



## NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF A FINAL EIR AND PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

**To:** Reviewing Agencies, Organizations, and Interested Parties

**Subject:** Notice of Availability of a Final Environmental Impact Report and  
Public Hearing Notice

**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  
Phone: (951) 304-2489

**Or**

Contact: Lorie Abeles, Executive Assistant  
Phone: (951) 461-6060

The **CITY OF MURRIETA**, as the Lead Agency, has prepared an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Pub. Res. Code §§ 21000 et seq.; 14 Cal. Code Regs. §§15000 et seq. ["State CEQA Guidelines"]) to evaluate the environmental effects associated with the proposed Murrieta Hills Specific Plan Amendment Project (Project). A Draft EIR was prepared and circulated for public review and comment from May 8, 2020 until June 22, 2020 consistent with State CEQA Guidelines §15087. The City received comments on the Draft EIR from federal, state, and local agencies, interested organizations, and members of the public. The City has prepared responses to all comments received consistent with State CEQA Guidelines §15088. The Final EIR consists of the Draft EIR, comments received on the Draft EIR and a list of commenters, the City's responses to comments, attachments, and an Errata to the Draft EIR. The Draft EIR Errata provides clarifications, amplifications, and insignificant modifications to the Draft EIR text, resulting from the public review process.

This Notice has been issued to notify interested parties that the Final EIR has been prepared and is available for review. The City's Planning Commission will consider the Final EIR prior to making recommendations or decisions on the Project at the public hearing scheduled on **April 28, 2021**. Following the Planning Commission hearing, the Murrieta City Council will consider the Final EIR prior to any decision regarding the Project. The City Council will also consider the recommended Findings of Fact with Statement of Overriding Considerations and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

### **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, 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 an HOA neighborhood park, up to three water supply tanks, two booster stations, water quality basins, on-site public streets, and off-site road improvements including the construction of McElwain Road from Keller Road to Linnel Lane. 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 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 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 Natural Open Space area, 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 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. 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)
- Zoning Amendment Adoption (ZC-013-3312)
- Specific Plan Amendment (SPA-012-3164)
- Tentative Tract Map (TTM 35853)
- Development Agreement (DA 2018-1631)
- Riverside County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) request for a Sphere of Influence Amendment for the City of Murrieta to include the MHSPA Project area and approximately 187 acres of property owned by the RCA located immediately south of the MHSPA project. In conjunction with the LAFCO application, the MHSPA and RCA property will be pre-zoned to reflect the appropriate City of Murrieta General Plan and Zoning designations
- Annexation of the MHSPA Project Area into the City of Murrieta
- Annexation of the RCA property located south of the MHSPA into the City of Murrieta

### **Proposed Annexation**

A jurisdictional boundary change will be processed through LAFCO to amend the City's sphere of influence and annex the MHSPA area, along with the RCA owned property. The properties currently lie within the unincorporated area of Riverside County. LAFCO is responsible for reviewing and approving any proposed jurisdictional boundary changes, including, without limitation, adjustments to spheres of influence and annexation requests. If the MHSPA is approved and adopted by the City Council of the City of Murrieta, the applications for changes to the jurisdictional boundaries will be forwarded to LAFCO for consideration and a hearing. If LAFCO approves the applications for changes to the jurisdictional boundaries, the MHSPA area and the RCA property will be within the city limits of the City of Murrieta and the Project entitlements will become effective.

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 by 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 that proposes to change the existing land use designations to be consistent with the City General Plan. 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.

### **Locations Where Final EIR is Available for Public Review**

An electronic PDF of the Final EIR is available for download on the City's website at <https://murrietaca.gov/290/Public-Notices>.

In addition, hard copies will 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  
Mondays and Wednesdays (10 a.m. to 6 p.m.) and Saturdays (noon to 4 p.m.)

## Public Hearing

The Planning Commission is scheduled to consider the Final EIR and take action on the Project during a public hearing scheduled for **April 28, 2021**. Pursuant to the City's current COVID-19 policies, this public hearing will be held virtually. The agenda item will be open for public comment. The meeting will be held at the following location, date, and time:

**YOU MAY VIEW THE MEETING LIVESTREAMED VIA THE CITY'S WEBSITE AT**

<http://onbase.murrietaca.gov/onbaseagendaonline>

**VIA FACEBOOK LIVE AT:**

<https://www.facebook.com/CityofMurrieta>

**OR VIA THE GO TO MEETING APP AT:**

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/835525413>

**You can also dial in using your phone.**

**United States: +1 (669) 224-3412**

**Access Code: 835-525-413**

**Date: April 28, 2021**

**Time: 6 p.m.**

COMMENTS MAY BE SUBMITTED VIA E-MAIL TO [LABELS@MURRIETACA.GOV](mailto:LABELS@MURRIETACA.GOV) AT ANYTIME PRIOR TO CLOSE OF THE PUBLIC COMMENT PORTION OF THE ITEM(S) UNDER CONSIDERATION. WHILE COMMENTS MAY ALSO BE SUBMITTED VIA THE GOTO MEETING APP, COMMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED VIA FACEBOOK LIVE.

Please note that any writings or documents provided to the Planning Commission regarding any item on this agenda will be made available for public inspection at the Public Counter at City Hall located at 1 Town Square, Murrieta, CA between the hours of 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday-Thursday; and 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. alternate Fridays.

**Special Accommodations.** The City of Murrieta intends to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Persons with special needs should call Cristal McDonald at (951) 461-6031 at least 72 hours in advance.

## Lead Agency Contact

### City of Murrieta

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