**COUNTY OF PLACER**
**Community Development/Resource Agency**

Michael J. Johnson, AICP
Agency Director

**PLANNING SERVICES DIVISION**

EJ Ivaldi, Deputy Director

**HEARING DATE:** June 11, 2015
**ITEM NO.:** 2
**TIME:** 10:15 am

**TO:** Placer County Planning Commission

**FROM:** E.J. Ivaldi, Deputy Planning Director

**DATE:** June 4, 2015

**SUBJECT:** UPDATE ON THE PROPOSED BICKFORD RANCH SPECIFIC PLAN AMENDMENT (PSPA 20140024)

**PURPOSE OF THE UPDATE:**
Provide an update to the Planning Commission on the applicant's proposed changes to the Bickford Ranch Specific Plan (BRSP). The update will include an overview of the project history, the applicant's proposed changes to the 2004 BRSP, the County's review process, and next steps. No formal action is being requested by the Planning Commission at this time. An opportunity for public comment on the applicant's proposed changes will be provided at the end of the update.

**GENERAL PLAN/COMMUNITY PLAN:** Placer County General Plan

**ZONING:** F-B-X-DR 10 Acre Minimum (Farm, combining minimum Building Site of 10 acres, combining Development Reserve); F-B-X-DR 20 Acre Minimum (Farm, combining minimum Building Site of 20 acres, combining Development Reserve); F-B-X 20 Acre Minimum (Farm, combining minimum Building Site of 20 acres)

**LOCATION:**
The Bickford Ranch Specific Plan area encompasses 1,927.9 acres and is located approximately four miles northwest of Interstate 80 and south of State Route (SR) 193 between the City of Lincoln, Penryn and Newcastle areas. The western boundary of the project site is defined by Sierra College Boulevard from SR 193 on the north side to English Colony Road on the south, except for a parcel at the southwest corner of Sierra College Boulevard and Caperton Court. The Union Pacific Railroad is generally the southern boundary except for a parcel south of the railroad tracks. The railroad passes beneath Boulder Ridge in the southeast portion of the property through the approximately 1,600 foot-long Clark Tunnel. Clover Valley Reservoir and Clover Valley Creek are located near the southern boundary. Caperton and Antelope Canals as well as Clark Tunnel Road cross the property. Existing vehicular access to the site is from Sierra College Boulevard on the west and Clark Tunnel Road from the north and south. Clark Tunnel Road is closed through the site at the northerly and southerly project boundaries for vehicular traffic only. The Clark Tunnel Road easement is available to pedestrians, bicycles, equestrians and emergency vehicles.

**APPLICANT:** John Tallman, Westpark Communities

**PROPERTY OWNER:** LV Bickford Ranch, LLC

**BACKGROUND**

In the 1990s, Southwest Bickford Holdings, Inc. purchased the property and proposed the Bickford Ranch Specific Plan (BRSP) project. Placer County prepared the BRSP Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) (August 17, 1999) and BRSP Final EIR dated November 13, 2000. The BRSP EIR was later revised in 2001 to reflect revisions to the project. On December 18, 2001, the Board of Supervisors certified the Revised BRSP EIR and approved the Specific Plan (including Development Standards and Design Guidelines) and the Development Agreement.

The 2001 approvals were subsequently challenged in court by four entities, the Town of Loomis, California Oak Foundation, Sierra Club, and the Audubon Society. The Court determined that the Board of Supervisor's approval of the Specific Plan, Development Standards, Design Guidelines, Development Agreement, adoption of mitigation measures, and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan, and resolutions pertaining to Clark Tunnel Road were invalid and consequently, ordered those actions be rescinded. Following nearly three years of litigation proceedings, Placer County and the project developer entered into settlement agreements with interested parties in 2004. On August 10, 2004, the Board of Supervisors complied with the Court's writ by rescinding its 2001 approval of the project

On October 19, 2004, the Board of Supervisors reconsidered and approved the BRSP project (2004 BRSP). The Board considered the previously certified BRSP EIR (2001), together with an Addendum to the EIR (2004). The Addendum addressed the changes between the project evaluated in the BRSP EIR (2001) and the project described in the September 1, 2004 BRSP as well as other changes that occurred since 2001. The Board approved the Specific Plan, Development Standards, Design Guidelines, Development Agreement, adoption of mitigation measures, and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan, and resolutions pertaining to Clark Tunnel Road.

The 2004 BRSP approval allowed for the development of a large scale, mixed use planned development including 1,890 residential units of varying densities and housing types, including an age-restricted component. The project also allowed for the construction of an 18-hole golf course with driving range and clubhouses, 9.7 acres of retail office uses, two public park sites, a fire station, sheriff's service center, and an elementary school site reservation.

In early 2005, site development activities commenced, including mass grading, oak tree removal, oak tree mitigation planting, and wetland species mitigation. None of the site work was completed. Off-site construction of sewer and water infrastructure was also initiated but not completed. When the economy fell apart in 2008, all construction stopped.

In 2012, LV Bickford Ranch, LLC acquired the property and proposed revisions to the approved 2004 BRSP. An Initial Project Application was filed with the County on January 29, 2014.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The applicant is proposing to amend the previously-approved Bickford Ranch Specific Plan (2004) in the area of residential housing types and conceptual lotting of residential villages to reflect current market demands. The proposed amendment would eliminate the Village Commercial site and golf course, reduce the overall development footprint by increasing open space areas, while maintaining the same 1,890 residential units originally approved. Access to the project site would also be modified.

The following summarizes the proposed changes to the approved 2004 Bickford Ranch Specific Plan:

Residential

- Increase in the residential density from 2.47 units per acre to 2.69 units per acre while maintaining the overall project density of approximately 0.98 units per acre.
- Reduction in the area designated for residential uses by 61.3 acres with offsetting increases in open space.
- Modification to the mix of residential housing types to shift units from the lowest and highest density ranges (High Density Residential and Rural Residential) to mid-range densities (Low Density and Medium Density).
- Increase in the number of age-restricted residential units by three units from 947 to 950 units, with a corresponding three unit reduction in the number of conventional units from 943 to 940 units, thus maintaining the 1,890 residential unit cap established with the 2004 BRSP.
- Elimination of the 17.3-acre high density attached residential units (Village Residential site).

Commercial

- Elimination of the 9.7-acre commercial site (Village Commercial site).

Open Space and Recreation

- Elimination of the golf course, driving range and golf course maintenance facility (316 acres).
- Reduction in overall parkland by 10.2 acres and shift of 15.2 acres of parkland from public parks to multiple smaller parks (maintained privately) within neighborhoods. Tower Park was removed and School Ranch Park was added.
- Increase in the acreage of open space preserves by 107.5 acres and creation of an open space transition area of 163.3 acres between residential and open space preserves uses.
- Increase in the acreage of open space parkways by 77.5 acres. A portion of the acreage previously located in open space parkways is now in Open Space Preserves.

Public Facilities

- Elimination of the 4.7-acre Public Facilities lot.
- Increase in the acreage of the fire station by 0.4 acre.

Public Utilities

- Increase in the size of the water tank site on the east side of the project site by 1.6 acres to accommodate Placer County Water Agency (PCWA)'s water facilities. Addition of a three-acre site on the west side of the site to accommodate a second water tank and pump station.
- Update to infrastructure and utility service plans to correspond to revised land use plan and updated roadway network.
- Addition of water conservation measures (e.g. reduced turf, smart irrigation controls, recirculating hot water, etc.) that will result in a water savings of 24.5 percent.

Transportation

- Shift in the Bickford Ranch Road/Sierra College Boulevard intersection north on Sierra College Boulevard.
- Elimination of the Lower Ranch Road/Sierra College Boulevard intersection. Realignment of trails to correspond to updated village design, open space constraints, and roadway network.
- Modification of street alignments and trail sections.
- Enhancements to the existing park and ride lot located on the west side of Sierra College Boulevard near SR 193. The 2004 BRSP included a park and ride facility within the Village Commercial Site was eliminated as part of the 2014 BRSP.

**PROJECT STATUS**

Environmental Review

As mentioned earlier in this report, the Board of Supervisors certified the BRSP EIR (2001), together with an Addendum to the EIR on October 19, 2004. The Addendum addressed the changes between the project evaluated in the BRSP EIR (2001) and the approved 2004 BRSP. In order for the Planning Commission to consider amendments to the approved 2004 BRSP, it must ensure that environmental review consistent with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines has been completed.

The County's environmental consultant, Analytical Environmental Services (AES), has reviewed the proposed amendments to the approved 2004 BRSP and is preparing an environmental checklist to document any changes in circumstances and project related changes, and whether such changes would result in new environmental impacts or an increase in severity of impacts discussed in the previously certified EIR and Addendum. This environmental analysis included a review of updated and/or revised technical studies in environmental topic areas such as traffic, visual resources, air quality, biological resources (oak trees, wetlands, etc.), drainage, noise, and public utilities (water, sewer, etc.). Once AES completes its review, an environmental determination will be made as to whether the proposed amendments to the 2004 BRSP would be adequately covered with the previous EIR with only minor changes and additions, therefore, an addendum can be prepared, or whether changes are substantial enough to require the preparation of a supplemental EIR or subsequent EIR.

Specific Plan, Development Standards, and Design Guidelines

In 2004, the Board of Supervisors approved the BRSP. The Specific Plan, together with its implementing Development Standards and Design Guidelines, controls the planning and development in the plan area. The Specific Plan itself provides general guidance through goals and policies on how the BRSP will be developed. The Development Standards, also approved in 2004, implement the goals and policies of the Specific Plan. The Design Guidelines implement the design and aesthetic intent of the Specific Plan. These three documents are intended to result in the BRSP being developed as a master planned community rather than a project developed in an ad hoc manner under the County's applicable zoning code.

The proposed amendments to the 2004 BRSP require that the Specific Plan, Development Standards, and Design Guidelines be updated. Staff is currently reviewing applicant prepared drafts of these documents that have been refreshed and reflect the County's updated standards and planning conventions. The Specific Plan has been revised to reflect changes to the land use diagram, infrastructure service plans, roadway alignments, project phasing and implementation tools. The Development Standards have been revised to reflect adjustments to residential product types (i.e. setbacks, building orientations, etc.). The Design Guidelines have been revised to reflect adjustments to land uses and residential product types. The Specific Plan, Development Standards, and Design Guidelines have been incorporated into one combined document that will guide future development in the Plan area.

Development Agreement

The County and Bickford Holdings LLC entered into a Development Agreement (DA) on November 2, 2004, which applies to the entire BRSP. The applicant is proposing to modify the DA to reflect proposed amendments to the 2004 BRSP. The Draft DA submitted to the County (March 2015) includes the revised land use plan, updated approaches to infrastructure and services delivery and financing, project phasing, adjustments to triggers and timing of Development Agreement obligations, and adjustment to the term of the Agreement consistent with projected buildout of the development. Staff is currently working with the applicant to finalize the terms of the DA.

Large-Lot/Small Lot Tentative Maps

The Planning Commission previously approved a Large Lot Vesting Tentative Map (SUB-441A) and Small Lot Vesting Tentative Map (SUB-441B) back in 2003. A Final Map associated with the Large Lot Tentative Map was recorded in July 2007. The Small Lot Tentative Map did not record. The applicant is proposing a new Large Lot Vesting Tentative Subdivision Map and a Small Lot Vesting Tentative Map (1,113 residential lots), consistent with the proposed amendments to the 2004 BRSP. Staff is currently reviewing both the Large Lot and Small Lot maps and will bring these forward for consideration by the Planning Commission together with the proposed amendments to the 2004 BRSP.

Fiscal Impact Analysis and Public Infrastructure and Facilities Financing Plan

The applicant has retained Economic and Planning Systems, Inc. (EPS) to update both the Fiscal Study and Public Infrastructure and Facilities Financing Plan to reflect the proposed amendments to the 2004 BRSP (Note: EPS originally prepared the Fiscal Impact Study for the BRSP project in July 1999). Once these reports are complete, Goodwin Consulting will be conducting a peer review for the County. The report findings will be presented to the Planning Commission together with the proposed amendments to the 2004 BRSP.

**NEXT STEPS**

County staff continues to work with the applicant and AES to complete the environmental analysis. County staff also continues to work with the applicant to finalize the Bickford Ranch Specific Plan documents, including the Development Standards and Design Guidelines, and Large-lot and Small Lot Vesting Tentative Maps. County staff will continue to work with the applicant to finalize the terms of the DA.

The proposed amendments to the BRSP have been presented before the Horseshoe Bar/Penryn Municipal Advisory Council (MAC), Newcastle Ophir MAC, and Rural Lincoln MAC as an information item. At such time there is a completed environmental document, the project will be scheduled before the Horseshoe Bar/Penryn MAC as an action item. The proposed BRSP amendment will then be scheduled before the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors for further consideration.

**ACTION REQUESTED:**

This report is intended to provide an update on the proposed Bickford Ranch Specific Plan amendment. No formal action is requested by the Planning Commission at this time.

Respectfully submitted,

E.J. Ivaldi, Deputy Planning Director

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment A – 2004 BRSP Approved Land Use Diagram
Attachment B – 2015 BRSP Proposed Land Use Diagram

cc: Engineering and Surveying Division
Environmental Health Services
Air Pollution Control District
Andy Fisher - Parks Department
Karin Schwab – County Counsel
Michael Johnson - CDRA Director
EJ Ivaldi – Deputy Director
Holly Heinzen – CEO Office
Horseshoe Bar/Penryn MAC
Subject/chrono files

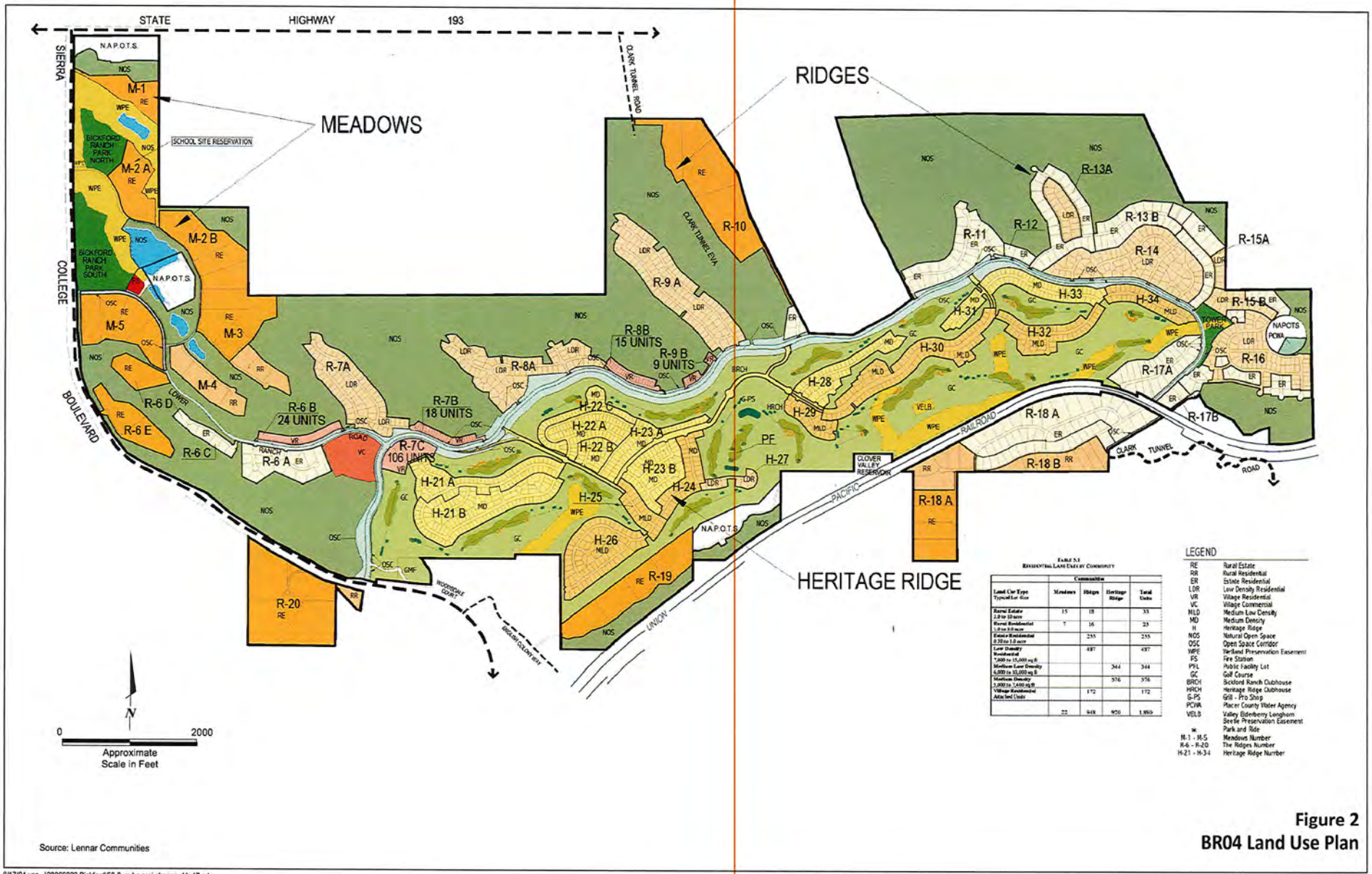



TABLE 3.1
RESIDENTIAL LAND USES BY COMMUNITY

| Land Use Type / Typical Lot Size | Meadows | Ridges | Heritage Ridge | Total Units |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Rural Estate 2.0 to 10 acre | 15 | 18 | | 33 |
| Rural Residential 1.0 to 3.0 acre | 7 | 16 | | 23 |
| Estate Residential 0.50 to 1.0 acre | | 255 | | 255 |
| Low Density Residential 7,000 to 15,000 sq ft | | 487 | | 487 |
| Medium Low Density 6,000 to 10,000 sq ft | | | 344 | 344 |
| Medium Density 3,000 to 7,400 sq ft | | | 576 | 576 |
| Village Residential Attached Units | | 172 | | 172 |
| | 22 | 948 | 920 | 1,890 |

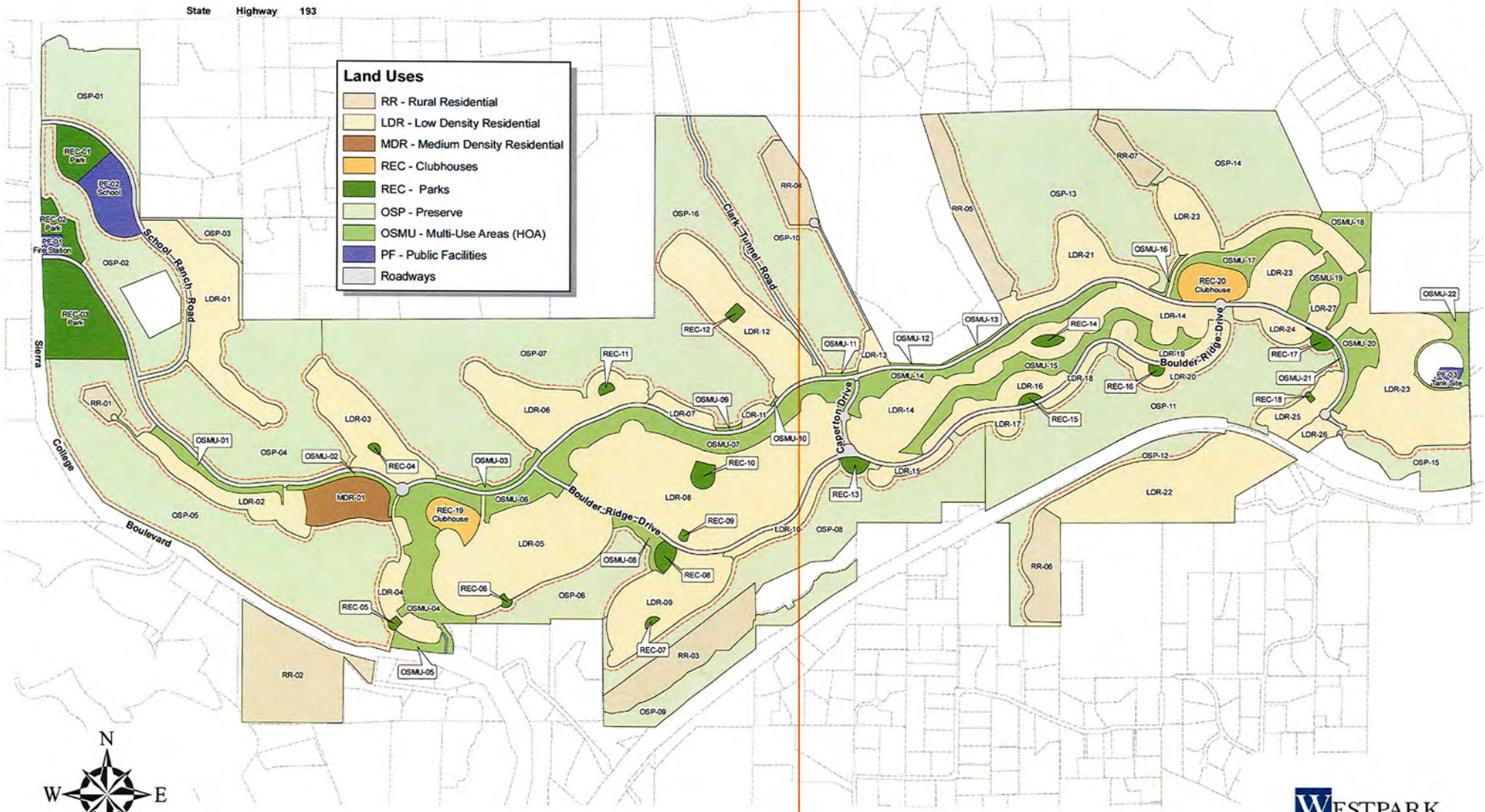
LEGEND

| | |
|---|---|
| RE | Rural Estate |
| RR | Rural Residential |
| ER | Estate Residential |
| LDR | Low Density Residential |
| VR | Village Residential |
| VC | Village Commercial |
| MLD | Medium Low Density |
| MD | Medium Density |
| HI | Heritage Ridge |
| NOS | Natural Open Space |
| OSC | Open Space Corridor |
| WPE | Wetland Preservation Easement |
| FS | Fire Station |
| PFL | Public Facility Lot |
| GC | Golf Course |
| BRCH | Sckford Ranch Clubhouse |
| HRCH | Heritage Ridge Clubhouse |
| G-PS | Grill - Pro Shop |
| PCWA | Placer County Water Agency |
| VELB | Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle Preservation Easement |
| * | Park and Ride |
| M-1 - M-5 | Meadows Number |
| R-6 - R-20 | The Ridges Number |
| H-21 - H-34 | Heritage Ridge Number |

Source: Lennar Communities

**Figure 2**
**BR04 Land Use Plan**

8/17/04 vsa ..\28066032 Bickford\F2-2_subs proj chnges_11x17.cdr




WESTPARK communities

1/22/2014

FIGURE 3
Land Use Plan