

February 21, 2019

Shirlee Herrington
Placer County Community Development Resource Agency
Environmental Coordination Services
3091 County Center Drive, Suite 190
Auburn, CA 95603
Email: sherring@placer.ca.gov

Re: Sunset Area Plan/Placer Ranch Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report
(State Clearinghouse No. 2016112012)

Dear Ms. Herrington:

This comment letter seeks to address the Sunset Area Plan/Placer Ranch Specific Plan (Project) and its associated Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR). My comments are intended to ensure that any development in the Sunset Area provides maximal protection of the site's unique environmental resources, including extensive vernal pool and riparian habitat, and addresses the existing community's needs and concerns. This development's impacts will remain for centuries to come, and development should be done with the utmost care, rather than business-as-usual development most reflective of the abysmal, congested, sprawling LA style of development where no one benefits.

The proposed project and currently proposed alternatives fail to comply with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA"), Public Resources Code section 21000 et seq. The DEIR violates CEQA because it fails to identify an alternative that would substantially reduce or eliminate even one of the Project's significant and unavoidable impacts. Significant health, safety and quality of life impacts to the public will occur as a result of poorly planned development including the proposal to locate residential development proximate to the landfill, and significant congestion to local and regional roadways. The jobs-housing imbalance will be exacerbated given the existing housing crisis which was not adequately mitigated for. Further, flora and fauna species receive little to no relief under a development scenario and associated mitigation measures that do not do enough to minimize and avoid impacts (e.g. to wetlands and native species). CEQA requires environmental impacts be avoided and minimized where feasible.

There are countless alternative ways that the County and developer can meet their development goals and objectives while reducing the environmental toll/footprint on the landscape. The Alliance for Environmental Leadership (AEL) has engaged with the

Page 1 of 2

Moreno Comment Letter
Sunset Area Plan/Placer Ranch Specific Plan DEIR
State Clearinghouse No. 2016112012

community to produce a Citizen-Initiated Smart Growth Plan¹ that fundamentally reimagines future development for the area. Given the alternatives the County put forth fail to adequately avoid and reduce environmental impacts across impact areas, CEQA requires that the County evaluate this proposed alternative in a revised and recirculated DEIR.

Once again, the County fails to adequately provide alternatives to the proposed project, and fails to adequately minimize impacts. Especially in the case of biological resources. When avoidance of impacts is possible, the County should absolutely require the developer to redesign to ensure the very best development outcomes for Placer County. Mitigating offsite for onsite impacts should only be done when there are no alternatives onsite.

Placer County should be a county that wins all around, not just benefitting the few. Short-sighted development plans, cookie-cutter development with no thought given to drawing from and working with the natural environment onsite, should not be the future of Placer County. Simply drive down towards the Bay Area, or Los Angeles, and you see short-sighted, anywhere-America development that benefits no one in the long run. Please do better Placer County. We can have it all with better design (AEL's proposed alternative).

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Lorie Moreno
541-786-0330

¹ The Smart Growth Plan was submitted under separate cover from AEL, but is incorporated by reference into this comment letter.