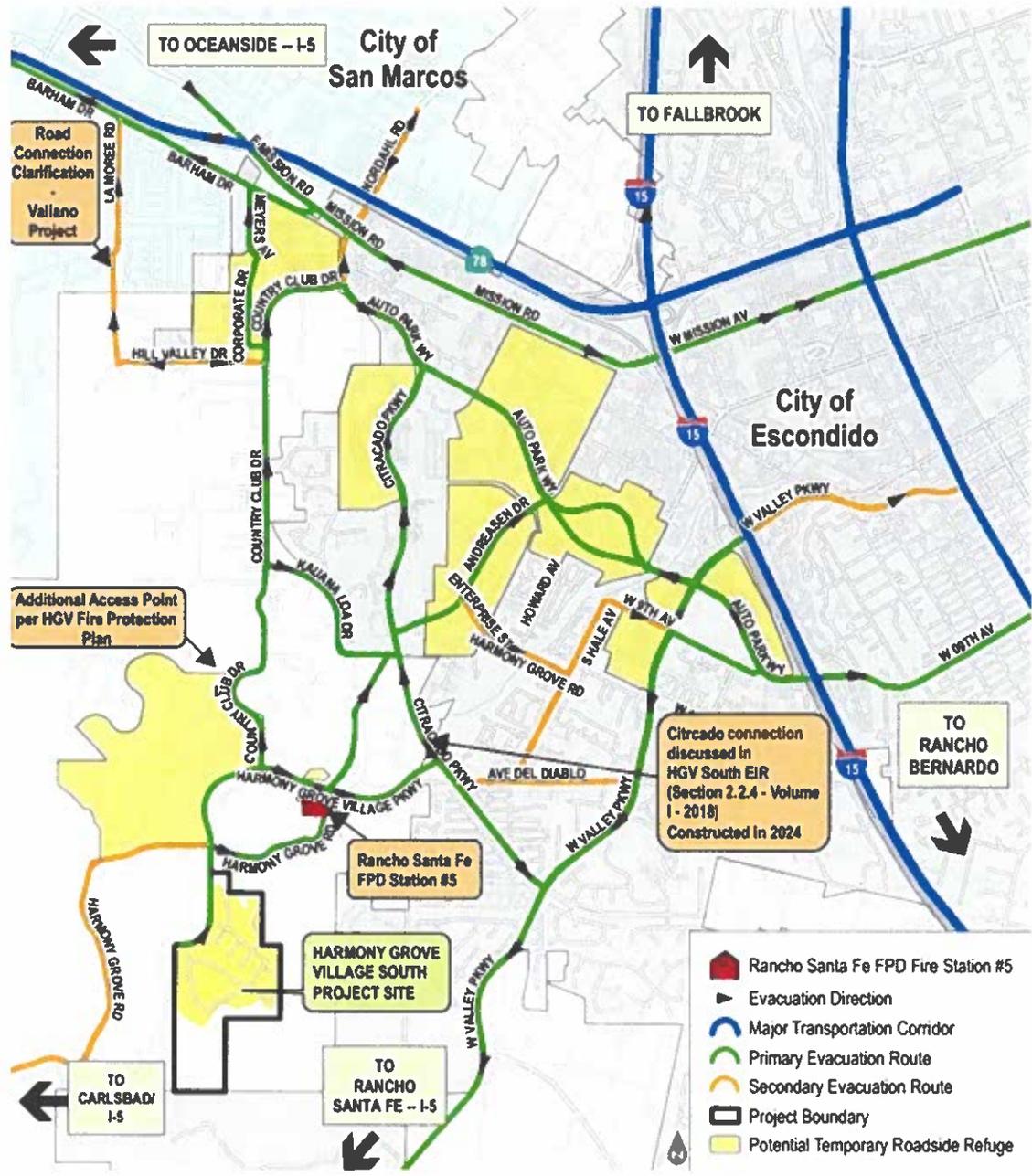
Respondents’ arguments concerning the analysis of evacuation times are unavailing. The EIR engaged in a calculation of the evacuation time on [CCD] using the capacity of vehicles per hour, in keeping with the formula set out in the County’s Operational Area Emergency Operations Plan (Appellate Decision, page 53 [emphasis added]).

As addressed in the Global Response: 2024 Fire / Evacuation, the information introduced by the comments did not consider all the relevant information and did not raise material new information. For additional information, note that specific discussion was provided in responses to comments that address “safe” roads for evacuation (ReOb-5), assumed intersection control during evacuation (ReO6b-6), an incorrect assumption that evacuees would only be “safe” once they are north of the CCD and HGR intersection (ReO6b-7), simultaneous evacuation of HGV South and surrounding

⁷ Planning Commission Hearing (https://sdcountry.granicus.com/player/clip/2657?view_id=12&redirect=true) at approximately 4 hours 42 minutes.

community (ReO6b-8), discussion of variations in wildfire spread and potential to temporarily shelter on site (ReO6b-9), and safety of legacy residents (ReO6b-11 and -12).

Evacuation Plan Regional Evacuation Routes. Additional comments incorrectly noted that the Project did not present a regional evacuation plan but focused only on the Project locale. This simply ignores the actual analysis in the Project Evacuation Plan which considered the Project and Project area, specifically the residents living to the south of the Project that would benefit from the CCD enhancements from Valiano as well as the Citracado Parkway improvements anticipated in the 2018 FEIR. The plan also looked at roads into both San Marcos and the City of Escondido.



As provided in the FEIR in Global Responses: Res Judicata and New Information and 2024 Fire / Evacuation, the depiction is based on Figure 2 of that plan, with the addition of the La Moree exit.

As shown on the above depiction, Citracado Parkway provides an alternative north-south route if CCD is closed, with two ways to access it from HGV Parkway. It also provides a major connection southerly to West Valley Parkway for evacuees wishing to move south or more easterly. Similarly, moving through the Valiano Project south of Hill Valley Drive would also avoid a substantial section of CCD. These alternative routes provide availability to divide traffic moving northerly if it is not diverted altogether to the east, addressing the commenter's concern over potential CCD closure.

It is also noted that the 2016 Rohde and Associates *Wildfire Risk Analysis*, which has been and is on the County Project website, specifically addresses risks as well as evacuation routes in the vicinity. The Local Fire History Map addressed fires from 1910 and regional text is provided on pages 6 and 7.

The Harmony Grove region is within an historic wildfire corridor. Santa Ana wind driven fires typically begin east of the area and travel through Harmony Grove, and threaten Elfin Forest, San Marcos, Encinitas, Escondido, Carlsbad, Rancho Santa Fe, and other communities nearby. In addition to the 2014 Cocos wildfire, other regional historic wildfires in proximity to the proposed development site include: the Del Dios Fire of 1997 which consumed 3,000 acres, the 1996 Harmony Grove Fire caused one fatality 7 and consumed 125 homes and burned over 8,000 acres, the 1991 Paint Fire which burned 3,000 acres, and an unnamed fire in 1943 that burned 40,428 acres. The regional average fire return interval is 7 years, considering all historical wildfires within 3 miles radius. Many of these fires denuded slopes of vegetation and flood cycles followed, which could impact Escondido Creek near the project site if feeder-watershed areas were burned.*

It also specifically addresses HGV (addressing the refuge areas provided in different locales associated with that project) as well as the legacy residents located in the vicinity of HGV South (and consistent with HGV South evacuation and temporary refuge analyses).

Also, the Rohde and Associates *Wildland Urban Interface Fire Emergency Plan* (also on the County Project website since 2016) is clearly a regional document. It addresses both new and older intermix conditions, and identifies entrapment threats along Escondido Creek, in the "Spiritualist Camp" along upper Cordrey Road and Crestwind Drive areas. It addressed powerlines between Harmony Grove and Encinitas, wood bridges across Escondido Creek, equine and other large animals in Harmony Grove and Eden Valley, hikers in Elfin Forest Recreational Preserve, Questhaven Retreat at the top of a ridge north of Escondido Creek, priorities in evacuation, staging areas (south of the HGR/CCD intersection, as well as at Elfin Forest Road and Questhaven, the Lake Hodges parking lot, Palomar Medical Center, and into Escondido), and evacuation assembly points. This is clearly a regional plan.

The SDCSD looked at the Project, considered it in context with the larger area, and determined that they could amass 100 deputies if needed to manage an evacuation event (Captain Brown, 2018 Planning Commission Hearing, beginning at 4 hours 45 minutes). Specific to technical professionals' opinion regarding regional issues, please note that as cited in the Appellate Court Decision on pages 48 and 49 (text provided in the discussion on "Secondary Access Determined Impracticable," above).

The presence of surrounding communities and both expected and likely future fire events are old news. Nothing new is presented here that differs from conditions known during Project document preparation. As noted in the 2018 FEIR in the Project Description on page 1-27 (emphasis added):

Because the development is so far along in construction (homes were available for sale in May 2015) presence of that project is included as a baseline environmental condition (an existing condition) in this EIR... In this rapidly changing existing setting, this approach is considered the most analytically conservative and of most informational value. It takes into consideration the shifting nature of the area, and does not tie analyses to a point in time which has already changed since the NOP issuance.

The concept of HGV inclusion as built was important enough to merit a global response in 2018, addressed in Section 8.3.5, *Baseline Conditions*. Both the HGV and Valiano projects were included in the HGV South cumulative projects list, and the existing setting of other area development was well documented in the EIR (see at a minimum, Figure 1-3, *Area Land Uses*, which depicts surrounding development north into San Marcos and east into Escondido). HGV as built was also referenced throughout the EIR where relevant. For example, EIR page 2.2-5 notes that:

As stated under Harmony Grove Village Network Conditions, the HGV project is currently under construction. With the completion of the project anticipated in the near term, a conservative assumption was made that the total traffic generated by HGV would be on the street system prior to the opening day of the Proposed Project. It is therefore included under existing baseline conditions, and assumes the greatest number of trips from that project on the road. The trip assignment taken from the HGV Final EIR was added to the existing 2014 traffic data to arrive at the final existing traffic volume conditions.

Specifically relevant to traffic, the HGV South evacuation time frame of 500 cars per hour per lane (as opposed to the standard 1,900 cars per hour per lane) specifically included slower speeds for evacuation conditions and accommodates the anticipated large vehicles with animal trailers – a use not allowed for HGV South. ***Clearly, those large animal trailers would be associated with area (i.e., regional) uses. They would not be coming from HGV South.***

As the Court stated: **“We conclude the EIR’s discussion of evacuation routes and timing satisfies CEQA requirements”** (Appellate Decision, page 51). This is **emphatically not new information**. Please also refer to Global Response: Res Judicata and New Information.

Consistent with the Court’s finding, note that the fire professionals who have reviewed plans and presented testimony at Project hearings and who will be present at the Board Hearing on October 1, 2025, evaluate ability to evacuate relative to all who will be directed to do so. They do not look at evacuation in an isolated and unrealistic bubble. Their job is to get everyone out (legacy residents, new community members, etc.), as well as the individuals generally out last – the emergency personnel. Again, as the Court stated:

“We conclude the EIR’s discussion of evacuation routes and timing satisfies CEQA requirements” (Appellate Decision, page 51).

Last Resort Temporary Refuge / Shelter in Place. Comments noted that potential for sheltering in place comprises “wishful thinking” as individuals who want to “get out” will leave regardless of direction provided by fire emergency professionals, that lack of secondary access is not addressed by installing more hydrants, that the Community Plan was designed to protect against entrapment during wildfires, and the potential for rapid change in fire behavior as seen on day 2 of the Cocos Fire when actions characterized as “mop up” by the commenter quickly morphed in a “full blown rager” in less than 10 minutes.

Relative to potential for temporary sheltering in place being “wishful thinking” as a projection of anticipated future responses, this cannot be directly answered other than to state that area residents are expected to be law-abiding citizens who will contribute to the overall safety of themselves and their neighbors by following direction from qualified emergency personnel with knowledge of the regional condition – whether it is to evacuate or to shelter at an appropriate location.

Regarding the lack of secondary access not being addressed through more hydrants, the commenter is correct. It is suggested, however, that the commenter look at the underlying purpose of evacuation, which is to attain safety. **The additional number of hydrants is one of a suite of design elements that harden the Project against fire.** It allows for easier and more numerous hookups for hoses and is one of the many elements that directly contribute to fire professional assessment that the Project can provide temporary refuge. *Since that refuge has been repeatedly acknowledged as open to legacy residents in the Project area, it directly affects their ability to exit what may be a residence not built to current code, or potentially surrounded by flammable vegetation, and attain a nearby site that has had large swaths of flammable vegetation modified, is irrigated, and contains both structures and open space identified by fire professionals for refuge.*

As stated in Response to Comment ReO6b-11:

While the preferred approach is always evacuation from wildfires, the Project design and enforced maintenance over time results in a landscape and buildings that are

built for the types of wildfire that may occur in the area and would not require evacuation if it was considered unsafe to do so. The contingency option of on-site refuge or sheltering is an accepted component of new, master planned communities.

This becomes especially important when one takes into account the very real events that can take place in a fire. Winds can quickly and unexpectedly shift, as mentioned in the comment regarding going from a “mop up” event to a “full-blown rager.” Also, one cannot always assume the exact origin of a fire. If it begins on your property boundary, it can become threatening much more quickly than if it is miles away and being monitored by professionals. The commenter is correct that there may be very little time to even notify fire officials of a fire, much less have them be able to respond directly to the site in time. Given these understandable concerns about potential wildfire events and speed of fire movement, the rejection of Project elements that could actually offer succor is confusing.

If the Project is approved, it will convert a two-lane road with an Arizona crossing under dense vegetation to a hardened section of CCD and much safer passage over Escondido Creek. These Project design elements would actually help existing residents south of the Project get to broader evacuation route options (north, west, and east) more quickly and with much less potential for overburn from tree canopy than currently exists. The three-lane road proposed by the Project would also facilitate arrival of emergency responders. And where there is no time to inform emergency responders, and certainly not time for them to respond, within a constrained time frame, limited time might be well used for a nearby resident to move themselves a few hundred feet down the road to a fire-hardened community, where it would be possible to weather the fire in safety until evacuation was again possible. The Project provides that option.

In fact, the Appellate Court concluded that the Project considered temporary refuge as a “**contingency option** where evacuation routes are rendered unsafe” (Appellate Decision, page 48) and identified a number of design features that would function as:

a layered fire protection system designed to current codes with ‘site specific measures that will result in a Project that is less susceptible to wildfire than surrounding landscapes and that would facilitate firefighter and medical aid response as well as project resident evacuation in a wildfire emergency’ (Appellate Decision, page 35 [emphasis added]).

Access / Egress for “Other Projects.” Contrast was drawn between HGV South and HGV, which a commenter notes “has four exits onto two roads” for evacuation and the Valiano Project, which has fewer homes but was required to provide secondary access via La Moree.

Relative to numbers of exits from HGV, it is noted that HGV physically abuts two roadways, whereas HGV South physically abuts one. HGV evacuees would exit onto either CCD or HGR and then follow the same options for evacuation as shown in the Project Evacuation Plan; i.e., having options to travel north, east, or west from the vicinity of the HGR and CCD intersection.

The number of exits from Project property onto the abutting roadway is three for HGV South. Once on CCD, the point at which vehicles could be directed north, west, or south, would occur in a maximum of 2,010 feet. In fact, an HGV resident living in the vicinity of Long Trot Drive would have to travel approximately 4,800 feet from home to access CCD, whereas HGV South residents would travel substantially less (a worst-case distance of approximately 3,800 feet from the farthest home from CCD to the intersection with HGR). In fact, existing residents south and west of the Project also would generally travel less than the noted 4,800 feet and would accomplish part of that route on Project improved, widened, and vegetatively controlled improved CCD.

Relative to why Valiano may have been required to provide secondary access when the number of units is fewer, the two items are unrelated. Fire safety requires professional evaluation of which design elements or remedies best protect residents, and those criteria are not tied to number of residents. Each life is considered important and decisions are not made based on danger to one versus many. Rather, consideration is based on constraints and opportunities. In the case of Valiano, an option existed for improvement of an existing dirt road. For HGV South, topographic constraints resulting in grades, road width and turn radii that do not meet secondary access requirements and resident opposition eliminate potential for providing secondary access. As a result, **and in compliance with Fire Code requirements, a suite of design measures was developed that comprise the equivalent of secondary access in terms of safety.** Please refer to discussion under “Secondary Access Determined Impracticable,” above.

Project Topography, Vegetation and Associated Analysis. Comments note that the Project is in a topographic “bowl,” is located within a very high fire hazard safety zone (VHFHSZ), and/or “surrounded” by thousands of acres of open space. These issues were specifically addressed in Global Responses: Res Judicata and New Information, as well as 2024 Fire / Evacuation. As noted, the Project’s location relative to setting, as well as presence in a VHFHSZ, were all disclosed and discussed in the FPP. In terms of topographic reference, the term “bowl” can be interpreted to indicate a constrained or closed-in location with a bottom of a certain elevation, surrounded by topographic features of generally consistent heights. Here, the Project is located at the southern extent of a long valley of various widths, with the highest topographic features to the west, lower (but still notable) features to the south, and more open areas with intermittent hills to the east and north. It is not a tightly constrained topographic feature.

The issue of the site being in a VHFHSZ was specifically addressed on page 8-104 of the FEIR. The issue had been so frequently discussed that it made the Appellate Court Decision text (emphasis added):

“[t]he final EIR acknowledges that the *Project lies within an area statutorily designated as a ‘Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone.’*” (Appellate Decision, page 33), and that “[b]oth *Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove are rural communities in very high wildland fire threat areas*” (Appellate Decision, page 4).

Critical environmental criteria were clearly incorporated into the modeling, not ignored. Fire behavior modeling assumed worst case habitat, relevant slopes, and Santa Ana winds, and also used a model that assumes higher flame height and faster spread rates for chaparral scrub than actually usually occurs. As stated on page 8-167 of the FEIR (emphases added):

Fire behavior modeling results using FM4 exceed observed fire behavior in all but the most extreme conditions. this model is rarely used in modern fire behavior modeling due to the release of more customized southern California models which are more accurately reflective of (and reduce) the FM4 fuel model longer flame length, faster spread rates and greater heat output assumed for chaparral fuels, particularly like those found near the HGV South Project (2018 FPP Appendix E page E-2). Because the conservative (overpredicting) FM4 fuel model was applied, however, the resulting fire behavior information represents conditions that are worse (i.e., more conservative) than those actually occurring at the site. Because of this modeling effort and its results, the HGV South analysis is considered consistent with the conditions described in comments generally concerned about increase in fire number and intensity due to climate change.

The Appellate Court concludes that:

We conclude the EIR contains a CEQA-compliant discussion of the potential wildland fire risks or exacerbation caused by the Project and the fire risks in the Project's vicinity and that substantial evidence supports its conclusion that the Project measures would reduce them to a level of insignificance (Appellate Decision, page 40).

Adjacent Roadways and Potential Constraints. Comments note the narrow nature of area roads and anticipated closure of those evacuation routes due to heavy growth of burnable fuels on each side of narrow lanes, as well as difficulty in turning a horse trailer around on them, and concern that CCD is the only exit for HGV South, as well as existing residents on CCD, Cordrey Drive, and Cordrey Lane. One commenter cited difficulties in evacuation via Elfin Forest Road into San Elijo. This latter comment is noted but focused on issues more germane to Elfin Forest residents rather than those of HGV South and nearby residents, miles to the east of Elfin Forest. It is noted, however, that the Elfin Forest portion of the 2024 Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Community Evacuation Plan addresses potential to direct such evacuees to stop at HGV, for refuge, as necessary if San Elijo is unavailable.

Relative to heavy growth of burnable fuels on each side of narrow lanes and difficulty in turning horse trailers around, these concerns do not actually apply to the Project vicinity. Commenters are reminded that the roads in the immediate vicinity of HGV have already been improved in terms of width and roadside fuel management. CCD north of HGR to HGV Parkway, HGV Parkway itself, and HGR west of CCD to Wilgen Drive were improved by HGV. Those roads have pathways or sidewalks abutting them, and maintained landscaping (consistent with Fire Code requirements)

along their landscaped and maintained frontages. Similar improvements and a three-lane road capacity would be provided by HGV South if the Project is approved, including the currently very constrained crossing of Escondido Creek.

As additionally discussed below, new roads have also been built or planned that result in different conditions than those experienced during the 1996 “Harmony Grove” Fire or 2014 Cocos Fire events. This was specifically addressed in Global Response: Res Judicata and New Information on pages 8-107 and -108.

...the Cocos evacuation process occurred before completion of all roadway improvements by HGV, which included improving segments of CCD and providing a new road to the east (HGV Parkway, which provides an enhanced route east and out of the valley through an HGV-built bridge connection over Escondido Creek into Escondido). These improvements were required to be completed as part of the HGV project and were described in the 2018 FEIR. The Valiano project (approved December 6, 2024) will add a new fire emergency access road from Hill Valley Drive to La Moree within the City of San Marcos, providing an alternative route to the north separate from CCD...Also, Citracado Parkway has since been completed as projected in the 2018 FEIR (see detailed discussion in Global Response: 2024 Fire / Evacuation) and would further facilitate future evacuation efforts. The roadway was actually completed in 2024, providing access from CCD all the way to Auto Park Way, delivering drivers directly into urban Escondido.

The issue of large animals (specifically horses) was raised during the EFHGTC presentation at Planning Commission, as well as by a 2024 commenter who stood to talk during that presentation. It is also noted that although there is no nexus requiring road improvements for large animal movement as the HGV South Project does not allow large animals, **2018 analyses assumed animal trailers on the road**, which was part of the reason that evacuation analysis conservatively estimated 500 vehicles per lane per hour. As relayed to EFHGTC in response to an October 7, 2024, letter written on their behalf by SMW, on FEIR page RTC-ReO6a-45:

Specifically with regard to the consideration of evacuating livestock from existing residences, the Project evacuation analysis used a very low lane capacity rate of 500 vehicles per hour (compared to the standard capacity of 1,900 vehicles per hour per lane) to account for large vehicles and trailers associated with livestock evacuations. It is also noted that temporary roadside refuges as shown on Figure 2 (page 7) of the Project Evacuation Plan on the County Project website (with an excerpt depicted in Global Responses: Res Judicata and New Information [as well as 2024 Fire / Evacuation]) include areas like parking lots and irrigated park areas, which could accommodate large animal trailers during evacuation temporary refuge stops. Decision making agencies reviewed the approach and accepted the

Project's analysis based on Project analyses as well as their own experience and understanding of the issues.

And in a response written directly to an individual whose property abuts the Project boundary, standing at the podium as part of the EFHGTC presentation at Planning Commission (see FEIR pages RTC-ReI7-2 and -3):

Regarding individuals south of the Project, road conditions would be expected to improve relative to moving large animal trailers in this area. [CCD] south of [HGR] would have wider, as well as an additional, lane(s). The narrow (and vegetation impinged) Arizona crossing of Escondido Creek would be improved with a bridge and widened to three vehicular lanes as well as an equestrian path, so that owners could choose to ride their horses out.

Wildfire potential requires animal owners in rural areas to plan for these events and create contingencies when evacuation may not be possible. This is beyond the purview of the Project as it relates to existing properties. Please also refer to the Evacuation Challenges and Potential Hazards Posed when Evacuating Large Animals portion of the 2018 Global Response: Adequacy of Emergency Evacuation. It is also recommended that the Fire Safe Council consider a system/application like HorseAlert that facilitates volunteers to assist in the event of an evacuation. Regardless, as shown on the Project Evacuation Plan on the HGV South portion of the County website, there are areas identified as temporary refuge areas in HGV, and such areas also could be used in HGV South for trailers during pause in evacuation activities. (It is further noted for information that the HGV South FPP evacuation analysis used a capacity rate of 500 vehicles per hour to determine evacuation times in an effort to be extremely conservative. This is well under the capacity of 1,900 vehicles per hour per lane. The 500 vehicles per hour rate equates to a 2-mile-per-hour [mph] vehicle speed [slower than average human walking pace]. This slow anticipated evacuation speed incorporates consideration of traffic congestion and livestock trailers towed by large vehicles.)

It is also noted that a horse/large animal staging area is currently planned for the RSFFPD Station 5 located on Overlook Point Road off of HGV Parkway in Harmony Grove. As of August 2025, RSFFPD is currently actively engaged in clearing vegetation and bringing in railing for the horse corral. That facility would be wholly accessed via the 50 plus-foot wide CCD and HGV Parkway roadways from the HGR intersection that were improved as part of HGV and subsequently built. And of course, if HGV South is approved, the same width road would replace the currently approximately 20-foot-wide crossing of Escondido Creek, with associated vegetation management all the way to the southern Project entrance. These existing and proposed improvements would notably minimize flames from encroaching vegetation that evacuees may have experienced in 2014.

4. SMART GROWTH V. SPRAWL

Smart Growth v. Sprawl. Some comments cited “smart growth” and believe the Project would constitute “sprawl.” The 2018 EIR, as well as the 2024 GHG recirculation of Subchapter 2.7, and numerous responses in both the 2018 and 2024/25 responses to comments have addressed (incorrect) repeated allegation of sprawl and associated inconsistency with smart growth principles. As stated most recently in response to the July 2025 letter submitted on behalf of EFHGTC:

Concerning the Project’s location, the Town Council has consistently portrayed the Project as rural, away from services and transportation. However, nothing can be further from the truth. The Project is located in close proximity to two cities, San Marcos and Escondido, which contain shopping, educational and job opportunities, and public transit hubs. HGVS is within a 2-mile radius of expansive employment centers and a concentration of urban and mixed land uses that include Palomar Hospital, Stone Brewery, numerous “big box” retail stores with surrounding retail, apartment complexes, mobile home parks, and a large-scale automobile mall. The Escondido Research and Technology Center (ERTC; an industrial/commercial employment and services center accessed by [HGR]), and a confluence of regional transportation connectors (I-15 and SR-78), are located within approximately 2.5 miles of the Project site. Finally, this Project is within approximately 3 miles of the Nordahl Transit Station.

Specific to SANDAG smart growth concepts, please note that SANDAG provided a letter in response to the 2018 Revised Draft EIR that is part of the FEIR (see FEIR pages 8-56 and -57). In that letter, they reiterate support for the vision and goals of the County’s General Plan Update, stating:

SANDAG supports the goals and objectives that are currently laid out in the 2011 County of San Diego General Plan, as they encourage smart, sustainable growth and reinforce the principles set forth in the 2015 Regional Plan... While SANDAG realizes that general plans are meant to be dynamic documents updated to reflect market forces and population growth and trends, SANDAG supports key land-use principles that preserve natural resources and limit urban sprawl (emphasis added).

Continuing from the FEIR conclusion that follows the SANDAG quote (page 8-57) as this relates to the Project specifically:

The Project is fully consistent with this – proposing village extension to incorporate the proposed community and located close to major travel thoroughfares such as I-15 and SR 78 and within biking distance of two cities, while retaining approximately 35 percent of the site in permanently preserved open space.

Therefore, alleged sprawl and consistency with smart growth principles have been previously addressed. The Project is *not* sprawl and *is* consistent with the County General Plan land use strategy incorporating smart growth principles.

Data relative to these issues have also been addressed in the Project EIR since initial circulation of the 2017 Draft EIR through preparation of the 2025 FEIR. A figure depicting area uses (including abutting residential, commercial, light industrial, and hospital uses within 0.5-, 1.0-, 1.5-, 2.0-, and 2.5-mile zones) is provided as Figure 8.3.6-1, *HGV + HGV South Adjacent Land Uses*, and is also now included as Figure 2.7-1. Similarly, extension of a village designation across the street from HGV to HGV South is appropriately addressed in accordance with the County Community Development Model (see detailed discussion of this in 2018 FEIR Volumes I and II as well as in Global Response: Reconsideration of General Plan Amendment Decision). Especially relevant is the following from the Appellant Court Decision (page 66 [emphasis added]):

[W]e must conclude the Project is consistent: the EIR evaluated the associated land uses; reflects County's effort to move future development closer to cities, shopping and employment centers; shows the Project is consistent with vehicle mileage projections; and encourages local walking in keeping with the plan.

5. COUNTY PROCESS

Applicant Did Not File a New Application. Some commenters stated that the Project Applicant filed a new application in 2024, with associated new requirements for *de novo* review. The allegation is untrue. The pre-2018 application remains the current application, as indicated in Project element numbering, all beginning with PDS2015 or PDS2018.

Invalidation of 2018 Approval Does Not Require a Wholly New Review. The form used to correct an EIR is a matter for the local agency to determine on its own based on CEQA and any instructions by the court as may be applicable. (*Protect the Historic Amador Waterways v. Amador Water Agency* [2004] 116 Cal.App.4th 1099). Based on the premise that years have passed since the preparation of the 2018 FEIR, several comments maintain that an EIR for the Project must be prepared “anew.” However, the age of the original environmental document is irrelevant if subsequent events do not trigger the need for further environmental review. (*Snarled Traffic Obstructs Progress v. City & County of San Francisco* [1999] 74 CA4th 793.)

Some commenters incorrectly contend that the Sierra Club⁸ case dictated that a new EIR be prepared for the HGV South Project. In the Sierra Club case the Appellate Court held the Project’s GHG mitigation measure did not comply with CEQA, but the Appellate Court left it to the County to reexamine the type of mitigation measure needed, whether additional alternatives were feasible or must be analyzed, or if a new mitigation measure might also require revisions to the other sections of the EIR. In compliance with this decision, the County methodically examined the 2018

⁸ Sierra Club v. County of San Diego (December 21, 2021) (case No. 37-2018-00043084-CU-TT-CTL).

FEIR and evaluated the correction required to conform to the Sierra Club decision to determine whether it would result in new or substantially more severe impacts than were disclosed in the 2018 FEIR. The matrix found in the Readers Guide and the analysis in Global Responses: Res Judicata and New Information and Lack of Need for Recirculation demonstrate the County's review of the environmental analyses provided in the 2018 FEIR and its determination that PRC Section 21092.1 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5 does not apply here. The County determined that the changes fall within the scope of the initial environmental review of the 2018 FEIR, and a thorough assessment has confirmed that no new significant environmental effects are anticipated due to these modifications, aligning with CEQA Guidelines.

The County also methodically examined whether the correction to the GHG mitigation measure would result in the need for new feasible project alternatives that would lessen the Project's environmental impacts. The County did not find additional alternatives were needed because the new mitigation measure retains the same goal of attaining net zero GHG emissions after implementing the proposed mitigation measure and PDFs. Also, implementation of the measure would not:

1. result in any new significant impacts;
2. increase the severity of any previously identified significant impact; or
3. affect commitments to implement GHG-related design features.

The proposed mitigation measure would not result in any new impacts because it requires the installation of solar panels on an existing building(s) that fall within the requirements of the exemption provided by CEQA. This is ensured because the mitigation measure is required to conform to the requirements of such an exemption from CEQA.

Several comments incorrectly assert that the County dismissed claims for a new EIR based solely on res judicata. But as described above and in great detail in Volume III of the RFEIR, the County examined the proposed corrections to the 2018 FEIR to determine whether it would result in new or substantially more severe impacts than were disclosed in the 2018 FEIR. The County relied on its technical expertise, and information that includes the previous record, expert memos, technical reports, and the information provided in the response to comments for its conclusion that recirculation of the full 2018 FEIR is not required.

With respect to whether significant new information is now available that triggers the preparation of an environmental document, see Section 8.7.1 in the RFEIR. The County carefully considered the new information and changed circumstances raised by the commenters based on the County's expertise to determine whether CEQA would require recirculation of the Project's EIR. CEQA requires recirculation of an EIR, in whole or in part, when significant new information is added to the final EIR before its recirculation (PRC Section 21092.1; CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5). As used in Section 15088.5, the term "information" can include changes in the project or environmental setting and additional data or other information. However, new information is not significant unless: (1) the EIR is changed in a way that deprives the public of a meaningful

opportunity to comment upon a substantial adverse environmental effect of the project; or (2) there is a feasible way to mitigate or avoid such an effect (including a feasible project alternative) that the project's proponents have declined to implement (CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5[a]).

The response to comments provides evidence of the examination of the data characterized as "new information" or "change in circumstance" raised by the comments and demonstrates that the criteria for recirculation were not met. The County relies on its technical expertise, and information that includes the previous record, expert memos, technical reports, and the response to comments that include the sources noted in the preceding paragraph, for its conclusions that recirculation is not required and its determination as stated above, that the changes fall within the scope of the initial environmental review of the 2018 FEIR. Whether an initial environmental document remains relevant despite changed plans or circumstances is a predominantly factual question for agencies to answer by drawing on their particular expertise. As opined by the California Supreme Court in *Friends of the College of San Mateo Gardens*, a court's responsibility on review is only to decide whether the agency's determination is supported by substantial evidence. (California Supreme Court in *Friends of the College of San Mateo Gardens v. San Mateo County Community College* [2016] 1 C5th 937.)

Nor does the decertification of the entire EIR alter the fact that the EIR was litigated, and all issues were resolved. Res judicata is applied even if an agency rescinds approval of a project and decertifies the entire EIR. (*Citizens for Open Government v. City of Lodi* 205 Cal.App.4th at 302 [the court applied res judicata even though the city rescinded approval of the project and decertified the prior EIR].) (See also *Ione Valley Land, Air & Water Defense Alliance v. County of Amador* [2019] 33 Cal.App.5th 165, 172 [whether the EIR has been decertified does not alter the fact that the sufficiency of a component of the EIR has been litigated and resolved].)

Some commenters claim that res judicata does not apply because "new conditions" have arisen, or conditions have gotten "worse" that make res judicata inapplicable. However, new facts alone are not enough to be considered a "changed condition" that would mean res judicata no longer applies; instead, the "changed" condition must be "material" or significant (*Citizens for Open Government v. City of Lodi*, 205 Cal.App.4th at 324-325. See also *Atwell v. City of Rohnert Park*, 27 Cal.App.5th at 701.) The County conducted extensive analysis of each of the comments raised by the public regarding claims that new information or a change in circumstances would void the application of res judicata or require a new analysis and recirculation of the various topics covered in the Project's EIR. See Section 8.7.1.5 et al. of the RFEIR.

It is also noted that the invalidation was entered based on concern that elements of a revised GHG mitigation measure could result in associated changes to other discussion topics in a revised EIR. Although this is an appropriate and CEQA-consistent concern, this was not the case for the Project. As conservatively documented in the recirculated Subchapter 2.7, changes to clauses in mitigation measure M-GHG-1 would result in net zero emissions and its implementation would not result in potentially significant impacts to other resource areas. M-GHG-1 implementation is required to

occur under a relevant CEQA exemption, such as for a ministerial action pursuant to County Zoning Code Section 6954, Solar Energy System for on-site uses, or under PRC 21080.35, and also would not trigger any exceptions to the exemption due to adverse effects to sensitive resources. This is detailed on pages 2.7-39 through -41 in Section 2.7.5.1, *Potential Subsequent Environmental Impacts Related to Mitigation Measure Implementation and CEQA Exemption*, as well as in Global Response: Lack of Need for Recirculation by each environmental topic.

County Staff Did Not Direct RSFFPD to Not Change Documents. Several commenters stated belief that RSFFPD staff were illegally told by County staff that changes to safety documents *were not possible*. This is untrue. No documentation for such direction was provided. One email is attached to a comment letter from SMW, apparently to support such contention. It conveys no more than:

- a statement that as CEQA lead agency the County will address any concerns in the record (it is important to keep EIR-related files in one place for decision makers)
- acknowledgement that the RSFFPD is the Fire Authority Having Jurisdiction for the project and “was responsible for reviewing the Project to ensure it complies with all relevant fire codes”
- that as the Project was previously approved and design has not changed, the County would continue to rely on previous approvals

Note that the first and third contentions are not directions to RSFFPD staff, but statements as to County staff intention absent information to the contrary. Clearly, if the RSFFPD had an issue, the County was open to hearing it. This is proven by the immediately following two sentences from the email from Mark Slovick to David McQuead on May 14, 2025 (emphasis added):

“The County [will] coordinate with the [RSFFPD] on the responses to public comments and hearing presentations once they’re drafted. **We want to make sure the Fire District has an opportunity to review the information**, including how all the comments and concerns have been responded to.”

The email then continues, discussing that hearing attendance is requested and letting RSFFPD know that staff will go over their draft presentation and be available to coordinate potential questions and answers. This planning for presentation is routine for a project that has been inactive for a period of time and/or and for which opposition is anticipated. No one wants to waste decision makers’ time in active research during hearings. The stated coercion is not apparent from the emails provided.

In fact, on July 10, 2025, the County provided Chief McQuead with the full text of the draft Fire/ Evacuation discussion in the Project’s 2025 RFEIR wherein he reviewed it and provided minor comments regarding additional evacuation tools available today. At no time did he provide any comments regarding the Fire Code standards that were applied to the Project or that the Project gave him pause.

County Staff Did Not Order RSFFPD to Waive Secondary Access Requirements. It was also noted that RSFFPD is generally “strict” on secondary access but was ordered by County staff “to waive secondary access requirements.” Again, this is untrue.

First, no information has been provided to support the allegation that County staff have instructed RSFFPD to “waive secondary access requirements.” Absent specifics of who, how and when, it’s impossible to specifically respond. If it is somehow related to email communications between the two agencies cited above, the reader is referred to that discussion.

Second, as discussed under “Secondary Access Determined Impracticable,” above, **there is no “secondary access requirement.”** There *is a requirement to meet an appropriate level of safety, which may be satisfied through either secondary access or alternative means.* Please see the above-referenced discussion, as well as 2018 Global Responses: Fire Hazards Impact Analysis, and Adequacy of Emergency Evacuation and Access, and 2024 Global Responses: Res Judicata and New Information, and 2024 Fire / Evacuation. **Findings as to Project need for secondary access are strictly the purview of the FAHJ.** There is no known instance on this Project of staff inserting themselves into the process of RSFFPD evaluation of Fire Code 2024 Guidelines Section 5.10.3 required findings.

HGV Portrayed as the “Last Large Development.” Although not relevant to Project environmental analyses, a number of comments state belief that no larger development projects would be processed following HGV. This issue was raised and answered both in 2018 and as part of the 2025 FEIR. As excerpted from 2025 FEIR pages RTC-ReI2-2 and -3:

Any statements made (express, implied, and/or as understood by the commenter) cannot restrict a land use agency from making future decisions required as part of their charter. Plans are guidance documents, but the County makes project approval decisions based on specific proposed project location and design, detailed and objective environmental analysis, and plan conformity review. Based on these considerations, a decision is made to approve or disapprove a project. Guidance documents cannot tie the County’s hands in amending prior decisions. As stated in 2018 FEIR Section 8.3.2.3, General Plan Related Issues, such an action: is contrary to well established California law that prohibits the unlawful delegation of legislative authority. A legislative body may not contract away its police power by restricting future legislative actions to the consent of other property owners. This would be considered an unlawful surrender of the County’s legislative authority and an invalid “contracting” away of its police powers.

6. MISCELLANEOUS FALSE STATEMENTS AND NON-CEQA ISSUE

A number of comments received immediately before Planning Commission made false allegations regarding political donations and a “monetary donation” made to RSFFPD (as opposed to development fees applied to all projects), inaccurate statements regarding fire approval directing the developer to “double the number of units,” characterizations of the developer and his financial

status, and concerns over insurance denial / rate increases. These issues do not affect identification of Project-related environmental impacts or their significance and therefore do not affect the environmental analyses in the FEIR. As such, they are unrelated to the CEQA process, and no response is required.

EXHIBIT 2

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August 18, 2025

VIA EMAIL ONLY

Ronald Ashman, Chair, and members
San Diego County Planning Commission
County of San Diego
Planning & Development Services 5510
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E-Mail: PDS.PlanningCommission@sdcounty.ca.gov

Re: Harmony Grove Village South Project hearing August 22, 2025

Dear Chair Ashman and Members of the Commission;

This firm represents RCS-Harmony Partners, LLC ("RCS"), the developer of a master-planned community commonly known as the "Harmony Grove Village South Project" ("Project" or "HGVS") located in the County of San Diego ("County"). This letter is provided in response to a letter written by Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger on behalf of Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Town Council ("Town Council"), dated July 16, 2025, urging the County not to reapprove the Project or certify its Environmental Impact Report ("EIR").

Background

The County originally approved the Project on July 25, 2018, and certified the associated Environmental Impact Report ("2018 EIR"). After several years of litigation, the California Court of Appeals, Fourth Appellate District, Division One ("Appellate Court") found that the 2018 EIR complied with the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") except for one issue related

to its Green House Gas (GHG) mitigation measure (“Appellate Decision”). The Project was also determined to be consistent with the County’s General Plan, except for providing an affordable housing component.¹ RCS has corrected the GHG mitigation measure and added an affordable housing component to the Project to comply with the Appellate Decision.² Because the Project has not changed and is within the scope of the previously certified EIR, the County determined that only the portion of the EIR that pertains to the GHG mitigation measure had to be amended and recirculated for public review.

Subchapter 2.7 of the 2018 EIR has been wholly replaced with a new Subchapter 2.7 that includes the new mitigation measure, updates the GHG analysis, and revises related Project Design Features. A new 2024 Global Climate Change Report prepared by Ldn Consulting, Inc., the 2024 Updated ConSol Evaluation, the Off-site Solar Panel Installation for GHG Mitigation, and Set Aside Fund Review were also included to replace and augment analogous 2018 EIR documents (referred to collectively as “new Subchapter 2.7 ”). The new Subchapter 2.7 is included in the HGVS Final EIR (“2025 FEIR”).

RCS is now requesting that the County reconsider the approval of the Project and certify the Project’s 2025 FEIR. The letter from the Town Council was submitted to the County more than nine months after the 45-day public review period for the recirculation of the new Subchapter 2.7. All comment letters received after the expiration of the public review and comment period are considered late comments and do not require a written response from the County. (Pub. Resources Code, §21091(d)(1); Pub. Resources Code, §21092.5(c).) The County has elected not to respond to the late letter from the Town Council; however, it is nevertheless important to correct some of the misstatements made in this letter.

1. The Project is not required to comply with the County’s 2022 TSG, including the requirement to prepare a VMT analysis.

Town Council mischaracterizes the 2025 FEIR as relying on the infill threshold exemption described in the County’s adopted 2022 Transportation Study Guidelines (“2022 TSG”), which has since been found noncompliant with CEQA by the California Court of Appeals.³ However, to be clear once again, the Project did not rely on the Infill exemption as the basis for not preparing another VMT analysis. Contrary to Town Council’s misstatements, the infill information was only used as additional data to illustrate that the HGVS site was “infill in nature” with respect to compliance with regional plans. (See 2025 FEIR, 2.7-32) A statement that an analysis has been completed is not the same thing as stating that an analysis is necessary. As explained further in

¹ Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Town Council et al. v. County of San Diego and RCS, 37-2018-00042927, Court of Appeal, Fourth Appellate District (Division One), filed October 14, 2021 (“Appellate Decision”). See also the companion decision Sierra Club v. County of San Diego and Integral Communities, LLC, et al., 37-2018-00043084-CU-TT-CTL, Court of Appeal, Fourth Appellate District (Division One), filed December 21, 2021

² Adding an affordable housing component to the Project has not changed the physical aspects of the Project; ten percent (10%) of the total units will be required to be affordable housing. The affordable housing fix is unrelated to the environment and would not require any change to the Project or EIR.)d were part of the recirculation.

³ The California Court of Appeal, Division One, held that the evidentiary record developed by the County failed to support the adopted thresholds, and on that basis held the two thresholds were found noncompliant with CEQA.

the new Subchapter 2.7:

“Although the VMT analysis circulated with the 2018 FEIR was determined to be adequate and sufficient by the Appeals Court, a subsequent analysis has been completed...[I]f a VMT analysis were to be initiated for a new EIR today, the Project would be exempted.”
(Subchapter 2.7, page 2.7-32 Fn 20.)[emphasis added]

The Reader’s Guide reiterates this point:

“[T]he Project is not required to comply with the County’s 2022 TSG, including the requirement to prepare a VMT analysis or, in this case, an infill analysis. Nevertheless, the Project prepared an Infill Analysis to determine if the Project also met the County’s “infill” requirements, as outlined in Section 3.3.1 of the 2022 TSG.
(2025 FEIR, Reader’s Guide, page 15.)[emphasis added]

The Project’s extensive litigation history limits the scope of issues (or future legal challenges) that may be raised regarding the legal adequacy of the 2018 EIR. Portions of the 2018 EIR that were either unchallenged or found to be adequate by the courts (and the concomitant data, analyses, and conclusions) are not appropriate subjects for further discussion because these issues cannot be raised again once settled by litigation. (*Citizens for Open Government v. City of Lodi* [2012] 205 Cal.App.4th 296, 324-325; see also *Planning & Conservation League v. Castaic Lake Water Agency* [2009]180 Cal.App.4th 210, 229.) The following sums up the public policy for res judicata:

“[A]llowing such claims to be relitigated would impose significant burdens on parties and the courts, could lead to inconsistent rulings or judgments that create confusion and inefficiency, and would be unfair to the party that has already obtained a final ruling in its favor. Res judicata maintains the integrity and predictability of the legal system and encourages parties to bring all their claims and arguments into a single proceeding, knowing that they will not have another opportunity to litigate the same issues.” (2025 FEIR, page 8-97.)

Here, the same parties (Elfin Forest Town Council) to the original litigation involving the same project (HGVS) are once again raising the same issue of VMT, including the same assertion that the VMT calculations are incorrect. Town Council raised this same objection to the Project’s VMT analysis in their June 2, 2017, comment letter to the 2018 EIR, arguing that:

“The project related vehicle miles traveled (VMT) estimate” lacked consistency and accuracy.” (O3b-17.)

Moreover, the Town Council raised the issue of VMT in their 2018 petition for a writ of mandate challenging the County's approval of the Project and 2018 EIR. Their 2018 petition states:

“The EIR for HGVS failed to make any attempt to quantify either the increase in VMT caused by these projects or transportation-related energy consumption on a cumulative basis. According to calculations prepared by the Town Council, based on evidence in the record, these cumulative projects would cause VMT to increase by 644,739 miles every day, or over 235 million new VMT per year. This is an astonishing impact that must have been, but was not, analyzed as a potentially significant cumulative impact.” (Petition, page 22). [*emphasis added*]

The VMT issue, however, was resolved by the Appellate Court in 2021. The Appellate Court found that the 2018 EIR adequately addressed this issue, concluding that: “[a]ccording to the EIR, SANDAG’s average trip length is 7.9 miles, and the average distance for Project trips was calculated to be 7.88 miles.” Also, “the analysis of the Project’s efforts to reduce vehicle emissions through design, location, and minimization of off-site vehicle trips complied with the County’s efforts to reduce sprawl and associated emissions” (Appellate Decision, pages 63-64).

Town Council wants nothing more than another bite of the apple by insisting that the Infill Analysis somehow allows them to reopen the VMT issue again. However, the infill analysis being raised as an issue by Town Council has nothing to do with VMT; rather, the analysis would afford a way out of performing a VMT analysis. The Infill Analysis and the Project’s election to prepare an Infill Analysis does not change the fact **that VMT was raised, litigated, and resolved by the courts**. Town Council raised VMT throughout its many years of litigation on the 2018 EIR, and the Appellate Court has opined on the same. The doctrine of res judicata prohibits further attempts to litigate the same claim, and it would be unfair to all the parties involved to do so.

Moreover, the 2022 TSG does not constitute “new information” that would necessitate a new VMT analysis and the recirculation of the transportation analysis in the 2018 EIR. The courts have consistently determined that the adoption of new guidelines is not considered significant new information that would trigger further environmental review under PRC 21166. (*Concerned Dublin Citizens v. City of Dublin*, 214 Cal.App.4th at 1319, 1320. See also *Citizens for Responsible Equitable Environmental Development (CREED) v. City of San Diego* [2011] 196 Cal.App.4th 532) [the court found that the effects of GHG on climate change were known or could have been discovered with the exercise of reasonable diligence for an EIR initially certified in the early 1990s.]

More particularly on point, the Court in *Olen Properties Corp v. City of Newport Beach*, 93 CA5th at 280-281, held that the change in CEQA Guidelines from level of service to VMT was not significant new information because the underlying issue was known when preparing the original EIR. Although the new CEQA Guidelines for VMT became effective in 2020 under SB

743, the underlying information was otherwise known or should have been known from at least 2006.

As evidenced by the long litigation history, VMT was an active topic of discussion during the preparation of the 2018 FEIR. The public was not deprived of a meaningful opportunity during the preparation of the 2018 EIR to comment upon any potential adverse environmental effect that the Project would have related to VMT (see CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5[a]). As noted above, the Town Council both commented on the issue of VMT and litigated the same in court.

The use of the infill data was in addition to an already Court-adjudicated adequate discussion of the Project's surroundings, location, and developed uses in the area. As stated above (including in the commenter's cited footnote from Subchapter 2.7), it was not to provide a new VMT analysis. That had already occurred and still stands.

2. **The County's 2024 Housing Report has nothing to do with the ability of the County to approve the Project.**

The Town Council also seems to be asserting that HGVS does not need to be approved because the County no longer has a housing shortage. They contend that, based on the 2024 County Housing Report, the County is well ahead of its RHNA goals with respect to Moderate and Above Moderate affordability categories.

However, according to the California Housing Partnership, the County's housing situation is a mixed bag, with some progress being made, but with persistent challenges in affordability and homelessness. They conclude that although the County is on track to meet its overall housing goals, providing housing for its residents remains a significant challenge due to rising housing costs. (San Diego County 2025 Affordable Housing Needs Report, May 2025. available at: <https://chpc.net/housingneeds>)

This lack of housing contributes to scarcity and high housing prices that put a strain on the general welfare of all County residents. The Nonprofit Institute of the School of Leadership and Education Sciences paints an even more dire picture:

Housing in 2024 received a thumbs-down rating, primarily attributed to the exorbitant costs associated with both renting and purchasing homes. Only 1 in 10 residents in San Diego County can afford a median-priced home, painting a stark reality of the housing crisis. .. The prices of median-rate housing and fair market rent have continued to climb in the past 10 years, heightening concerns about the accessibility and affordability of housing for San Diegans. ..The housing crisis continues to persist in our region and is a pressing emergency. (available at: "https://www.sandiego.edu/soles/centers-and-institutes/nonprofit-institute/signature-programs/dashboard/housing.php)

Nor is the Project's affordable housing the sole reason for the County to approve the Project. The County has identified the following benefits:

- overall economic benefits (tax revenues), employment opportunities (both increased options and "close-in employment relationships,
- social benefits (related to support of existing Harmony Grove Village; provision of a diverse mix (including affordable) housing;
- promotion of walking and bicycling, access to employment, education, recreation, entertainment, shopping, and services;
- social health amenities; full consistency with the County General Plan relative to proximity to a village and amenities, and proximity to urban medical, shopping, educational, and job opportunities;
- recreational benefits (dedication of public park uses, increased existing and planned regional trail connectivity), biological benefits and open space (with over 31 percent of the site being in a biological open space easement adjacent to an abutting preserve, and enhancement to the biological environment of Escondido Creek), and
- enhanced safety (improvement of access to the south of Escondido Creek in emergency events during both wildfire and flood events, based on a widened roadway, additional travel lane, and a bridge), as well as increased emergency service fees.

These benefits accrue regardless of the County's provision of housing elsewhere and provide a diverse suite of reasons why the Project brings value. Concerning the Project's location, the Town Council has consistently portrayed the Project as rural, away from services and transportation. However, nothing can be further from the truth. The Project is located in close proximity to two cities, San Marcos and Escondido, which contain shopping, educational and job opportunities, and public transit hubs. HGVS is within a 2-mile radius of expansive employment centers and a concentration of urban and mixed land uses that include Palomar Hospital, Stone Brewery, numerous "big box" retail stores with surrounding retail, apartment complexes, mobile home parks, and a large-scale automobile mall. The Escondido Research and Technology Center (ERTC; an industrial/commercial employment and services center accessed by Harmony Grove Road [HGR]), and a confluence of regional transportation connectors (I-15 and SR-78), are located within approximately 2.5 miles of the Project site. Finally, this Project is within approximately 3 miles of the Nordahl Transit Station.

3. Town Council misrepresents the County's position concerning the Fire Protection Plan and misinterprets County Code of Regulatory Ordinances section 81.306.

Town Council's discussion regarding San Diego County Code Section 81.306 is full of misrepresentations and distortions that are aimed at reopening the Project's Fire Protection Plan (FPP) that the Appellate Court has upheld. First, Town Council is attempting to use Section

81.306(d) of the County Code of Regulations as a pretext to relitigate the FPP. Town Council contends that Section 81.306(d) requires the Planning Commission to “obtain and review” a recommendation on the Project’s tentative map from the Fire Chief of the Rancho Santa Fe Fire District (RSFFPD). Under Section 81.306, the Fire Chief is required to make recommendations related to “hydrants, connections to be installed, fire control measures, improvements and compliance with SRA Fire Safe Regulations...”

However, Town Council does not take into account that all of these issues have already been discussed in great detail in the existing FPP and that the RSFFPD has accepted the FPP. Nor has the Fire Code substantially changed since 2018, including on matters that are required to be addressed in Section 81.306, and more, such as access, water, response, construction standards, and defensible space (see Global Response: 2024 Fire / Evacuation, Fire Codes Comparison matrix).

Town Council incorrectly assumes that the recommendation of the Fire Chief must be separate from the FPP that was specifically prepared for the Project, accepted by both the San Diego County Fire Authority and RSFFPD, and covers the same issues identified in Section 81.306(d). Essentially, Town Council attempts to confuse the issue by making it more complicated than necessary. As explained in Section 8.7.4.4 (Response to Comments) of the 2025 FEIR, when the Planning Commission prepares its report to the Board of Supervisors (Board) on the Project’s entitlements, and when the Board takes action on the tentative map, both entities will be able to rely on the Project’s FPP that the SDCFA and RSFFPD have previously accepted. There is nothing in this Code Section that prohibits the use of the FPP for the purposes of Section 81.306(d).

Nor has Town Council offered any evidence as to why it would be a safety issue if the Fire Chief relied on the FPP when making a recommendation to the Planning Commission. Numerous professional fire prevention and protection personnel with hundreds of years of experience combined reviewed the FPP that was prepared by seasoned fire professionals. The FPP was found sufficient by the Appellate Court:

“The issue for us is “not whether the [fire plan, evacuation plan or Wildfire Risk Analysis] are irrefutable or whether they could have been better. *The relevant issue is only whether the studies are sufficiently credible to be considered as part of the total evidence that supports the [agency’s] finding[s]...*” ’ ” (Chico Advocates for a Responsible Economy v. City of Chico, supra, 40 Cal.App.5th at p. 851.) *They are here*” (emphasis added) (Appellate Decision, page 45).

The County has already determined that reconsideration of Project entitlements does not require a new FPP. Each of the Section 8.7.4 discussion topics demonstrates that comments have not raised new issues or topics requiring changes to the FPP. The Project’s location and construction requirements have been evaluated and determined to minimize future wildfire risks, enhance the Project’s fire resiliency (as well as that of its immediate neighbors), and protect the

health and safety of local residents and natural resources. Similarly, based on considerations of timing, road capacity, alternative plans, emergency access/egress, and proximity and capacity of fire services, Project wildfire and evacuation analyses are consistent with relevant updated fire regulations and new guidelines. (See Planning Commission Hearing Report, August 22, 2025, page 37.)

Next, Town Council incorrectly characterizes the Project's map application as not being a vested entitlement, even though its application includes "Vesting Tentative Map PDS2018-TM-5626. They propose a convoluted argument that because there is no vesting map, a new recommendation from the Fire Chief is required, and a new FPP must be prepared. However, Town Council ignores the Subdivision Map Act provision that requires local agencies to apply only those ordinances, policies, and standards in effect on the date the local agency determines that the **application is complete** when determining to approve or deny an application for a vesting tentative map. (Govt Code §66474.2(a), See also *Bright Dev. v City of Tracy* (1993) 20 CA4th 783 (city, which adopted a resolution "to clarify and memorialize" policy on undergrounding utilities after a vesting tentative map application was deemed complete, could not require the developer to underground off-site utilities as a condition of approval); *Kaufman & Broad Cent. Valley, Inc. v City of Modesto* (1994) 25 CA4th 1577 (city could not charge development fees more than those in effect at the time the vesting tentative map application was deemed complete.) Therefore, applying Town Council's argument to the facts (the Project entitlements include a vesting tentative map), their argument is irrelevant here.

Finally, if the Board approves the tentative map and makes new findings to support its approval, res judicata will bar challenges to the new findings. Similar to *Atwell v. City of Rohnert Park*, res judicata applies to the adoption of the new findings when a project remains unchanged, there is no change in the material facts, and the same claims are being raised as in the original lawsuit. (*Atwell v. City of Rohnert Park* (2018) 27 Cal.App.5th 692, 701, 702.)

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Very truly yours,
NORTON MOORE & ADAMS



Ann Y. Moore

HARMONY GROVE VILLAGE SOUTH



HARMONY GROVE VILLAGE SOUTH

453 Homes To Be Built By Local Union Members For Working San Diegans And Middle-Class Families

- San Diego Is Battling A Homelessness And Housing Crisis That Impacts Every Corner Of Our County
- The Only Long-Term Solution Is To Create More Homes, And That's Exactly What Harmony Grove Village South Provides
- **Join Housing Advocates From Across San Diego By Asking Our County Supervisors To Reject NIMBYism And Approve This Community**

CLOSE-IN LOCATION
Live - Work - Play
Improve Quality of Life

EXPAND EXISTING VILLAGE
NOT Sprawl!
No McMansions!

408 MIDDLE MARKET HOMES
Multi-Family and
Single Family Courtyard

45 AFFORDABLE HOMES
First Time Possible

ZERO NET ENERGY COMMUNITY
100% Solar + EV Charging
+ Energy Efficient

HGVS: Solutions For San Diego's Missing Middle



FARMHOUSES
Townhome



COTTAGES
Paseo Row Homes



BUNGALOW
Courtyard Single Family



GRANARY
2-3 Story Loft



HARMONY COURT
Courtyard Single Family



HARMONY GROVE VILLAGE SOUTH



HARMONY GROVE VILLAGE
742 Homes | Approved 2007
(100% Completed)



HARMONY GROVE VILLAGE SOUTH
Planned Village Expansion
(Expands Village Land Area 20%)

HGVS CHECKS ALL THE BOXES

✓ CLOSE-IN LOCATION

- Central "North County" Location: 600,000 Jobs
- Reduces Commute Times = Improved Quality Of Life
- County VMT Compliant. County Defines HGVS As "Infill"
- Regional Transit Centers + Connections: 1.0 - 2.5 Miles
- Hundreds of Employment, Retail And Food Services: 3.0 Miles

✓ AFFORDABLE AND MIDDLE CLASS HOMES

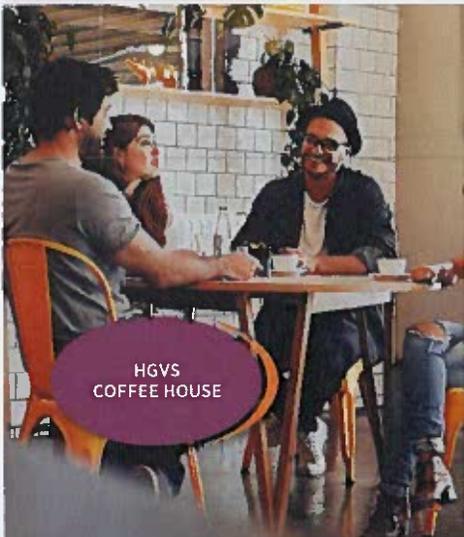
- No McMansions! Human-Scale Single-Family And Multi-Family Homes
- Lofts - Townhomes - Single Family Row Homes, - Single Family Courtyard Homes
- Living Areas From 800 Square Feet To Over 2,000 Square Feet
- Authentic Rustic Architecture: Complements Harmony Grove Village, Local Area

✓ SUPERIOR SUSTAINABILITY: NET ZERO ENERGY

- Expand Existing Harmony Grove Village - Use Existing Infrastructure.
- Meets General Plan Goal For Clustering "Highest Populations"
- **100% Rooftop Solar. No Natural Gas Service**
- **100% EV Charging Station, Each Home And In Community**
- **100% Energy Efficient Buildings - Interior And Exterior**
- Maximize Drought Tolerant, Native And Regionally Appropriate Plants
- Land-Adaptive, Clustered Building Sites--Only 25% Of Entire Site
- 36 Acres Natural Land To Biological Open Space Preserve In Perpetuity
- **Build New \$10M Multi-Lane, Regional-Serving Bridge Over Escondido Creek**
 - Physical Link Uniting ALL Four HGV Planning Areas
 - Vehicles, Pedestrians, Bikes, Horses, Trails
 - Restores Ecology, Wildlife Corridors To Degraded Escondido Creek
 - Improve Circulation, Especially In Times of Urgency

✓ PROMOTE HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

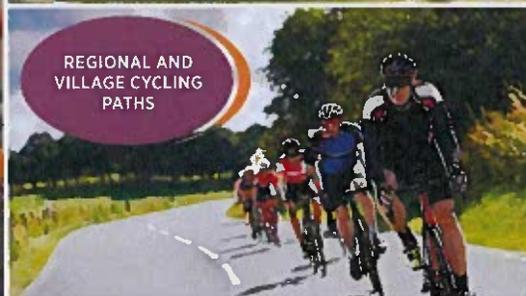
- 5,000 SF Center House: Community Gathering, Exercise, Meeting, Staging Area
- Extensive Trail Connections, Including San Diego's Famous Regional Trail System
- 13 On-Site Parks Featuring Active And Passive Opportunities
- Walkable To HGV's Community Core
- Regional Transit Centers + Connections Between 1.0 - 2.5 Miles



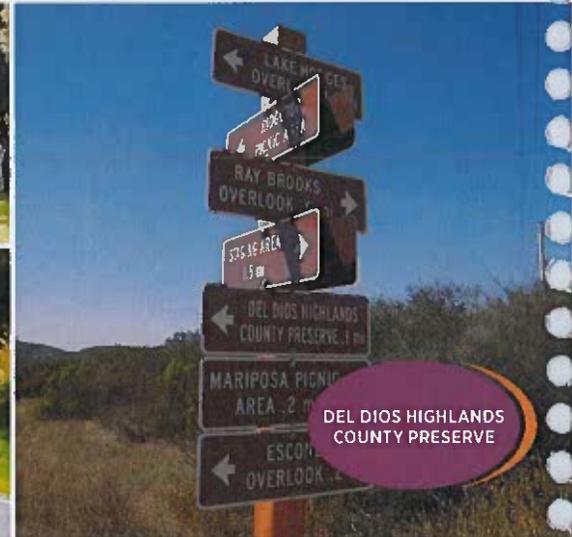
HGVS COFFEE HOUSE



HGVS EVENT LAWN



REGIONAL AND VILLAGE CYCLING PATHS



DEL DIOS HIGHLANDS COUNTY PRESERVE

HGVS FIRE PROTECTION PLAN



CAL FIRE
Protection of Property
and Resources in California



**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
FIRE AUTHORITY**
Regional-County Fire Safety
Oversight and Coordination



**RANCHO SANTA FE
FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT**
Local District with
Jurisdictional Responsibility



**SAN DIEGO COUNTY
SHERIFFS OFFICE**
Emergency Transportation
Evacuation Coordination

SIX
INDEPENDENT
ENTITIES

500
YEARS
OPERATING
EXPERIENCE



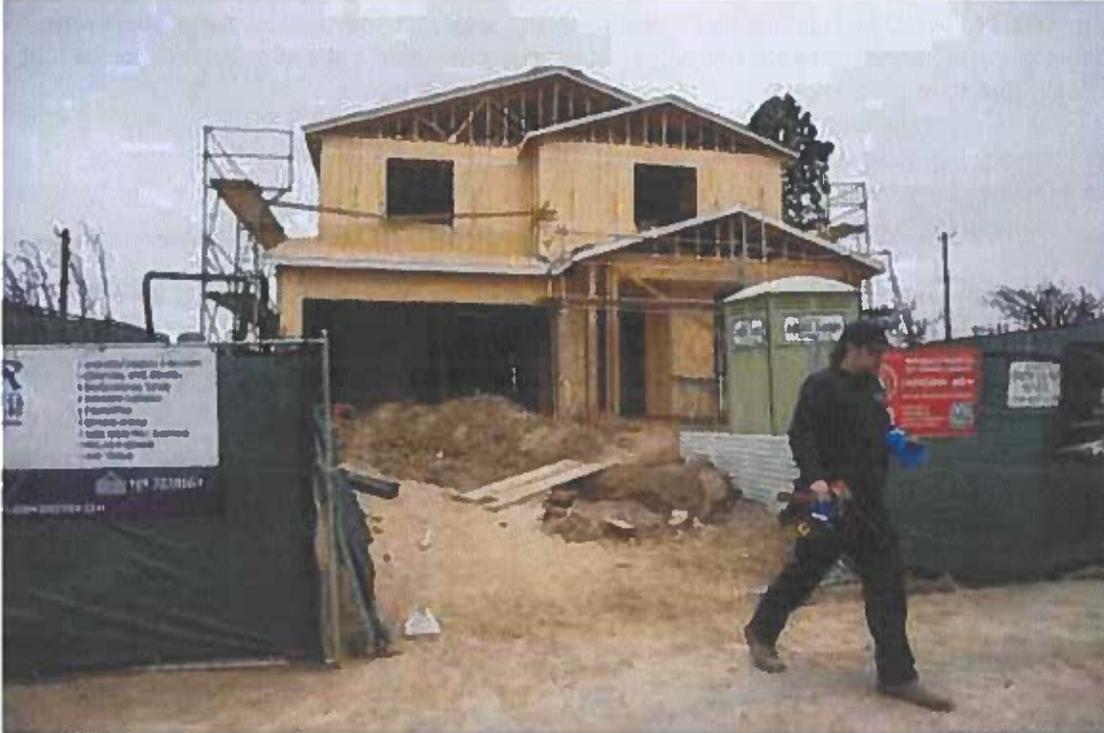
ROHDE ASSOCIATES
Wildfire Commanders
Regional Emergency Experts
Fire Behavior Analysts



DUDEK
Statewide Urban Forestry
Fire Protection Planning

OpinionCommentary

Opinion: State's updated building codes are reducing wildfire risks



The state's building and fire codes have been strengthened in a way that advocates say has reduced risks from wildfires. (SCNG)

By Ruben Grijalva – San Diego Union Tribune Opinion/Commentary – August 26, 2025

As San Diegans know all too well — and as I've seen firsthand as the former head of Cal Fire — our state's wildfire season has become an annual crisis exacerbated by climate change and development in wildland-urban interface areas.

Fueled by high temperatures, dry landscapes and erratic winds, wildfires now threaten communities across California year-round — and every fire season in our state feels like the worst one yet.

The devastation from January's fires in Los Angeles only reinforced the public's growing sense of vulnerability. But in the midst of fear, we're overlooking a quiet, powerful success story: California has already developed a working model for wildfire resilience.

Since 2008, the state of California has enforced modern fire and building codes specifically designed to protect new construction in fire-prone areas. These standards require ignition-resistant building and landscape materials, defensible space, and better fire access and vehicular routing.

The results are in: Homes built to these codes make up less than 1% of total fire losses across the state. Most of the affected homes were in older "legacy" communities developed before 2008, whereas master-planned communities built after 2008 have experienced no significant fire losses.

These are not abstract regulations — they are real-world protections that help us all. When applied correctly by local fire authorities utilizing their experience and judgment, they replace flammable terrain and outdated infrastructure with fire stations, widened evacuation routes, water supplies and homes that are specifically built to resist ignition.

These communities don't just survive fire — they help stop it. Once again, in 17 years, with tens of thousands of homes built, there has been no significant fire loss in any master-planned community constructed to these standards.

Meanwhile, too many areas in San Diego County and across our state remain dangerously unprepared and vulnerable. These are older neighborhoods built before modern codes and choked with drought-stricken brush. They lack basic fire defenses like viable access roads or emergency water. No wonder they often bear the brunt of wildfire destruction.

Some advocates have misunderstood the purpose of Fire Hazard Severity Zones, mistakenly using these maps to argue against development altogether. But Fire Hazard Severity Zones are a tool for identifying where higher standards of remediation and resilience are most needed — not a red line against building.

Anti-housing activists have begun skewing their discourse toward a new misconception: that development of homes in these areas should be halted altogether. Comparing wildfire incidents in older communities to newer, fire-hardened neighborhoods is not just misleading; it's unfair.

The truth is this: We need fire-safe, master-planned communities more than ever, both to provide housing and to ensure residents' safety in the face of increasingly dangerous fire seasons. Denying safe, code-compliant construction only worsens the state's dual crises of wildfire preparedness and housing.

The path forward is clear:

1. Build new homes to modern fire codes, especially in high-risk zones.
2. Retrofit existing homes wherever feasible, with ignition-resistant materials and defensible space.
3. Support certification programs like those from the Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety, which verifies that homes meet or exceed fire-resistance standards.
4. Reframe fire preparedness as a core part of responsible homeownership — not a luxury expense.

We must also recognize the strategic advantage of new development: Master-planned communities can act as buffers, shielding older neighborhoods and providing areas of refuge from encroaching fires while providing urgently needed housing.

As a fire professional with nearly 50 years in fire safety, I wouldn't choose to live in a high fire-risk area unless it was in a community built to these newer standards. It's time for San Diego and all of California to

adopt a more nuanced view of development in fire-prone areas, one that considers the housing crisis, wildfire risks and the effectiveness of fire-safe community design.

California's housing crisis and wildfire threat may seem to be on a collision course, but halting development in high-risk areas is not the solution. If we're serious about living with wildfires — as we must be — then fire safety must become a cultural norm, a building standard and a planning imperative.

San Diego County doesn't need to start over. It just needs to scale up what already works.

Grijalva is former California state fire marshal and was director of CalFire under the Schwarzenegger administration. He lives in Roseville.



September 30, 2025

To: Members of the San Diego County Planning Commission

From: Jose Torre-Bueno, Executive Director, The Center for Community Energy

Re: Letter of Support for the Harmony Grove Village South Project

Dear San Diego Board of Supervisors,

San Diego is facing an urgent housing crisis, and the only long-term solution is to build more homes that working families can afford. We're writing this letter to show our support for the Harmony Grove Village South project – a thoughtfully designed community that will provide 453 much-needed homes, including townhomes, row houses, and single-family residences, ensuring that middle-class San Diegans have access to quality, attainable housing. Additionally, it will be built by local union members, supporting fair wages and creating good jobs right here in our region.

Beyond addressing our housing shortage, Harmony Grove Village South sets a new standard for sustainability. With 100% rooftop solar, EV charging in every home, and energy-efficient building design, this project will be a true net-zero energy community. Expanding an existing neighborhood and utilizing current infrastructure ensures responsible growth while preserving open space and enhancing ecological restoration efforts.

This project exemplifies the kind of forward-thinking development that aligns with the Center for Community Energy's mission to promote clean energy solutions that benefit communities while advancing California's decarbonization goals. By integrating distributed energy resources such as solar power and EV infrastructure, Harmony Grove Village South will not only lower energy costs for residents but also contribute to a more resilient electric grid. Projects like this showcase how sustainable housing and smart energy policies can work hand in hand to create a healthier, more affordable future for San Diegans. We urge the Board of Supervisor to approve this innovative and much-needed development to help San Diego move toward a more sustainable and housing-secure future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jose Torre-Bueno'.

Jose Torre-Bueno, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Center for Community Energy
jose.torrebueno@cc-energy.org
(619) 977-0553

Dear Members of the Board of Supervisors,

It's not lost on me that for many families, finding an affordable place to live in San Diego has become nearly impossible, and our city needs solutions - urgently. The Harmony Grove Village South project offers an opportunity to address this challenge, helping local residents achieve homeownership and build a stable future in a neighborhood they love.

This project matters to me personally because it grows our community responsibly, making use of existing infrastructure while preserving the area's character. By offering middle-market homes alongside affordable units, it addresses the critical "missing middle" housing gap, ensuring that teachers, first responders, healthcare workers, and other essential professionals can continue living near where they work. Isn't that the kind of future we all want for our city?

I know the many benefits of this project are familiar, but it's worth highlighting: it will create well-paying jobs for local union workers, strengthen our regional economy, and support skilled tradespeople. Its commitment to sustainability also sets a new benchmark for responsible development in San Diego.

I wholeheartedly encourage you to approve the Harmony Grove Village South project. It is a smart, balanced approach to growth that will help our community thrive, provide economic opportunity, and bring real solutions to the housing crisis.

Very Respectfully,

Gary Skaggs
garyskaggs@me.com

Dear San Diego Board of Supervisors,

As a resident of San Diego County, please accept this letter of support for the Harmony Grove Village South housing development. Our region is facing a serious homelessness and housing crisis that affects every corner of our community. It's clear that the only long-term solution is to create more homes and that's exactly what Harmony Grove Village South will accomplish.

What makes me especially excited about this project is its sustainability-focused design. As someone who works in the solar energy industry, I'm passionate about creating a greener future, and Harmony Grove Village South is setting the bar high. With 100% rooftop solar and 100% EV charging stations for each home and throughout the community, this development represents a true commitment to clean energy. Additionally, the focus on 100% energy-efficient buildings, both inside and out, shows thoughtful planning for long-term sustainability.

This development doesn't just offer housing; it brings much-needed infrastructure improvements and will create hundreds of good-paying jobs. The fact that these homes will be built by union members for working people and middle-class families shows a commitment to uplifting our local workforce and economy.

Harmony Grove Village South addresses our housing needs, boosts our economy through job creation, and prioritizes sustainable living. I strongly urge the Board to approve this project.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Eddie Price', written in a cursive style.

Eddie Price
2325 Manzana Way
San Diego, CA 92139
(619) 616-5890
eprice@gridalternatives.org

San Diego Board of Supervisors

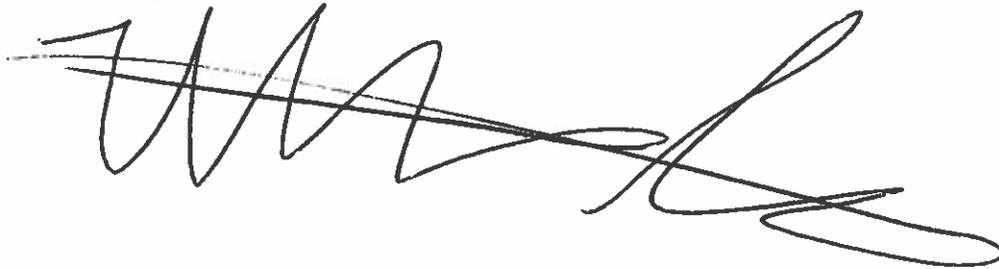
Dear Members of the Board,

As a student at California State University San Marcos and a resident of Escondido, I am deeply concerned about the housing crisis in San Diego. Rent continues to rise, and for my generation, the prospect of owning a home is becoming increasingly out of reach. Without more affordable options, young people like me risk being priced out of the communities where we grew up and hope to build our lives.

Harmony Grove Village South offers a real solution that our region desperately needs. By creating 453 homes for working San Diegans and middle-class families, built by local union members, this project addresses the housing crisis while creating new job opportunities. I am especially encouraged by the commitment to sustainability, renewable energy, and community spaces that foster healthy lifestyles. Approving this development is not just about building homes, it's about investing in the future of San Diego and giving my generation a chance to thrive here.

I strongly support Harmony Grove Village South and urge our County Supervisors to do the same.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Waters Sliter', written over a horizontal dashed line.

Waters Sliter

Letter of Support for Harmony Grove Village South Housing Development

Dear San Diego Board of Supervisors,

As a long-time San Diego County resident, I believe it is critical that we address the growing housing crisis, particularly for working families who are struggling to find affordable options in our area. The Harmony Grove Village South project presents an incredible opportunity to directly tackle this issue by providing 453 much-needed homes for middle-class families. This project is designed to give San Diegans access to the American dream, offering homes that are not only affordable but also sustainable and built with quality in mind.

The homes will be constructed by local union members, supporting fair wages and contributing to the local economy. What's more, the project's commitment to net-zero energy, 100% rooftop solar, and electric vehicle charging stations aligns perfectly with our collective goal of reducing carbon footprints while enhancing the livability of our communities. As San Diego continues to grapple with housing shortages, the Harmony Grove Village South project is a step forward in creating a vibrant, sustainable, and inclusive community for all.

I strongly support the approval of this project and encourage you to join me in advocating for the future of San Diego's working families.

Sincerely,

Alita Hetland
5926 Rancho Mission Rd. #94
San Diego, CA 92108
619-282-7080
alitalita@yahoo.com



Dane M. White, Mayor
201 North Broadway, Escondido, CA 92025
Phone: 760-839-4631
E-mail: Dane.White@escondido.gov

September 30, 2025

Terra Lawson-Remer
Supervisor – District 3
County Administration Center
1600 Pacific Hwy
Room 335
San Diego, CA 92101

Dear Supervisor Lawson-Remer:

As the Mayor of Escondido and someone who has personally experienced the pain of homelessness, I am writing to express my strong support for Harmony Grove Village South—an initiative that deeply resonates with both my personal journey and my commitment to addressing homelessness in our community.

More than a decade ago, I found myself homeless, battling severe addiction, and sleeping behind a 7-Eleven in Escondido—the city I now have the honor of serving as Mayor. That experience exposed me to the harsh realities too many face daily: The struggle for shelter and the overwhelming challenge of rebuilding a life from nothing.

My journey was not easy, but it reinforced a fundamental truth: With the right support and opportunities, transformation is possible. This belief fuels my dedication to real, lasting solutions that go beyond temporary relief to address the root causes of homelessness, including the unacceptable lack of affordable housing.

Today, far too many families in San Diego County are experiencing housing insecurity due to circumstances beyond their control: Job loss, medical emergencies, or simply the skyrocketing cost of living. With limited housing options available, adults and children alike are being left without a place to call home. Experts agree that the most effective way to combat this crisis is by building more homes—especially projects like Harmony Grove Village South, which provide affordable housing options and addresses the critical “Missing Middle” gap.

As Mayor, I have seen firsthand how access to stable, affordable housing changes lives—not just for individuals and families, but for entire communities. Investing in housing and supportive services uplifts those in need, strengthens public safety, drives economic growth, and fosters a more compassionate, resilient society.

Supervisor Lawson-Remer
September 30, 2025
Page 2

I wholeheartedly endorse Harmony Grove Village South and urge you to support this essential project. Together, we can create a future where every person has the opportunity to thrive.

Sincerely:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Dane M. White".

Dane M. White
Mayor

To the San Diego Board of Supervisors,

Our region is facing an undeniable housing crisis, and the only sustainable solution is to build more homes - especially for working families and middle-class San Diegans. Harmony Grove Village South will provide 453 much-needed homes, built by local union members, ensuring good jobs while creating a more affordable and livable community. As a community member who deeply cares about the future of San Diego, I strongly support this development.

Beyond housing, Harmony Grove Village South is a model for responsible development. It expands existing infrastructure, preserves 36 acres of open space, and prioritizes sustainability with net-zero energy homes, EV charging stations, and drought-tolerant landscaping. The addition of a new multi-lane bridge will improve circulation and emergency access while restoring the ecology of Escondido Creek. This project isn't just about housing, it's about building a community that supports working families, promotes healthy lifestyles, and aligns with our region's environmental goals.

I urge you to approve Harmony Grove Village South. It's time we take real action to address San Diego's housing shortage by supporting smart, sustainable development that benefits all residents.

Regards,

Morgan Rogers
31027 Pauma Heights Road
Valley Center, CA 92082
mrogers0127@gmail.com

**San Diego County Board of Supervisors
1600 Pacific Highway, Room 335
San Diego, CA 92101**

San Diego County Board of Supervisors,

As our region faces a worsening housing and homelessness crisis, Harmony Grove Village South (HGVS) provides a meaningful response by offering attainable homes that close the “missing middle” gap of the housing market. This thoughtfully designed, infill-located community will help meet the growing demand for housing while respecting and preserving the natural surroundings.

With our economy expanding and more families struggling to find a place they can afford, we need long-term solutions that reflect both our values and our future needs. HGVS does just that by offering an environmentally conscious development that prioritizes sustainability, connectivity, and quality of life for a diverse range of residents.

San Diego can no longer stand in the way of progress – we must invest in housing solutions today. I urge you to approve Harmony Grove Village South and support a more livable future for all who call this region home.

Sincerely,

Paul DeRisi
619-850-3980

09/29/2025

San Diego County Board of Supervisors
1600 Pacific Highway, Room 335
San Diego, CA 92101

Re: Support for Harmony Grove Village South

Dear Chair Terra Lawson-Remer and Members of the Board,

I am writing to express my strong support for the Harmony Grove Village South development. As San Diego County continues to face a severe housing shortage, projects like this are critical to ensuring our community remains a place where families, workers, and future generations can thrive.

Harmony Grove Village South represents an opportunity to deliver much-needed housing at a time when rising costs are pushing too many residents out of the county. By approving this project, you will help provide attainable options for local families, strengthen our neighborhoods, and support the overall economic vitality of the region.

Housing is not just about buildings, it is about stability, opportunity, and community well-being. Approving Harmony Grove Village South is an important step toward addressing the urgent need for more homes and ensuring San Diego remains a place where people of all backgrounds can build a future.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration of this important project.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Kyselev', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Leon Kyselev

Letter of Support for the Harmony Grove Village South Housing Development

Members of the Board of Supervisors,

San Diego is facing a severe housing crisis, and the only long-term solution is to build more homes. That is why I am writing to express my strong support for the Harmony Grove Village South housing development. This project will provide more than 450 much-needed homes for working families and middle-class San Diegans, built by local union labor.

I have worked for many years on the issue of ensuring San Diego's economy continues to grow. There is a strong need for new housing options for all sectors of the region's workforce - to which this project contributes. SANDAG estimates the need for thousands of new homes each year to support continued economic vitality for the San Diego region - projects such as this one.

Harmony Grove Village South is exactly the kind of smart, sustainable development our region needs. It will expand an existing community, use modern, energy-efficient design, and ensure homeownership remains within reach for more San Diegans. I urge you to approve this project and help move our county forward in addressing the housing crisis.

Sincerely,

Andrew Poat
San Diego, CA
619.806.7608
andrewpoat@gmail.com

**San Diego County Board of Supervisors
1600 Pacific Highway, Room 335
San Diego, CA 92101**

Dear Members of San Diego's Board of Supervisors,

As a San Diegan who cares deeply about the future of our region, I believe Harmony Grove Village South offers the right solution to address the growing demand for housing. Our housing crisis has made it increasingly difficult for working families and young professionals to find an attainable place to live, and this development offers a real solution. This project will create good-paying jobs while strengthening our tax base to support schools, fire districts, and infrastructure.

What makes HGVS stand out is its balance of economic value, environmental stewardship, and community connection. With 100% rooftop solar, EV-ready homes, preserved open space, and neighborhood amenities that encourage healthy, active lifestyles, it's a model for how we can grow responsibly.

I strongly urge you to approve this project so we can take a meaningful step toward addressing San Diego's housing shortage and building a stronger, more inclusive community.

Sincerely,

Ciara Trujillo
(949) 279-0685
ciara.trujillo@colliers.com

To the San Diego County Board of Supervisors:

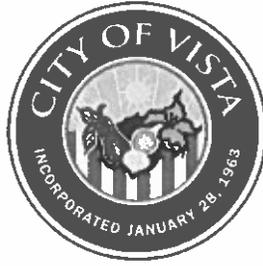
I am reaching out to voice my support for the Harmony Grove Village South housing development. As a proud San Diego business owner and resident for nearly two decades, I have dedicated much of my time to serving District 3, including as a member of the Ocean Beach Town Council and our local Planning Group. Based on my experience, I firmly believe that this project is essential to addressing our area's housing crisis and ensuring San Diego remains a place where all residents can thrive.

The development of 453 homes, with units specifically aimed at the "missing middle" category, is a crucial step toward providing attainable housing for working families. I've learned that this project will be built by local union members, ensuring fair wages and good jobs for San Diegans. Additionally, the increased tax base will help fund our public schools — an investment that benefits the entire community.

Let me be blunt: It is unacceptable for wealthy NIMBYs and supporters of bigoted redlining policies to continue their baseless attempts to derail this project. Their opposition, at its core, is about keeping people of color and lower income working families out of "their neighborhood." You cannot allow these exclusionary tactics — and the nonstop lies spewing from opponents -- to dictate housing policy in San Diego County. This nonsense must end today!

I urge the Board to move forward with approval of Harmony Grove Village South and take a stand for a more inclusive and equitable San Diego. Please don't let a small group of entitled NIMBYs to stand in the way of creating homes for working people.

Sincerely,
Giovanni Ingolia



September 29, 2025

Chair Terra Lawson Remer
County of San Diego, Board of Supervisors
1600 Pacific Highway, Room 206
San Diego, CA 92101 San Diego, CA 92123

Dear Chair Lawson Remer:

I am writing to express my strong support for the Harmony Grove Village South project, which represents a critical step in addressing San Diego County's ongoing housing and homelessness crisis.

As Mayor of Vista, I am committed to practical solutions for addressing homelessness and public safety, and I have proudly led efforts such as Vista's award-winning Homelessness Strategic Plan. I firmly believe that projects like Harmony Grove Village South and its 450+ homes are among the long-term solutions our region needs to give working people and middle-class families access to quality housing.

San Diego County's homelessness and housing crises will not be solved without swift and decisive action. I agree with the many community and elected leaders who also support this project: If we don't start building more homes today, we risk falling even further behind in meeting the needs of our constituents.

Harmony Grove Village South is the right project, at the right scale, on the right land. It will not only offer much-needed housing but also generate economic benefits by creating jobs and strengthening our tax base. These additional tax revenues will provide essential funding for our schools and public safety entities —ensuring a stronger, more resilient community for residents here in Vista and across the County.

I urge you to support Harmony Grove Village South and take meaningful action today to address our region's housing challenges. Together, we can create opportunities for hard-working families while ensuring a sustainable and prosperous future for Vista and all of San Diego County.

Sincerely,

John Franklin
Mayor

Esteemed Members of the Board,

As a lifelong builder and North County resident, I've seen firsthand how the lack of housing is impacting families, businesses, and our community's future. The Harmony Grove Village South development is exactly the kind of thoughtful, well-planned solution we need. The development is strongly aligned with San Diego's commitment to sustainability and aims to build more than 450 homes for our community's hard-working families.

This project doesn't just address the housing crisis; it supports our economy. It creates good-paying jobs, strengthens our construction industry, and expands our tax base to fund schools, fire protection, and infrastructure. With a variety of home sizes and styles, Harmony Grove Village South provides real options for middle-income residents who are currently priced out of the market.

As a contractor and business owner, I know high quality when I see it. This project uses existing infrastructure, respects the land, and adds long-term value to our region. I strongly urge the Board to approve Harmony Grove Village South and invest in a stronger, more affordable future for San Diegans.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rick Woolsey". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "R".

Rick Woolsey
President, R&R General Contractors

September 9, 2025

Letter of Support for the Harmony Grove Village South Housing Development

Honorable Board of Supervisors,

San Diego's housing crisis demands tangible, long-term solutions—and building more homes must be part of the answer. I'm writing to voice my strong support for the Harmony Grove Village South development, which will bring 453 much-needed homes to our region, created by skilled local union workers.

As our economy grows and more families are priced out of the housing market, we need developments that meet both today's challenges and tomorrow's needs. HGVS represents that vision—prioritizing sustainability, walkability, and community while expanding access to attainable housing for working and middle-income San Diegans.

Harmony Grove Village South is the kind of forward-looking project that can help San Diego address its housing shortage in a responsible and meaningful way. I urge you to support its approval.

Kind regards,

Autumn M Stoff

Autumn Stoff



September 11, 2025

San Diego County Board of Supervisors
1600 Pacific Highway, Room 335
San Diego, CA 92101

Dear Board of Supervisors,

I support the Harmony Grove Village South housing development and strongly encourage our County Supervisors to approve it without delay.

San Diego is facing a severe and unprecedented housing crisis, and we will not begin to solve it without well-planned, sustainable communities like this—designed to meet the needs of working families while respecting the region’s environmental and economic goals.

Harmony Grove Village South will deliver much-needed homes for middle-income San Diegans, built with local labor and supported by existing infrastructure. Beyond addressing our housing needs, the project strengthens our local economy, expands the tax base, and reflects a forward-looking approach with its net-zero energy design and diverse housing types.

This project is the kind of responsible growth our region urgently needs.

Sincerely,

Blake Isaacson

Dear San Diego County Board of Supervisors,

Please help provide housing for working families and middle-class residents to find a place to call home. The Harmony Grove Village South project is an ideal solution, offering more than 450 homes that will provide attainable homeownership opportunities for local families, and create a special place for them to start a community to call home.

Harmony Grove South will also create valuable jobs for local union members, strengthening our regional economy and supporting skilled workers with fair wages. Additionally, with features like net-zero energy homes, comprehensive rooftop solar, and EV charging, its dedication to sustainability defines a new model for responsible development in our county.

I hope you will approve the Harmony Grove Village South project without delay. It represents smart growth, economic opportunity, and a real path forward in solving San Diego's housing crisis.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Santistevan", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

David Santistevan

Dear Supervisors,

Every day, we see headlines about the housing crisis in San Diego - rising rents, families priced out of homeownership, and an increasing number of people without a stable place to live. It's clear we need real solutions, and the proposed Harmony Grove Village South development provides one. As a longtime advocate for smart, community-oriented growth in our region, I strongly support this housing development.

This project directly addresses the urgent need for more homes, particularly for working San Diegans and middle-class families. With 453 sustainably built homes - constructed by local union workers - it offers a mix of housing types that reflect our community's needs. Harmony Grove Village South isn't just about building homes; it's about giving families a chance to stay in San Diego, contribute to our economy, and thrive. I urge our County Supervisors to support this important step toward solving our region's housing shortage.

Regards,

Ed Gallo
4edgallo@gmail.com

Dear Members of the Board of Supervisors,

As a long-time San Diegan, I've watched the cost of housing climb higher and higher. It's pushing everyday people out of the communities they love. We need more homes that working families can afford, and I believe Harmony Grove Village South is exactly the kind of well-planned development that can make a difference.

This project isn't about building more oversized, out-of-reach houses. It's about creating a mix of homes for local families while being mindful of the surrounding environment, adding parks, trails, and gathering spaces that make it a true community.

I personally appreciate the fact that it's 100% solar-powered and includes EV chargers for every home, showing it's designed with the future in mind.

I believe HGVS is a smart, much-needed step toward solving our housing shortage, and I hope you'll give it your full support.

Sincerely,

Eden Gannon

September 11, 2025

ATTENTION:

**San Diego County Board of Supervisors
1600 Pacific Highway, Room 310
San Diego, CA 92101**

Dear County Board of Supervisors,

I am a born and raised San Diegan and I am raising my children here. As they get to an age where they are supposed to be creating homes of their own it is impossible to ignore the challenges of the housing market here.

Harmony Grove (HGVS) is a thoughtful project, providing environmental considerations with rooftop solar, EV ready homes, protected open space balanced with the human need for new homes that include neighborhood amenities and connectivity to the community.

Our housing crisis has made it increasingly difficult for working families to find an attainable place to live, and this development offers a real solution. This project will create good-paying jobs while strengthening our tax base to support schools, fire districts, and infrastructure.

I strongly urge you to approve this project so we can take a meaningful step toward addressing San Diego's housing shortage and building a stronger, more inclusive community.

Sincerely,



Erin McKinley
858.945.8227
TurnFocus@gmail.com

Esteemed Members of the Board,

San Diego's housing shortage continues to place a significant burden on working families and middle-income residents who are being priced out of homeownership. The Harmony Grove Village South (HGVS) project presents a thoughtful solution, one that aligns with the kind of smart, sustainable development that supports our region's long-term planning goals.

HGVS proposes a variety of homes, including middle-market and affordable housing options that directly address the "missing middle" gap. This development is designed to meet the needs of teachers, nurses, first responders, and other essential workers who are vital to San Diego's economy and community fabric, yet often unable to live in the city they serve.

Unlike traditional sprawl, HGVS extends an existing village footprint, leveraging current infrastructure while preserving the area's rural character. It exemplifies infill-style growth that reduces pressure on urban cores and promotes a more balanced regional housing supply.

The project also supports broader city priorities: job creation through good-paying union labor, a strong emphasis on sustainability with 100% rooftop solar, net-zero energy homes, and EV charging infrastructure, and a walkable, community-focused design that enhances quality of life.

As someone deeply engaged in advancing San Diego's planning objectives, I hope you'll view HGVS as a compelling opportunity to deliver both housing and community benefit. It reflects the kind of responsible growth our region urgently needs - and deserves.

Sincerely,
Jill Chorak

September 11, 2025

ATTN:

San Diego County Board of Supervisors

1600 Pacific Highway, Room 310

San Diego, CA 92101

Dear County Supervisors,

I am writing to express strong support for the Harmony Grove Village South development. This project presents a meaningful opportunity to address the pressing need for housing in our region, particularly for working families and middle-income residents who deserve a chance at homeownership.

Harmony Grove South offers a thoughtful, sustainable, and attainable solution for those seeking stability and community. Beyond housing, the project will generate jobs for local union workers, contributing to a stronger and more resilient regional economy.

Equally important is the project's forward-thinking approach to sustainability. Features such as rooftop solar panels and EV charging stations demonstrate a commitment to environmentally responsible growth.

I urge you to approve the Harmony Grove Village South project. It embodies smart planning, economic vitality, and a genuine step toward resolving San Diego's housing challenges.

Best,

Kelly Fauth

Dear Board of Supervisors,

San Diego is facing a severe housing crisis that is making it increasingly difficult for working families and middle-class residents to find an affordable place to call home. The Harmony Grove Village South project is an ideal solution, offering more than 450 homes that will provide attainable homeownership opportunities for local families - helping them build a stable and thriving future in our region.

Unlike urban sprawl, HGVS expands an existing village in a responsible way, utilizing current infrastructure while maintaining the area's character. With middle-market homes and affordable housing units, this development will help address the "missing middle" housing gap, ensuring that teachers, first responders, healthcare workers, and other essential professionals can continue to live and work in San Diego.

Beyond housing, HGVS will also create valuable jobs for local union members, strengthening our regional economy and supporting skilled workers with fair wages. Additionally, its commitment to sustainability - including net-zero energy homes, 100% rooftop solar, and EV charging - raises the bar for responsible development in our county.

I strongly urge you to approve the Harmony Grove Village South project without delay. It represents smart growth, economic opportunity, and a real path forward in solving San Diego's housing crisis.

Regards,

Marwan Bishar
858-354-3394
bisharmarwan@gmail.com
MBA Development LLC



MARATHON CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION

CONTRACTORS AND ENGINEERS

STATE LICENSE NO. 411338

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TEL (619) 276-4401 FAX (619) 276-0717
www.marathonsd.com

September 11, 2025

Attention: San Diego County Board of Supervisors
1600 Pacific Highway, Room 335
San Diego, CA 92101
Subject: Harmony Grove Village South

Dear Board of Supervisors:

As someone who has spent almost five decades working in heavy civil engineering construction projects, large environmental restoration projects, and light industrial development, I understand the importance of thoughtful development that serves our communities, supports people, and protects the environment. The Harmony Grove Village South project reflects these values.

This project addresses San Diego's urgent housing crisis by creating 453 new homes for working families that will be delivered by local union labor, while also enhancing the local economy and expanding access to homeownership. Just as importantly, it's designed with sustainability at its core: net-zero energy homes, including EV charging infrastructure, and the permanent preservation of 36 acres of natural land. By clustering development and restoring areas along Escondido Creek, it also helps revitalize native habitats and maintain the ecological health of the region, a wonderful balance between development and the environment.

Harmony Grove Village South is a responsible, future-focused community that benefits the people who live here, the environment we all depend on, and the broader region. I strongly urge the Board to support this project.

Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,

Mike Furby
President
Marathon Construction Corporation
Lakeside Land Company

**San Diego County Board of Supervisors
1600 Pacific Highway, Room 335
San Diego, CA 92101**

Members of the Board of Supervisors,

As a longtime San Diego entrepreneur and business leader, I know that a strong regional economy depends on access to stable, attainable housing for working families. The Harmony Grove Village South development offers a viable solution with more than 450 thoughtfully designed homes for middle-income San Diegans, built by local union labor and powered by 100% rooftop solar.

This project addresses one of our region's most urgent challenges: the severe shortage of housing for working professionals and families who are the backbone of our economy. In addition to helping ease the housing crisis, Harmony Grove Village South will create good-paying jobs, expand our local tax base, and strengthen critical infrastructure.

As someone in the technology and finance sector, I also see this as an investment in talent retention. When San Diego workers can afford to live here, we're better positioned to compete globally, grow businesses locally, and build a more resilient future. I urge the Board to approve this forward-thinking, sustainable community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nigel Hook', written in a cursive style.

Nigel Hook
Founder & CEO, TradeSun

SAN DIEGO NORTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

MARKET | RETAIN | CONNECT

9/11/2025

San Diego County Board of Supervisors
1600 Pacific Highway, Room 335
San Diego, CA 92101

RE: Harmony Grove Village South – Support

Honorable Members of the Board of Supervisors,

On behalf of the San Diego North Economic Development Council (SDNEDC), I am writing to express the Council's strong support for the Harmony Grove Village South (HGVS) project.

This project will add 453 badly needed homes to job rich areas west of Interstate 15. Building for the missing middle, HGVS is comprised of a combination of townhomes, row homes, attached condominiums, and courtyard detached homes. It is not inefficient large lot development but rather a project with the kind of housing product that North County desperately needs.

Housing is the most important economic development crisis we have. The failure to match our region's ability to create jobs with production of new housing has driven the costs of rent and homeownership to record breaking levels. These costs drain family budgets, with more than 40% of San Diego households being rent burdened. To pay for shelter too many San Diego families go without, hurting our small businesses that give our region character and make North County a special place.

This is starkly apparent in examining housing growth against job growth in the immediate area. The table on the following page compares the jobs/housing balance in 2015 vs. 2025 for Escondido and San Marcos. Housing figures are from the CA Department of Finance (E-1 estimates) while Jobs are from JobsEQ – a source that provides employment numbers at the sub-county level.

	2015 payroll jobs	2025 payroll jobs	2015 homes	2025 homes	Ratio 2015 (How many Jobs chasing each home)	Ratio 2025 (How many Jobs chasing each home)
Escondido	50,009	59,592	48,696	50,883	1.03	1.17
San Marcos	37,520	44,216	30,126	33,157	1.24	1.33
Total	87,619	103,808	78,822	84,040	1.11	1.23



(Mailing) ELB Room 514
441 La Moree Road
San Marcos, CA 92078



info@sdnedc.org



(760) 203-5841



sdnedc.org

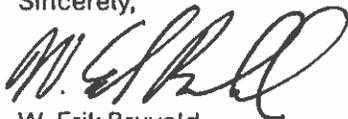
As the table on the previous page shows, in 2015 there were just over 87,600 payroll jobs in those 2 cities and 78,822 a ratio of 1.11 jobs for every home. Prices were expensive but middle-class residents could still afford homes and start families. In the following 10 years, San Marcos and Escondido combined added almost 16,000. This was the result of, in part, growth at CSUSM (4.8 miles from the intersection of Harmony Grove Road and Country Club Drive), the construction of a new Kaiser Hospital (5.5 miles), robust growth at the Escondido Auto mall (2.5 miles) and continued expansion in the La Costa Meadows business park in San Marcos (7.6 mile). These mileages, derived from Google Maps are telling. **HGVS IS proximate to job growth – far more so than many other projects.**

Meanwhile, between 2015 and 2025 San Marcos and Escondido **only added 5,200 homes**. In other words, **for every 1 net new home added to supply over the past 10 years, nearly 3 net new jobs were chasing it.**

The results have been predictable. Jobs still are in the area are still being filled. But rather than workers living close to employment sites, many individuals employed by North County businesses have been forced by high housing prices to reside in more affordable areas such as South County, Southern Riverside County or even further afield. This inability to match job growth with housing growth in the same community has led to increased GHG, increased consumption of open space and a diminished quality of life for those subjected to mega commutes. Stopping housing in one neighborhood doesn't stop growth, it simply pushes the problems out with more emissions and more wasteful land use patterns.

In closing I urge the commission to not just approve the project but to do so with a full-throated endorsement, showing that the county is doing its part to meet the most important regional economic development challenge we have.

Sincerely,



W. Erik Bruvold
Chief Executive Officer

To the San Diego County Board of Supervisors,

Our community needs real solutions to address the growing housing crisis, and I believe Harmony Grove Village South is the project that can make a difference. With a number of well-designed homes for middle-class and working San Diegans, this community will provide attainable housing while supporting good-paying jobs right here in our county.

This development offers more than just homes; it brings economic value and a commitment to sustainability. It will preserve 36 acres of natural open space, create parks, trails, and gathering places, and ensure every home is built with clean energy features. By supporting skilled workers with fair wages, Harmony Grove Village South will strengthen our regional economy while helping families put down roots.

Approving this project is an opportunity to ease our housing shortage, invest in sustainable growth, and create a community where San Diegans can truly live, work, and thrive.

Sincerely,

Roby Ellis

9/11/2025

**San Diego County Board of Supervisors 5510
1600 Pacific Highway, Room 335
San Diego, CA 92101**

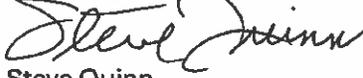
To the San Diego County Board of Supervisors,

San Diego's housing shortage continues to put pressure on working families and middle-income residents. The Harmony Grove Village South project offers a realistic solution by delivering more than 450 new homes in a way that complements the surrounding community.

The project makes smart use of existing infrastructure, provides a range of attainable housing options, and supports good local jobs through union-built construction. Its sustainability features—like rooftop solar and net-zero energy design—are aligned with the region's climate goals and future needs.

Harmony Grove Village South represents the kind of balanced growth that can help ease our housing crisis while strengthening our local economy. I respectfully urge you to approve this project.

Sincerely,


Steve Quinn

September 9, 2025

Letter of Support for the Harmony Grove Village South Housing Development

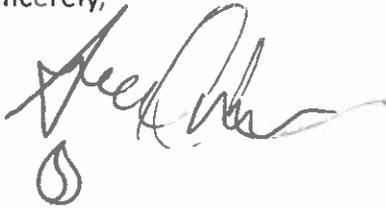
Members of the Board of Supervisors,

San Diego is facing a severe housing crisis, and the only long-term solution is to build more homes. That is why I am writing to express my strong support for the Harmony Grove Village South housing development. This project will provide 453 much-needed homes for working families and middle-class San Diegans, built by local union labor.

With our economy expanding and more families struggling to find a place they can afford, we need long-term solutions that reflect both our values and our future needs. HGVS does just that-offering environmentally conscious development that prioritizes sustainability, connectivity, and quality of life for a diverse range of residents.

Harmony Grove Village South is exactly the kind of smart, sustainable development our region needs. I urge you to approve this project and help move our county forward in addressing the housing crisis.

Sincerely,



SLS\ND\W

Susan Dunn *Founder, Designer & Aquaphile*

USPS Address: P.O. Box 1086, Rancho Santa Fe, CA, 92067

FedEx & UPS: 6436 Via Naranjal, Rancho Santa Fe, CA 92067

Office 858-832-1086 Direct 858-836-3051

Cell 858-245-1826 Email susan@susandunn.com

**San Diego County Board of Supervisors
1600 Pacific Highway, Room 335
San Diego, CA 92101**

Dear County Supervisors,

San Diego's housing crisis continues to drive displacement and homelessness, leaving far too many individuals and families without a safe, stable place to call home. To meaningfully address this crisis, we need to expand our region's supply of attainable housing across the entire income spectrum. The Harmony Grove Village South (HGVS) project offers exactly that - a pathway to stability for working families who are increasingly at risk of falling through the cracks.

HGVS proposes middle-market and affordable options that will help close the housing gap for those earning too much to qualify for traditional assistance, but too little to afford market-rate housing. These are often the very people - caregivers, social workers, and public servants - who are one hardship away from housing insecurity.

By responsibly expanding an existing village, this project offers a smarter alternative to unchecked sprawl. It supports community-based development while leveraging existing infrastructure, preserving open space, and maintaining neighborhood character.

For those of us committed to solving homelessness in San Diego, increasing the supply of attainable housing is one of the most powerful tools we have. I strongly urge you to support the Harmony Grove Village South project. It brings us one step closer to a region where everyone has the opportunity for a safe, stable home.

Sincerely,

Trudy Levenson

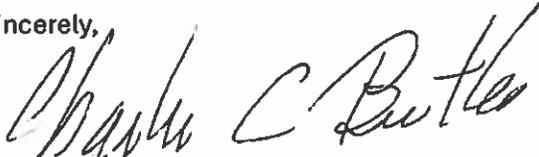
San Diego County Board of Supervisors
1600 Pacific Highway, Room 335
San Diego, CA 92101

Dear Members of the Board of Supervisors,

Having built and led my business in San Diego for decades, I understand the vital role that stable housing plays in maintaining a strong, vibrant workforce. Our region is facing a housing shortage that threatens both families and the economic health of our communities. Harmony Grove Village South is a well-planned development that directly addresses this challenge by providing attainable homes for working families and middle-income residents, while supporting local union labor and fair wages.

This project not only meets a critical housing need but also strengthens our neighborhoods, preserves natural surroundings, and fosters a sense of community. In my experience as business owner and operator, I know that developments like HGVS benefit everyone - from employees to local businesses and the broader economy. I strongly encourage the Board to approve Harmony Grove Village South and help ensure San Diego remains a place where families and our workforce can thrive.

Sincerely,



Charles C. Butler

Founder
AMERICAN FAUCETS & COATING CORP
Since 1992

**San Diego County Board of Supervisors
1600 Pacific Highway, Room 310
San Diego, CA 92101**

To the San Diego County Board of Supervisors,

As a homebuilder who firmly believes in the promise of the American Dream, I support the Harmony Grove Village South project because it represents exactly what our region needs—real solutions to our housing crisis. With more than 450 purpose-built homes for working families and middle-income San Diegans, this community helps fill the critical gap in attainable housing while preserving the character and sustainability of the region.

From my experience in homebuilding, I can say this project is being done the right way. It includes a diverse mix of home types that cater to different preferences, is designed with long-term sustainability in mind, and will be built by skilled local union labor. That's the kind of quality and care we need more of in San Diego. Harmony Grove Village South is a well-planned, responsible way to create the homes our workforce and families so urgently need.

This project not only expands much-needed housing supply but also delivers meaningful economic value and will generate lasting benefits for local schools, infrastructure, and public services. Harmony Grove Village South is a smart, forward-looking investment in our county's future, and I urge you to approve it.

Regards,



Tom Dobron

Dear Chair Terra Lawson-Remer and Members of the Board,

I'm writing to you as both a longtime Ocean Beach resident and a small business owner to share my wholehearted support for the Harmony Grove Village South (HGVS) development. As someone deeply invested in the cultural and economic vitality of our region, I see HGVS as an incredibly thoughtful and much-needed solution to our county's housing crisis.

Affordable and middle-income housing shouldn't be something we debate year after year. It should be something we build—with care, vision, and urgency. HGVS does exactly that. It's designed for real San Diegans—teachers, artists, health workers, tradespeople—people who contribute to our communities and deserve a chance to put down roots.

I'm particularly impressed with the community aspects of the project. Thirteen parks, walking trails, a gathering center, and native landscaping—these are the kinds of elements that turn a development into a *community*. The mix of townhomes, courtyard homes, and lofts means there's something for a wide variety of families and individuals—not just one income bracket or lifestyle.

As someone who values sustainability and aesthetics, I also love that HGVS will feature rustic architecture that fits the area's character, while being fully solar-powered and built with long-term environmental stewardship in mind.

We need to move beyond short-term thinking and embrace responsible developments like this one. I hope you and the Board approve this project and show that San Diego County is ready to support solutions that make a real difference.

Warm regards,

Julie Klein
Ocean Beach Resident
Artist & Small Business Owner



San Diego County Board of Supervisors
1600 Pacific Highway, Room 335
San Diego, CA 92101

Dear Members of the Board of Supervisors,

As a longtime San Diego resident, real estate professional and past board member and active member of the Building Industry Association of San Diego, I have seen firsthand how the lack of affordable housing affects both families and our local workforce. I have found Harmony Grove Village South is more than just a housing development, it is an investment in the hard working people who keep our region running. With the homes built by local union members, this project ensures fair wages while addressing a critical housing shortage. For many employees across San Diego having access to affordable, well-designed homes close to work is life changing. Harmony Grove Village South provides that opportunity while supporting our local economy and sustaining skilled trades, something I have long advocated for through my work with the BIA. I strongly support this project and urge the Board to approve it, helping working families stay rooted in the communities they love. Thank you for your attention to my letter!

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

Eric Jones

A2C8E3F92ACD475...

Eric Jones

President

Urban Real Estate Services

619-885-8003

eric@urbanrealestate.info

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4579 Mission Gorge Place, Suite A
San Diego, CA 92120
(619) 287-8873

San Diego County Board of Supervisors
1600 Pacific Highway, Room 335
San Diego, CA 92101

Dear Members of the Board of Supervisors,

Having built and led my business in San Diego for decades, I understand the vital role that stable housing plays in maintaining a strong, vibrant workforce. Our region is facing a housing shortage that threatens both families and the economic health of our communities. Harmony Grove Village South is a well-planned development that directly addresses this challenge by providing attainable homes for working families and middle-income residents, while supporting local union labor and fair wages.

This project not only meets critical housing needs but also strengthens our neighborhoods, preserves natural surroundings, and fosters a sense of community. In my experience as business owner and operator, I know that developments like HGVS benefit everyone - from employees to local businesses and the broader economy. I strongly encourage the Board to approve Harmony Grove Village South and help ensure San Diego remains a place where families and our workforce can thrive.

Sincerely,



John La Raia
President
A-1 Self Storage
Phone: 619-287-8873 ext. 204



September 15, 2025

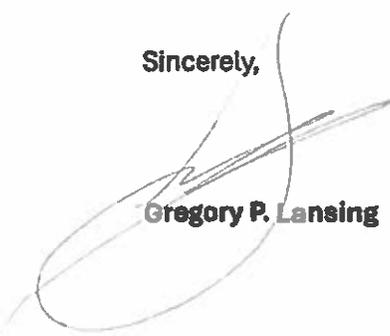
**San Diego County Board of Supervisors
1600 Pacific Highway, Room 335
San Diego, CA 92101**

Dear Members of the Board of Supervisors,

Having built and led my business in San Diego for decades, I understand the vital role that stable housing plays in maintaining a strong, vibrant workforce. Our region is facing a housing shortage that threatens both families and the economic health of our communities. Harmony Grove Village South is a well-planned development that directly addresses this challenge by providing attainable homes for working families and middle-income residents, while supporting local union labor and fair wages.

This project not only meets a critical housing need but also strengthens our neighborhoods, preserves natural surroundings, and fosters a sense of community. In my experience as business owner and operator, I know that developments like HGVS benefit everyone - from employees to local businesses and the broader economy. I strongly encourage the Board to approve Harmony Grove Village South and help ensure San Diego remains a place where families and our workforce can thrive.

Sincerely,



Gregory P. Lansing



JOHN W. HOWARD*
SCOTT J. STREET

MICHELLE D. VOLK
PETER C. SHELLING

KRISTIN J. WRIGHT
Chief Operating Officer

Also Admitted
Colorado*

MAIN OFFICE
ONE AMERICA PLAZA
600 WEST BROADWAY, SUITE 1400
SAN DIEGO, CA 92101
TEL (619) 234-2842

LOS ANGELES OFFICE
201 S LAKE AVENUE, SUITE 303
PASADENA, CA 91101
TEL (213) 205-2800

OF COUNSEL:
MITCHELL B. STEIN

September 11, 2025

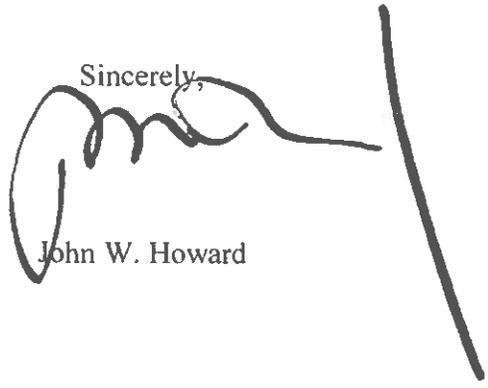
San Diego County Board of Supervisors
1600 Pacific Highway, Room 335
San Diego, CA 92101

Dear Members of the Board of Supervisors,

I am writing as both a resident and a professional in North County who deeply cares about the future of our community. The reality is clear: we are facing a housing crisis, and without new homes, our community risks losing the very families and workers who form the backbone of our economy. I believe Harmony Grove Village South is a practical, well-planned solution to help address this urgent need.

As the owner of a local law firm, I know firsthand how stable housing can make a profound difference in the lives of my employees. A development like Harmony Grove Village South would give them the opportunity to live closer to work, build stability for their families, and contribute more fully to the community. Approving this project would not only provide much-needed homes but also strengthen the social and economic fabric of our region.

I strongly support Harmony Grove Village South and respectfully encourage the Board to approve this important development.

Sincerely,

John W. Howard

September 26, 2025

Dear Members of the Board of Supervisors,

I've lived in North County San Diego for years, and I love our community, but I also know that doing nothing isn't an option. Some voices oppose new housing developments, worried about "change," yet our county faces a real crisis: families and working San Diegans simply cannot find homes they can afford. Harmony Grove Village South is designed to meet that need with 453 homes built by local union members, offering a variety of housing types without sprawling mansion. It's a project that fits our area, supports our economy, and keeps our community vibrant.

I hope the Board will move forward and approve this development. We can't let fear of change outweigh the clear benefits for our neighbors, our children, and our region. Harmony Grove Village South is the kind of development North County needs - let's make it happen!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sam Suchowiejko". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Sam Suchowiejko

Retired Project Manager for KB Homes

North County San Diego Resident



March 17, 2025

To: Members of the San Diego County Planning Commission

From: Jose Torre-Bueno, Executive Director
Center for Community Energy
jose.torrebueno@cc-energy.org

Susan Wayo, Board Member & Director of Operations
Center for Community Energy
susan.wayo@cc-energy.org

Re: Letter of Support for the Harmony Grove Village South Project

Dear members of the San Diego County Planning Commission:

San Diego is grappling with a housing crisis that affects every corner of our county, and the need for more affordable housing options has never been more urgent. The Harmony Grove Village South project offers a long-term solution to this crisis by providing 453 much-needed homes for working families and middle-class households. We urge you to approve it without any further delays.

In addition to addressing the housing shortage, the Harmony Grove Village South project demonstrates a strong commitment to sustainability. With 100% rooftop solar, energy-efficient buildings, and electric vehicle charging stations, this development aligns with our goals for a cleaner, more sustainable future. The project also ensures that 36 acres of natural land will be preserved as open space, enhancing the community's connection to nature.

Furthermore, this project closely aligns with the Center for Community Energy's mission to advance clean energy solutions that benefit residents, small businesses, and underserved communities. By integrating distributed energy resources such as rooftop solar and EV infrastructure, the project supports California's decarbonization goals while helping to reduce long-term energy costs for homeowners. Developments like this demonstrate how we can build much-needed housing while improving grid resiliency and expanding access to clean, affordable energy.

We strongly support this initiative as it not only provides vital housing for our community but also fosters environmental stewardship and job creation through local union labor.

The Center for Community Energy

A 501(c)3 non-profit

<https://centerforcommunityenergy.org/>

1470 Encinitas Blvd., #312
Encinitas, CA 92024

Kindly accept this letter of support. We look forward to the successful development of this project, which will significantly contribute to the well-being of San Diego's residents.

Regards,

Jose Torre-Bueno, PhD
Exec. Director
Center for Community Energy



Susan Wayo
Board Member & Secretary
Center for Community Energy



The Center for Community Energy

A 501(c)3 non-profit

<https://centerforcommunityenergy.org/>

249 So. Hwy. 101, Unit 564
Solana Beach, CA 92075

SAN DIEGO NORTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

MARKET | RETAIN | CONNECT

8/13/2025

Planning Commission
County of San Diego
Planning & Development Services
5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 110
San Diego, CA 92123

RE: Harmony Grove Village South – Support

Honorable Planning Commissioners,

On behalf of the San Diego North Economic Development Council (SDNEDC), I am writing to express the Council's strong support for the Harmony Grove Village South (HGVS) project.

This project will add 453 badly needed homes to job rich areas west of Interstate 15. Building for the missing middle, HGVS is comprised of a combination of townhomes, row homes, attached condominiums, and courtyard detached homes. It is not inefficient large lot development but rather a project with the kind of housing product that North County desperately needs.

Housing is the most important economic development crisis we have. The failure to match our region's ability to create jobs with production of new housing has driving the costs of rent and homeownership to record breaking levels. These costs drain family budgets, with more than 40% of San Diego households being rent burdened. To pay for shelter too many San Diego families go without, hurting our small businesses that give our region character and make North County a special place.

This is starkly apparent in examining housing growth against job growth in the immediate area. The table on the following page compares the jobs/housing balance in 2015 vs. 2025 for Escondido and San Marcos. Housing figures are from the CA Department of Finance (E-1 estimates) while Jobs are from JobsEQ – a source that provides employment numbers at the sub-county level.



(Mailing) ELB Room 514
441 La Moree Road
San Marcos, CA 92078



info@sdnedc.org



(760) 203-5841



sdnedc.org

	2015 payroll jobs	2025 payroll jobs	2015 homes	2025 homes	Ratio 2015 (Jobs/Homes)	Ratio 2025 Jobs/Homes)
Escondido	50,009	59,592	48,696	50,883	1.03	1.17
San Marcos	37,520	44,216	30,126	33,157	1.24	1.33
Total	87,619	103,808	78,822	84,040	1.11	1.23

As the table shows, In 2015 there were just over 87,600 payroll jobs in those 2 cities and a ratio of 1.11 jobs for every home. In the following 10 years, San Marcos and Escondido combined added nearly 16,000 jobs. This was the result, in part, of growth at CSUSM (4.8 miles from the intersection of Harmony Grove Road and Country Club Drive), the construction of a new Kaiser Hospital (5.5 miles), robust growth at the Escondido Auto mall (2.5 miles to the Kia dealership) and continued expansion in the La Costa Meadows business park in San Marcos (7.6 miles to Diamond Street and Melrose Drive in San Marcos). These mileages, derived from Google Maps are telling. **HGVS IS proximate to job growth – far more so than many other projects.**

Meanwhile, between 2015 and 2025 San Marcos and Escondido only added 5,200 homes. In other words, for every 1 net new home added to supply over the past 10 years, nearly 3 net new jobs were chasing it. The ratio has gotten worse (1.11 vs. 1.23) not better as litigation, building costs, and barriers to production have led to a worsening supply problem.

During this 10-year period the County of San Diego did add homes. Unfortunately, the data from the state does not allow us to disaggregate the homes built in North County and those constructed in other areas such as East Otay, Alpine, Ramona and Valley Center. But even if we assume that EVERY net housing unit in the unincorporated area that was built over the past decade was constructed in Harmony Grove, **the Jobs/Housing ratio would still have grown worse (1.11 to 1.14). Simply put, all over the region we have been unable to balance job growth with an adequate expansion in the number of housing units.**

The results are both obvious and predictable. Jobs still are in the area and still being filled. But rather than workers living close to employment sites, many individuals employed by North County businesses have been forced by high housing prices to reside in more affordable areas such as South County, Southern Riverside County or even further afield. It can not be emphasized enough – this inability to match job and housing growth leads to increased GHG, increased consumption of open space and a diminished quality of life for

those subjected to mega commutes. Stopping housing doesn't stop problems, it simply pushes the problems out with more emissions and more wasteful land use patterns.

In closing I urge the commission to not just approve the project but to do so with a full-throated endorsement, showing that the county is doing its part to meet the most important regional economic development challenge we have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. Erik Bruvold', written in a cursive style.

W. Erik Bruvold
Chief Executive Officer



Dane M. White, Mayor
201 North Broadway, Escondido, CA 92025
Phone: 760-839-4631
E-mail: Dane.White@escondido.gov

August 15, 2025

Chairman Ron Ashman
County of San Diego Planning Commission
5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 110
San Diego, CA 92123

Dear Chairman Ashman:

As the Mayor of Escondido and someone who has personally experienced the pain of homelessness, I am writing to express my strong support for Harmony Grove Village South—an initiative that deeply resonates with both my personal journey and my commitment to addressing homelessness in our community.

More than a decade ago, I found myself homeless, battling severe addiction, and sleeping behind a 7-Eleven in Escondido—the city I now have the honor of serving as Mayor. That experience exposed me to the harsh realities too many face daily: The struggle for shelter and the overwhelming challenge of rebuilding a life from nothing.

My journey was not easy, but it reinforced a fundamental truth: With the right support and opportunities, transformation is possible. This belief fuels my dedication to real, lasting solutions that go beyond temporary relief to address the root causes of homelessness, including the unacceptable lack of affordable housing.

Today, far too many families in San Diego County are experiencing housing insecurity due to circumstances beyond their control: Job loss, medical emergencies, or simply the skyrocketing cost of living. With limited housing options available, adults and children alike are being left without a place to call home. Experts agree that the most effective way to combat this crisis is by building more homes—especially projects like Harmony Grove Village South, which provide affordable housing options and addresses the critical “Missing Middle” gap.

As Mayor, I have seen firsthand how access to stable, affordable housing changes lives—not just for individuals and families, but for entire communities. Investing in housing and supportive services uplifts those in need, strengthens public safety, drives economic growth, and fosters a more compassionate, resilient society.

Chairman Ashman
August 15, 2025
Page 2

I wholeheartedly endorse Harmony Grove Village South and urge you to support this essential project. Together, we can create a future where every person has the opportunity to thrive.

Sincerely:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Dane M. White".

Dane M. White
Mayor

Dear San Diego Planning Commission,

San Diego is facing a severe housing crisis that is making it increasingly difficult for working families and middle-class residents to find an affordable place to call home. The Harmony Grove Village South project is an ideal solution, offering more than 450 homes that will provide attainable homeownership opportunities for local families - helping them build a stable and thriving future in our region.

Unlike urban sprawl, HGVS expands an existing village in a responsible way, utilizing current infrastructure while maintaining the area's character. With middle-market homes and affordable housing units, this development will help address the "missing middle" housing gap, ensuring that teachers, first responders, healthcare workers, and other essential professionals can continue to live and work in San Diego.

Beyond housing, HGVS will also create valuable jobs for local union members, strengthening our regional economy and supporting skilled workers with fair wages. Additionally, its commitment to sustainability - including net-zero energy homes, 100% rooftop solar, and EV charging - sets a new standard for responsible development in our county.

I strongly urge you to approve the Harmony Grove Village South project without delay. It represents smart growth, economic opportunity, and a real path forward in solving San Diego's housing crisis.

Regards,

Marwan Bishar
858-354-3394
bisharmarwan@gmail.com
[MBA Development LLC](#)

7/16/2025

County of San Diego Planning Commission
5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 110
San Diego, CA 92123

Dear Planning Commissioners,

As a homebuilder who firmly believes in the promise of the American Dream, I support the Harmony Grove Village South project because it represents exactly what our region needs—real solutions to our housing crisis. With more than 450 purpose-built homes for working families and middle-income San Diegans, this community helps fill the critical gap in attainable housing while preserving the character and sustainability of the region.

From my experience in homebuilding, I can say this project is being done the right way. It includes a diverse mix of home types that cater to different preferences, is designed with long-term sustainability in mind, and will be built by skilled local union labor. That's the kind of quality and care we need more of in San Diego. Harmony Grove Village South is a well-planned, responsible way to create the homes our workforce and families so urgently need.

This project not only expands much-needed housing supply but also delivers meaningful economic value and will generate lasting benefits for local schools, infrastructure, and public services. Harmony Grove Village South is a smart, forward-looking investment in our county's future, and I urge you to approve it.

Regards,



Tom Dobron

July 28, 2025

Letter of Support for the Harmony Grove Village South Housing Development

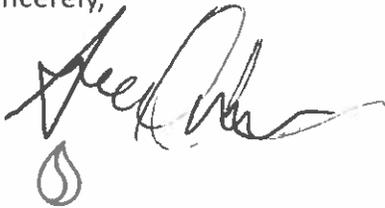
Dear San Diego Planning Commission,

San Diego is facing a severe housing crisis, and the only long-term solution is to build more homes. That is why I am writing to express my strong support for the Harmony Grove Village South housing development. This project will provide 453 much-needed homes for working families and middle-class San Diegans, built by local union labor.

With our economy expanding and more families struggling to find a place they can afford, we need long-term solutions that reflect both our values and our future needs. HGVS does just that—offering environmentally conscious development that prioritizes sustainability, connectivity, and quality of life for a diverse range of residents.

Harmony Grove Village South is exactly the kind of smart, sustainable development our region needs. I urge you to approve this project and help move our county forward in addressing the housing crisis.

Sincerely,



SUSAN DUNN

Susan Dunn *Founder, Designer & Aquaphile*

USPS Address: P.O. Box 1086, Rancho Santa Fe, CA, 92067

FedEx & UPS: 6436 Via Naranjal, Rancho Santa Fe, CA 92067

Office 858-832-1086 **Direct** 858-836-3051

Cell 858-245-1826 **Email** susan@susandunn.com



August 12, 2025

Chairman Ronald Ashman
County of San Diego Planning Commission
5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 110
San Diego, CA 92123

Dear Chairman Ashman:

I am writing to express my strong support for the Harmony Grove Village South project, which represents a critical step in addressing San Diego County's ongoing housing and homelessness crisis.

As Mayor of Vista, I am committed to practical solutions for addressing homelessness and public safety, and I have proudly led efforts such as Vista's award-winning Homelessness Strategic Plan. I firmly believe that projects like Harmony Grove Village South and its 450+ homes are among the long-term solutions our region needs to give working people and middle-class families access to quality housing.

San Diego County's homelessness and housing crises will not be solved without swift and decisive action. I agree with the many community and elected leaders who also support this project: If we don't start building more homes today, we risk falling even further behind in meeting the needs of our constituents.

Harmony Grove Village South is the right project, at the right scale, on the right land. It will not only offer much-needed housing but also generate economic benefits by creating jobs and strengthening our tax base. These additional tax revenues will provide essential funding for our schools and public safety entities —ensuring a stronger, more resilient community for residents here in Vista and across the County.

I urge you to support Harmony Grove Village South and take meaningful action today to address our region's housing challenges. Together, we can create opportunities for hard-working families while ensuring a sustainable and prosperous future for Vista and all of San Diego County.

Sincerely,

John Franklin
Mayor

3/11/2025

Dear San Diego Planning Commission,

As a resident of San Diego County, please accept this letter of support for the Harmony Grove Village South housing development. Our region is facing a serious homelessness and housing crisis that affects every corner of our community. It's clear that the only long-term solution is to create more homes—and that's exactly what Harmony Grove Village South will accomplish.

What makes me especially excited about this project is its sustainability-focused design. As someone who works in the solar energy industry, I'm passionate about creating a greener future, and Harmony Grove Village South is setting the bar high. With 100% rooftop solar and 100% EV charging stations for each home and throughout the community, this development represents a true commitment to clean energy. Additionally, the focus on 100% energy-efficient buildings, both inside and out, shows thoughtful planning for long-term sustainability.

This development doesn't just offer housing; it brings much-needed infrastructure improvements and will create hundreds of good-paying jobs. The fact that these homes will be built by union members for working people and middle-class families shows a commitment to uplifting our local workforce and economy.

Harmony Grove Village South addresses our housing needs, boosts our economy through job creation, and prioritizes sustainable living. I strongly urge the Planning Commission to approve this project.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Regards,



Eddie Price
2325 Manzana Way
San Diego, CA 92139
(619) 616-5890
eprice@gridalternatives.org

Letter of Support for Harmony Grove Village South Housing Development

Dear San Diego Planning Commission,

As a long-time San Diego County resident, I believe it is critical that we address the growing housing crisis, particularly for working families who are struggling to find affordable options in our area. The Harmony Grove Village South project presents an incredible opportunity to directly tackle this issue by providing 453 much-needed homes for middle-class families. This project is designed to give San Diegans access to the American dream, offering homes that are not only affordable but also sustainable and built with quality in mind.

The homes will be constructed by local union members, supporting fair wages and contributing to the local economy. What's more, the project's commitment to net-zero energy, 100% rooftop solar, and electric vehicle charging stations aligns perfectly with our collective goal of reducing carbon footprints while enhancing the livability of our communities. As San Diego continues to grapple with housing shortages, the Harmony Grove Village South project is a step forward in creating a vibrant, sustainable, and inclusive community for all.

I strongly support the approval of this project and encourage you to join me in advocating for the future of San Diego's working families.

Sincerely,

Alita Hetland
5926 Rancho Mission Rd. #94
San Diego, CA 92108
619-282-7080
alitalalita@yahoo.com

Dear San Diego Planning Commission,

San Diego is facing a severe housing crisis that is making it increasingly difficult for working families and middle-class residents to find an affordable place to call home. The Harmony Grove Village South project is an ideal solution, offering more than 450 homes that will provide attainable homeownership opportunities for local families—helping them build a stable and thriving future in our region.

Unlike urban sprawl, HGVS expands an existing village in a responsible way, utilizing current infrastructure while maintaining the area’s character. With middle-market homes and affordable housing units, this development will help address the “missing middle” housing gap, ensuring that teachers, first responders, healthcare workers, and other essential professionals can continue to live and work in San Diego.

Beyond housing, HGVS will also create valuable jobs for local union members, strengthening our regional economy and supporting skilled workers with fair wages. Additionally, its commitment to sustainability—including net-zero energy homes, 100% rooftop solar, and EV charging—sets a new standard for responsible development in our county.

I strongly urge you to approve the Harmony Grove Village South project without delay. It represents smart growth, economic opportunity, and a real path forward in solving San Diego’s housing crisis.

Very Respectfully,

Gary Skaggs
garyskaggs@me.com

Dear Planning Commission,

As a community member who deeply cares about the future of San Diego, I strongly support the Harmony Grove Village South project. Our region is facing an undeniable housing crisis, and the only sustainable solution is to build more homes—especially for working families and middle-class San Diegans. This project will provide 453 much-needed homes, built by local union members, ensuring good jobs while creating a more affordable and livable community.

Beyond housing, Harmony Grove Village South is a model for responsible development. It expands existing infrastructure, preserves 36 acres of open space, and prioritizes sustainability with net-zero energy homes, EV charging stations, and drought-tolerant landscaping. The addition of a new multi-lane bridge will improve circulation and emergency access while restoring the ecology of Escondido Creek. This project isn't just about housing—it's about building a community that supports working families, promotes healthy lifestyles, and aligns with our region's environmental goals.

I urge the San Diego Planning Commission to approve Harmony Grove Village South. It's time we take real action to address San Diego's housing shortage by supporting smart, sustainable development that benefits all residents.

Regards,

Morgan Rogers
31027 Pauma Heights Road
Valley Center, CA 92082
mrogers0127@gmail.com

Letter of Support for the Harmony Grove Village South Housing Development

Dear San Diego Planning Commission,

San Diego is facing a severe housing crisis, and the only long-term solution is to build more homes. That is why I am writing to express my strong support for the Harmony Grove Village South housing development. This project will provide 453 much-needed homes for working families and middle-class San Diegans, built by local union labor.

I have worked for many years on the issue of ensuring San Diego's economy continues to grow. There is a strong need for new housing options for all sectors of the region's workforce - to which this project contributes. SANDAG estimates the need for thousands of new homes each year to support continued economic vitality for the San Diego region - projects such as this one.

Harmony Grove Village South is exactly the kind of smart, sustainable development our region needs. It will expand an existing community, use modern, energy-efficient design, and ensure homeownership remains within reach for more San Diegans. I urge you to approve this project and help move our county forward in addressing the housing crisis.

Sincerely,

Andrew Poat
San Diego, CA
619.806.7608
andrewpoat@gmail.com

County of San Diego Planning Commission
5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 110
San Diego, CA 92123

Dear Planning Commissioners,

San Diego County is at a critical crossroads when it comes to housing—and projects like Harmony Grove Village South (HGVS) are exactly the kind of smart, sustainable solutions we need to move forward.

As our region faces a worsening housing and homelessness crisis, HGVS provides a meaningful response by offering attainable homes that fill the “missing middle” of the housing market. This thoughtfully designed, infill-located community will help meet the growing demand for housing while respecting and preserving the natural surroundings.

With our economy expanding and more families struggling to find a place they can afford, we need long-term solutions that reflect both our values and our future needs. HGVS does just that—offering environmentally conscious development that prioritizes sustainability, connectivity, and quality of life for a diverse range of residents.

San Diego can no longer stand in the way of progress – we must invest in housing solutions today. I urge you to approve Harmony Grove Village South and support a more inclusive, livable future for all who call this region home.

Sincerely,

Paul DeRisi
619-850-3980

August 14, 2025

County of San Diego Planning Commission
5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 110
San Diego, CA 92123

Dear Planning Commissioners,

As a San Diegan who cares deeply about the future of our region, I believe Harmony Grove Village South is exactly the kind of smart, sustainable growth we need. Our housing crisis has made it increasingly difficult for working families to find an attainable place to live, and this development offers a real solution. This project will create good-paying jobs while strengthening our tax base to support schools, fire districts, and infrastructure.

What makes HGVS stand out is its balance of economic value, environmental stewardship, and community connection. With 100% rooftop solar, EV-ready homes, preserved open space, and neighborhood amenities that encourage healthy, active lifestyles, it's a model for how we can grow responsibly.

I strongly urge you to approve this project so we can take a meaningful step toward addressing San Diego's housing shortage and building a stronger, more inclusive community.

Sincerely,

Ciara Trujillo
(949) 279-0685
ciara.trujillo@colliers.com

To the members of the San Diego County Planning Commission:

I am reaching out to voice my support for the Harmony Grove Village South housing development. As a proud San Diego business owner and resident for nearly two decades, I have dedicated much of my time to serving District 3, including as a member of the Ocean Beach Town Council and our local Planning Group. Based on my experience, I firmly believe that this project is essential to addressing our area's housing crisis and ensuring San Diego remains a place where all residents can thrive.

The development of 453 homes, with units specifically aimed at the "missing middle" category, is a crucial step toward providing attainable housing for working families. I've learned that this project will be built by local union members, ensuring fair wages and good jobs for San Diegans. Additionally, the increased tax base will help fund our public schools — an investment that benefits the entire community.

Let me be blunt: It is unacceptable for wealthy NIMBYs and supporters of bigoted redlining policies to continue their baseless attempts to derail this project. Their opposition, at its core, is about keeping people of color and lower income working families out of "their neighborhood." You cannot allow these exclusionary tactics — and the nonstop lies spewing from opponents — to dictate housing policy in San Diego County. This nonsense must end today!

I urge the Planning Commission to move forward with approval of Harmony Grove Village South and take a stand for a more inclusive and equitable San Diego. Please don't let a small group of entitled NIMBYs to stand in the way of creating homes for working people.

Sincerely,
Giovanni Ingolia

Dear San Diego Planning Commission,

Every day, we see headlines about the housing crisis in San Diego—rising rents, families priced out of homeownership, and an increasing number of people without a stable place to live. It's clear we need real solutions, and the proposed Harmony Grove Village South development provides one. As a longtime advocate for smart, community-oriented growth in our region, I strongly support this housing development.

This project directly addresses the urgent need for more homes, particularly for working San Diegans and middle-class families. With 453 sustainably built homes—constructed by local union workers—it offers a mix of housing types that reflect our community's needs. Harmony Grove Village South isn't just about building homes; it's about giving families a chance to stay in San Diego, contribute to our economy, and thrive. I urge our County Supervisors to support this important step toward solving our region's housing shortage.

Regards,

Ed Gallo
4edgallo@gmail.com

June 13, 2025

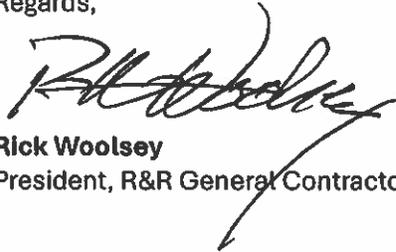
To the members of the San Diego County Planning Commission:

As a lifelong builder and North County resident, I've seen firsthand how the lack of housing is impacting families, businesses, and our community's future. The Harmony Grove Village South development is exactly the kind of thoughtful, well-planned solution we need. The development is strongly aligned with San Diego's commitment to sustainability and aims to build more than 450 homes for our community's hard-working families.

This project doesn't just address the housing crisis — it supports our economy. It creates good-paying jobs, strengthens our construction industry, and expands our tax base to fund schools, fire protection, and infrastructure. With a variety of home sizes and styles, Harmony Grove Village South provides real options for middle-income residents who are currently priced out of the market.

As a contractor and business owner, I know high quality when I see it. This project uses existing infrastructure, respects the land, and adds long-term value to our region. I strongly urge the Commission to approve Harmony Grove Village South and invest in a stronger, more affordable future for San Diegans.

Regards,



Rick Woolsey
President, R&R General Contractors

30 June, 2025

County of San Diego Planning Commission
5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 110
San Diego, CA 92123

Dear Planning Commissioners,

As a longtime San Diego entrepreneur and business leader, I know that a strong regional economy depends on access to stable, attainable housing for working families. The Harmony Grove Village South development offers exactly that—453 thoughtfully designed homes for middle-income San Diegans, built by local union labor and powered by 100% rooftop solar.

This project addresses one of our region's most urgent challenges: the severe shortage of housing for working professionals and families who are the backbone of our economy. In addition to helping ease the housing crisis, Harmony Grove Village South will create good-paying jobs, expand our local tax base, and strengthen critical infrastructure.

As someone in the technology and finance sector, I also see this as an investment in talent retention. When San Diego workers can afford to live here, we're better positioned to compete globally, grow businesses locally, and build a more resilient future. I urge the Planning Commission to approve this forward-thinking, sustainable community.

Sincerely,



Nigel Hook
Founder & CEO, TradeSun



July 16, 2025

County of San Diego Planning Commission
5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 110
San Diego, CA 92123

Dear Planning Commissioners,

I support the Harmony Grove Village South housing development and strongly encourage our County leaders to approve it without delay.

San Diego is facing a severe and unprecedented housing crisis, and we will not begin to solve it without well-planned, sustainable communities like this—designed to meet the needs of working families while respecting the region’s environmental and economic goals.

Harmony Grove Village South will deliver 453 much-needed homes for middle-income San Diegans, built with local labor and supported by existing infrastructure. Beyond addressing our housing needs, the project strengthens our local economy, expands the tax base, and reflects a forward-looking approach with its net-zero energy design and diverse housing types.

This project is the kind of responsible growth our region urgently needs.

Sincerely,

Blake Isaacson

7/16/2025

County of San Diego Planning Commission
5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 110
San Diego, CA 92123

Dear Planning Commissioners,

As a homebuilder who firmly believes in the promise of the American Dream, I support the Harmony Grove Village South project because it represents exactly what our region needs—real solutions to our housing crisis. With more than 450 purpose-built homes for working families and middle-income San Diegans, this community helps fill the critical gap in attainable housing while preserving the character and sustainability of the region.

From my experience in homebuilding, I can say this project is being done the right way. It includes a diverse mix of home types that cater to different preferences, is designed with long-term sustainability in mind, and will be built by skilled local union labor. That's the kind of quality and care we need more of in San Diego. Harmony Grove Village South is a well-planned, responsible way to create the homes our workforce and families so urgently need.

This project not only expands much-needed housing supply but also delivers meaningful economic value and will generate lasting benefits for local schools, infrastructure, and public services. Harmony Grove Village South is a smart, forward-looking investment in our county's future, and I urge you to approve it.

Regards,



Tom Dobron

Letter of Support for the Harmony Grove Village South Housing Development

Dear San Diego Planning Commission,

San Diego's housing crisis demands tangible, long-term solutions—and building more homes must be part of the answer. I'm writing to voice my strong support for the Harmony Grove Village South development, which will bring 453 much-needed homes to our region, created by skilled local union workers.

As our economy grows and more families are priced out of the housing market, we need developments that meet both today's challenges and tomorrow's needs. HGVS represents that vision—prioritizing sustainability, walkability, and community while expanding access to attainable housing for working and middle-income San Diegans.

Harmony Grove Village South is the kind of forward-looking project that can help San Diego address its housing shortage in a responsible and meaningful way. I urge you to support its approval.

Kind regards,

Autumn M Stoff

Autumn Stoff



MARATHON CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION

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July 31, 2025

Attention: County of San Diego Planning Commission
5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 110
San Diego, CA 92123
Subject: Harmony Grove Village South

Dear Planning Commissioners:

As someone who has spent almost five decades working in heavy civil engineering construction projects, large environmental restoration projects, and light industrial development, I understand the importance of thoughtful development that serves our communities, supports people, and protects the environment. The Harmony Grove Village South project reflects these values.

This project addresses San Diego's urgent housing crisis by creating 453 new homes for working families that will be delivered by local union labor, while also enhancing the local economy and expanding access to homeownership. Just as importantly, it's designed with sustainability at its core: net-zero energy homes, including EV charging infrastructure, and the permanent preservation of 36 acres of natural land. By clustering development and restoring areas along Escondido Creek, it also helps revitalize native habitats and maintain the ecological health of the region, a wonderful balance between development and the environment.

Harmony Grove Village South is a responsible, future-focused community that benefits the people who live here, the environment we all depend on, and the broader region. I strongly urge the Planning Commission to support this project.

Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,

Mike Furby
President
Marathon Construction Corporation
Lakeside Land Company

August 14, 2025

Dear San Diego Planning Commission,

Please help provide housing for working families and middle-class residents to find a place to call home. The Harmony Grove Village South project is an ideal solution, offering more than 450 homes that will provide attainable homeownership opportunities for local families, and create a special place for them to start a community to call home.

Harmony Grove South will also create valuable jobs for local union members, strengthening our regional economy and supporting skilled workers with fair wages. Additionally, its commitment to sustainability- including net-zero energy homes, 100 roof top solar, and EV charging- sets a new standard for responsible development in our county.

Please approve the Harmony Grove Village South project without delay. It represents smart growth, economic opportunity, and a real path forward in solving San Diego's housing crisis.

Regards,


David Santistevan

8/19/2025

**County of San Diego Planning Commission
5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 110
San Diego, CA 92123**

Dear San Diego Planning Commission,

San Diego's housing shortage continues to put pressure on working families and middle-income residents. The Harmony Grove Village South project offers a realistic solution by delivering more than 450 new homes in a way that complements the surrounding community.

The project makes smart use of existing infrastructure, provides a range of attainable housing options, and supports good local jobs through union-built construction. Its sustainability features—like rooftop solar and net-zero energy design—are aligned with the region's climate goals and future needs.

Harmony Grove Village South represents the kind of balanced growth that can help ease our housing crisis while strengthening our local economy. I respectfully urge you to approve this project.

Sincerely,


Steve Quinn

August 14, 2025

ATTENTION:
County of San Diego Planning Commission
5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 110
San Diego, CA 92123

Dear Planning Commissioners,

I am a born and raised San Diegan and I am raising my children here. As they get to an age where they are supposed to be creating homes of their own it is impossible to ignore the challenges of the housing market here.

Harmony Grove (HGVS) is a thoughtful project, providing environmental considerations with rooftop solar, EV ready homes, protected open space balanced with the human need for new homes that include neighborhood amenities and connectivity to the community.

Our housing crisis has made it increasingly difficult for working families to find an attainable place to live, and this development offers a real solution. This project will create good-paying jobs while strengthening our tax base to support schools, fire districts, and infrastructure.

I strongly urge you to approve this project so we can take a meaningful step toward addressing San Diego's housing shortage and building a stronger, more inclusive community.

Sincerely,



Erin McKinley
858.945.8227
TurnFocus@gmail.com

August 14, 2025

ATTN:

County of San Diego Planning Commission

5510 Overland Ave, Ste 110

San Diego, CA 92123

Dear Planning Commissioners,

I am writing to express strong support for the Harmony Grove Village South development. This project presents a meaningful opportunity to address the pressing need for housing in our region, particularly for working families and middle-income residents who deserve a chance at homeownership.

Harmony Grove South offers a thoughtful, sustainable, and attainable solution for those seeking stability and community. Beyond housing, the project will generate jobs for local union workers, contributing to a stronger and more resilient regional economy.

Equally important is the project's forward-thinking approach to sustainability. Features such as rooftop solar panels and EV charging stations demonstrate a commitment to environmentally responsible growth.

I urge you to approve the Harmony Grove Village South project. It embodies smart planning, economic vitality, and a genuine step toward resolving San Diego's housing challenges.

Best,

Kelly Fauth

**County of San Diego Planning Commission
5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 110
San Diego, CA 92123**

Dear Planning Commissioners,

San Diego's housing crisis continues to drive displacement and homelessness, leaving far too many individuals and families without a safe, stable place to call home. To meaningfully address this crisis, we need to expand our region's supply of attainable housing across the entire income spectrum. The Harmony Grove Village South (HGVS) project offers exactly that - a pathway to stability for working families who are increasingly at risk of falling through the cracks.

HGVS proposes middle-market and affordable options that will help close the housing gap for those earning too much to qualify for traditional assistance, but too little to afford market-rate housing. These are often the very people - caregivers, social workers, and public servants - who are one hardship away from housing insecurity.

By responsibly expanding an existing village, this project offers a smarter alternative to unchecked sprawl. It supports community-based development while leveraging existing infrastructure, preserving open space, and maintaining neighborhood character.

For those of us committed to solving homelessness in San Diego, increasing the supply of attainable housing is one of the most powerful tools we have. I strongly urge you to support the Harmony Grove Village South project. It brings us one step closer to a region where everyone has the opportunity for a safe, stable home.

Sincerely,

Trudy Levenson

Dear San Diego Planning Commission,

San Diego's housing shortage continues to place a significant burden on working families and middle-income residents who are being priced out of homeownership. The Harmony Grove Village South (HGVS) project presents a thoughtful solution, one that aligns with the kind of smart, sustainable development that supports our region's long-term planning goals.

HGVS proposes more than 450 homes, including middle-market and affordable housing options that directly address the "missing middle" gap. This development is designed to meet the needs of teachers, nurses, first responders, and other essential workers who are vital to San Diego's economy and community fabric, yet often unable to live in the city they serve.

Unlike traditional sprawl, HGVS extends an existing village footprint, leveraging current infrastructure while preserving the area's rural character. It exemplifies infill-style growth that reduces pressure on urban cores and promotes a more balanced regional housing supply.

The project also supports broader city priorities: job creation through good-paying union labor, a strong emphasis on sustainability with 100% rooftop solar, net-zero energy homes, and EV charging infrastructure, and a walkable, community-focused design that enhances quality of life.

As someone deeply engaged in advancing San Diego's planning objectives, I hope you'll view HGVS as a compelling opportunity to deliver both housing and community benefit. It reflects the kind of responsible growth our region urgently needs - and deserves.

Sincerely,
Jill Chorak

Dear San Diego Planning Commission,

As a long-time San Diegan, I've watched the cost of housing climb higher and higher. It's pushing everyday people out of the communities they love. We need more homes that working families can afford, and I believe Harmony Grove Village South is exactly the kind of well-planned development that can make a difference.

This project isn't about building more oversized, out-of-reach houses. It's about creating a mix of homes for local families while being mindful of the surrounding environment, adding parks, trails, and gathering spaces that make it a true community.

I personally appreciate the fact that it's 100% solar-powered and includes EV chargers for every home, showing it's designed with the future in mind.

I believe HGVS is a smart, much-needed step toward solving our housing shortage, and I hope you'll give it your full support.

Sincerely,

Eden Gannon

San Diego Planning Commission,

Our community needs real solutions to address the growing housing crisis, and I believe Harmony Grove Village South is exactly the kind of project that can make a difference. With 453 well-designed homes for middle-class and working San Diegans, this community will provide attainable housing while supporting good-paying jobs right here in our county.

This development offers more than just homes; it brings economic value and a commitment to sustainability. It will preserve 36 acres of natural open space, create parks, trails, and gathering places, and ensure every home is built with clean energy features. By supporting skilled workers with fair wages, Harmony Grove Village South will strengthen our regional economy while helping families put down roots.

Approving this project is an opportunity to ease our housing shortage, invest in sustainable growth, and create a community where San Diegans can truly live, work, and thrive.

Sincerely,

Roby Ellis

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/ujc3xnpvdwxctwnp8z2e/APVdYLG6VikWtR6m9qsVxq4?rlkey=2a926pwzl9fssmqwms4w14b4i&st=282bgt13&dl=0>