

# Saddleback Meadows Area Plan 98-2 (181 Units)



SEPTEMBER 2022

#### **Prepared for:**

Orange County Public Works Development Services/Planning Services 601 North Ross Street Santa Ana, CA 92701



Stamped By: CanningK

## Saddleback Meadows Area Plan 98-2 (181 Units)

Prepared For:

Orange County Public Works Development Services/Planning 601 North Ross Street Santa Ana, California 92701

Prepared By:

Ascent Environmental 1230 Columbia Street, Suite 440 San Diego, CA 92101 619-219-8000

September 2022

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

| Se               | Section  |    |  |  |
|------------------|--|----|--|--|
| 1                | INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND  | 1  |  |  |
| 2                | PROJECT LOCATION AND SETTING   |    |  |  |
| 3                | DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT  | 5  |  |  |
|                  | 3.1 Site Planning  | 5  |  |  |
|                  | 3.2 Circulation  |    |  |  |
|                  | 3.3 Drainage/Storm Water Quality Management                                  | 7  |  |  |
| 4                | OPEN SPACE CONCEPT   | 9  |  |  |
|                  | 4.1 Natural Resource Protection Area   | 9  |  |  |
|                  | 4.2 Scenic Preservation Area   | 10 |  |  |
| 5                | RIDING AND HIKING TRAIL CONCEPT  |    |  |  |
| 6                | GRADING CONCEPT  | 14 |  |  |
|                  | 6.1 Earthwork Volumes  | 14 |  |  |
| 7                | LANDSCAPE/RESTORATION CONCEPT  | 16 |  |  |
| 8                | FUEL MODIFICATION/FIRE PROTECTION CONCEPT                                    |    |  |  |
| Та               | ables  |    |  |  |
| Tab              | ble 1 Proposed Area Plan (181 Units)/Modified Project (266 Units) Comparison | 2  |  |  |
| Tab              | ble 2 Proposed Land Use Summary  | 5  |  |  |
| Tak              | ble 3 Open Space Summary   | 5  |  |  |
| <b>Fiç</b><br>1. | gures<br>Development Concept Plan  |    |  |  |
| 2.               |  |    |  |  |
| 3.               |  |    |  |  |
| 4.               |  |    |  |  |
| 5.               |  |    |  |  |
| 6.               | Landscape & Revegetation Concept Plan  |    |  |  |
| 7.               | Fuel Modification Concept Plan   |    |  |  |
| 8.               | Fuel Modification Zone Plan Cross-Section                                    |    |  |  |
| Ар               | opendices  |    |  |  |

- A Saddleback Meadows Rural Character Statement
- B Fuel Modification and Fire Protection Plan

### 1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Saddleback Meadows Area Plan 98-2 (181 units) hereinafter referred to as "**Proposed Area Plan (181 Units)**" has been prepared for the County of Orange (County), Orange County Public Works/ Development Services/Planning to outline the following project design characteristics: (1) Development Concept, (2) Open Space Concept, (3) Riding and Hiking Trail Concept, (4) Grading Concept, (5) Landscape/Revegetation Concept, and (6) Fuel Modification/Fire Protection Concept. In addition, the Proposed Area Plan (181 Units) includes a Rural Character Statement which establishes the overall design character and guidance for the project, and a Fuel Modification and Fire Protection Plan which are included in the appendix.

The design of the Proposed Area Plan (181 Units) for the 222.2-acre Saddleback Meadows project originates from Area Plan 98-2 Modified Project (266 Units) that was previously approved by the Orange County Board of Supervisors ("Board") on August 11, 2004, and which consisted of 266 single family residential dwelling units. The Area Plan approved in 2004 was developed as a result of negotiations with neighboring property owners and environmental groups. The 2004 previously approved Area Plan is referred to as the "**Modified Project (266 Units)**" throughout this document and was also reflected in approved revised Vesting Tentative Tract Map (VTTM) 15230. The Proposed Area Plan (181 Units) reflects a reduction in the development area from 134.0 acres to 78.3 acres, and a reduction in residential unit count from 266 units to 181 units, and is depicted in this Area Plan (**Figure 1**) and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Revised Vesting Tentative Tract Map (VTTM) 15230.

The Modified Project (266 Units) proposed an adjacent offsite water tank and associated access road to provide potable water to the proposed project and the surrounding area. If a water tank were required to serve the 181-unit project, it would be located onsite with a short access road from the end of the main entry road (spine road). The Trabuco Canyon Water District (TCWD) is currently studying the elimination of the water tank and access road by making other regional water system improvements, such as the Harris Grade area of Trabuco Canyon (or another location within the District) to better serve the region. The results of that study have not been completed, although the TCWD has identified other alternatives to supplying domestic water service to the project site without an onsite water tank. The landowner is in discussions with TCWD regarding the project's share of the offsite facilities and expects those discussions to result in a mutually satisfactory arrangement. Accordingly, the Proposed Area Plan (181 Units) eliminates the water tank and access road.

The key differences between the Modified Project (266 Units) approved in 2004 and the Proposed Area Plan (181 Units) are summarized as follows:

- A reduction in unit count from 266 single family detached residential units to 181 single family detached residential units through elimination of the previously approved eastern development area, a decrease in average lot size from 6,843 SF to 6,062 SF, and a total reduction of 85 units or 32%. Residential lots range from 4,000 square feet to 14,313 square feet. The minimum lot size is 4,000 SF;<sup>1</sup>
- ► A substantial reduction in the development impact area from 134.0 acres to 78.3 acres, a 38% reduction;<sup>2</sup>
- Elimination of the water tank from the offsite ridgeline area, and elimination of the water tank access road;
- ► An increase in the percentage of the site devoted to open space (from 73% to 84%);<sup>3</sup>
- Enhancement of locally and regionally important biological resources, and expansion of onsite wildlife movement corridors;
- Incorporation of a bio-detention storm water quality management system to comply with current storm water quality regulations; and

<sup>1</sup> Source: 2nd Revised VTTM 15230

<sup>2</sup> See Table 1

 Provision of a local Riding and Hiking Trail, that extends from the project entry off of El Toro Road to the terminus of the spine road and will include a trail rest area.

A comparison of the Proposed Area Plan (181 Units) and the Modified Project (266 Units) is shown in Table 1.

| Features                      | Proposed Area Plan (181 Units) | Modified Project (266 Units) |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Dwelling Units                | 181                            | 266                          |
| Development Area <sup>4</sup> | 78.3 AC                        | 134.0 AC                     |
| Minimum Lot Size              | 4,000 SF                       | 4,500 SF                     |
| Average Lot Size              | 6,062 SF                       | 6,843 SF                     |
| Gross Density                 | 0.8 DU/AC                      | 1.2 DU/AC                    |
| % Open Space <sup>5</sup>     | 84%                            | 73%                          |
| Wildlife Corridor             | Yes                            | Yes                          |

#### Table 1 Proposed Area Plan (181 Units)/Modified Project (266 Units) Comparison

Key elements of the Modified Project (266 Units) that have been retained in the Proposed Area Plan (181 Units) include:

- Substantial buffering, including berming, back-cut slope grading, landscaping and revegetation along the project's development edges and open space areas, to partially or completely screen and enhance views of the project from adjoining areas including St. Michael's Abbey (now the Orange County Rescue Mission), the Ramakrishna Monastery, the Hidden Ridge Community, Portola Hills Planned Community, and El Toro Road<sup>6</sup>;
- Retention of the comprehensive landscape, fuel modification and revegetation plans, as modified for the smaller development area;
- Retention of a modified onsite riding and hiking trail and rest area;
- Protection, expansion, and enhancement of locally and regionally important biological resources, and preservation and expansion of onsite wildlife movement corridors; and Community-wide design concepts, elements and features reflective of a "<u>rural-like</u>" character within the context and constraints of the site and the developer's objectives as detailed in Appendix A Saddleback Meadows Rural Character Statement.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Development Area is based on the total of Single-Family Residential Lots, Streets from Table 2, and Scenic Preservation Area from Table 3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Includes onsite trail within the Scenic Preservation Area

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> The specific effects of the project on the Ramakrishna Monastery are addressed in a separate settlement between the Vedanta Society of Southern California, a California religious corporation ("Vedanta"), and California Quartet, a California limited partnership ("California Quartet"), and reflected in the May 5, 2004 Covenant, Grant of Easement, and Restrictions Agreement between Vedanta and California Quartet (the "2004 Vedanta Covenant"), as amended by the November 25, 2019 Settlement Agreement ("2019 Settlement Agreement ") entered by Consent Award Pursuant to Stipulation on January 31, 2020 ("Consent Award") and in the judgment of the Orange County Superior Court entered on July 28, 2022 in the case of Vedanta Society of Southern California, Petitioner v. California Quartet, Respondent, Case Number 30-2022-01245287-CU-PA-CJ ("the Court Judgment"). The 2004 Vedanta Covenant, as amended by the 2019 Settlement Agreement, and the Court Judgment provides for the parties' respective rights and obligations with respect to the project. The County of Orange is not party to the 2019 Settlement Agreement.

## 2 PROJECT LOCATION AND SETTING

The 222.2-acre project site is situated on vacant land located in east-central Orange County. The project site is located on the eastern side of El Toro Road, approximately ½ mile south of the intersection of Santiago Canyon Road (El Toro Road) and Live Oak Canyon Road. O'Neill Regional Park, the Ramakrishna Monastery and the Hidden Ridge residential community are located to the south, Saint Michael's Abby (now the Orange County Rescue Mission) and the Cleveland National Forest are located to the north and the Foothill Ranch planned community is located to the west.

The project site is located in unincorporated Orange County; therefore, land use and development are under the jurisdiction of the County, and subject to compliance with the County General Plan, the Foothill/Trabuco Specific Plan (F/TSP), the Aliso Creek Corridor Specific Plan and County Zoning Code. The project site is located within the Bridlewood District of the F/TSP. The project site is designated as follows in these policy plans:

- Orange County General Plan: 1B Suburban Residential (0.5-18.0 du/ac)
- ► Foothill Trabuco Specific Plan (FTSP): Bridlewood Residential District (BWR) < 1 acre/du
- ► Orange County Zoning Code (Title 7, Division 9): S Specific Plan (FTSP)

The Proposed Area Plan (181 Units) is consistent with the provisions of the above County of Orange policy planning documents and Zoning Code.

The Saddleback Meadows project site is situated amid the lower, southwestern foothills of the Santa Ana Mountains. The topography is hilly with several steep slopes and ravines. The project site is undeveloped, and portions of the site have been grazed, cleared, or otherwise disturbed for many years. The site has experienced significant erosion, slope failures, and invasion of non-native plants. Horse and cattle grazing occurred on the site during most of the 1900s. Prior onsite development was limited to a small corral in the western portion of the site, remnants of several other structures, and a few informal unimproved site access roads.

There are a variety of vegetation types on the project site including oak woodland, coastal sage scrub, chaparral, riparian, ephemeral ponds, and non-native grassland. A wildlife movement corridor is located on the project site.

### 3 DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

#### 3.1 SITE PLANNING

The Proposed Area Plan (181 Units) calls for revision of the Modified Project (266 Units) and Revised VTTM 15230 with a single-family residential community consisting of 181 residential units, private roads, increased open space, and local and regional riding/hiking trails<sup>7</sup>. A total of 181 single family residential lots and 32 lettered lots (streets/fuel modification zones/slope/riding and hiking trail/open space) are proposed on the 222.2-acre project site. In addition, 3.2 acres of offsite grading is required for slope and El Toro Road improvements. The project land use summary is shown in **Table 2**. The average residential lot size for this project is approximately 6,062 square feet (sf), with a minimum lot size of 4,000 sf. The reduced minimum lot size as compared to the previously approved project is intended to accommodate the reduced grading footprint of the overall project, the statewide demand for greater energy efficiency, greenhouse gas reduction, housing affordability, and changing market demand. The minimum lot size is compatible with other recently approved and under construction residential developments in the vicinity, including single family residential lots as small as 3,200 square feet (Portola Center). The average gross area per unit (APU) for the Proposed Area Plan (181 Units) is 53,475 sf per unit, as compared to the APU for the Modified Project (266 Units) of 36,388 sf per unit, highlighting the reduced overall gross residential density.

Access to the project is proposed via a private vehicular gated street (spine road) off El Toro Road immediately south of the existing Aliso Creek/Trail under-crossing structure. An emergency-only access via Valley Vista Way is also proposed. Public access to the riding and hiking trail is provided via the spine road entry gate from dawn to dusk. Fencing at the terminus of the riding and hiking trail will be provided to prevent trespass into the natural open space area. Open space (consisting of all areas outside of street right-of-way and the single-family house lots) comprises 186.6 acres or 84% of the site. An open space summary is shown in **Table 3**. The Development Concept Plan is depicted in **Figure 1**.

| Land Use                             | Area (acres)* | Portion of Site (Percent) |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| Single-family Residential Lots (181) | 25.1          | 11                        |
| Streets                              | 10.5          | 5                         |
| Open Space <sup>8</sup>              | 186.6         | 84                        |
| TOTAL                                | 222.2         | 100                       |

#### Table 2Proposed Land Use Summary

Single Family Residential Lots – Residential lot area excluding streets and manufactured slope.

Streets – Street Right-of-Way area only

Open Space includes the Natural Resource Protection Area, Scenic Preservation Area – See Table 3

#### Table 3Open Space Summary

| Land Use                         | Area (acres)* | Portion of Site (Percent) |
|----------------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| Natural Resource Protection Area | 143.9         | 64.8                      |
| Scenic Preservation Area         | 42.74         | 19.1                      |
| TOTAL                            | 186.6         | 84.0                      |

Natural Resource Protection Area - All onsite undisturbed open space, including the Biological Resource Mitigation Area.

Scenic Preservation Area – All area not included in residential lots, streets, or Natural Resource Preservation Area. It includes fuel modification areas, common lots and the riding and hiking trail.

<sup>7</sup> A Final Map for a 705 mobile home manufactured housing community is recorded on the Property and would be replaced by the Final Map for the 2nd Revised VTTM 15230 once recorded.

<sup>8</sup> Includes onsite riding and hiking trail and trail rest area within the Scenic Preservation Area.

The project has been designed to minimize impact on the existing landform. The residential lots have been located on the more gently sloping areas along the southwestern portion of the site, while the steep terrain of the central canyon area and the northern and eastern sections of the site have been left as open space. Development will lie below the eastern and northern major ridgelines bordering the property, which creates a natural ridgeline backdrop. A primary design consideration in establishing the rural-like character of Saddleback Meadows is partially screening views of the community when viewed from the surrounding areas and from within the development. In response to this design intent and the interests of the Orange County Rescue Mission, the Ramakrishna Monastery, O'Neill Regional Park, and the neighboring Hidden Ridge and Portola Hills communities, specific grading and site planning techniques and landscape elements have been incorporated into the project design. The intent of these features will be to partially or completely screen views of Saddleback Meadows from the surrounding areas, and to reduce visual impacts<sup>9</sup>. This will be accomplished through:

- Creative contour grading that emphasizes and expands upon the existing landforms;
- Berming and back-cut grading at select and appropriate locations to blend with natural terrain features while providing screening and buffering views into the project site from the Orange County Rescue Mission, the Ramakrishna Monastery, and the Hidden Ridge and Portola Hills communities. A 4 to 5-foot berm is proposed along the rear yard areas of residential lots on the south side of G Street to partially screen proposed residential units from the Hidden Ridge residential community. Back-cut slope grading is proposed along the residential lots south of the spine road and east of I street to screen views of those residential units from the Ramakrishna Monastery and open space areas south of the project site;
- Creative site planning techniques that incorporate slopes, landscape zones and landforms between homes and the surrounding neighbors, and allows for neighborhood streets that follow the terrain;
- ► An aesthetic community-wide landscape (including substantial native habitat restoration) that provides visual enhancement through significant perimeter and interior plantings, responds to seasonal changes, and provides filtered views of the community from the surrounding areas. Loffel walls are used in select locations to minimize the extent of manufactured slopes. Loffel walls allow for the growth of plant materials on and around the wall, eventually helping to screen the wall behind a blanket of vegetation;
- Elimination of 85 residential units in the northern and easterly portion of the project site which will result in an increase in undisturbed open space and separation from neighbors, and;
- Reconfiguring the riding and hiking trail to parallel the spine road and providing a trail rest area at the terminus of the trail adjacent to the spine road cul de sac.

The project design expands the local wildlife corridor over that shown in the Modified Project (266 Units) to increase the regional wildlife movement linkages between regionally important open space areas such as O'Neill Regional Park, Whiting Ranch Wilderness Park, and the Cleveland National Forest. This corridor is more fully discussed in Section 4.0. A total of eight (8) ephemeral ponds (six (6) existing and two (2) constructed) are included in the Natural Resource Protection Area to provide for required biological mitigation areas. A 15-foot open space buffer is proposed during construction along the northern perimeter of the development area. Temporary construction fencing will be installed along the entire 15-foot buffer line to ensure project grading does not impact the Natural Resource Protection Area.

These project features are fully described in the subsequent sections of this Proposed Area Plan 98-2 (181 Units).

### 3.2 CIRCULATION

On-site vehicular circulation is proposed with a system of private streets consisting of a vehicular gated primary spine road (44-foot and 50-foot rights-of-way), a series of cul-de-sacs (46-foot right-of-way), and is shown in **Figure 1**. The 44-foot right of way for the upper portion of the spine road has been reduced from the previously proposed 46-foot

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> The project is subject to a settlement with Vedanta. See Footnote No. 6.

right of way due to the reduced residential unit count and associated reduction in project generated traffic volumes. The primary vehicular project entry is proposed approximately 800 feet east of El Toro Road, and is gated. A secondary emergency-only access road is proposed via Valley Vista Way. An encroachment easement is required from the County of Orange to accommodate the primary access road where it traverses County-owned property along the western-most boundary of the site.

#### 3.3 DRAINAGE/STORM WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT

The entire development area and the majority of the onsite open space areas drain in a westerly direction towards Aliso Creek. A comprehensive storm water quality management program, designed to minimize or eliminate water quality impacts to Aliso Creek, has been incorporated into the overall project design. Major retention and water quality basins are depicted in **Figure 1**. In addition, a small onsite open space area located in the southeastern portion of the site drains towards southerly towards the existing offsite storm drain system and Oso Creek. No developmentrelated urban runoff drains toward Oso Creek and no drainage facilities are proposed in this area.

The following stormwater drainage and water quality design features have been incorporated into the project:

- A bio-detention system north of and adjacent to the proposed spine road to filter and detain low flow urban runoff from streets and other impervious areas;
- ► Hydromodification controls to reduce peak stormwater flows and sedimentation to downstream receiving waters;
- On-site detention and filtration of first flush storm water;
- Incorporation of a comprehensive series of structural and non-structural Best Management Practices, located within the project development area, including in-line stormceptors;
- Temporary structural and non-structural Best Management Practices (BMPs) during development area construction;
- Temporary BMPs in the Natural Resource Protection Area during construction of the biological resource mitigation ponds and access.

This storm water quality management program is intended to meet current County of Orange and NPDES storm water quality requirements promulgated by the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board.

## 4 OPEN SPACE CONCEPT

Project open space planning areas are shown in **Figure 2**. The Open Space Concept for the project is shown in **Figure 3** and consists of two elements: 1) the **Natural Resource Protection Area** (143.9 acres), and 2) the **Scenic Preservation Area** (42.7 acres). The Natural Resource Protection Area includes the 142.8 acre Biological Resource Mitigation Area which offsets project impacts to biological resources, preserves a wildlife movement corridor, and which will be protected by a conservation easement deed ("Conservation Easement") dedicated to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) consistent with the Court Judgment. The Natural Resource Protection Area is shown in **Figure 2**. The Scenic Preservation Area (42.7 acres) will offer substantial buffering, berming, and landscaping along the project's development edges, interior slopes and includes the riding and hiking trail. The Scenic Preservation Area will partially or completely screen the project and enhance views of the project from adjoining areas including the Orange County Rescue Mission, the Ramakrishna Monastery, the Hidden Ridge Community, Portola Hills Planned Community, and El Toro Road.<sup>10</sup>

The Open Space Concept is based upon the various open space dedication categories defined in the Resources Element/Open Space Component of the Orange County General Plan. Such uses and conditions include but are not limited to:

- Resource Protection
- Landscaped Berms
- ► Fuel Modification
- ► Riding & Hiking Trail

- Biological Restoration
- Manufactured Slopes
- Water Quality Features
- ► Temporary Construction BMPs

#### 4.1 NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION AREA

In response to the Orange County Natural Communities Conservation Program (NCCP) goals and objectives, and the state and federal resource agency requirements, the project incorporates a comprehensive biological resource mitigation plan (**Figure 6**). The Proposed Area Plan (181 Units) biological resource mitigation plan, as compared to the Modified Project (266 Units) biological resource mitigation plan expands the wildlife movement corridor and restoration/enhancement areas incorporated into the design of the project, providing for improved connectivity and wildlife movement from the Aliso Creek Corridor to O'Neill Regional Park and the Cleveland National Forest.

As part of the Proposed Area Plan (181 Units), the 142.8 acre Biological Resource Mitigation Area, which is the area that will be protected by the Conservation Easement dedicated to CDFW consistent with the Court Judgment, offers the opportunity to protect and enhance important biological resources and preserve undisturbed open space. This area will preserve existing biological resources including coastal sage scrub, oak, and sycamore woodlands, and five existing ephemeral ponds and eight created ephemeral ponds (an increase of nine ponds over Modified Project (266 Units)) which provide habitat for the Riverside fairy shrimp, a federally listed endangered species. The Biological Resources Mitigation Plan components are located within the Natural Resource Protection Area. The protection, preservation, enhancement, and restoration program for the Biological Resource Mitigation Area includes:

- Leaving the Biological Resource Mitigation Area undisturbed by grading, except for the grading to create three new ephemeral ponds;
- ► Removal of non-native/invasive vegetation, and replacement with native vegetation;
- ► Restricting any fuel modification/brush management activities within the Biological Resource Mitigation Area;
- Preservation and creation of Riverside fairy shrimp habitat (preserve five (5) existing ephemeral ponds, and create eight (8) ephemeral ponds, for a total of thirteen (13) ephemeral ponds); and

Orange County Public Works Saddleback Meadows Area Plan 98-2

<sup>10</sup> The project is subject to a settlement with Vedanta. See Footnote No. 6.

• Restricting public access.

The Natural Resource Protection Area excludes the Fuel Modification Zones, fencing and drainage improvement features, and the riding and hiking trail (see Section 7.0).

In select portions of the Biological Resource Mitigation Area, riparian habitat and ephemeral ponds will be preserved and created. Thirteen ephemeral ponds (consisting of five existing ponds and eight newlycreated ponds) and associated erosion control will be either preserved or constructed to provide Riverside fairy shrimp habitat. Existing stands of oak woodlands, coastal sage scrub, chaparral, riparian habitat, and other ephemeral ponds will be left undisturbed. Non-native vegetation including annual grasslands and orchards may be removed and replaced with coastal sage scrub and oak woodlands. Existing stands of disturbed coastal sage scrub will be enhanced. Portions of the onsite unimproved roads/trails will be revegetated with native vegetation.

A local wildlife movement corridor is part of the project open space to address the importance of wildlife movement linkages between regionally important open space areas such as O'Neill Regional Park, Whiting Ranch Wilderness Park, and the Cleveland National Forest. The Proposed Area Plan (181 Units) has incorporated an east/west corridor alignment consistent with that shown in the Foothill/Trabuco Specific Plan. This wildlife corridor runs through the northerly and central portion of the property and is a component of a regional three corridor concept. The Proposed Area Plan (181 Units) eliminates the constricted 400-foot-wide wildlife corridor of the Modified Project (266 Units), preserving the full width of the existing natural corridor in the project site's easterly section. Furthermore, unlike the Modified Project (266 Units), the Proposed Area Plan (181 Units) preserves the north/south corridor connecting the Cleveland National Forest to O'Neill Regional Park. The proposed on-site native habitat preservation and restoration will serve to increase the functionality of the proposed wildlife corridor.

Consistent with the Court Judgment, the applicant will dedicate to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife ("CDFW"), the perpetual conservation easement deed for wildlife and habitat conservation purposes over 142.8 acres of the Biological Resource Mitigation Area located within the 143.9 acre Natural Resource Protection Area. The applicant will record an executed irrevocable offer of dedication of the perpetual conservation easement deed for wildlife and habitat conservation purposes to CDFW. The form of the perpetual conservation easement ("Conservation Easement") deed shall be approved by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and CDFW. The long term management of the Conservation Easement area will be provided by the San Diego Habitat Conservancy or other land management organization acceptable to the Resource Agencies.

### 4.2 SCENIC PRESERVATION AREA

The 42.7-acre Scenic Preservation Area encompasses the following uses:

- ► El Toro Road Community Edge Area
- ► Landscape Buffers,
- Berming along "G" Street rear yards
- Back-cut Grading along "I" Street, and portions of "H" Street and the upper spine road rear yards
- Riding and Hiking Trail and rest area
- ► Fuel Modification Zones
- Manufactured Slopes and Remedial Grading
- Storm Water Quality Treatment System (Temporary and Permanent)

These areas will be owned and maintained by a Homeowner's Association (HOA) or other form of Community Maintenance District. No privately owned residential lots will be allowed to encroach into the Scenic Preservation Area. The Scenic Preservation Area will be permanently protected by a legally binding agreement, such as the project's Conditions, Covenants and Restrictions (CC&Rs) that will ensure that the scenic qualities of the project's edges are not adversely impacted in the future by structures or other types of development. The individual elements of the Scenic Preservation Area are described in detail in other sections of this Proposed Area Plan (181 Units).

The Scenic Preservation Area will allow for the incorporation of manufactured slopes, landscaping, landscape lighting, irrigation, project signage, fuel modification/brush management, water quality facilities, riding and hiking trail, slope

drains, or edge fencing, and other design features associated with development of the project. In addition, nine (9) seven-foot wide, mid-block slope access points are proposed for slope maintenance and OCFA fire access purposes.

### 5 RIDING AND HIKING TRAIL CONCEPT

There are several existing regional and local trails and bikeways in the vicinity of the project site including:

- ► Aliso Creek Trail a regional riding and hiking trail that follows Aliso Creek upstream to the El Toro Road under crossing, crosses to the east side of El Toro Road and continues northward past Live Oak Canyon Road.
- ► Aliso Creek Bikeway a regional riding and hiking trail located along the west side of the project site. This Trail begins at the existing trail/bikeway under crossing of El Toro and extends south to Valley Vista Way.
- ► Live Oak Canyon Trail a regional riding and hiking trail located along the west side of the project site. This trail begins at the existing trail/bikeway under crossing of El Toro Road and extends south to Valley Vista Way.

Trail connections are provided, linking the project site to existing regional riding/hiking trails and bikeways. The project proposes a trail staging area, new riding/hiking trail, trail rest area and significant natural open space.

The Riding and Hiking Trail concept is depicted in the Open Space and Recreation Plan (Figure 3) and includes the following major elements:

- ► Live Oak Canyon Trail
  - The project proposes the offer of dedication of a 16-foot-wide trail along the El Toro Road Frontage (approximately 1,350 feet) from Valley Vista northward to the existing trail under crossing of El Toro Road.
  - Maintenance of the Trail will be the responsibility of the County of Orange.
- Onsite Riding and Hiking Trail
  - The overall design approach to the onsite riding and hiking trail is to provide for riding and hiking opportunities for project residents and the public, including:
    - The public riding and hiking riding trail will be access controlled (signed, fenced, and landscaped) and will extend the length of the spine road and will terminate at the top of the spine road/cul-de-sac where a trail rest area will be provided. See **Figure 4**.
    - The riding and hiking trail will be open from dawn to dusk.
    - The riding and hiking trail will allow equestrians but will prohibit bicycles.
    - Signage will be provided at the trail entry and at other locations approved by the County (OC Parks) regarding hours and prohibited uses.
    - The trail will be 10-feet wide and will be setback approximately 10-feet from the spine road to allow for a landscape buffer. The width of the trail easement is 20-feet.
    - The terminus of the riding and hiking trail at the spine road cul-de-sac riding will be designated by a four-foot high wrought iron fence and landscaping around the cul-de-sac, to residential lot 181 to prevent unauthorized entry and trespass onto the open space area. Steep slopes are located adjacent to the northern side of the trail and adjacent to residential lot 181 further discouraging trespass into the open space area.
    - Fencing and signage will be installed at the rest area to deter the public from further riding and hiking movement into the open space area.
    - The riding and hiking trail easement will be offered to the County of Orange, with fee ownership retained by the project HOA. Maintenance of the trail and rest area will be the responsibility of the HOA or its assignee. Alternatively, the applicant will offer to dedicate the riding and hiking trail as a private local park under County ordinance subject to a covenant with the County to maintain public access as described in the Area Plan. The County will determine the form of dedication.

## 6 GRADING CONCEPT

The overall design concept for this project reflects a contour grading approach which utilizes techniques emphasizing variations in landform and takes advantage of a curvilinear street and lot layout, rather than repetitive linear uniformity. Remedial grading is required to stabilize the project site pursuant to County of Orange requirements. All remedial grading areas not proposed for additional conventional grading and associated lots, slopes, and streets, will be revegetated pursuant to the requirements contained in Section 7 of this Area Plan<sup>11</sup>. Contour grading and strategic use of berms, back-cut slope grading and existing landforms along the community's spine road and edges to provide for partial or complete screening and buffering of views into the project site from off-site locations (**Figure 5**).<sup>12</sup> Numerous project design features work together to establish the rural-like character. Contour grading with landform enhancement provides for edge treatments responsive to the natural terrain. The community's spine road alignment responds to the terrain and allows for landscape plantings on both sides to create a rural-like experience while driving through the community. Creative site planning responds to the intended rural character with enhanced setbacks from the spine road. This allows the project to create a more natural and organic ambiance in keeping with the rolling hillside setting, surrounded by large areas of onsite open space.

These contour grading techniques consist of the following:

- ► Integrating grading into the context of existing topography using horizontal rounding of contours;
- Blending of manufactured contours with natural existing contours;
- ► Rounding at the top and toe of slopes to avoid harsh transitions;
- Designing of development enclaves of varying size and irregular spacing to avoid a uniformly "terraced" appearance;
- Berming and back-cut grading at select and appropriate locations to blend with natural terrain features while providing for partial screening and buffering views into the project site from the Orange County Rescue Mission, the Ramakrishna Monastery, and the Hidden Ridge and Portola Hills communities. A 4 to 5-foot berm is proposed along the rear yard areas of residential lots on the south side of G street to screen proposed residential units from the Hidden Ridge residential community. Back-cut slope grading is proposed along the residential lots south of the spine road and east of I street to screen views of those residential units from the Ramakrishna Monastery and open space areas south of the project site<sup>13</sup>; and
- ► A 15-foot open space buffer is proposed during construction around the northern perimeter of the development area. Temporary construction fencing and Best Management Practices will be installed along the 15-foot buffer line to ensure remedial and conventional grading does not impact the Natural Resource Protection Area.

Proposed manufactured slope locations and heights are shown in **Figure 1**.<sup>14</sup> Detailed slope height information is shown on the 2nd Revised VTTM 15230.

#### 6.1 EARTHWORK VOLUMES

Project implementation will require the following grading quantities which will be balanced onsite. The footprint of the Proposed Area Plan (181 Units) conventional and remedial grading has been substantially reduced, as compared to the Modified Project (266 Units) to correspond with the reduced footprint of the lots, slopes, and roads. The estimated remedial grading extent is based on a combination of factors, including an updated approach to provide protection for El Toro Road, updated preliminary geotechnical studies, additional subsurface investigation, more

<sup>11</sup> The project is subject to a settlement with Vedanta. See Footnote No. 6.

<sup>12</sup> The project is subject to a settlement with Vedanta. See Footnote No. 6.

<sup>13</sup> The project is subject to a settlement with Vedanta. See Footnote No. 6.

<sup>14</sup> Figure 1 contour intervals are 10 feet.

sophisticated computer modeling, as well as changes in County geotechnical engineering requirements and factor of safety requirements that have been put in place since the prior approval. A minor amount of offsite grading is required to transition from El Toro Road to the project.

Estimated total conventional and remedial grading is 7,082,730 cubic yards. The estimated total grading quantity for the Proposed Area Plan is approximately 2,000,000 cubic yards less than the Modified Project (266 Units). Conventional and remedial grading is summarized as follows:

#### **Conventional Grading**

- Balanced Conventional Grading Cut/Fill
  - Cut Quantity: ± 1,226,540 cubic yards
  - Fill Quantity: ± 1,226,549 cubic yards
- Total Import Quantity: 0
- Total Export Quantity: 0

#### **Remedial Grading**

- Estimated total remedial grading (remove and replace):
  - Cut Quantity: ± 6,235,710 cubic yards
  - Fill Quantity: ± 6,235,710 cubic yards
- ► Total Import Quantity: 0
- ► Total Export Quantity: 0

The estimated remedial grading (6,235,710 cubic yards) and conventional grading (1,226,540 cubic yards) volumes for the Proposed Area Plan (181 Units) are estimated to be less than the Modified Project (266 Units) grading quantities, by approximately 2,000,000 cubic yards. The proposed overall footprint of conventional grading is substantially reduced for the Proposed Area Plan (181 Units) as a result of the reduced development envelope, and results in a reduced volume of conventional grading. The volume of remedial grading originally estimated was based on preliminary geotechnical investigations and analysis for preparation of the project environmental impact report for the original development proposal for the project consisting of a 299 Unit Area Plan in 2004. After approval of the Modified Project (266 Units), in 2004, additional geotechnical investigations and analyses from these investigations, the estimated volume of remedial grading ensures full remediation and stability of El Toro Road, account for revising previous assumptions that existing fault lines interrupt landslide slip planes and incorporate changes in County geotechnical requirements since the initial approval.

**Figure 5** shows the location of remedial and conventional grading, including off site grading, the cut and fill areas, and the location of the retaining, MSE and Loffel walls. Although substantially reduced in area, it is substantially consistent with the conceptual contour approach to grading originally approved with the project and the Modified Project (266 Units).

As with the Modified Project (266 Units), the earthwork (including remedial grading) for the Proposed Area Plan (181 Units) will be balanced on-site, and there will be no import or export of soil. The earthen berms will be constructed from on-site soil as part of the project's conventional grading.

## 7 LANDSCAPE/RESTORATION CONCEPT

The landscape / restoration concept for Saddleback Meadows integrates the landscape of the proposed project with the site's existing setting, habitat restoration, and that of the surrounding foothill region (**Figure 6**). Remedial grading is required to stabilize the project site pursuant to County of Orange requirements. All remedial grading areas not proposed for additional conventional grading and associated lots, slopes, and streets, will be revegetated pursuant to the requirement contained in this section.<sup>15</sup> The use of landscape / restoration materials (both native and introduced) and the manner in which the landscape concept is integrated into the project address:

- Views into the community from surrounding properties;
- ► Views from within the Saddleback Meadows community;
- Creation of a community character that reflects the transitional nature of the property from a suburban to semirural setting;
- The desire to enhance and restore the biological resources of the property; and
- Riding and hiking trail access control through the inclusion of signage, fencing and mature landscaping.

A predominant image of rural open space and natural vegetation will be accomplished via:

- Landscape planting that predominates over the built environment;
- Interspersing primarily sycamore tree groupings at strategic locations throughout the project which will blend the different landscape zones and integrate this community into the surrounding preserved natural open space areas;
- Trees and shrub massings planted on slopes between the residential enclaves and within natural open spaces, on slopes between homes, and along community streets;
- Side slope and street tree plantings in the neighborhoods to provide for visible tree canopies above the roof lines; and
- Interlacing of natural and introduced landscape materials; and
- Revegetation of designated onsite unimproved roads/trails with native vegetation to deter public access into the open space area.<sup>16</sup>

The landscape concept consists of five functional, yet integrated, areas and zones as shown on the Landscape & Revegetation Concept Plan (**Figure 6**) and the Fuel Modification Plan (**Figure 7**). Where there is a conflict between the fuel modification zones and the landscape zones, the requirements of the Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA) shall prevail. These areas and zones are as follows:

► <u>El Toro Road Community Edge Area</u> - The El Toro Road Community Edge Area will play a key role in providing a physical and visual buffer for the project from off-site. Predominantly manufactured slopes are planned along El Toro Road. In addition, a key component of this edge is the preservation of Aliso Creek and its riparian habitat along El Toro Road, just north of the proposed main project entry point. This community edge adjacent to the road will be landscaped with introduced and native-compatible plants which reflect and continue the riparian landscape found along the Aliso Creek/El Toro Road Corridor. The California sycamore, commonly found in riparian areas, will be the major slope tree along the El Toro Road Community Edge.

Further up the manufactured slope, the landscape will transition from riparian plants to ornamental and nativecompatible plants suitable for erosion control, and for buffering and screening. Tree plantings at side-yard property lines of the residential lots located at the top of slopes will reduce the visual impact of dwellings when viewed from off-site, while maintaining views for individual lots. Additionally, this edge treatment is designed to provide visual screening of the project from vehicles traveling along El Toro Road.

Screen Planting - Screen planting will play a key role in providing a physical and visual buffer for the project from off-site views in addition to berming described in Section 6.0. Tall trees and shrub massings will be planted on

<sup>15</sup> The project is subject to a settlement with Vedanta. See Footnote No. 6. 16 The project is subject to a settlement with Vedanta. See Footnote No. 6.

slopes and berm areas between the residential enclaves and the Natural Resource Protection Area and along community streets. Priority will be given to landscape plantings, i.e., views of the community shall be through the landscape which blankets the architecture of the neighborhoods, thus allowing the landscape (incorporating sycamores, oaks, and other appropriate trees) to predominate over the built environment; however, berming landscaping will also be included for variety. Most of the screen planting will occur within the berming and slope areas and therefore will respect the limitations of those zones as well.

- Community Slope Area Manufactured slopes will be landscaped to visually enhance the project, to control erosion, and to provide buffering/screening where appropriate and feasible. Trees will be located at the top of slopes and clustered near side-yard property lines of residential lots as well as on the central areas of the slopes. Slope planting will take into consideration maximum tree height at maturity, so that views from residential lots will not be impaired. California sycamore and coastal live oak trees may be used in strategic locations throughout the community slopes, continuing the community rural/natural landscape theme.
- Fuel Modification Zone The Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA) requires a fuel modification program along all edges of residential development exposed to fire hazard areas. The fuel modification program addresses three primary fuel modification zones consisting of a Setback Zone (Zone A), Wet Zone (Zone B), and a Non-Irrigated Zone (Zone C) (Figures 7 and 8). Maintenance responsibility for setback Zone A will lie with the individual homeowner and/or HOA. Responsibility for the Wet and Non-Irrigated Zones (B and C) will be with the HOA/Community Maintenance District. The Wet Zone and the Non-Irrigated Zone will be incorporated into legal lots and are part of the Scenic Preservation Area discussed above. Fuel modification zone maintenance is allowed within the Scenic Preservation Area.

Saddleback Meadows' residential edges contain both upslope and down slope conditions with a combination of both manufactured and natural slopes. The intent of fuel modification is to create a transition area between natural open space (fire hazard areas) and residential areas, and to provide an acceptable level of fire safety along these residential edges. Revegetated portions of these slopes will be landscaped using native-compatible plant species that meet the public safety goals of the OCFA, reinforce the naturalized appearance of the manufactured slopes, and satisfy the aesthetic goals of the project.

- Setback Zone (Zone A) A 20-foot-wide area within the rear/side yard setback areas of all residential lots abutting the fuel modification zone. No combustible construction or materials will be allowed in this zone. This zone will be maintained by the individual homeowner.
- Wet Zone (Zone B) A 50-foot-wide landscape area, beginning at the residential rear yard property line. This zone includes an automatic irrigation system and low fuel, fire-resistive, native-compatible plants.
- Non-Irrigated Zone (Zone C) The Non-Irrigated zone is typically 100-feet wide. However, several upslope areas with 50-foot widths are permitted with OCFA approval. In natural undisturbed slopes, existing native planting will be thinned and maintained in a low fuel condition. Manufactured slopes or remedial grading areas will be re-vegetated with native and native-compatible plant materials and may be temporarily irrigated. Landscaping is intended to quickly naturalize, and the irrigation system will be abandoned upon stabilization of the vegetation.

Figures 7 and 8 illustrate the fuel modification plan. The project has been designed so that all fuel modification zones are contained within the project site.

Biological Resource Mitigation Area - The 142.8 acre Biological Resource Mitigation Area is the fifth element of the Landscape Concept, is located within the Natural Resource Protection Area, and has been previously described in Section 4.0. A final 40-scale restoration plan will be prepared and include specific details regarding habitat preservation/conservation, enhancement, and creation, following approval of the Proposed Area Plan (181 Units) and the VTTM as part of the construction documents for the project<sup>17</sup>.

Five (5) existing onsite ponds will be preserved, three (3) engineered ponds will be created, and five (5) small handconstructed ponds will be created for hydrology and habitat purposes. A total of thirteen (13) ponds will be located within the Biological Resource Mitigation Area.

Orange County Public Works Saddleback Meadows Area Plan 98-2

<sup>17</sup> The project is subject to a settlement with Vedanta. Please see Footnote 6.

## 8 FUEL MODIFICATION/FIRE PROTECTION CONCEPT

A comprehensive conceptual Fuel Modification/Fire Protection Plan (FMFPP) has been prepared for the Proposed Area Plan (181 units), and is included in Appendix B. The FMFPP has been designed to include adequate access for fire apparatus and a series of fuel modification zones to minimize the threat of wildfire impacts to the project site. In addition, nine (9) seven foot wide, mid-block slope access points are proposed to provide common slope access for OCFA. The final FMFPP has not been approved by the Orange County Fire Authority, and as such is subject to modification. The OCFA shall approve the final FMFPP prior approval of the VTTM. The Fuel Modification Plan is shown in **Figure 7** with the typical FMFPP cross-section shown in **Figure 8**.

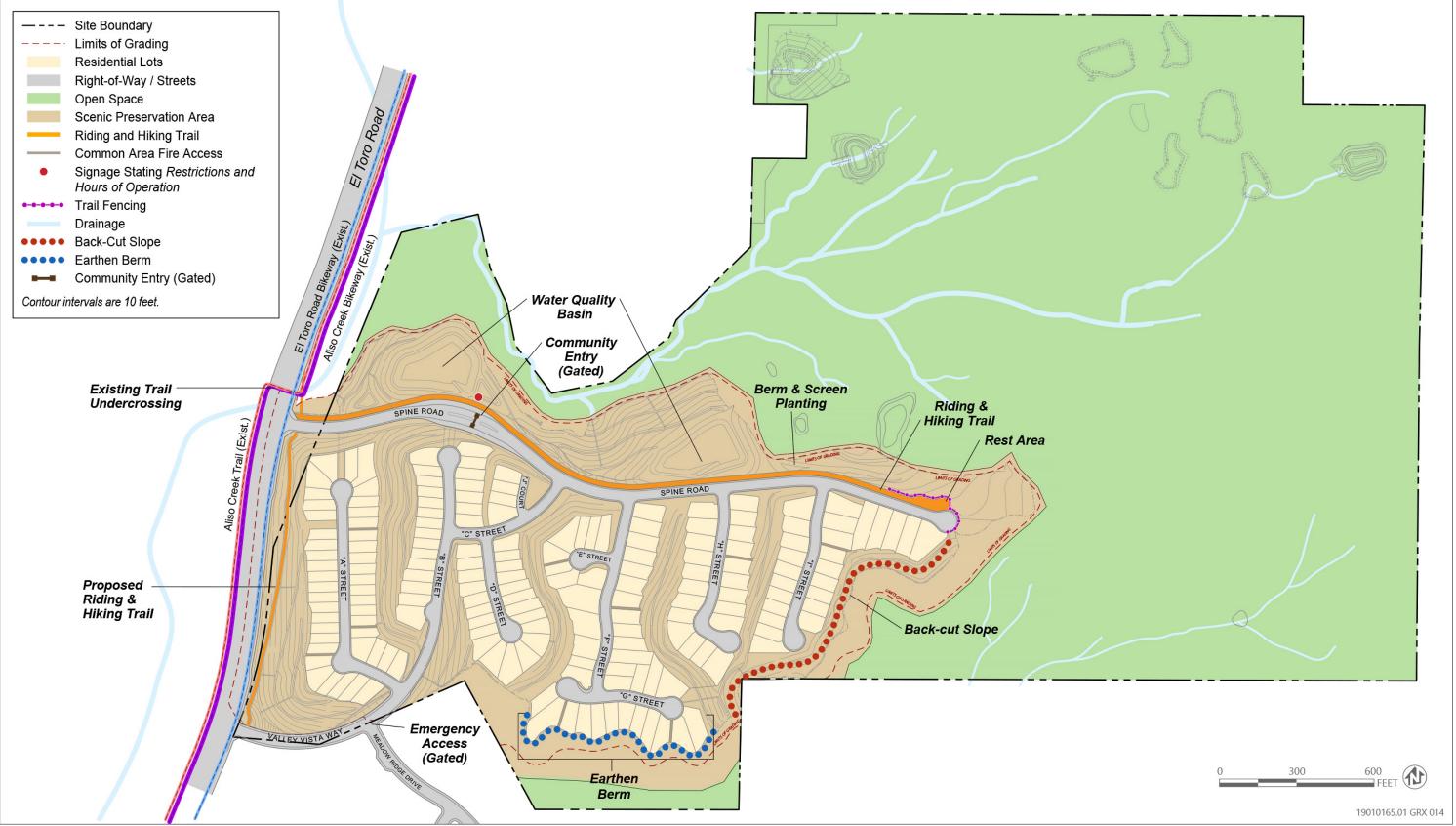
Fuel Modification Zones are summarized as follows:

- ► Zone A Non-combustible Construction Zone: 20 feet wide, typically located on homeowner's property.
- Zone B Irrigated Wet Zone: 50-feet wide, typically located on homeowner's association property. Selective planting and thinning.
- Zone C Thinning Zone: 100-feet wide, located on homeowner's association property. No irrigation, with 50% thinning of live vegetation and 100% removal of dead vegetation.
- ► Radiant Heat Zone: Residential lot/pad areas.
- ► Special Maintenance Areas Interior Slopes: All interior manufactured slopes.
- Special Maintenance Areas Edge: Reduction in Zone C when approved by OCFA (succulents and rock).

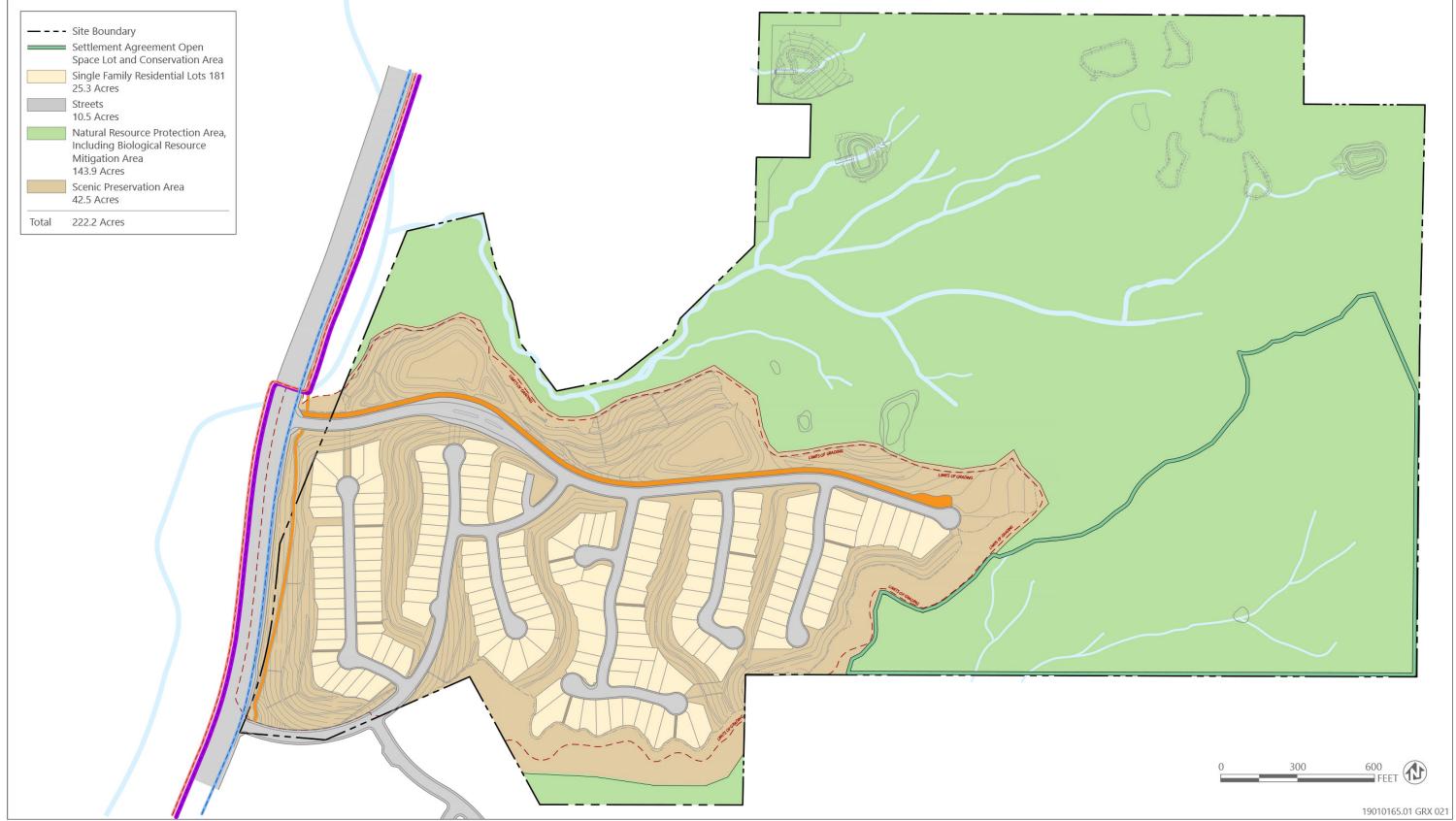
The developer of the project will be responsible for implementation of the fuel modification zones and the homeowner's association, or community maintenance district will be responsible for ongoing maintenance. Fuel modification zones are not proposed within the Natural Resource Protection Area.

# Figures

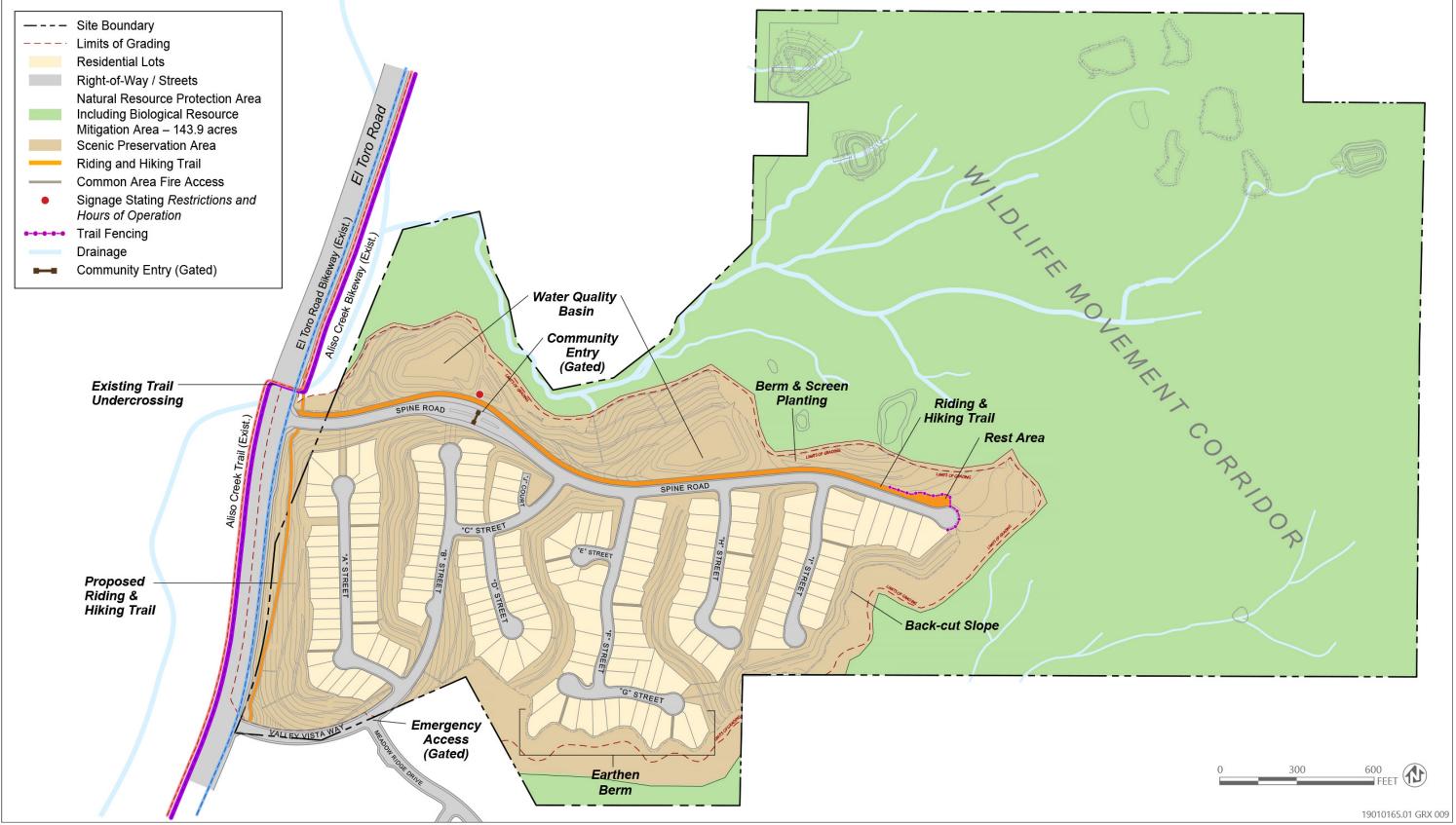
- 1 Development Concept Plan
- 2 Planning Areas
- 3. Open Space and Recreation Concept Plan
- 4. Riding and Hiking Trail Rest Area Plan
- 5. Contour Grading Concept Plan
- 6. Landscape & Revegetation Concept Plan
- 7. Fuel Modification Concept Plan
- 8. Fuel Modification Zone Plan Cross-Section



Source: Ascent Environmental and Hunsaker & Associates



Source: Ascent Environmental and Hunsaker & Associates



Source: Ascent Environmental and Hunsaker & Associates

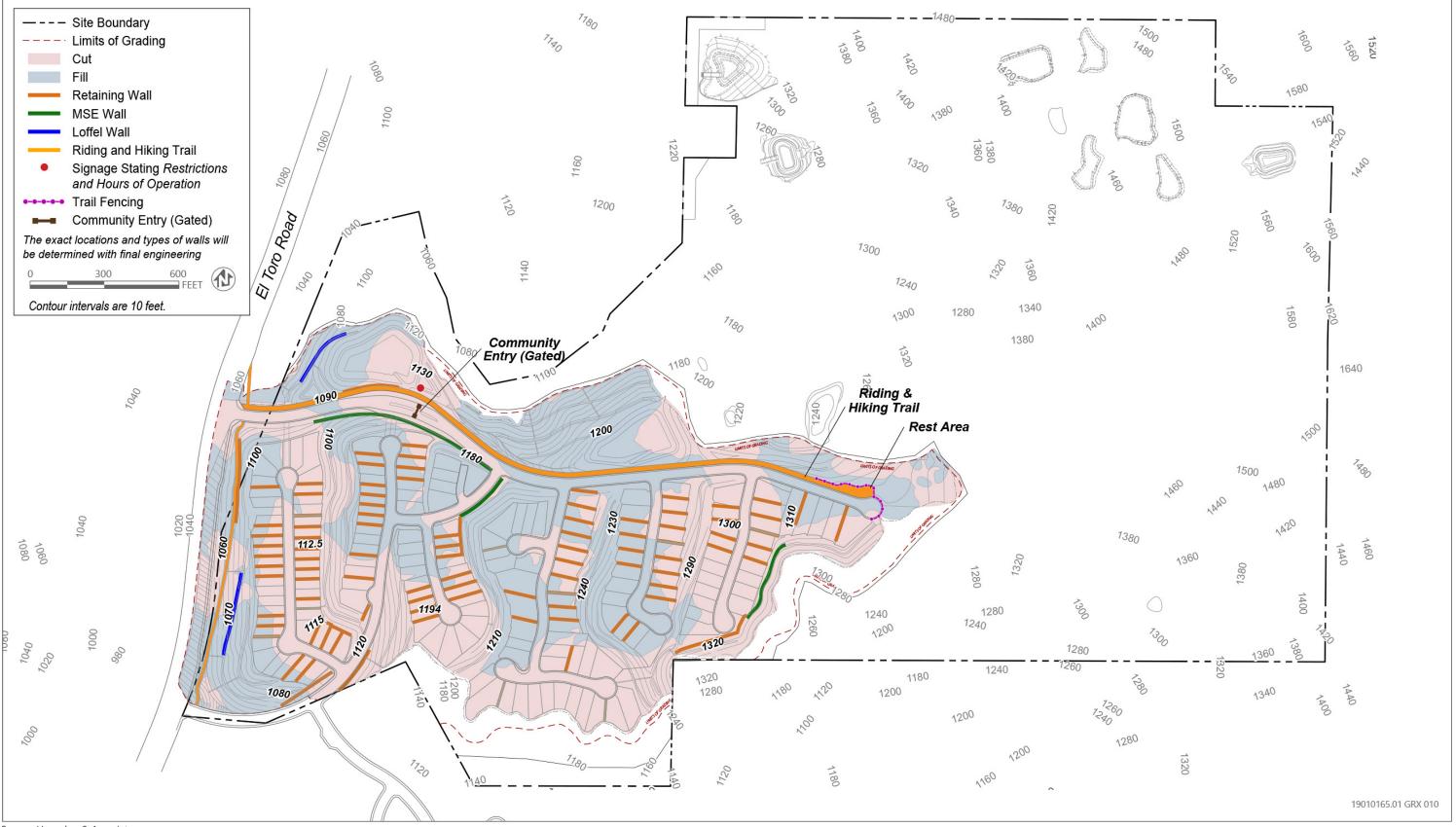


Source: Hunsaker & Associates, adapted by Ascent Environmental in 2021



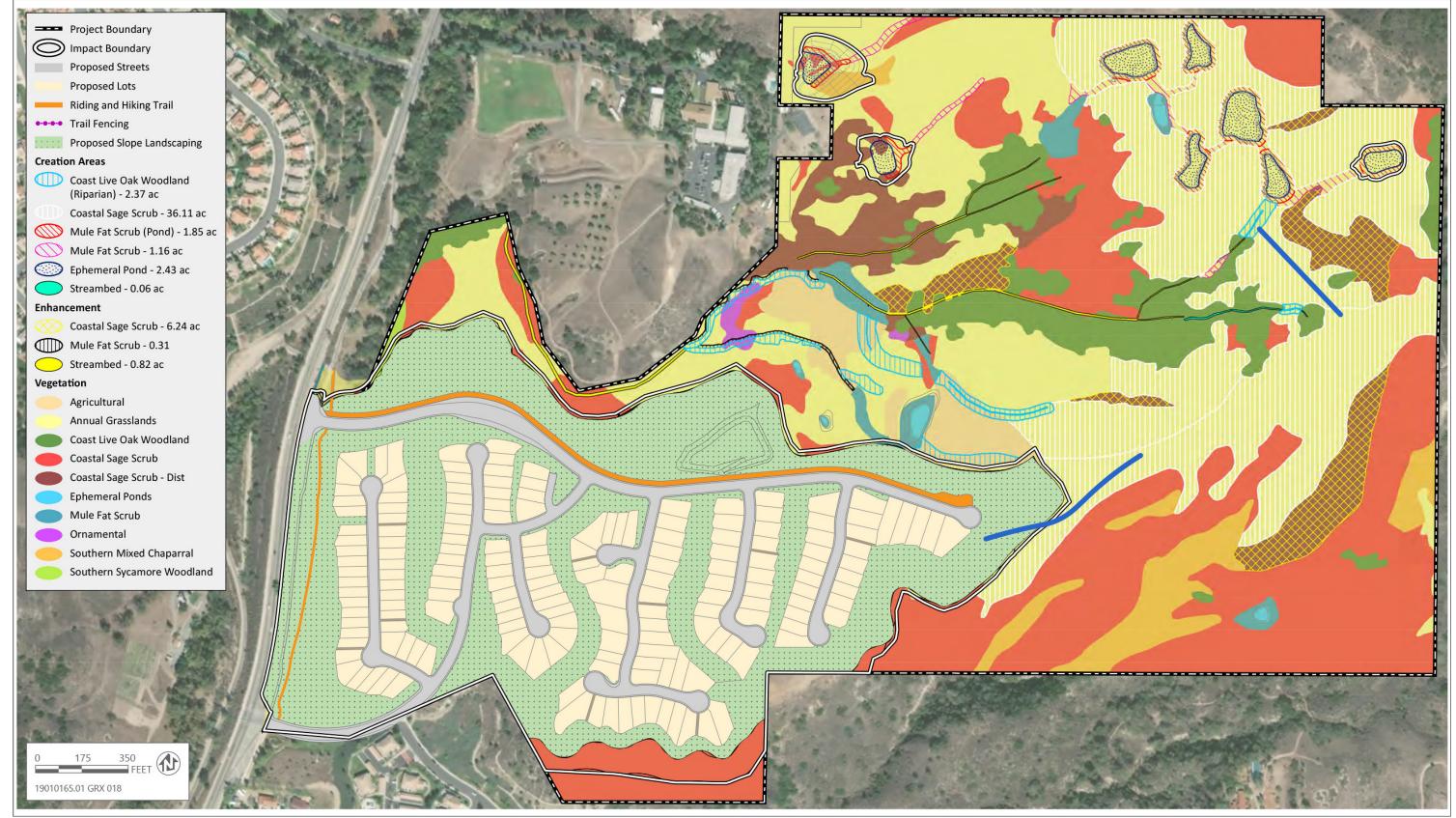
12.5 25 FEET

19010165.01 GRX 020

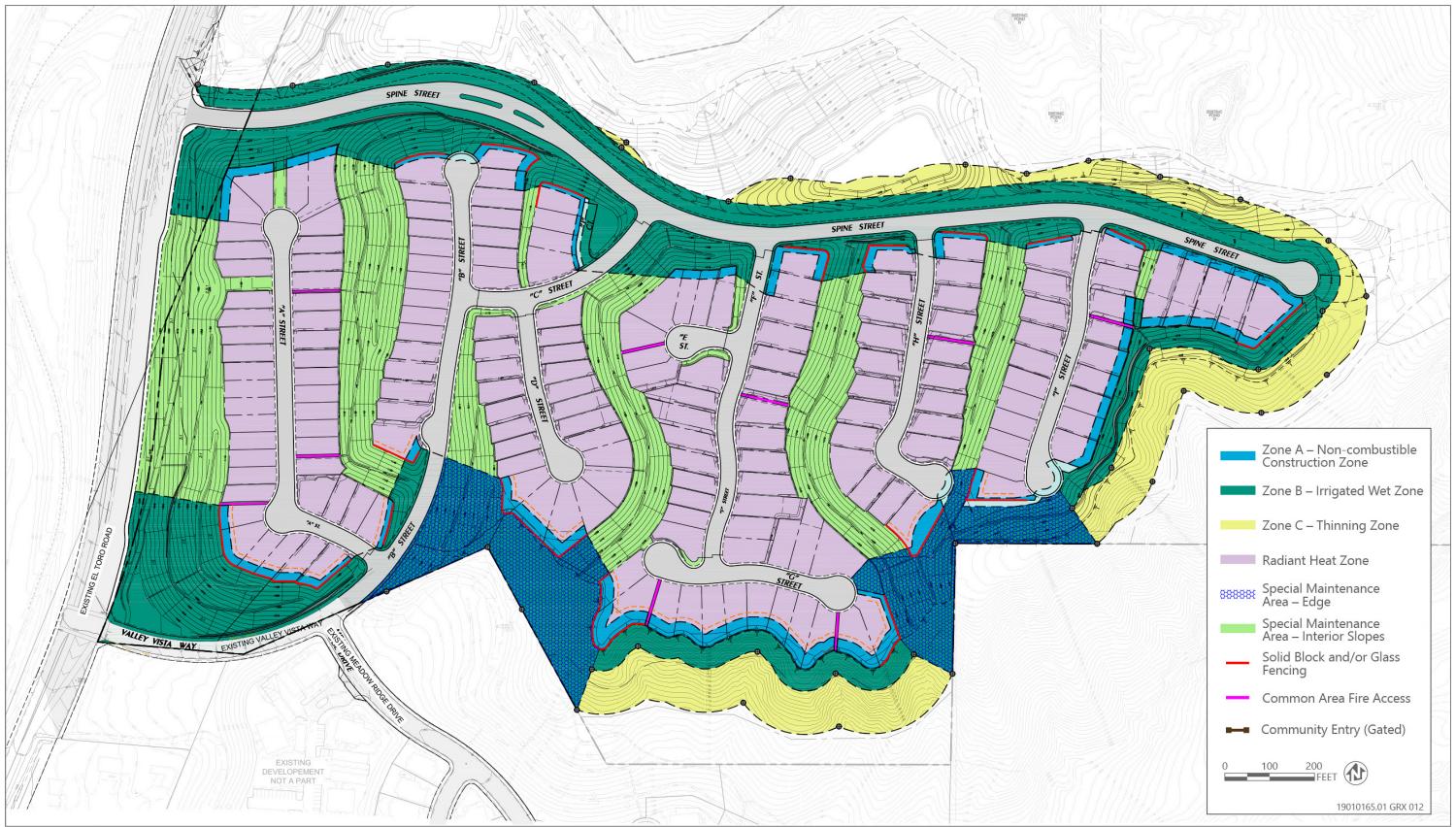


Source: Hunsaker & Associates

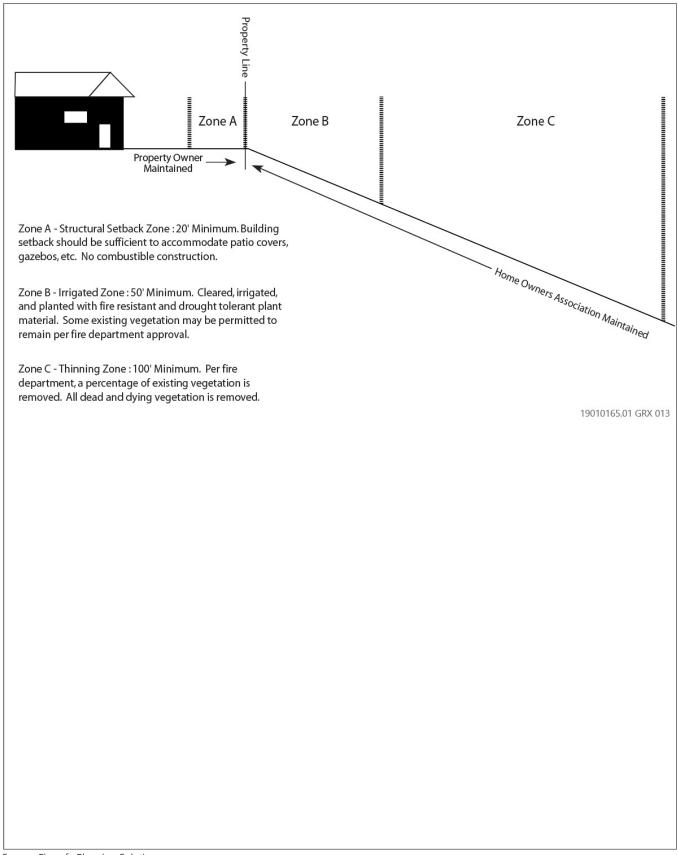
#### Figure 5 Contour Grading Concept Plan



Source: Helix Environmental Planning



Source: Firesafe Planning Solutions



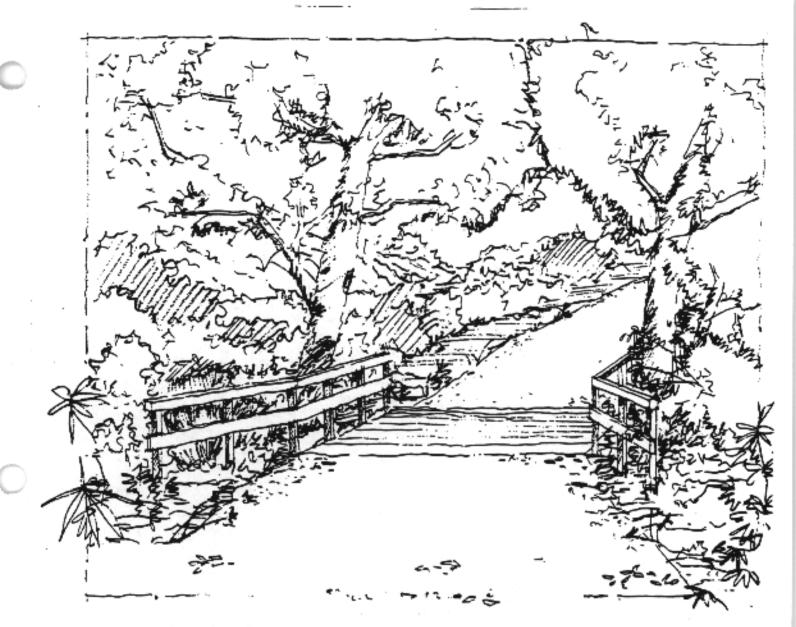
Source: Firesafe Planning Solutions

#### Figure 8 Fuel Modifications Cross-Section

## Appendix A

## Saddleback Meadows Rural Character Statement

#### ATTACHMENT "A"



## SADDLEBACK MEADOWS RURAL CHARACTER STATEMENT

Prepared for: California Quartet, Ltd.

2354

## SADDLEBACK MEADOWS RURAL CHARACTER STATEMENT

July 24, 1996

Prepared for: California Quartet, Ltd.

Prepared by: Michael Madden Associates

2355

#### SADDLEBACK MEADOWS RURAL CHARACTER STATEMENT

#### Purpose and Intent

The purpose and intent of this "character statement" booklet is to express the preliminary community design concepts that will eventually create the visual and physical character that the Saddleback Meadows community will have. This booklet addresses the basic design elements and considerations necessary in developing any community character, and ties those elements and considerations to the Saddleback Meadows community. It responds to the project teams intent for a rural community theme and character, as well as responding to design considerations expressed by Saint Michael's Abbey, Hidden Ridge residential community, and the Ramakrishna Monastery. It is a preliminary study intended to reflect the underlying design vocabulary that has been a consistent component of all land use and site planning studies conducted for this property.

This "Rural Character Statement" is intended to be used as a guideline for community design and as a "tool of measure" to be used by the Planning Commissioners during the review of the Use Permit. The Use Permit requires a precise grading plan, detailed landscape plans, fuel modification plans and programs, architectural plans for all structures, and the precise location of all building and structures.

The planning and design of any proposed community is a combination of the physical site plan on the land and the design parameters initially established relating to the desired community character. The end result is a community whose physical character and composition relates directly with the landscape, streetscape and architectural fabric.

Approaching the Saddleback Meadows project with this philosophy, and with the desire to plan and design a community reflecting the qualities and character of a rural townscape, the initial community design elements establishing the rural character are presented in this booklet.

#### The "Rural Townscape" Character

USSNAA

The term "rural character" conjures up images of small towns set upon the land amidst a country setting. Winding roads are enveloped in trees and tree canopies. Rolling hills, field walls of stone and rock, woodlands, grasslands and fields surround the towns and provide a separation between each town. Natural areas outside of the towns are enjoyed by the people of the area for hiking, bicycling and horseback riding, exploring and treasure hunting, picnics, and rides in the country. Seasonal color through changing foliage and wild flowers accent the landscape, further emphasizing the character and appeal of the rural townscape and surrounding environment.



1

004319

Villages and towns are visible and apparent within the landscape, yet blend with the land through a multitude of introduced, as well as natural features and elements. These include:

- A. Country roads that transition into a town's main street;
- B. Open fields or woodiands filtering into the outskirts of the town through open fields and parks, eliminating the visual boundary of the town and the country;
- C. In hillside environments, steep winding streets that climb with the hillside;
- D. Streetside elements such as wood rail fencing, simple wooden signs, and old street lamp;
- E. The informal arrangement of trees and other plantings, whether curbside or used in other manners, accenting the natural appeal rather than rigid uniformity; and
- F. Buildings and related architecture presenting softer earth tone qualities and utilizing materials that blend and are in harmony with the landscape and the natural elements.

#### The Rural Character of Saddleback Meadows

The character of the Saddleback Meadows community will be observed from two perspectives, these being:

- A. The "macro" scale:
  - Public views into the community from off-site (El Toro Road, Saint Michael's Abbey, Hidden Ridge and the Ramakrishna Monastery); and
  - Views of the community from within.
- B. The "micro" scale:

Costert

- Views of community elements along highly visible public edges noticeable by the passing public, such as the El Toro Road edge and natural slopes adjacent to Saint Michael's Abbey, Hidden Ridge, and the Ramakrishna Monastery; and
- Visual elements and design details throughout the community noticeable from within the community.

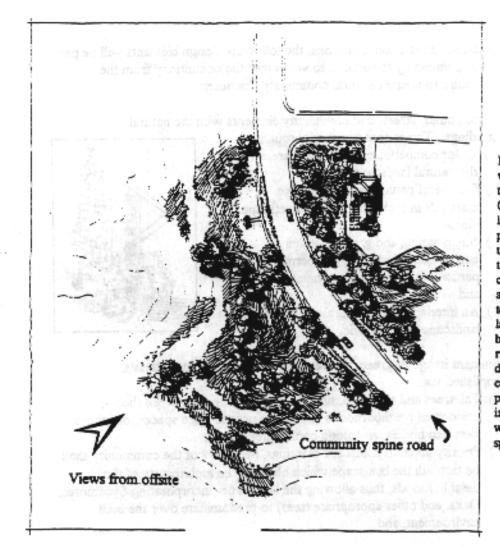
The Saddleback Meadows community will incorporate community wide design elements and features reflective of the rural character. These features and elements will respond to the "macro" and "micro" levels of concern, as well as addressing the design considerations expressed by the adjacent neighbors.

A primary design consideration in establishing the rural character of Saddleback Meadows is presenting a landscaped enveloped community when viewed from the surrounding areas and from within. In response to this design intent and the interests of the Abbey, Hidden Ridge and the Monastery, specific grading techniques, site planning, and landscape elements will be incorporated within the plan. The intent of these features will be to enhance the views of Saddleback Meadows from the surrounding areas. This will be accomplished through:

2

004320

- 1. Creative contour grading that emphasizes and expands upon landforms;
- Berming at select and appropriate locations to blend with natural terrain features while providing screening and buffering views into the project site from the Abbey, Hidden Ridge and the Monastery;
- 3. Creative site planning techniques that minimize rows of backyards along highly visible edges, incorporates slopes, landscape zones and landforms between homes and the surrounding neighbors, and neighborhood streets that climb with the terrain rather than flat roads common to non-terrain sites; and
- 4. An aesthetic community wide landscape that provides visual enhancement through significant perimeter and interior plantings, providing filtered views of the community from the surrounding areas and responds to seasonal changes.



Numerous design features work together to establish the rural character. Contour grading with landform enhancement provides for edge treatments responsive to the natural terrain. The community's spine road alignment responds to the terrain and allows for landscape plantings on both sides to create the rural experience while driving through the community. Creative site planning responds to the intended rural character with setbacks from the spine road.



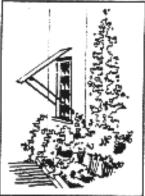
Community spine road Views from offsite

Contour grading and the creative use of berms and landforms along the community's spine road provide for screening and buffering of views into the project site from offsite.

Based upon the above described design considerations, the following design elements will be part of the Saddleback Meadows community to respond to views into the community from the surrounding areas and the desire to create the rural community character:

#### A. Blend the homes, streets and community elements with the natural surroundings. This is accomplished through:

- Color compatibility of architecture with the natural landscape;
- The use of natural and natural-like materials in architecture and streetscape elements;
- Site planning and grading design encouraging landforms and berming, particularly along main community streets; and
- An interface of the natural and introduced landscape as one fabric.



- B. Predominant image of green, nature, open space and plant materials, accomplished via:
  - Tall trees and shrub massings planted on slopes between the residential neighborhoods and within natural open spaces, on slopes between homes, and along community streets;
  - 2.) Priority given to landscape plantings, i.e. views of the community shall be through the landscape which blankets the architecture of the neighborhoods, thus allowing the landscape (incorporating Sycamores, Oaks, and other appropriate trees) to predominate over the built environment; and

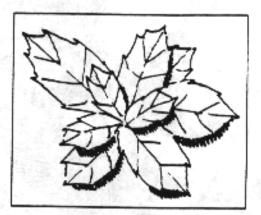
4

004322<sup>2359</sup>

 Side slope and street tree plantings in the neighborhoods to provide for visible tree canopies above the rooflines.

The following design parameters will be part of Saddleback Meadows in response to views from within the community and the desire to create the rural community character:

- A. View windows into natural open spaces from the community streets and "pocket parks";
- B. Informal plantings of landscape elements along the community streets, slopes and within the neighborhoods;
- C. Blending of landscape elements and landform features transitioning from the natural to the man-made;
- D. Movement in three-dimensions through landforms and plant massings, curvilinear, winding streets, and grade elevation in streets to accommodate the natural terrain;



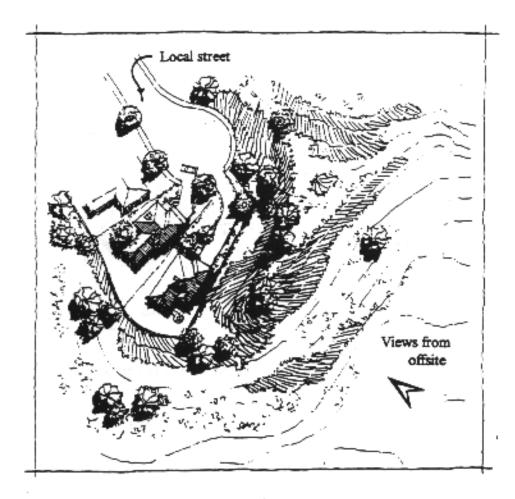
- E. Architecture: roofs, facades, design elements and details having a theme of natural materials and elements; and
- F. Visual imagery along the community streets:
  - Informal slope plantings with tall canopy type trees for visual enclosure, presence and seasonal color;
  - 2.) Natural appearing materials such as wood rail fencing, stone/rock walls;
  - 3.) Narrow meandering walks and trails;
  - 4.) Minimal but thematic street signs and street lighting; and
  - 5.) Neighborhood tree planting requirements.

Based upon the above description of design intent in creating the rural character for the Saddleback Meadows community and responding to neighboring design interests, the following pages provide examples of design features and elements of the Saddleback Meadows project.

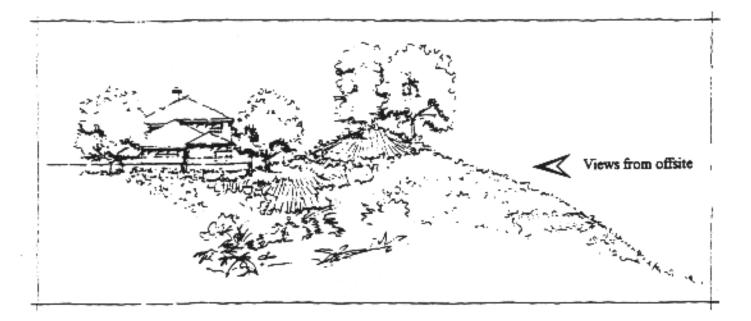


5

2360

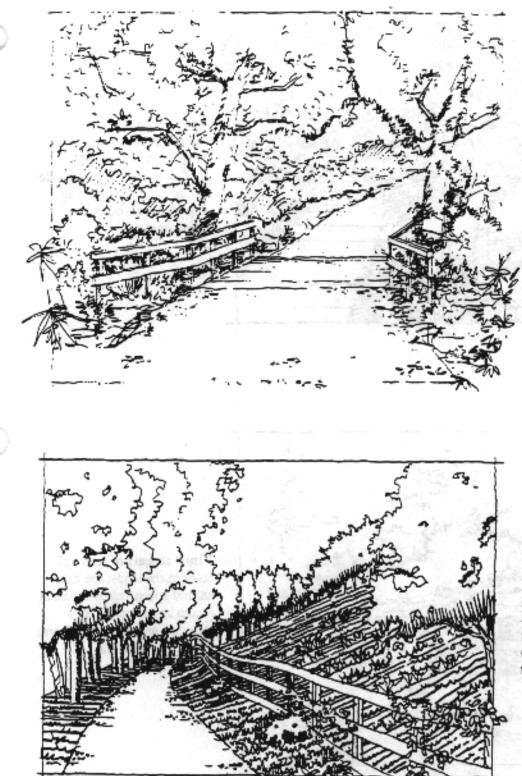


Consideration given to landforms and the replication of the existing terrain features along select project edges provides for a sense of "enclosure" for the neighborhoods while buffering views into the project from surrounding areas.



6

2361



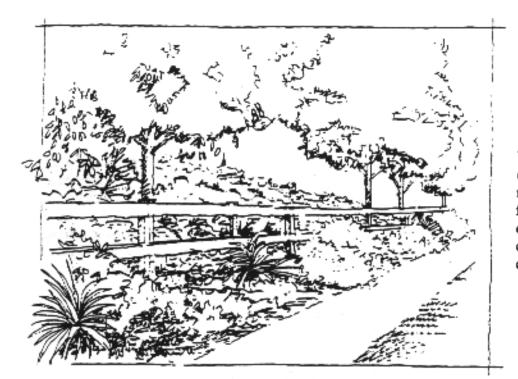
69434.6<sup>2463</sup>

Riding, hiking and bicycling trails provide access to natural open spaces and should feature natural elements and materials. Wooden bridges provide access across swales while visually reinforcing the rural character.

Horse trails and/or bicycle trails can be incorporated as part of the community theme. Landscape setbacks from streets and thematic fencing encourage the rural flavor of the community.

004325 2362

Meandering sidewalks along the community's spine road, enveloped by trees and landscape plantings, provide for an enjoyable walking experience through the community.



61.22. .

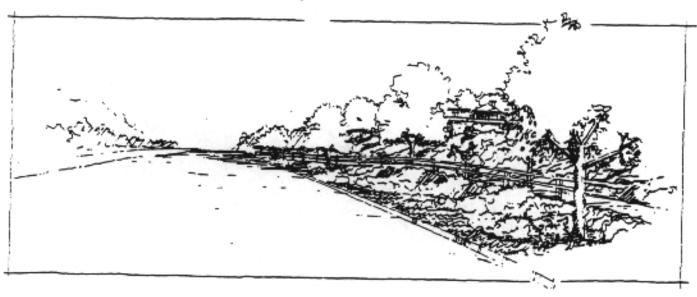
Visual accents of seasonal color in the landscape and natural appearing materials in fences and streetscape elements encourages the rural character within the community.





Simple wood-like sign posts provide information and direction while reflecting the desired character of the community.

Visual detail along public edges (El Toro Road) emphasizes the rural nature of Saddleback Meadows. Wood-like fencing, canopy trees and slope planting reflect the community theme and allow for filtered views into the hills beyond.



9

2364

# Appendix B

### Fuel Modification and Fire Protection Plan



# **CONCEPTUAL FUEL MODIFICATION PLAN** TENTATIVE TRACT MAP 15230, UNINCORPORATED ORANGE COUNTY, CA EXISTING DEVELOPEMEN<sup>®</sup>

NOT A PART

PROJECT

BOUNDARY

SHEET FM-3

NORTH

07/27/2022

DATE:

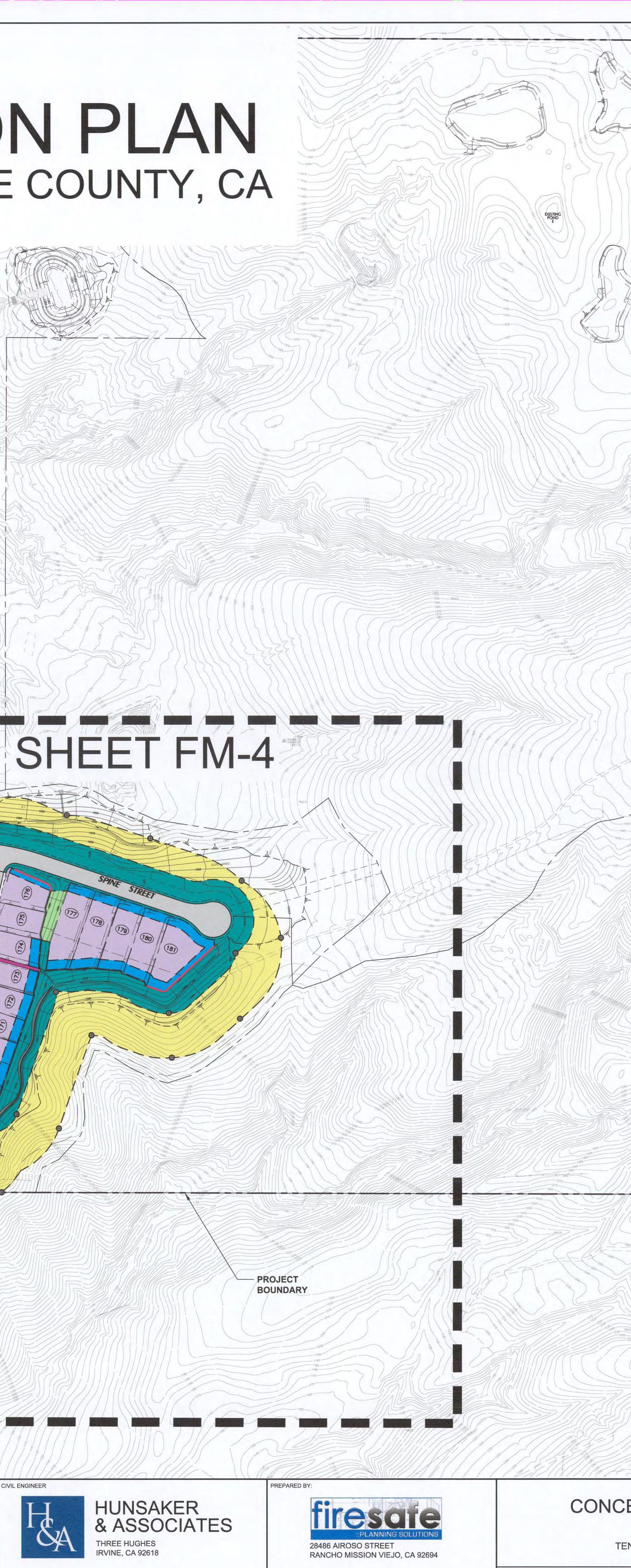
"F"

SCALE: 1" =100'-0 SADDLEBACK MEADOWS - FUEL MOD PLAN PLAN SET:

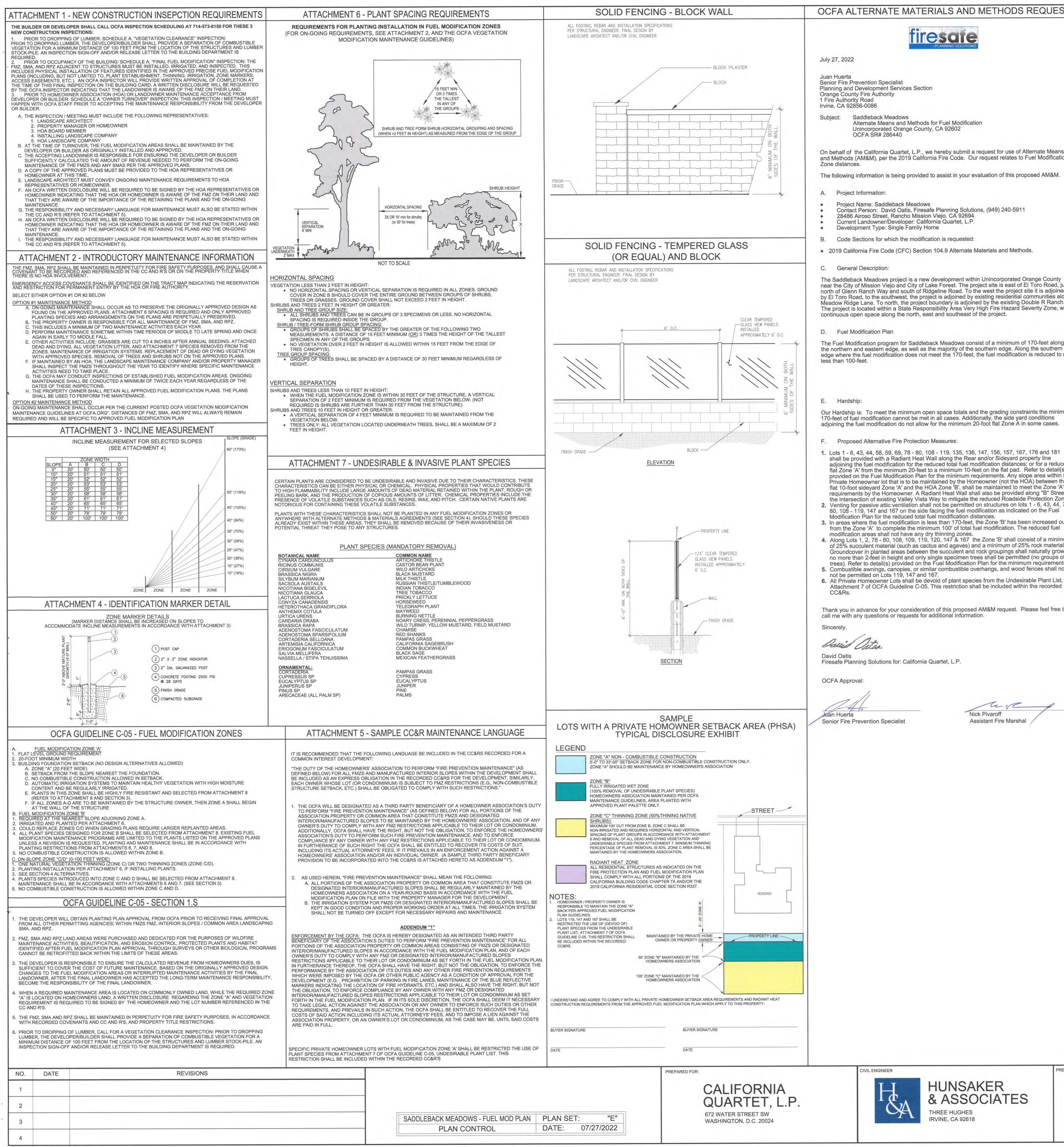
PLAN CONTROL

CALIFORNIA QUARTET, L.P. 672 WATER STREET SW WASHINGTON, D.C. 20024

PREPARED FOR:



VICINITY MAP PROJECT SITE SHEET INDEX SHEET TITLE TITLE SHEET UEL MODIFICATION DETAILS & NOTES FM-3 FM-4 FUEL MODIFICATION LAYOUT **ADDITIONAL NOTES**  THERE IS NO EXISTING FEDERALLY PROTECTED ANIMAL OR BIRD HABITAT WITHIN THE FUEL MODIFICATION AREAS WE ARE PROPOSING. THERE IS NO RESTRICTION REGARDING THE DATES OF PLANT DENSITY THINNING THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. MAINTENANCE IS REQUIRED IN THE LATE SPRING AND EARLY FALL EACH YEAR. THE PROJECT LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT HAS RESEARCHED THE SOIL AND STEEPNESS OF THE SLOPES AND THERE ARE NO GEOLOGICAL ISSUES PREVENTING THE REQUIRED MAINTENANCE TO BE PERFORMED. A 20' WIDE, 13'-6" VERTICAL CLEARANCE SHALL BE MAINTAINED AT ALL TIMES ON FIRE ACCESS ROADS. REFER TO THE APPROVED FIRE MASTER PLAN. THE CC & R'S SHALL BE SUBMITTED AND APPROVED BY OCFA PRIOR TO RECORDING THEM AND IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT OR CIVIL ENGINEER TO INFORM THE DEVELOPER OF THIS. THE CC & R'S SHALL HAVE A STATEMENT THAT THE VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PROGRAM SHALL BE MAINTAINED PER THE LATEST APPROVED PRECISE FUEL MODIFICATION PLANS. ATTACHMENT 5 AND ADDENDUM "1" LANGUAGE PROVIDED ON THIS PLAN SHALL BE INCLUDED WITHIN THE CC & R'S. THE CC & R'S SHALL ALSO DEMONSTRATE THAT THE SPECIAL MAINTENANCE AREAS ARE REQUIRED TO BE MAINTAINED PER THE APPROVED FUEL MODIFICATION PLANS, AND THE REQUIRED CONSTRUCTION FEATURES PER THE FIRE PROTECTION PLAN .. WITHIN THE FUEL MODIFICATION ZONES, THE PLANT SPECIES FOR THE PRECISE FUEL MODIFICATION PLAN SHALL BE SELECTED FROM THE OCFA APPROVED PLANT PALETTE ATTACHMENT 8. THIS PROJECT IS WITHIN THE STATE RESPONSIBILITY AREA. VERY HIGH FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONE. THIS PROJECT SHALL COMPLY WITH OCFA GUIDELINE B-09A FOR STATE RESPONSIBILITY AREAS ALL HOMEOWNER LOTS SHALL BE DEVOID OF PLANT SPECIES FROM ATTACHMENT 7 OF OCFA GUIDELINE C-05, UNDESIRABLE PLANT LIST. THIS RESTRICTION SHALL BE INCLUDED WITHIN THE RECORDED CC&R'S OCFA APPROVAL ORANGE COUNTY FIRE AUTHORITY Reviewed by Planning & Development Service Request Expires After 6 Months of Inacti-Approval subject to field inspection and required test notations hereon, conditions in correspondence an conformance with applicable regulations. The stamping of these plans shall not be held to permit or approve the violation of any law. OCFA SR #: \_ 286440 Fee Codes: 120 Plan Type: CONCEPTURE FUR MODIFUSTION By: JUAN HUERTA Emp #: 6380 Date: 8 / 12 / 20 22 ONLY STAMPED SHEETS REVIEWED BY ORANGE COUNTY FIRE AUTHORITY Call at least 48 hours in advance to schedule inspections: (714) 573-5150 SADDLEBACK MEADOWS SHEET CONCEPTUAL FUEL MODIFICATION PLAN TITLE SHEET TENTATIVE TRACT MAP 15230 - UNINCORPORATED ORANGE COUNTY OCFA SERVICE REQUEST NO. 286440 OF **ORANGE COUNTY FIRE AUTHORITY** 



## OCFA ALTERNATE MATERIALS AND METHODS REQUEST

Planning and Development Services Section

Saddleback Meadows Alternate Means and Methods for Fuel Modification Unincorporated Orange County, CA 92602 OCFA SR# 286440

On behalf of the California Quartet, L.P., we hereby submit a request for use of Alternate Means and Methods (AM&M), per the 2019 California Fire Code. Our request relates to Fuel Modification

The following information is being provided to assist in your evaluation of this proposed AM&M.

Project Name: Saddleback Meadows Contact Person: David Oatis, Firesafe Planning Solutions, (949) 240-5911 28486 Airoso Street, Rancho Mission Viejo, CA 92694 Current Landowner/Developer: California Quartet, L.P.

B. Code Sections for which the modification is requested:

2019 California Fire Code (CFC) Section 104.9 Alternate Materials and Methods.

The Saddleback Meadows project is a new development within Unincorporated Orange County near the City of Mission Vieio and City of Lake Forest. The project site is east of El Toro Road, just north of Glenn Ranch Way and south of Ridgeline Road. To the west the project site it is adjoined by El Toro Road, to the southwest, the project is adjoined by existing residential communities along Meadow Ridge Lane. To north, the project boundary is adjoined by the existing Double R Ranch. The project is located within a State Responsibility Area Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, with continuous open space along the north, east and southeast of the project.

The Fuel Modification program for Saddleback Meadows consist of a minimum of 170-feet along the northern and eastern edge, as well as the majority of the southern edge. Along the southern edge where the fuel modification does not meet the 170-feet, the fuel modification is reduced to no

Our Hardship is: To meet the minimum open space totals and the grading constraints the minimum 170-feet of fuel modification cannot be met in all cases. Additionally, the side yard conditions adjoining the fuel modification do not allow for the minimum 20-foot flat Zone A in some cases.

Proposed Alternative Fire Protection Measures:

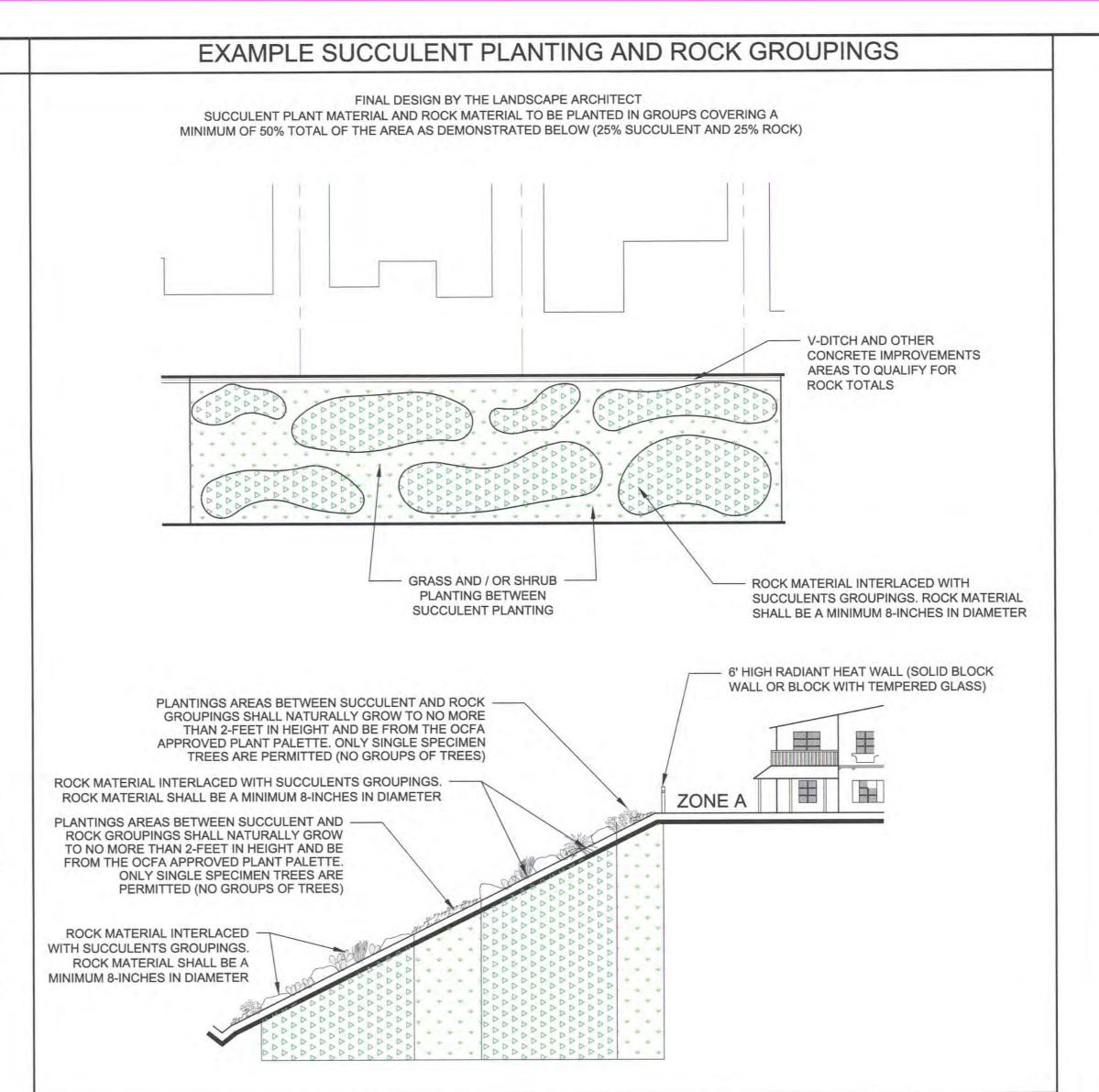
1. Lots 1 - 6, 43, 44, 58, 59, 69, 78 - 80, 108 - 119, 135, 136, 147, 156, 157, 167, 176 and 181 shall be provided with a Radiant Heat Wall along the Rear and/or Sideyard property line adjoining the fuel modification for the reduced total fuel modification distances; or for a reduced flat Zone 'A' from the minimum 20-feet to a minimum 10-feet on the flat pad. Refer to detail(s) provided on the Fuel Modification Plan for the minimum requirements. Any slope area within the Private Homeowner lot that is to be maintained by the Homeowner (not the HOA) between the flat 10-foot sideyard Zone 'A' and the HOA Zone 'B', shall be maintained to meet the Zone 'A' requirements by the Homeowner. A Radiant Heat Wall shall also be provided along "B" Street at the intersection of existing Valley Vista Way to mitigate the reduced Roadside Protection Zone. 2. Venting for passive attic ventilation shall not be permitted on structures on lots 1 - 6, 43, 44, 78 -80, 108 - 119, 147 and 167 on the side facing the fuel modification as indicated on the Fuel Modification Plan for the reduced total fuel modification distances.

3. In areas where the fuel modification is less than 170-feet, the Zone 'B' has been increased out from the Zone 'A' to complete the minimum 100' of total fuel modification. The reduced fuel modification areas shall not have any dry thinning zones.Along Lots 1, 2, 78 - 80, 108, 109, 119, 120, 147 & 167 the Zone 'B' shall consist of a minimum of 25% succulent material (such as cactus and agaves) and a minimum of 25% rock material. Groundcover in planted areas between the succulent and rock groupings shall naturally grow to no more than 2-feet in height and only single specimen trees shall be permitted (no groups of trees). Refer to detail(s) provided on the Fuel Modification Plan for the minimum requirements. 5. Combustible awnings, canopies, or similar combustible overhangs, and wood fences shall not not be permitted on Lots 119, 147 and 167. 6. All Private Homeowner Lots shall be devoid of plant species from the Undesirable Plant List,

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this proposed AM&M request. Please feel free to

Firesafe Planning Solutions for: California Quartet, L.P.

Assistant Fire Marshal







PREPARED BY:





SADDLEBACK MEADOWS CONCEPTUAL FUEL MODIFICATION PLAN FUEL MODIFICATION DETAILS & NOTES TENTATIVE TRACT MAP 15230 - UNINCORPORATED ORANGE COUNTY OCFA SERVICE REQUEST NO. 286440 **ORANGE COUNTY FIRE AUTHORITY** 



