

17 March 2020

Dear Ms. Nelson, Bradbury City Council, and fellow Bradbury residents,

I am writing to voice my strong objection to the planned Chadwick Ranch Estates development. Bradbury and the San Gabriel Valley does not need this development, which, as the Initial Study notes, is expected to provide new housing for a negligible 40-50 people on fourteen lots within its 112 acres. Chadwick Estates is being pitched unabashedly to the billionaire elite; the Offering Memorandum from WD Land promises not livable homes but “a once in a lifetime opportunity to build a unique trophy residential compound” among “large ultra-luxury multi-million-dollar homes” owned by “the world’s rich and famous with billionaire residents”. In exchange for these fourteen “trophy compounds”, the existing Bradbury community is being asked to sacrifice much of our precious open space, irreversibly degrading our local wilderness and straining our limited resources.

Besides the lack of any justification for this development (beyond the profit motive), practical concerns include the loss of prime native habitat, coupled with the extreme fire vulnerabilities of encroaching deeper into the urban-wildland interface. As the Initial Study notes, the entire area is “a very high fire severity zone.” In addition, the per capita resource footprint for these compounds would far exceed Bradbury’s average, let alone that of adjacent communities. Water is of particular concern – the demand for the inevitable large pools and landscape irrigation, plus the unknown number of bathrooms per unit, is bound to strain already-tight resources. I note from the Initial Study that California American Water is committed to dig a well to support the needs of this development, yet the site of this well, let alone any guarantee of its initial and long-term productivity, has not been determined. The Initial Study also states that this well will be drilled in Duarte, and that the City of Duarte must give its approval. What is the likelihood, in this age of chronic drought and depleted water tables, that Duarte will approve a well to support a new billionaire’s enclave in Bradbury? The Initial Study also notes that “pad areas” for the houses are proposed from 20,000 to 49,000 square feet - the footprint of such gargantuan mansions will destroy Bradbury’s rural essence while also degrading the adjacent wilderness areas of Monrovia and Duarte. Given that these mansions will be likely be multistory, the impact of fourteen such compounds on foothill views boggles the mind. Such environmental

and resource issues, along with many more significant impacts as noted in the Initial Study, point to years of negotiations and potential litigation involving the City of Bradbury, for a development that is clearly not in the best interests of Bradbury's current residents.

Also, no one could argue that the development is required from a housing demand perspective, even for its targeted ultrawealthy customers. If there are indeed fourteen billionaires desiring to own a trophy in "exclusive" Bradbury, they already have numerous options. Many large multi-million dollar homes have stagnated on the market for extended periods, with prices dropping over time. As of this evening (3/17/20), Zillow lists 11 mansions (or vacant lots) in Bradbury priced above \$3 million, up to \$15 million. As but one example of the slow market, I purchased my home at 6 Bradbury Hills Rd early in 2019. This is a desirable home on a large lot with spectacular views, yet it was on the market for more than a year before I bought it at far below the initial asking price (to live in, not tear down). Clearly, if market demand were high, my property would have been snapped up for a teardown and new mansion. In addition, the large empty lot adjacent to me at 8 Bradbury Hills Rd was also on the market for an extended period before being sold for \$1.55 million in July. And as you are aware, the large lot at Winston and Royal Oaks Drive remains to be developed into several new mansions. The new large home on Winston just north of City Hall as well as the new construction north of the bike path are examples of megamansions that were built without destroying precious hillside open space. Surely the desire of fourteen investors to claim a Bradbury address can be accommodated by the existing pool of homes and vacant lots without loss of our remaining open space.

In summary, in contrast to the prospectus from WD Land, Bradbury is not (only) for "the world's rich and famous", "the youngest female billionaire", the "third richest man in China", etc. Their prospectus pitches Chadwick Ranch Estates as a US investment for uberwealthy foreign investors, and highlights elite private schools miles away on the westside, while the local "Amenities Map" is also concentrated in LA and on the westside (the Getty is noted but the Huntington is not). Clearly, these "trophy residential compounds" will be occupied by people who will not become part of the fabric of the local Bradbury/Duarte/Monrovia community.

Also, the approval of one such billionaire's development does nothing to address the real issues of housing access for working families. Given Bradbury's goal of "Preserving Rural Tranquility", this will always be a challenge, yet these trophy estates are a giant step in the wrong direction. Approval of these estates will certainly pave the way for more development of our pristine hillsides – not only in Bradbury, but in other foothill communities. Such development is not inevitable; Monrovia's Hillside Wilderness Preserve sets a fine example for the importance of curbing development in the foothills. If Monrovia had and has the vision and resources to achieve this level of open space protection, certainly Bradbury can do the same.

I find it ironic that the WD Land prospectus notes that "The property is the last remaining vacant land parcel in Bradbury Estates" (which is untrue), and also, without a trace of irony, states that the Chadwick family "remain excellent stewards of the land." Although I do not know the financial rationale behind their desiring such a large development, I urge the Chadwick family to consider a conservancy arrangement to protect ALL their wilderness land in perpetuity.

In summary, if this project is allowed to proceed, it will irreversibly damage the rural/wilderness character of Bradbury, as well as significantly burden already stretched water and emergency response resources. Therefore, I strongly recommend against approval of the Chadwick development. The recent dramatic economic downturn should highlight the folly of destroying precious open space to provide trophy estates for a handful of billionaires. I hope that the desires of the Bradbury community at large, those of us who live in and love Bradbury not as a trophy address, but for its "rural tranquility", will prevail.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Szymkowski". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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