

NOTICE OF PREPARATION
AND PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING NOTICE
FOR A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

TO: Interested Parties

DATE: May 14, 2009

SUBJECT: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report and Public Scoping Meeting for the Rio Santiago project. City of Orange Applications: General Plan Amendment (GPA 2009-0002); Zone Change (ZC 1254-09); Environmental Impact Report (EIR 1818-09); Design Review Committee (DRC 4413-09); Tentative Tract Map (TTM 0025-09); Rio Santiago Specific Plan (SP 001-09); Orange Park Acres Specific Plan Amendment (SPA 001-09); East Orange General Plan Amendment (SPA 002-09), and a Development Agreement (Number to be Assigned)

CEQA Staff Contact: Chad Ortlieb, Senior Planner, Planning Division
LEAD AGENCY: City of Orange, 300 East Chapman Avenue, Orange, CA. 92866
Phone (714) 744-7237, FAX (714) 744-7222, cortlieb@cityoforange.org

PROJECT LOCATION:

The project is located within the City of Orange, in north-central Orange County. The site is generally located to the east of State Route 55, to the west of State Route 261, approximately two miles to the north of Chapman Avenue, on the north side of Santiago Canyon Road, between Orange Park Blvd. on the east and Cannon Street on the west, and south of Mabury Avenue. The site designated address is currently 6118 East Santiago Canyon Road.

The City of Orange is commencing with preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Rio Santiago project, and has released this Notice of Preparation (NOP) and Notice of Public Scoping Meeting per the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The City wants to know your views and your specific concerns related to the potential environmental effects of the project. Information gathered during the NOP comment period will be used to shape and focus future analyses of environmental impacts.

If you are a public agency, the City is interested in the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental information germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities. As a responsible or trustee agency, your agency may need to use the EIR prepared by the City when considering issuance of a permit or other approval for the project.

NOP COMMENT PERIOD:

The City invites you to submit written comments describing your specific environmental concerns, and if representing a public agency, please identify your specific areas of statutory responsibility. Written comments are desired at the earliest possible date, but due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be received no later than 30 days after receipt of this notice. **The NOP public comment period begins on May 14, 2009 and ends on June 12, 2009.** Please send your written comments to the City staff contact identified above, and please include your name, address, and contact information in your correspondence.

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING INFORMATION:

The City invites you to attend a public scoping meeting to obtain additional information about the project.

A scoping meeting for public agency representatives will be held on May 21, 2009 from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. The public agency scoping meeting will be held in Conference Room C of the Community Development Department within Orange City Hall located at 300 East Chapman Avenue in the City of Orange.

A scoping meeting for the public will be held on May 21, 2009 from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Linda Vista Elementary school located at 1200 North Cannon Street in the City of Orange.

DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY:

The project description, location, and potential environmental effects are described below. An Initial Study, providing a preliminary analysis of the environmental effects of the project was not prepared for the project because all potential environmental impacts will be analyzed in an Environmental Impact Report. This Notice of Preparation (NOP) is transmitted to the Office of Planning and Research and to each responsible and trustee agency.

PROJECT APPLICANT: JMI Real Estate

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The project site consists of approximately 110 acres and is informally known as the Sully-Miller site, a former sand and gravel mining operation. The site is presently zoned sand and gravel and is utilized for asphalt and concrete crushing and recycling. There is no zoning for open space currently on the site. The application requests City consideration of the following:

- Changing the City's General Plan Designation for the site from Resource Area (RA) to Medium Density Residential (MDR 15-24 Du/Ac), Open Space Park (OS-P) and Open Space (OS); and from Low Density Residential (LDR2-6 Du/Ac) to Open Space (OS).
- A change in Zoning Designation from Sand and Gravel (S-G) and Single Family Residential 8,000 sf (R-1-8) to Planned Community (P-C).
- Adoption of a Specific Plan to establish standards for uses and development of the site, consistent with the proposed amended General Plan.
- Approval of an amendment to the 1975 East Orange General Plan (a Specific Plan document) and the Orange Park Acres Specific Plan to remove the portions of the project site that are included in those two documents.
- A Tentative Tract Map for subdivision of the property.
- Design Review Committee consideration for review of project design.
- Park Planning and Development Committee consideration of project trails.
- A Development Agreement offering additional community benefits and vesting rights associated with project approvals for a period of time mutually agreed upon by the City and applicant.
- An Environmental Impact Report for disclosure and assessment of potential project impacts and establishment of mitigation measures and a mitigation monitoring program, if necessary.

The project is a proposal to establish no more than a 460 unit senior living community on approximately 30 acres of the project site located in the southeast corner of the 110 acre site. The community would be comprised of a combination of individual units focused on one and two-story flats (casitas living), independent living, and assisted living/skilled nursing. Unit sizes would range from 400 to 1,800 square feet in area. There would be a height limit of two-story along the perimeter and three-story in the center.

Attached and detached dwelling units are proposed for the senior living community. Included within the 460 residences, an overlay area would allow for up to 44 townhomes or up to 25 single family residences on a minimum of 8,000 square feet lots that could be senior or non-senior oriented. Accessory amenities such as community dining areas with a kitchen, a community room, a reading room, support services such as coffee and juice service with minor accessory food sales for the senior community, exercise rooms, pool and spa facilities, outdoor gardens, trails, scenic view corridors, and recreation facilities are all identified as likely components of the senior living community. A comprehensive list of potential ancillary uses will be refined in the forthcoming Specific Plan for the project. On site and individual unit parking is proposed in accordance with a parking analysis to be provided with the Draft Environmental Impact Report and forthcoming Specific Plan.

The project is also a proposal to establish natural open space on approximately 42 acres located north of the project between Santiago Creek and Mabury Avenue. In the southwest and south central portion of the project site which is approximately 28 acres, the project proposes to establish private recreational uses such as a 97,000 square foot building with a maximum two-story height that may include a YMCA facility consisting of uses that could include a wellness center, gymnasium, pool, multi-purpose rooms, a child care center, locker rooms, and administrative offices. Outdoor sport fields and courts are proposed in association with the facility. An equestrian facility, educational facilities, and a resource center with medical services such as an Autism Center could also be part of the 28 acre site, in association with the 97,000 square foot building. Actual uses will be refined in the forthcoming Specific Plan. On-site parking is proposed to support the recreational uses in accordance with a parking analysis to be provided with the Draft Environmental Impact Report and forthcoming Specific Plan.

The project also proposes to establish low intensity recreational uses in the easterly portion of the site on approximately 10 acres. Potential uses identified for the site include a golf putting course, horseshoes, lawn bowling, bocce ball, nature interpretative center, picnic and shade structures, trails, supplemental storage and limited RV parking primarily for residents of the senior community, overflow parking, gardens, and agricultural uses. Ancillary uses proposed are parking lot(s) and restrooms. Actual uses for the planning area will be refined in the forthcoming Specific Plan. On-site parking is proposed to support the low intensity recreation uses in accordance with a parking analysis to be provided with the Draft Environmental Impact Report and forthcoming Specific Plan.

SUMMARY OF PROBABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS:

Implementation of the proposed project may result in significant environmental effects in the areas of aesthetics, agriculture resources, air quality (including global climate change), biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, noise, mineral resources, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation and traffic, and utilities and service systems. These potential environmental effects will be analyzed in the EIR that will be prepared to evaluate the project's potential impacts on the environment and project alternatives will be analyzed.