



Notice of Preparation and Scoping Meeting for the Old Ranch Country Club Specific Plan Project Environmental Impact Report

DATE: January 26, 2023

TO: Reviewing Agencies and Other Interested Parties

FROM: City of Seal Beach, Community Development Department, 211 Eighth Street Seal Beach, California 90740

PROJECT TITLE/SUBJECT: Old Ranch Country Club Specific Plan Project - Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and Notice of Public Scoping Meeting

PROJECT APPLICANT: Old Ranch Development LLC

NOTICE OF PREPARATION REVIEW PERIOD: February 6, 2023 – March 7, 2023 (30 days)

SCOPING MEETING: February 22, 2023

The purpose of this Notice of Preparation (NOP) is to notify potential Responsible Agencies (Agencies) that the Lead Agency, the City of Seal Beach (City), will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed Old Ranch Country Club (ORCC) Specific Plan Project (Project) and to solicit comments and suggestions regarding (1) the scope and content of the EIR and (2) the environmental issues and alternatives to be addressed in the EIR [California Environmental Quality Act [CEQA] Guidelines Section 15082]. This NOP also provides notice to interested parties, organizations, and individuals of the preparation of the EIR and requests comments on the scope and contents of the environmental document.

PROJECT LOCATION:

The Project site is located in the City of Seal Beach, which is at the western edge of Orange County, adjacent to the Pacific Ocean and is bordered by Long Beach to the northwest, Sunset Beach, a neighborhood within Huntington Beach, to the southeast, Rossmoor, an unincorporated community in Orange County, the City of Los Alamitos to the north, and the cities of Westminster and Garden Grove to the west. The Project site is approximately 155.5 acres and is located along the northern edge of the City. The site is bordered by the Joint Forces Training Base (JFTB) Los Alamitos to the north, Interstate (I) 405 Freeway and Seal Beach Naval Weapons Station to the south, and residential neighborhoods to the east and west. A Project vicinity map is provided to the right.



Existing development on the Project site consists of the Old Ranch Country Club, which includes a 30,000-square-foot (SF) clubhouse, with approximately 12,000 SF of meeting space, an 18-hole golf course, wedding venues, pool, maintenance facility, and driving range with a 600 SF building.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Old Ranch Development LLC (Project Applicant) proposes the development of new facilities including: a 116-unit, 4-level (188,500 SF) multi-family housing development; a 51-unit 3-level senior housing complex including a 25,340-SF medical office facility on the ground floor; a 150-key overnight accommodation (109,015 SF), including a bar and lounge and a specialty restaurant; a relocated maintenance facility (2,650 SF); and a 3-level parking structure with 591 stalls (226,441 SF), including 26 valet spaces and 36 electric vehicle (EV) parking spaces, with 4 tennis courts on the top level. A total of 1,042 parking spaces are

proposed. The project also entails a new clubhouse pool and associated structures (21,000 SF) abutting the existing clubhouse.

The Project would also include new connecting drive aisles/streets, surface parking areas, and landscaping in addition to a reconfigured driving range from two-way to a two-level one-way. Other improvements related to recontouring of the golf course and changes pertaining to the flood plain easement and drainage reconfiguration would occur.

Access to the ORCC Specific Plan area is provided by Seal Beach Boulevard and Lampson Avenue (Major and Secondary streets, respectively), through the City of Seal Beach and the City of Los Alamitos. Regional access to the site can be provided by San Diego Freeway (405), San Gabriel Freeway (605), Garden Grove Freeway (22), and Pacific Coast Highway (1).

Internal circulation is currently provided by an entrance off Lampson Avenue at Basswood Drive for the existing Project site. The entry drive off Lampson and the drop-off/valet will be modified. Another entrance off Lampson at Old Ranch Plaza will provide access to the public driving range and maintenance facilities, and an existing private drive will connect the maintenance facility to the driving range. Emergency access will be provided by the existing emergency access only, just east of Seal Beach Boulevard. A new driveway is proposed off Seal Beach Boulevard, which will provide access to the proposed multi-family housing.

Development of the Project would require the following discretionary approvals from the City of Seal Beach:

- Adoption of the ORCC Specific Plan
- Certification of the ORCC Specific Plan EIR
- Approval of the Development Agreement
- Public Street Tree Removal Approval, including a Eucalyptus Tree Permit
- Zoning Code Amendment (Height)
- Design Review
- Vesting Tentative Tract Map or Tentative Tract Map Approval

NOTICE OF PREPARATION (NOP):

The City has prepared a Project summary to provide an overview of the proposed development. The City has made a determination that a full-scope EIR, inclusive of all environmental topics except for Agriculture & Forestry, Mineral Resources, and Wildfire is required for the proposed Project. The NOP and accompanying Project summary can also be accessed online at the City's website: <https://www.sealbeachca.gov/>. Copies are available for review at the City of Seal Beach, Community Development Department, 211 Eighth Street, Seal Beach, California 90740, and at the following locations:

Orange County Public Library
Seal Beach Branch
707 Electric Avenue
Seal Beach, California 90740

Orange County Public Library
Los Alamitos-Rossmoor Branch
12700 Montecito
Seal Beach, California 90740

The City of Seal Beach requests your careful review and consideration of this notice, and it invites any and all input and comments from interested Agencies, persons, and organizations regarding the preparation of the EIR. Pursuant to CEQA Section 21080.4, comments must be submitted in response to this notice no later than 30 days after receipt of the NOP during the scoping period, which begins on February 6, 2023, and ends at the close of business on March 7, 2023. All comments or other responses to this notice should be submitted in writing to:

Shaun Temple, AICP
Planning Manager
City of Seal Beach, Community Development Department
211 Eighth Street
Seal Beach, California 90740
stemple@sealbeachca.gov
562.431.2527 ext. 1316

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING:

The City will conduct a public scoping meeting in conjunction with this NOP to present the Project, describe the EIR process, and receive public comments and suggestions regarding the scope and content of the EIR. The meeting will be held on February 22, 2023, at 6:00PM, at the following location:

City Council Chambers
211 Eighth Street
Seal Beach, California 90740

OLD RANCH COUNTRY CLUB SPECIFIC PLAN - PROJECT SUMMARY

The City of Seal Beach is the Lead Agency under CEQA for the preparation of an EIR for the proposed Old Ranch Country Club (ORCC) Specific Plan Project. Section 15161 of the State CEQA Guidelines states that an EIR “...should focus primarily on the changes in the environment that would result from the development of the Project. The EIR shall examine all phases of the Project including planning, construction, and operation.”

Existing Setting

The Project site is located in the City of Seal Beach (City), which is at the western edge of Orange County, adjacent to the Pacific Ocean and is bordered by Long Beach to the northwest, Sunset Beach, a neighborhood within Huntington Beach, to the southeast, and Westminster to the west. The Project site is approximately 155.5 acres and is located along the northern edge of the City. The site is bordered by the Joint Forces Training Base (JFTB) Los Alamitos to the north, the I-405 Freeway and Seal Beach Naval Weapons Station to the south, and residential neighborhoods to the east (College Park East) and west (Rossmoor).

Existing development at the Project site consists of the Old Ranch Country Club, which includes a 30,000-SF clubhouse, with approximately 12,000 SF of meeting space, an 18-hole golf course, wedding venues, pool, maintenance facility, and two-way driving range with a 600-SF building.

General Plan and Zoning

The Project site is located in Seal Beach Planning Area 4 of the City’s General Plan. Specifically, the City of Seal Beach General Plan identifies the ORCC Specific Plan area for “Open Space Golf”. The site has been designated for “Open Space Golf” land uses since the mid-1960s when the Bixby Ranch Company initially developed the site. The General Plan encourages the preservation of the existing public and private recreational facilities within the Planning Area.

The ORCC area is presently zoned Recreational Golf (RG). The purpose of this designation as stated in the Zoning Code of the City of Seal Beach is to allow golf courses and associated club houses, maintenance facilities, accessory concession sales, and related plant nurseries. Zoning allows residential development in conjunction with a golf course but subject to Conditional Use Permit. The ORCC Specific Plan is proposed under a Mixed-Use Country Club planning concept with the Specific Plan as the mechanism or tool that will assure compatibility; preserve the general health, safety, and welfare of the community; and create a cohesive, quality design for the Project. The adoption of the ORCC Specific Plan will supersede the existing zoning and establish a new set of development regulations and design guidelines for the 155.5-acre site. The zoning designation will change from the existing RG designation to ORCC SP (Old Ranch Country Club Specific Plan), which the ORCC Specific Plan will implement.

Alternatives to the Proposed Project

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(a) requires that, “an EIR describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the Project, or to the location of the Project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the Project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the Project and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives.”

The City will develop alternatives, which will include the CEQA-required No Project Alternative, will be determined once the technical analyses are completed and there is an understanding of the Project's potentially significant impacts.

Probable Environmental Effects of the Proposed Project

The City of Seal Beach has determined that all environmental topics, except for Agriculture and Forestry Resources, Mineral Resources, and Wildfire, will be included and analyzed in the EIR for the proposed ORCC Specific Plan Project.

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems

Anticipated Schedule

As currently envisioned, it is anticipated that the Draft EIR will be available for public review in Summer 2023. A 45-day public review period will be provided, after which responses to comments received will be prepared. The Seal Beach Planning Commission will then hold a public hearing and make a recommendation on certification of the EIR to the City Council. Public hearings are anticipated in early Fall 2023.

Conclusion

The City of Seal Beach requests the public's careful review and consideration of this notice, and it invites any and all input and comments from public agencies and interested individuals regarding the preparation and scope of the Draft EIR.