



DATE: December 16, 2020

TO: State Clearinghouse
1400 10th Street, Suite 222
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 445-0613

FROM: City of Antioch

SUBJECT: Deer Valley Estates Project
Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report

LEAD AGENCY: City of Antioch
Community Development Department
Contact: Zoe Merideth, Associate Planner
P.O. Box 5007
Antioch, CA 94531-5007
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PROJECT APPLICANT: Blue Mountain Communities
707 Aldridge Avenue
Vacaville, CA 95688

Notice is hereby given that the City of Antioch will be the Lead Agency and will prepare a Focused Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed Deer Valley Estates Project (proposed project). An Initial Study has been prepared along with this Notice of Preparation (NOP), which scopes out all but one environmental topic from further review. The focused EIR will address potential physical environmental effects of the project related to transportation, as outlined in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). We are requesting comments on the scope of topics addressed in this EIR.

Please provide comments on the scope of the EIR to Zoe Merideth, Associate Planner, at the address listed above. Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date, but not later than **5:00 p.m. January 15, 2021**. In your response, please identify a contact person in your agency for future correspondence.

The Initial Study and NOP are available online at: <https://www.antiochca.gov/community-development-department/planning-division/environmental-documents/>



INTRODUCTION: The purpose of an EIR is to inform decision-makers and the general public of the environmental effects of a proposed project. The EIR process is intended to provide environmental information sufficient to evaluate a proposed project and its potential to cause significant effects on the environment; examine methods of reducing adverse environmental impacts; and consider alternatives to the proposed project. The Deer Valley Estates Project EIR will be prepared and processed in accordance with CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines. The EIR will generally include the following:

- Description of the proposed project;
- Description of the existing environmental setting for the topic of transportation, potential environmental impacts of the project, and mitigation measures;
- Description of cumulative impacts; and
- Alternatives to the proposed project.

PROJECT LOCATION: The approximately 37.56-acre project site consists of two parcels of undeveloped land located at 6100 Deer Valley Road in the southern portion of the City of Antioch, Contra Costa County. The City of Antioch is bordered to the north by the San Joaquin River Delta; to the east by the City of Brentwood and the City of Oakley; to the west by the City of Pittsburg and unincorporated portions of Contra Costa County; and to the south by unincorporated portions of Contra Costa County (see Figure 1).

The project site is located within the Sand Creek Focus Area of the General Plan, which is generally bounded by existing residential neighborhoods to the north, Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserves to the west, the city limits to the south, and the City of Brentwood to the east. The Sand Creek Focus Area is intended to function as a large-scale planned community, providing needed housing and employment opportunities. The project site is identified by Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 055-071-026 and 057-022-013.

PROJECT SITE CHARACTERISTICS AND SURROUNDING LAND USES: The rectangular project site is generally flat, with gently rolling topography that slopes from east to west. Site elevations range from approximately 195 to 225 feet above mean sea level. The project site is currently vacant and generally consists of non-native annual grassland and ruderal vegetation. As shown in Figure 2, the project site is generally surrounded by existing and under-construction residential uses, vacant land, and healthcare uses. To the north, the project site is bounded by a single-family residential neighborhood with one- to two-story homes. Further north are Prewett Ranch Drive and Deer Valley High School. The project site is bordered immediately to the east by the Aviano Farms Project, which is currently under construction with 533 residential units. Further east is the approved Vineyards at Sand Creek project, which is also under construction and consists of 641 residential units. To the south is Wellness Way and the Kaiser Medical Center, past which is Sand Creek Road. The project site is bound to the west by Deer Valley Road, across which is the site of The Ranch Project, which is a master planned residential community that was approved by City Council in July 2020 and could be under construction by 2023.

PROJECT BACKGROUND: On February 26, 2008, an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (2008 IS/MND) for the proposed Deer Valley Estates Master Development Plan Project (2008 Project) was adopted by the Antioch City Council. The 2008 IS/MND evaluated the potential impacts associated with the development of 136 single-family residential units and an approximately 1.69-acre park on the

project site. The 2008 Project included a rezoning of the project site from Study Zone (S) to the site's current zoning of Planned Development (P-D) and the adoption of the Master Development Plan.

An Initial Study for the project, which is available for review online (as listed above), has been prepared to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project and determined what level of additional environmental review is appropriate. Per CEQA Guidelines Section 15152, "where an EIR [or negative declaration] has been prepared and certified [or adopted] for a program... consistent with the requirements of this section, any lead agency for a later project pursuant to or consistent with the program... should limit the EIR... on the later project to effects which: (1) were not examined as significant effects on the environment in the prior EIR; or (2) are susceptible to substantial reduction or avoidance by the choice of specific revisions in the project, by the imposition of conditions, or other means." The analysis provided in this Initial Study tiers from the 2008 IS/MND, as appropriate.

In accordance with the requirements outlined in Section 15168 of the CEQA Guidelines, the Initial Study has been prepared to disclose the relevant impacts and mitigation measures covered in the 2008 IS/MND and discuss whether the project is within the parameters of the 2008 IS/MND. Based on the findings of the Initial Study, a focused EIR will be prepared for impacts that need further discussion and/or mitigation beyond that provided in the 2008 IS/MND.

The City of Antioch General Plan Land Use Map designates the project site as Sand Creek Focus Area – Low Density Residential. The Low Density Residential designation is generally characterized by single-family homes in traditional subdivisions, which are generally located on gently rolling terrain. The zoning on the project site is the P-D district established as a part of the 2008 Project. The P-D district is intended to enable and encourage flexibility in the design and development of land so as to promote its most appropriate use.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The proposed project involves the construction of 121 new single-family homes on the project site and associated open space, roadway, and utility improvements. The single-family residential units would range in size from approximately 2,252 square feet to approximately 3,445 square feet and would be located on individual lots that would be a minimum of 7,000 square feet. All of the residential units would front onto internal streets within the project site, discussed below, and none would front onto either Deer Valley Road or Wellness Way.

Each of the residential lots on the project site would include private backyards that would be an average of 2,240 square feet in size. In total, the proposed project would provide approximately 15.2 acres (662,380 square feet) of private open space, including backyards. The proposed project would include multiple common open space areas for project residents, including an approximately 1.12-acre park, which would be located in the approximate center of the project site (as shown on Figure 3) and would include a dog park and a playground. An approximate total of 1.5 acres of the site would be improved with landscaping, including street trees and native grasses and an approximately 4- to 6-foot-wide trail that would run through the northwest and center portions of the site and connect the proposed park to Deer Valley Road. Access to the proposed trail would be provided by a tubular steel fence with an access gate in the northwest corner of the project site.

PROJECT ENTITLEMENTS AND APPROVALS: The proposed project would require the following discretionary entitlements from the City of Antioch:

- Tentative Map Approval
- Final Development Plan
- Use Permit; and
- Design Review

PROBABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS: The City has reviewed the proposed project application and has determined that an EIR should be prepared for the proposed project because it may have a significant effect on the environment. The City has concluded that the EIR should address potential project-related impacts to transportation and circulation. The EIR will include a discussion of the existing setting, thresholds of significance, evaluation of potential impacts, and if necessary, feasible mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate potentially significant impacts.

ALTERNATIVES: Based on the significance conclusions determined in the focused EIR, alternatives to the proposed project will be analyzed to reduce identified impacts. Section 15126.G(e) of the CEQA Guidelines requires the evaluation of a No Project Alternative. Other alternatives may be considered during preparation of the EIR and will comply with the CEQA Guidelines, which call for a "range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project.

EIR PROCESS: Following the close of the NOP comment period, a draft focused EIR will be prepared that will consider all NOP comments. In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15105(a), the draft focused EIR will be released for public review and comment for a required 45-day review period. Following the close of the 45-day public review period, the City will prepare a final EIR, which will include responses to all substantive comments received on the draft focused EIR. The draft focused EIR and final EIR will be considered by the Planning Commission and City Council in making the decision to certify the EIR and approve or deny the project.



Signature

December 16, 2020

Date