

TO: JAMES L. APP, CITY MANAGER

FROM: BOB LATA, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: NOTICE OF PREPARATION, ENVIRONMENTAL SCOPING SESSION AND MODELING WORKSHOP: CHANDLER RANCH AREA SPECIFIC PLAN

DATE: JANUARY 20, 2004

Needs: For the City Council to consider three actions: (1) authorizing issuance of a Notice of Preparation for the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Chandler Ranch Area Specific Plan, (2) setting a date for a public "Scoping Session" for the DEIR and (3) setting a joint meeting with the Planning Commission to discuss the status of modeling of grading for the Chandler Ranch Area Specific Plan.

Facts:

1. Based on Council direction provided on November 18, 2003, work is proceeding on the DEIR for the Chandler Ranch Area Specific Plan. The process requires issuance of a Notice of Preparation (NOP) which is intended to allow other agencies and the public to provide input on / confirm the scope of the DEIR.
2. During the 30 day period for public review of the NOP, it is proposed that the City conduct a Scoping Session to provide the public with an additional opportunity to provide input on the scope of the DEIR.
3. Part of the direction provided by the City Council at the November 18, 2003 meeting was for staff to return to Council with proposals and cost estimates for modeling of grading / landform modification beyond the scope authorized at the November 18, 2003 meeting.

Analysis
and

Conclusion: Issuance of the NOP is a routine matter, consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

A Scoping Session on the DEIR is required by CEQA but can be conducted before staff, the Planning Commission, or the City Council. The value of having Commission and/or Council members present is to hear, first hand, the range of public comments.

Because of the amount of information and its complexity (including the various options for modeling of grading and land form modifications), it is being suggested that the Planning Commission and City Council set a special joint public workshop to:

- Receive a presentation regarding grading and modeling information currently on hand;
- Review the status of modeling work currently underway;
- Provide direction to staff, consultants and property owners regarding what additional modeling may be required in conjunction with the preparation of the DEIR.

As has previously been noted, the purpose and intent of modeling grading and/or land form modification is to insure that the Planning Commission, City Council and public have a clear understanding of the nature and extent of topographic changes proposed within the Chandler Ranch Area Specific Plan. The intent is to insure all are in full understanding of proposed changes so there are “no surprises”.

There has been a significant amount of information gathered by the primary property owner regarding sub-area 6, along with cross-sections of development concepts elsewhere on the property. The property owner’s representatives are seeking an opportunity to present that background information as the Council considers what additional work may be required.

Pursuant to Council direction on November 18, 2003, modeling work is proceeding regarding sub-area 7 and/or 9, a development area with some of the most extreme topography. That modeling will contrast extensive / mass grading with grading that would conform with the City’s current Hillside Ordinance.

Proposals, including cost estimates, have been obtained for modeling additional areas of the Chandler Ranch Area Specific Plan. Staff, the consultants and the property owners are seeking direction from the Commission and Council regarding what further modeling should be prepared.

At the same time, there is also a need to discuss and confirm what form the modeling should take (physical model(s), computer graphics, etc.). Obtaining feedback from the Commission and Council would be of value in this respect.

Having a combined Scoping Session and public workshop regarding grading / modeling would seem an effective means to address the above described needs.

Another alternative would be to limit the joint Commission – Council meeting to a discussion of modeling of grading, directing staff to make separate arrangements for a Scoping Session (for example at the February 10, 2004 Planning Commission meeting). This approach would provide additional opportunity to discuss the issue of modeling in greater depth / detail.

Policy

Reference: General Plan requirement for Chandler Ranch Area Specific Plan.

Fiscal

Impact: Cost estimates will be presented regarding options for additional modeling.

Options:

Subject to consideration of public input, it is recommended that the City Council consider the following options:

- a. Authorize issuance of a Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) on the Chandler Ranch Area Specific Plan, and set Thursday, February 12, 2004, at 7:00 PM (or another acceptable date) for a joint Planning Commission - City Council workshop that would combine a Scoping Session on the DEIR with a public workshop and discussion regarding modeling of grading and landform modification.
- b. Authorize issuance of a Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) on the Chandler Ranch Area Specific Plan, and set Thursday, February 12, 2004, at 7:00 PM (or another acceptable date) for a joint Planning Commission - City Council workshop regarding modeling of grading and landform modification. (A Scoping Session on the DEIR would be held as a separate meeting before the Planning Commission.)
- c. Amend, modify or reject the foregoing options.