



Planning for Success.

FINAL EIR

ROBERTS RANCH SUBDIVISION

SCH # 2016011053

PREPARED FOR

City of Hollister

May 10, 2017

EMC PLANNING GROUP INC.
A LAND USE PLANNING & DESIGN FIRM

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FINAL EIR

ROBERTS RANCH SUBDIVISION

SCH # 2016011053

PREPARED FOR

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May 10, 2017

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1.0 Introduction

The City of Hollister, acting as the lead agency, determined that the proposed Robert's Ranch Subdivision (hereinafter "proposed project") might result in significant adverse environmental effects, as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines section 15064. Therefore, the City of Hollister had a draft environmental impact report (draft EIR) prepared to evaluate the potentially significant adverse environmental impacts of the project. The draft EIR was circulated for public review from January 17, 2017 to March 2, 2017, and public comment was received. CEQA Guidelines section 15200 indicates that the purposes of the public review process include sharing expertise, disclosing agency analysis, checking for accuracy, detecting omissions, discovering public concerns, and soliciting counter proposals.

This final EIR has been prepared to address comments received during the public review period and, together with the draft EIR, constitutes the complete Robert's Ranch Subdivision EIR. This final EIR is organized into the following sections:

- Section 1 contains an introduction to this final EIR.
- Section 2 contains written comments on the draft EIR, as well as the responses to those comments.
- Section 3 contains the revisions to the text of the draft EIR resulting from comments on the draft EIR.
- Section 4 contains the mitigation monitoring program.
- Section 5 contains additional references and sources.

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2.0 Comments on the Draft EIR

2.1 CEQA REQUIREMENTS

CEQA Guidelines section 15132(c) requires that the final EIR contain a list of persons, organizations, and public agencies that have commented on the draft EIR. A list of the correspondence received during the public review period is presented below.

CEQA Guidelines sections 15132(b) and 15132(d) require that the final EIR contain the comments that raise significant environmental points in the review and consultation process, and written response to those comments. Where required, revisions have been made to the text of the draft EIR based on the responses to comments. These revisions are included in Section 3.0, Changes to the Draft EIR.

2.2 COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT EIR AND RESPONSES TO COMMENTS

The following correspondence was received during the 45-day public review period on the draft EIR:

1. William and Michele Lee (January 18, 2017)
2. Peter Hellmann (February 22, 2017)
3. LSA, Inc. (February 21, 2017)
4. California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) District 5 (March 2, 2017)
5. Monterey Bay Air Resources District (March 2, 2017)

A copy of each correspondence received during the public review period for the draft EIR is presented on the following pages. Numbers along the left-hand margin of each comment letter identify individual comments to which a response is provided. Responses are presented immediately following each letter.

Table 1, Commenters and Environmental Issues, summarizes the significant environmental comments received in each comment letter.

Table 1 Commenters and Environmental Issues

Table Heading	William and Michele Lee	LSA, Inc.	Peter Hellmann	Caltrans District 5	Monterey Bay Air Resources District
Aesthetics					
Agricultural Resources					
Air Quality and Greenhouse Gasses			✓		✓
Biological Resources		✓	✓		
Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources					
Geology and Soils					
Hazards and Hazardous Materials					✓
Hydrology and Water Quality					
Fire Protection					
Police Protection					
Schools					
Parks					
Noise					
Water Service					
Wastewater Service					
Storm Drainage Facilities					
Transportation and Traffic				✓	✓
Effects Not Found to be Significant					
Alternatives					
Planning and Growth					
Cumulative					✓
Other	✓				

SOURCE: EMC Planning Group 2017

William & Michele Lee
291 Old Ranch Road
Hollister, CA 95023

January 18, 2017

City of Hollister, Development Services Department
C/O Abraham Prado and Maria Mendez
375 Fifth Street
Hollister, CA 95023

Re: Prezone No. 2015-5

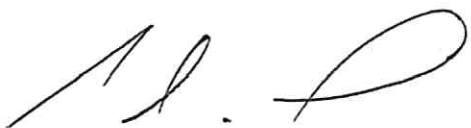
Mr. Prado and Ms. Mendez:

We are in receipt of your notice of availability of the draft EIR and proposed Roberts Ranch subdivision (SCH#2016011053). We would like to make public our support of this project that adjoins our property and our support for adoption of the EIR. While there is some traffic impact from the project, any project in the region will cause traffic impact. The state will eventually need to widen both Highways 156 and Highways 25. If we do not move forward with growth and development in the area, then the State of California will never have reason to widen these roads.

Growth is inevitable. This project reflects good planning and smart growth, which is part of why we support it. The quality of life of our region will improve drastically as we grow. Growth will allow us to attain enough population to attract retail businesses, restaurants, and other such commercial activities. These things will both generate sales taxes to help our local community AND they will improve our quality of life here in this Hollister area. We will no longer be forced to drive to Gilroy for everything.

For the record, as neighbors, local business owners, and as community members, we support this project and encourage the acceptance of the DRAFT EIR and the proposed subdivision. If you or anyone would like to speak with us to better understand our position, we would be more than happy to discuss this further.

Kindest Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'W. Lee', written in a cursive style.

William & Michele Lee

Response to Comment Letter from William and Michele Lee (January 18, 2017)

The commenters expressed support for the proposed project and stated that there will be some traffic impact from the project. Traffic impacts are address in the draft EIR in Section 3.16, Traffic and Circulation. No changes to the draft EIR are necessary.

Abraham Prado

From: Peter Hellmann <PHellmann@BuildersLandGroup.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 22, 2017 4:22 PM
To: Abraham Prado; Maria Mendez
Cc: Brad Sullivan; Sally Rideout; Jim Brennan; Matt Koart; Richard Scagliotti; Tom Terpstra
Subject: Comments on Roberts Ranch Draft Environmental Impact Report (SCH #2016011053)
Attachments: LSA DEIR Comment Letter_2-21-17.pdf

Dear Mr. Prado and Ms. Mendez,

We are pleased to submit two very brief comments on the Roberts Ranch Draft Environmental Impact Report ("DEIR"). In short, we are extremely impressed with the document. The DEIR thoroughly and comprehensively analyzes the project's potential environmental impacts, and recommends mitigation measures that are well-defined, reasonable and appropriate. It is an easy-to-read document (for a DEIR!), and will certainly help inform the City's decision-makers during the upcoming hearings on our project applications.

Nevertheless, we do have the following two comments:

1. Mitigation Measure AQ-1 provides, ".Restrictions on solid fuel heating appliances shall be included on deeds for individual parcels." We believe such restrictions are most appropriately addressed in the recorded covenants, conditions and restrictions ("CC&R's"). Therefore, for clarification, we believe this sentence should read, ".Restrictions on solid fuel heating appliances shall be included in the covenants, conditions and restrictions (CC&R's) recorded against each of the individual parcels."
2. Our consulting biologist, Ross Dobberteen of LSA Associates, prepared the attached letter dated February 21, 2017, which lists LSA's comments on Section 3.4 (Biological Resources) of the DEIR. We respectfully request that the text and proposed mitigation measures be revised in accordance with LSA's recommendations.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our comments on the DEIR. Please let me know if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

Peter Hellmann

Response to Comment Letter from Peter Hellman (February 22, 2017)

1. The commenter requests that mitigation measure AQ-1 be revised to require language prohibiting solid fuel heating appliances be included in the project's covenants, codes and restrictions (CCRs) instead of the deed. Prohibition of these appliances is recommended by the Monterey Bay Air Resources District (air district). This recommendation is identified in the air district comments on the Notice of Preparation (Appendix A of the draft EIR); however, the district does not identify a specific mechanism to implement its recommendation. City staff agree that enforcement through the CCRs would not reduce the efficacy of the mitigation measure to prohibit these appliances. Therefore, the suggested change has been made to mitigation measure AQ-1 on pages S-3 and 3-42 of the draft EIR. Section 3.2 of the final EIR reflects these changes.
2. This comment refers to the LSA comments addressed in the responses to Comment Letter #2.



LSA, INC.
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PT. RICHMOND, CALIFORNIA 94801

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BERKELEY
CARLSBAD

FRESNO
IRVINE
PALM SPRINGS

RIVERSIDE
ROCKLIN
SAN LUIS OBISPO

February 21, 2017

City of Hollister, Development Services Department
c/o: Abraham Prado and Maria Mendez
375 Fifth Street
Hollister, CA 95023

Subject: Submittal of Comments Regarding the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Roberts Ranch Project in Hollister, San Benito County, California (SCH# 2016011053)

Dear Mr. Prado and Ms. Mendez:

On behalf of our client, Hollister Enterprise, LLC, LSA, Inc. presents this letter with our comments regarding the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Roberts Ranch Project. Our comments are based on our on-going work on the project since 2013, as well as LSA's prior experience with wetlands/endangered species projects and associated mitigation in San Benito County and throughout the South Bay Area.

Presented below please find our comments on the DEIR:

- 1 | • For BIO-4, the following text in italics should be added to the end of the first sentence =
"... minimum 2:1 ratio of area preserved to area impacted *or as otherwise permitted by the USFWS and CDFW*."
- 2 | • LSA believes that the agencies may not require any mitigation for the project's impacts to upland habitat for the California red-legged frog.
- 3 | • The document does not reference the pending NWP application with the Corps on page 3-46 and states on the bottom of page 3-75 that the applicant will be required to obtain appropriate regulatory approvals/authorizations from the Corps.
- 4 | • On page 3-76, there are two references to the county that should be deleted (see first bullet, fourth sentence and second bullet at the bottom, fifth sentence).
- 5 | • On page 3-76, the second bullet at the bottom, fourth sentence states that if credits are purchased from a mitigation bank, the "... applicant shall prepare a mitigation plan that provides detailed information about the bank." When purchasing credits from a bank, preparation of a stand-alone mitigation plan is not required and the applicant needs to provide evidence of the purchase of the credits to the regulatory agencies, typically via a Bill of Sale.

Please contact me if you have questions and/or require further information regarding this letter and associated comments on the DEIR.

Sincerely,

LSA, INC.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ross A. Dobberteen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "D".

Ross A. Dobberteen, Ph.D.
Principal

Response to Comment Letter from LSA, Inc. (February 21, 2017)

1. The commenter suggests a revision to mitigation measure BIO-4. The suggested revision does not affect the efficacy of the mitigation measure BIO-4, which calls for compensatory off-site mitigation in compliance with the requirements of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) permitting requirements. This language has been added to Table S-1 on page S-10 and to page 3-73 of the draft EIR. Section 3.2 of the final EIR reflects this change.
2. Also regarding mitigation measure BIO-4, the commenter points out that CDFW and USFWS may not require mitigation for the project's impacts to California Red-legged Frog (CRLF) upland habitat. Until this has been officially confirmed by each agency's respective permitting process, the mitigation requirement remains in effect. No changes have been made to the draft EIR.
3. The commenter notes that a Nationwide Permit application has been applied for with the United States Army Corps of Engineers. It is noted that LSA has submitted a Request for Authorization under Nationwide Permit 29 for the proposed Roberts Ranch Project, Hollister, San Benito County, CA (LSA Associates, May 22, 2014). No revisions to the EIR are necessary.
4. The commenter notes that mitigation measure BIO-7 on page 3-76 of the draft EIR refers to San Benito County instead of the City of Hollister. This mitigation measure has been revised to refer to the city instead of the county. Section 3.2 of the final EIR reflects these changes.
5. The commenter notes that mitigation measure BIO-7 on page 3-76 of the draft EIR should be revised to clarify that a mitigation plan providing detailed information about the mitigation bank is not required. Instead, the applicant must provide evidence of the purchase of the credits to the city, USACE, and RWQCB. Section 3.2 of the final EIR reflects this change.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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 FAX (805) 549-3329
 TTY 711
<http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist05/>



Serious drought
 Help save water!

March 2, 2017

SBt-25-48.2
 SCH#2016011053

Mr. Abraham Prado
 City of Hollister
 Development Services Department
 Planning Division
 375 Fifth Street
 Hollister, CA 95023

Dear Mr. Prado:

COMMENTS FOR DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (DEIR) – ROBERTS RANCH PROJECT (SR 25/ENTERPRISE ROAD) HOLLISTER, CA

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), District 5, Development Review, has reviewed the Roberts Ranch prezone and annexation of 54.9 acres to the City of Hollister and vesting tentative map for a 206-lot residential subdivision located on State Route (SR) 25 and Enterprise Road in San Benito County. Caltrans supports local development that is consistent with State planning priorities intended to promote equity, strengthen the economy, protect the environment, and promote public health and safety. We accomplish this by working with local jurisdictions to achieve a shared vision of how the transportation system should and can accommodate interregional and local travel and development. Projects that support smart growth principles which include improvements to pedestrian, bicycle, and transit infrastructure (or other key Transportation Demand Strategies) are supported by Caltrans and are consistent with our mission, vision, and goals. Caltrans offers the following comments in response to the DEIR for the Roberts Ranch Project:

1. The Council of San Benito County Governments (SBtCOG) collects development impact fees to help fund transportation projects of regional significance to address project long-range traffic impacts. Caltrans supports payment of the adopted SBtCOG development impact fees as required to mitigate any cumulative impacts. While language in the document makes reference to “paying fees” it might be helpful to add specific reference to the COG fees as means of mitigation.
2. The traffic study identifies a Level of Service degradation at the Enterprise Road/SR 25 intersection (Intersection #14). Specifically, throughput on SR 25 is acceptable but the approach legs from both the north and south on Enterprise Road are what experience

2 operational problems in the existing plus project scenario. This is a project-specific impact that
3 should be addressed, however, the study does not seem to provide a clear method on how to
4 ensure that mitigation is met. Mentioned in the study is paying fees toward the signalization of
5 Enterprise/SR 25, however, even with the addition of 206 homes (and background conditions)
6 those warrants are unlikely to be met. But more importantly, we are concerned that the site
7 planning for the development places the full burden of traffic to the State system from
8 Enterprise Road. We strongly recommend other site plan alternatives such as a new connection
9 to Fairview Road that would allow functional circulation without the reliance on one main
10 access point at Enterprise Road. This strategy also avoids increased local pressure for a signal at
11 Enterprise which may never meet the threshold or be deemed appropriate.

3. There are plans for the eventual widening of SR 25 from Sunset Drive to Fairview Road in
4 Hollister. In 2002, a Project Study Report (PSR) was completed that generally set an outline of
5 right of way needs for such a project. Before any approvals are given, it is important to confirm
6 that a setback is included that preserves enough right of way consistent with the final document.
7 We look forward to working with you on your site plan development to ensure there are no
8 conflicts with right of way preservation.

4. Please be aware that if any work is completed in the State's right-of-way it will require an
5 encroachment permit from Caltrans, and must be done to our engineering and environmental
6 standards, and at no cost to the State. The conditions of approval and the requirements for the
7 encroachment permit are issued at the sole discretion of the Permits Office, and nothing in this
8 letter shall be implied as limiting those future conditioned and requirements. For more
9 information regarding the encroachment permit process, please visit our Encroachment Permit
10 Website at: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/trafficops/ep/index.html>.

5. Since the project will be increasing impervious surface and drains toward SR 25, Caltrans
6 would like to review the drainage plans and reports, when they are available, to confirm that
7 they include the necessary components to mitigate the increase in runoff to State Right of Way.
8 We request the City to condition the development to have this review and concurrence with
9 Caltrans prior to entitlement.

6. At any time during the environmental review and approval process, Caltrans retains the
7 statutory right to request a formal scoping meeting to resolve any issues of concern. Such
8 formal scoping meeting requests are allowed per the provisions of the California Public
9 Resources Code Section 21083.9 [a] [1].

Mr. Abraham Prado
March 2, 2017
Page 3

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the proposed project. If you have any questions, or need further clarification on items discussed above, please contact me at (805) 549-3282 or email jill.morales@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jillian R. Leal-Morales', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

JILLIAN R. LEAL-MORALES
Associate Transportation Planner, District 5
jill.morales@dot.ca.gov

Attachment (4/1/2015 letter to San Benito County)

cc: Mary Gilbert (SBtCOG)

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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PHONE (805) 549-3101
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<http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist05/>



*Serious drought
Help save water!*

April 1, 2015

SBt-25-48.15
SCH# 2015031055

Byron Turner
San Benito County Planning Department
2301 Technology Parkway
Hollister, CA 95023

Dear Mr. Turner

COMMENTS TO ROBERTS RANCH RESIDENTIAL NOTICE OF PREPARATION

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), District 5, Development Review, has reviewed the above referenced project and offers the following general and specific comments.

1. Caltrans supports local planning efforts that are consistent with State planning priorities intended to promote equity, strengthen the economy, protect the environment, and promote public health and safety. We accomplish this by working with local jurisdictions to achieve a shared vision of how the transportation system should and can accommodate interregional and local travel.
2. To ensure the traffic study in the Draft EIR includes the information needed to analyze the impacts (both cumulative and project-specific) of this effort, it is recommended that the analysis be prepared in accordance with the Department's *"Guide for the Preparation of Traffic Impact Studies."* An alternative methodology that produces technically comparable results can also be used.
3. Because we are responsible for the safety, operations, and maintenance of the State transportation system, our Level of Service (LOS) standards should be used to determine the significance of the project's impact. We endeavor to maintain a target LOS at the transition between LOS C and LOS D on all State transportation facilities.
4. Our future comments to this, and any subsequent EIR for the project, will stress the importance of using the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments Model for traffic analysis, and to include all impacted transportation agencies early and often in the discussions.

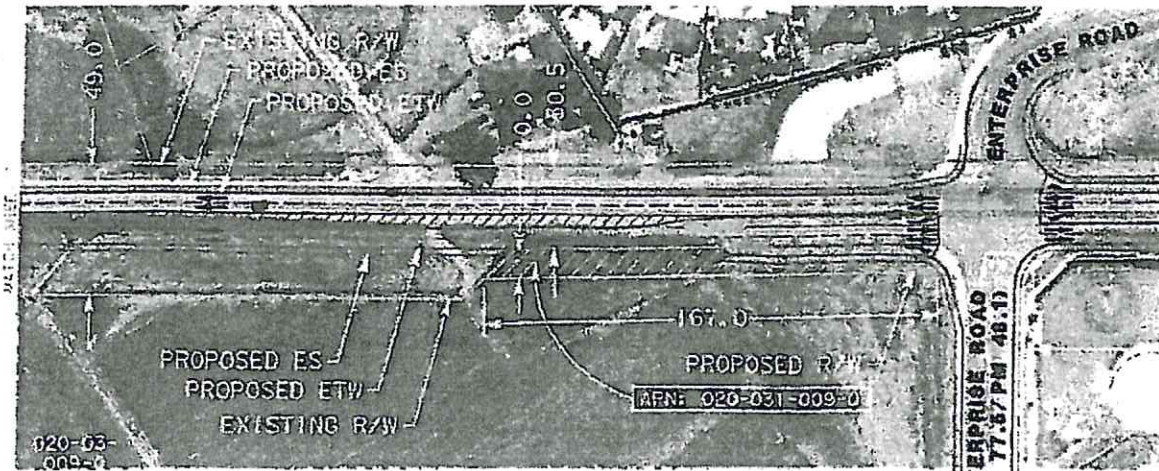
5. The traffic study should include information on existing traffic volumes within the study area, including the State transportation system, and should be based on recent traffic volumes less than two years old. Counts older than two years cannot be used as a baseline. Feel free to contact us for assistance in acquiring the most recent data available.
6. The methodologies used to calculate the LOS should be consistent with the methods in the current version of the Highway Capacity Manual. All LOS calculations should also be included in the Draft EIR as an appendix made available for review.
7. At any time during the environmental review and approval process, Caltrans retains the statutory right to request a formal scoping meeting to resolve any issues of concern. Such formal scoping meeting requests are allowed per the provisions of the California Public Resources Code Section 21083.9 [a] [1].

Previous Correspondence

In previous email correspondence dated March 18, 2015, Caltrans identified concerns with the draft traffic study as well as site plan issues. The following are those details.

- The use of HCM 2000 instead of the new HCM 2010 version.
- The lack of pedestrian volumes in the HCM calculations.
- The lack of a heavy vehicle percentage factor.
- Peak Hour Factor was not applied to Existing+Project or Future conditions. (Demonstrated by conditions showing improvement with project trips.)

Regarding the site plan, there is a potential conflict with a long-standing intent to widen Highway 25 from Hollister to Fairview Road. In 2002 a Project Study Report (PSR) was completed that generally set an outline of right of way needs for such a project. At that time, the PSR called for a 10 meter by 167 meter setback at this location. This is an image from the PSR:



*"Provide a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system
to enhance California's economy and livability"*

Byron Turner
April 1, 2015
Page 3

Before any approvals are given, it is important to confirm that a setback is included that allows enough right of way. Please also note that since 2002, minimum widths for sidewalks have increased, a bike lane feature will be required, and there may be the need to install a transit stop. That said, more than 10 meters will likely be required which reemphasizes the importance of the setback.

If you have any questions, or need further clarification on items discussed above, please don't hesitate to call me at (805) 542-4751.

Sincerely,



JOHN J. OLEJNIK
Associate Transportation Planner
District 5 Development Review Coordinator
john.olejnik@dot.ca.gov

cc: Mark McCumsey (D5)
Frank Boyle (D5)

Response to Comment Letter from California Department of Transportation (Caltrans District 5) and attachment (March 2, 2017)

These comments include NOP comments submitted by Caltrans to San Benito County in response to the similar project originally proposed with the county (April 1, 2015). The comments on the county NOP for the former project requested that the project's transportation impacts be assessed in a report prepared in accordance with the Department's Guide for the Preparation of Traffic Impact Studies, use of the Highway Capacity Manual (2010), and provide setbacks along State Route 25 to allow for its widening in the future. The 2015 NOP comments are acknowledged in the draft EIR on page 1-5 and pages 3-199 – 3-200 and are included in the draft EIR Appendix B. All NOP comments made by Caltrans District 5 are addressed in the EIR.

1. The comment requests that mitigation measures for which participation in the San Benito County Council of Governments (COG) regional traffic impact fee program is required should reference the COG TIF program. The traffic impact analysis references the payment of fees as identified in the San Benito Council of Governments Transportation Impact Mitigation Fee Nexus Study (Jan. 2016) as a means of mitigation for improvements to facilities that are included as part of the improvement projects of the San Benito County Regional Transportation Impact Mitigation Fee (TIMF) program. The developer will be required to pay the applicable TIMF fee as a fair-share contribution toward improvements at this intersection. This process and requirement is also identified on page 3-210 of the draft EIR, which states that development projects within San Benito County, including incorporated cities, are required to pay traffic impact fees into the Hollister/San Benito County Regional Traffic Impact Fee program administered by San Benito Council of Governments as authorized by the regional transportation plan. This requirement is implicit in the traffic impact analysis and draft EIR and no changes are necessary.
2. This comment suggests that the proposed project's impact to the intersection of Enterprise Road and State Route 25 is not addressed under the existing plus project condition and that clarification of mitigation is necessary. As noted in the traffic Impact Analysis Table ES 1, Intersection Level of Service and Signal Warrant Analyses Summary and summarized in the draft EIR (pages 3-223), under existing plus project conditions, the addition of project traffic would increase volume on area roadways and would affect operating conditions at the unsignalized intersection at Enterprise Road and State Route 25, among others. This intersection would experience peak hour traffic volumes that meet the delay thresholds that warrant signalization with or without the project. However, since the addition of project traffic would not cause the overall average LOS to deteriorate to

unacceptable levels (LOS C or worse), the impact is less than significant. Therefore, the project's contribution to existing traffic delays at the intersection under existing plus project conditions would not result in significant impacts under Caltrans, county, or city service thresholds. The impact under existing plus project conditions is less than significant and mitigation is not required.

The comment also suggests that the peak hour signal warrants would not be met with the addition of background and project traffic to existing traffic volumes. As reported in the EIR (page 4-23), the traffic report (Hexagon Transportation Consultants 2016) assessed the cumulative traffic environment under two scenarios: background conditions and cumulative conditions, with cumulative conditions including background conditions. The assumptions for future baseline traffic volumes under background conditions include buildout of currently approved, but not yet constructed projects in the City of Hollister and northern San Benito County. As presented in Table ES 1 of the traffic impact analysis and reported in Table 37 of the draft EIR, the peak hour signal warrants are shown to be met under background conditions with or without the project. The LOS at the subject intersection would degrade to an unacceptable level (LOS E) under this scenario. Therefore, as reported in the draft EIR (page 4-30), the project would have a cumulatively considerable contribution to the cumulative LOS impact at this intersection under background plus project conditions. As noted in the draft EIR (page 4-32) implementation of Mitigation Measure CUM T-4 requires the payment of the the project's fair share of the traffic impact fees necessary to finance signalization of the intersection. No changes to the draft EIR are required.

The commenter states that the volume of traffic entering State Route 25 via Enterprise Road could be alleviated by providing access to State Route 25 via Fairview Road to the east. As discussed in the traffic impact analysis and the draft EIR (Section 4.2, Cumulative Impacts), and summarized in the previous response, the proposed project would contribute to cumulative LOS impacts to the intersection. Intersection improvements that are necessary to reduce the LOS to acceptable levels under the cumulative scenario are included in the San Benito County Council of Governments Transportation Impact Mitigation Fee Program. The proposed project's cumulatively considerable contributions to cumulative traffic impacts at the intersection of Enterprise Rd. and State Route 25 are mitigated to a less-than-significant level by payment of the applicable transportation impact fees. Therefore no significant impacts would occur. CEQA Guidelines section 15126.6(a) requires a description of reasonable alternatives to the proposed project which could feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project. A secondary access would indeed distribute traffic to each of the access points reducing demand

at Enterprise/SR 25. However, traffic signals are planned south of the project site at the Cielo Vista Drive intersection with Fairview Road as well as a future connection of Union Road to Fairview Road north of the project site. An additional signalized intersection along the project frontage of Fairview Road may inhibit traffic flow along Fairview Road. The project site layout provides for a roadway connections (Mimosa Street) to the parcel located along the project's northern boundary (Award Homes subdivision), which will also provide a connection to Fairview Road via the planned Union Road extension and this route in the future. No changes to the draft EIR are required.

3. This comment identifies a need for appropriate land dedications for future widening of State Route 25 in the vicinity of the project site. The proposed project includes an approximate 32.8-foot-wide land dedication over a distance of approximately 244 feet adjacent to the Caltrans public right-of-way along the project site frontage of State Route 25 (refer to Figure 6, Vesting Tentative Map) and identified in the project description page 2-19. No changes to the draft EIR are required.
4. The comment identifies that an encroachment permit is required for work within a Caltrans facility. The required encroachment permit is identified on page 2-25 of the draft EIR.
5. This comment requests that the city condition project approval to provide an opportunity for Caltrans to review drainage improvements that may impact State Route 25. This comment is forwarded to City staff for consideration.
6. This comment is acknowledged. It does not raise an environmental issue and no changes to the draft EIR are necessary.



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March 2, 2017

Abraham Prado
City of Hollister, Development Services Department
375 Fifth St.
Hollister, CA 95023

Email: Abraham.prado@hollister.ca.gov

Subject: Comments on DEIR for Proposed Roberts Ranch Subdivision (SCH# 2016011053)

Dear Mr. Prado,

Thank you for providing the Monterey Bay Air Resources District (Air District) the opportunity to comment on the above-referenced document. The Air District has reviewed the document and has the following comments:

Air Quality:

1. Mitigation Measure AQ-1, Air Quality, Table S-1, Pg. S-3—The Air District appreciates the inclusion of air emissions reduction features throughout the development—prohibition of solid fuel appliances.
2. Mitigation Measure AQ-2, Air Quality, Table S-1, Pg. S-3, Pg.S-4—It is good to see this project will follow a proactive approach to mitigate construction dust impacts by preparing a grading plan and appointing a qualified site monitor to ensure dust control measures are implemented.
 - a. Mitigation Measure AQ-2 (e) lists freeboard space of +1'ft. The Air District CEQA Guidelines states that *Haul trucks shall maintain at least 2'ft of freeboard*. This mitigation measure has a 90% effectiveness rate. Please note our change to further reduce the project construction emissions.
3. Air Quality, Section 3.3, Pg.3-18—The Air District appreciates the inclusion of the CalEEMod model for estimating construction and operation emissions following our recommendation. The operational emissions can be reduced significantly below district threshold by prohibiting wood-burning fireplaces and stoves in the new development. The additional emission reduction steps described on pg. 3-41 will further reduce emissions to sub-threshold levels.
4. Year 2027 (Project Buildout) Threshold of Significance, Pg. 3-128—The Air District appreciates the inclusion of this section on greenhouse gas impacts and achieving post-2020 emission reduction targets as identified in the 2008 Scoping Plan as a defacto threshold of significance. The Air District supports mitigation measure GHG-1, which will assure that GHG emissions remain at a LTS level.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials:

- 2 1. Mitigation Measure, Table S-1, Pg. S-18—The summary for Hazards and Hazardous Materials is left blank in the S-1 Summary Table. Please explain if there are no impacts and no mitigation measures required.

Transportation:

- 3 1. Mitigation Measure T-3 / T-4 / CUM T-3 / CUM T-4, Pg. S-26-S-28— This section suggests that application of mitigation measure T-3 / T-4, CUM T-3 / T-4 will mitigate operational phase traffic congestion from passenger vehicles, school buses as well as energy consumption to a less than significant level. Please consider these additional measures:
- a. Since the proposed project is a prezone and there are plans to expand in the future, we highly recommend incorporating roundabouts at intersections be considered where there is sufficient space. Roundabouts are a congestion management strategy that results in significant motor vehicle emission reduction. Roundabouts would improve traffic circulation for both current and future conditions, benefitting air quality, greenhouse gases and noise. It would improve safety for drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians.
 - b. If roundabout inclusion is not feasible, we recommend incorporating smart traffic lights, or Intelligent traffic lights, that combine traditional traffic lights with an array of sensors and artificial intelligence to intelligently route vehicle and pedestrian traffic. Studies show that smart traffic lights will reduce future VMT by over 28% and cut CO₂ emissions by as much as 6.5% (Gradinescu, V et. Al, "Adaptive Traffic Lights Using Car-to-Car Communication").

Potential funding for *a.* and *b.* above may be available through the Air District. Please contact Alan Romero, Air Quality Planner III at (831) 718-8030 ext. 241.

Please let me know if you have any questions. I can be reached at (831) 718-8021 or hmuegge@mbard.org.

Best Regards,



Hanna Muegge
Air Quality Planner

cc: Bob Nunes
David Frisbey
Alan Romero

Response to Comment from Monterey Bay Air Resources District (March 2, 2017)

1. The comment identifies a correction to the district's standard construction dust control measures that are included in Mitigation Measure AQ-2. Mitigation Measure AQ-2 is revised as reflected in Section 3.2 of this final EIR.
2. The comment notes that the significance conclusion For Hazards and Hazardous materials is missing from Table S-1. Table S-1 identifies significant impacts and mitigation measures. As discussed in the draft EIR pages 3-142 – 3-143, the proposed project would not result in significant impacts related to hazards or hazardous materials. The incorrect entry is removed from Table S-1, and the change is noted in Section 3.2 of the final EIR.
3. It is assumed that, the commenter suggests additional mitigation measures to reduce project mobile source energy emissions that include the use of roundabouts in development of the project site, or if roundabouts are not feasible, that area intersection improvements include smart traffic lights. The proposed project includes a circulation plan identified in the vesting tentative map (Appendix C of the draft EIR). The traffic consultant did not identify significant impacts that would result from on-site circulation improvements. The proposed project does not include or require installation of traffic signals and project contributions to cumulative traffic impacts are mitigated by the payment of applicable traffic impact fees. An emissions reduction plan is required by Mitigation Measure GHG-1, which identifies specific measures, or other measures proposed by the applicant that will reduce GHG emissions generated by the project to a less than significant level. It is unlikely that additional emissions reduction measures other than those identified in Mitigation Measure GHG-1 would be needed to reduce emissions impacts to less than significant. In the unlikely event that additional measures would be needed to reduce GHG emissions as required by Mitigation Measure GHG-1, the applicant and the City of Hollister may consider the use of roundabouts instead of traditional intersections on the project site, provided the emissions reductions from these facilities are identified and included in the emissions reduction plan.

3.0 Changes to the Draft EIR

3.1 CEQA REQUIREMENTS

CEQA Guidelines section 15132 requires that a final EIR contain either the draft EIR or a revision of the draft EIR. This final EIR incorporates the draft EIR by reference and includes the revisions to the draft EIR, as presented on the following pages.

3.2 CHANGES MADE

This section contains text from the draft EIR with changes indicated. Additions to the text are shown with underlined text (underline) and deletions are shown with strikethrough text (~~strikethrough~~). Explanatory notes in italic text (*italic*) precede each revision.

The following change was made to Table S-1 on page S-18:

Hazards and Hazardous Materials				
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Mitigation Measure AQ-1 found in Table S-1, on page S-3, and on page 3-42 has been revised as follows to clarify implementation of mitigation measure AQ-1:

- AQ-1. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicant shall ~~include~~ provide evidence that the following air emissions reduction features on the project plans are incorporated into the covenants, conditions, and restrictions (CC&Rs) for the subdivision and will be recorded against each of the individual parcels:
- Solid fuel heating appliances (i.e., wood-burning fireplaces; wood stoves; etc.) shall be prohibited. ~~Restrictions on solid fuel heating appliances shall be included on deeds for individual parcels.~~

Item e in Mitigation Measure AQ-2 found in Table S-1 on pages S-3-4, and on page 3-43 of the DEIR has been revised as follows:

- Maintain at least ~~1'-0"~~ 2' 0" of freeboard on haul trucks;

Mitigation measure BIO-4 listed in Table S-1 on page S-10 and on page 3-73 has been revised with the following clarification:

BIO-4. To compensate for the permanent loss of CTS and CRLF upland habitat, the applicant shall preserve or purchase in-kind grassland habitat that is known to provide upland habitat for CTS and CRLF at a minimum 2:1 ratio of area preserved to area impacted or as otherwise permitted by the USFWS and CDFW. Compensatory mitigation may be accomplished through one of the following options:

- Establishing a conservation easement on or off site in a suitable location and providing a non-wasting endowment for management and monitoring of the property in perpetuity. Lands placed in a conservation easement must be documented to support CTS and CRLF;
- Depositing funds into an USFWS- and CDFW-approved in-lieu fee program; or
- Purchasing credits in a USFWS- and CDFW-approved conservation bank that includes the Roberts Ranch site in its service area.

Mitigation measure BIO-7 in Table S-1 on pages S-13-14 and on page 3-76 of the DEIR has been revised to reference the city instead of the county and to clarify USACE and RWQCB requirements as follows:

BIO-7 To compensate for permanent impacts to 0.08 acre of wetlands of the United States and achieve “no net less” of wetland acreage or habitat value, the applicant will create, preserve, or purchase in-kind wetland habitat at a 2:1 ratio. Compensatory mitigation may be accomplished through one of the following options:

- The applicant shall create at least 0.16 acre of off-site mitigation wetlands elsewhere in the Hollister region, or in a location approved by the CDFW. A conservation easement shall be placed on the mitigation site to preserve the site in perpetuity as natural open space. A long-term management plan shall be developed for the mitigation site. The applicant shall provide an endowment in an amount to be determined by the ~~county~~city, USACE, and RWQCB for the long-term maintenance and monitoring of the mitigation site. Off-site wetland creation would also require the following:

- A wetland mitigation replacement plan that includes, at a minimum: 1) a discussion of the impacted wetland's plant species composition and hydrology and the proposed plant species composition and hydrology of the mitigation site; 2) performance standards by which success will be evaluated; 3) monitoring procedures; 4) a contingency plan, 5) annual reporting requirements, and 6) rationale for expected success. The mitigation plan shall be approved by USACE, and RWQCB prior to city approval of the grading plan. The mitigation wetland shall be monitored for five years after installation.

- As an alternative to creating wetlands, the applicant may purchase mitigation credits at an approved mitigation bank in San Benito County (e.g., Pajaro River Mitigation Bank). If this alternative approach is chosen, a minimum of 0.16 acre of credits shall be purchased to compensate for the loss of waters of the United States and State at a ratio of 2:1. The purchase of mitigation bank credits shall be subject to approval by the county, USACE, and RWQCB. If this mitigation alternative is pursued, the applicant shall ~~prepare a mitigation plan that provides detailed information about the bank. Mitigation credits must be verified by the county~~ submit detailed information about the bank, including verification of purchased credits to the city, USACE, and RWQCB prior to the initiation of construction ~~of or~~ filling of wetlands.

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Additional References

1. Del Rio, Robert, Traffic Consultant. Hexagon Transportation Consultants. Email Correspondence with Consultant, 21 March 2017.
2. Sullivan, Bradley, Esq. Hollister City Attorney. Personal Communication, 21 March 2017.

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