



# CITY OF COSTA MESA

P.O. BOX 1200 • 77 FAIR DRIVE • CALIFORNIA 92628-1200

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

November 8, 2011

Patrick J. Alford, Planning Manager  
City of Newport Beach, Community Development  
3300 Newport Blvd.  
P.O. Box 1768  
Newport Beach, CA 92658-8915

**SUBJECT: DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (DEIR) FOR NEWPORT BANNING RANCH**

Dear Mr. Alford:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) prepared for the Newport Banning Ranch Master Plan. Please consider the following comments:

## TRANSPORTATION

General comments:

- The report does not have graphics showing traffic volumes at intersections and Average Daily Traffic (ADT) on roadway segments. The City requests that these be provided in order to conduct a complete review of the results of various land use and circulation scenarios.
- At several occasions, the intersections at Newport Boulevard Frontage Road at Victoria and 22<sup>nd</sup> Street are referred to as State intersections. These intersections are in City of Costa Mesa jurisdiction and control.

Page 4.9-3: In the discussion of Master Plan of Arterial Highways (MPAH), the report incorrectly states that the Orange County Transportation Authority's (OCTA) MPAH defines "Orange County freeway, toll road and arterial circulation system." The MPAH map is limited to arterial highways only and the freeways and toll roads are included for information purposes only and reflect existing conditions. This is based on discussions with OCTA staff and also per the OCTA MPAH map itself, which mentions that the information on freeways, toll roads are provided for reference only.

Page 4.9-20: Standard condition SC 4.9-3 requires review and approval of the City of Newport Beach Traffic Engineer for issuance of a Haul Route permit. The report should include a condition requiring the approval of City of Costa Mesa Transportation Services Manager for use of any routes within the City of Costa Mesa jurisdiction for construction access.

Page 4.9-75: There are several incorrect statements in the discussion of SR-55 Freeway Extension. The report mentions that "The City of Costa Mesa Circulation Element depicts the extension of SR-55 as a freeway between 19<sup>th</sup> Street and Industrial Way. The Orange County

MPAH depicts the freeway portion of SR-55 ending at its current terminus at 19<sup>th</sup> Street in Costa Mesa." As mentioned in comment earlier, the OCTA MPAH is limited to arterials only. The SR-55 Freeway is under the jurisdiction of the State of California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). Caltrans has an adopted Route Concept Report (RCR) for SR-55 Freeway that shows the extension of SR-55 Freeway south to Industrial Way. There is no mention of Caltrans RCR in the discussion. As part of the proposed MPAH amendment study for the Banning Ranch project, the City requested that model run and analysis of project with SR-55 Freeway as currently proposed also be included.

Pages 4.9-81 and 4.9-82: The buildout analysis seems to yield significantly lower Intersection Capacity Utilization (ICU) values compared to 2016 conditions. The City requests that the future traffic volume projections at all intersections be provided for review.

Page 4.9-93: MM 4.9-2, Costa Mesa Mitigations – The City of Newport Beach should condition that the applicant mitigate the project impacts in Costa Mesa based on terms and conditions as agreed to by the applicant and the City of Costa Mesa.

Page 4.9-95: Newport Boulevard – 19<sup>th</sup> Street Intersection: The recent widening of Newport Boulevard at this location constructed a retaining wall along the west side. The primary access road to parking garage serving the large office building at 1901 Newport Boulevard is located immediately adjacent to this retaining wall. This access roadway will be impacted with any widening.

Newport Boulevard – 17<sup>th</sup> Street Intersection: The proposed mitigation at this location will require undergrounding the existing open channel along southbound Newport Boulevard south of 17<sup>th</sup> Street to accommodate the fourth through lane. This requires construction of a concrete box structure in the widened area south of 17<sup>th</sup> Street.

Page 4.9-96: Superior Avenue – 17<sup>th</sup> Street: The note incorrectly states that the improvement is limited to signal operation modifications. The project also includes a westbound right-turn lane, which will require right-of-way from the adjacent parcel. The improvement will also affect drive thru operations of fast food restaurant, which will need to be addressed.

Page 4.9-116: Table 4.9-34 shows projected increase in traffic due to project traffic. The project trip distribution exhibit stated that approximately 35% of project traffic uses 17<sup>th</sup> Street. Considering the project trip generation of approximately 15,000 vehicles per day, this translates to over 5,200 vehicles per day. However, the Table 4.9-34 shows only an increase of 3,912 vehicles. There should be an exhibit that shows clearly the level of redistribution of background traffic with the construction of Bluff Road. Even with the forecast as provided, the volume-to-capacity ratio is over 0.90 for 17<sup>th</sup> Street as well as 19<sup>th</sup> Street, resulting in a need for increased capacity on segments west of Placentia Avenue. The need for this widening and timing should be addressed in the DEIR.

Page 7-81: The traffic analysis should include graphics showing traffic volumes at intersections for all scenarios. In addition, graphics showing Average Daily Traffic (ADT) volumes for all scenarios should be included.

## **LAND USE**

### *Section 4.1.7- Environmental Impacts, Page 4.1-31*

The first paragraph refers that no development or grading is proposed for the open space between North Bluff Road and existing California Seabreeze residential community in Costa Mesa.

This area is within the project perimeter where abandoned oil wells exist. Given the significance of the Banning Ranch development and proximity of North Bluff Road to these residences, the City recommends that new grading and landscaping is installed in the area where the existing dirt berm is located. It is important that landscape restoration take into consideration any comments from the Seabreeze community and City of Costa Mesa staff. It is also suggested that any improvements be included with the initial phases of the project development so that these Costa Mesa residents could potentially benefit directly from the revitalized open space area to the fullest extent possible

Exhibit 3-9

The street cross section is only depicting the street and not the adjacent slope. It would be helpful to have additional information on the view impacts for the northern segment of Bluff Road adjacent to the Seabreeze community.

## **AESTHETICS**

The City recommends that this section address interim aesthetic impacts to Costa Mesa communities. To minimize construction impacts to the Seabreeze community, stock piles, construction staging and material storage shall be located away from the residential properties of Seabreeze and Parkview Circle. It would be important to offer a 24-hour hotline for residents to call with any concerns during construction.

## **NOISE**

*Section 4.12.1 (Page 4.12-8)*

The City recommends that the construction hours for the development be consistent with the City's regulations: Permitted Hours of Construction for City of Costa Mesa are from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Saturday; no construction is permitted on Sunday or federal holidays.

## **RECREATION AND TRAILS**

*Section 4.8.5 Community Parks (Page 4.8-10)*

The DEIR refers to North and South Community Parks with various amenities. The California Coastal Act notes that "lower cost visitor and recreational facilities shall be protected, encouraged, and, where feasible, provided. Developments providing public recreational opportunities are preferred." If there are any visitor fees or parking costs associated with proposed public recreational facilities and community parks, the City recommends that Costa Mesa residents be offered a discounted rate.

Sincerely,



KHANH NGUYEN  
Interim Development Services Director

cc: Chief Executive Officer  
Interim Assistant CEO  
City Attorney  
Interim Public Services Director  
Transportation Svs. Manager