



NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY

To: Interested Agencies and Organizations
Subject: Notice of Availability of a Draft Environmental Impact Report
Murrieta Hills Specific Plan Amendment Project
SCH # 2014031045

Lead Agency:

Agency Name: City of Murrieta
Street Address: 1 Town Square
City/State/Zip: Murrieta, California 92562
Contact: James Atkins, Associate Planner
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Or

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The **CITY OF MURRIETA**, as the Lead Agency, has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Murrieta Hills Specific Plan Amendment Project (MHSPA or Project) identified below. This Notice of Availability (NOA) has been issued to notify interested parties that the Draft EIR is publicly available for review and comment. The City is requesting comments on the Draft EIR from responsible and trustee agencies, interested public agencies, organizations, and the general public.

Project Location

The Project is located in unincorporated Riverside County, immediately adjacent to the northern portion of the City of Murrieta, west of the I-215 Freeway, generally south of Keller Road. The City of Menifee borders the Project to the north, and the City of Wildomar borders the Project to the west.

The Project site is not included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 (California Department of Toxic Substances Control list of various hazardous sites).

Project Description

The MHSPA proposes residential, commercial, mixed-use, and natural and improved open space on approximately 972 acres. The MHSPA also includes construction of a public park, up to three water supply tanks, two booster stations, water quality basins, on-site public streets, and off-site road improvements and construction, as warranted. The proposed land use plan for the Murrieta Hills Specific Plan is comprised of the following components:

- **Single-Family Residential** development is proposed to account for the majority of the housing within the MHSPA area, totaling 497 homes on approximately 198 acres. Three categories of minimum lot sizes (4,800 square feet [SF]; 5,500 SF; and 6,500 SF) are proposed.
- **Executive Single-Family Residential** development would provide the largest proposed residential lots. Lots would be a minimum of 10,000 SF and would be expected to yield 60 lots on approximately 50 acres.

- **Community Commercial** development would total approximately 18 acres and would serve residents within and around the Murrieta Hills community. Likely uses may include restaurants, a grocery store, lodging, and other services.
- **Mixed-Use** component comprises approximately 13 acres. Development would consist of a mixture of multi-family residential uses in combination with a variety of retail, professional office, service-oriented businesses and/or combinations of such uses in a mixed-use environment. A maximum of 193 attached multi-family dwelling units would be allowed.
- **Open Space** proposed in the MHSPA would consist of three primary open space areas: Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) natural open space preserve, a Linear Nature Park, and non-MSHCP open space. The three open spaces together total approximately 652 acres.
- **Circulation** improvements would consist of approximately 20 acres on-site for the backbone street system that will serve the Project area. Additional internal streets are anticipated to be required. The backbone street system includes the essential loop road system on which the overall circulation network will rely to connect all Planning Areas (PAs) and adjacent land uses. Primary access into the Project area would be provided from Keller Road along the northern project boundary. Additionally, off-site roadway improvements would include the extension of McElwain Road from the existing terminus, near Linnel Lane in the City of Murrieta, northward to Keller Road and Project frontage improvements to Keller Road. The Project would also dedicate the right-of-way necessary for the proposed Interstate 215 (I-215)/Keller Road interchange, a separate project.
- The MHSPA also proposes infrastructure improvements to provide water, sewer, drainage, and gas and electric service to the site. The Project area would be served by the Eastern Municipal Water District (EMWD). The MHSPA proposes additional upgrades to the water system, including construction of up to three additional water tanks within the Project area. Sewer services would also be provided by EMWD, and the Project area would connect to existing off-site facilities in Zeiders Road north of the Project. System upgrades, if required by the extension of these facilities to serve the Project, will be addressed in the EIR. The Project area is located within the San Jacinto and Santa Margarita watersheds, as well as the Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District.

Project entitlements and approvals required for the Project include:

- EIR No. EA-2017-1396 Certification
- General Plan Amendment (GPA-012-3165)
- Murrieta Hills Specific Plan and Zoning Amendment Adoption (ZC-013-3312)
- Specific Plan Amendment (SPA-012-3164)
- Tentative Tract Map (TTM 35853)
- Development Agreement (DA 2018-1631)
- Annexation to City of Murrieta
- Annexation to the City of Murrieta sphere of influence of an “isolated” Riverside County parcel lying to the south of the Specific Plan area and adjacent to the Cities of Murrieta and Wildomar
- Sphere of Influence Amendment for the City of Murrieta

Proposed Annexation

The majority of the MHSPA area is currently designated as RM (Rural Mountainous, 10-acre minimum lot size) in the Riverside County General Plan, with smaller portions designated RC-EDR (Rural Community-Estate Density Residential, 2-acre minimum lot size) and Rural Community-Low Density Residential (RC-LDR, 1-acre to half-acre minimum lot size). All of the parcels are zoned by Riverside County as R-R, Rural Residential. The Project area is to be annexed into the City of Murrieta through the Riverside Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO), and when annexed, will be under the jurisdiction of the City of Murrieta. The MHSPA proposes annexation into the City of Murrieta with an amendment to the City's General Plan proposed to change the existing land use designations. A zone change is also proposed to rezone the property to the City's zoning classifications. Ultimately, the Project area will be governed by the provisions in the adopted MHSPA.

Environmental Impact Report

The MHSPA EIR evaluated potential environmental impacts resulting from the amendment and replacement of the original Murrieta Hills Specific Plan No. SPM-4, including any required off-site improvements, and annexation of the property into the City. The MHSPA EIR supersedes the 1995 Murrieta Hills Specific Plan EIR and establishes new requirements and guidelines for the development of the master planned community. The MHSPA EIR focused on the following potential significant environmental issues (significant unavoidable impacts are noted in ***bold/italics***):

- ***Aesthetics***
- ***Air Quality***
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- ***Greenhouse Gas Emissions***
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- ***Noise***
- Public Services and Recreation
- ***Transportation***
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Wildfire

Agencies

The City requests that each responsible and trustee agency review the Draft EIR relevant to the agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the Project, in a manner consistent with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines §15087 (14 California Code of Regulations [CCR] §15087). Each agency may use the EIR prepared by the City when considering any permits that the agency must issue, or other approvals for the Project.

Public Review Period

The Draft EIR is available for public review for a period of 45 days. In accordance with CEQA Guidelines §15105, should you have any comments, please provide written comments on the Draft EIR within the 45-day period between **May 8, 2020** and **June 22, 2020**.

Locations Where Draft EIR is Available for Public Review

Pursuant to the California Governor's Executive Order N-54-20, an electronic PDF of the Draft EIR is available for download on the City's website at <https://murrietaca.gov/290/Public-Notices>. Also, in accordance with the California Governor's Executive Order N-54-20, all materials shall be submitted electronically to the State Clearinghouse CEQAnet Web Portal (<https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/>).

In addition, in the event that the Governor’s Executive Order N-33-20 (commonly known as the “Stay at Home Order”) is lifted during the public review and comment period, hard copies will then be available at the following locations:

- City of Murrieta Planning Division, 1 Town Square, Murrieta, CA 92562
- Murrieta Public Library, 8 Town Square, Murrieta, CA 92562

Public Comments

The City requests your careful review and consideration of the Draft EIR, and invites **written comments** from interested agencies, persons, and organizations regarding environmental issues identified in the Draft EIR. Please indicate a contact person for your agency or organization. Comments in response to this notice may be submitted to the City through close of business (5:00 PM) on **June 22, 2020**.

Lead Agency Contact

All comments should be submitted in writing to:

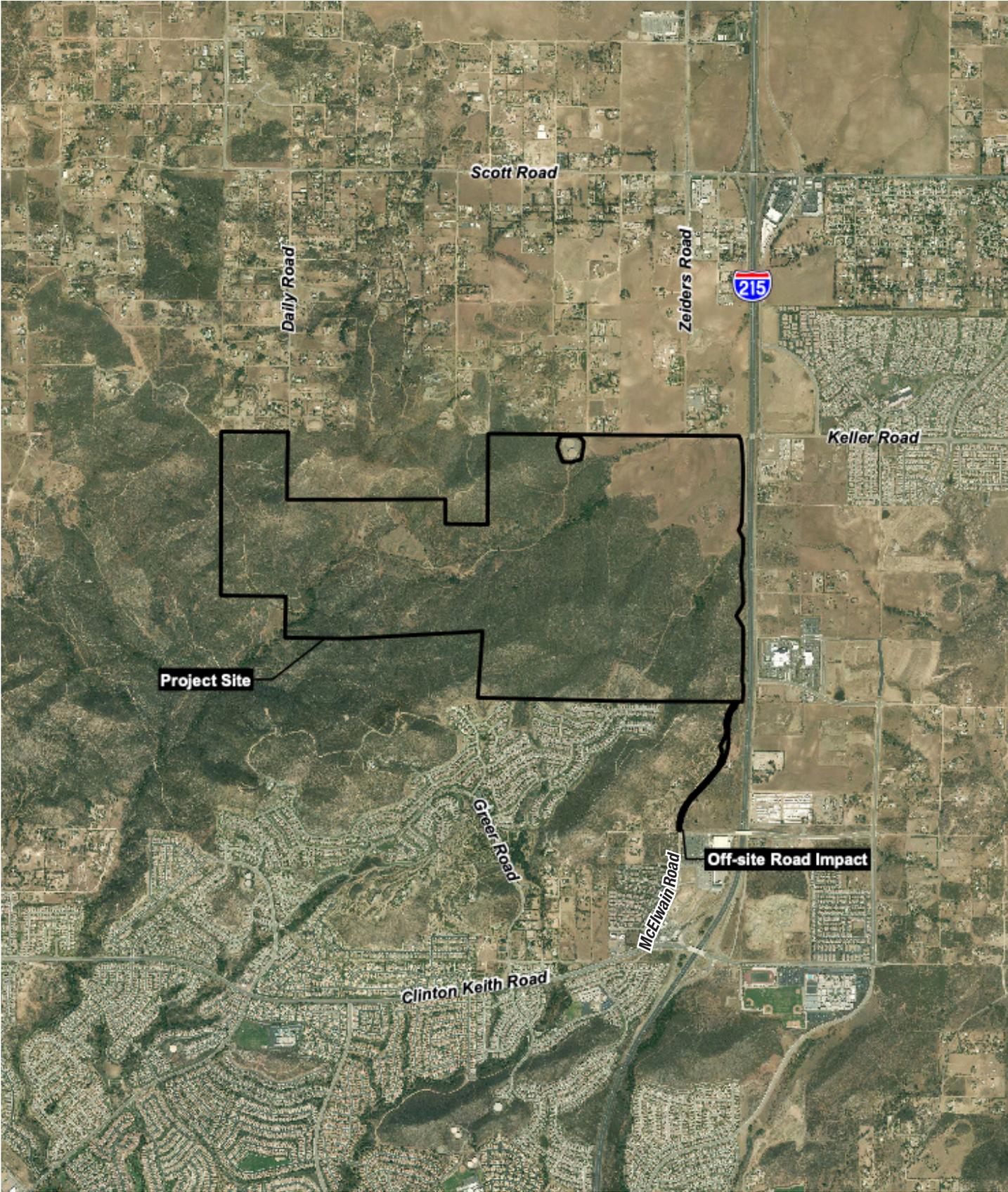
City of Murrieta

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Or to:

City of Murrieta

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Project Location Map
Murrieta Hills Specific Plan Amendment Project