

## DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL PLANNING DEPARTMENT STATEMENT

### BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' MEETING: SEPTEMBER 23, 2025

This is an appeal hearing on the Los Angeles County (County) Regional Planning Commission's (Commission) approval, by a 4:0 vote (one Commissioner was absent), of Project No. PRJ2021-001195, which is also known as the Lyons Canyon Project. This Project includes Vesting Tentative Tract Map (VTTM) No. 83301 (RPPL2021003061); Conditional Use Permit (CUP) No. RPPL2021003113; Oak Tree Permit (OTP) No. RPPL2021003070; Administrative Housing Permit (AHP) No. RPPL2021003105; and certification of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Project as well as the adoption of the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP), Findings of Fact, and a Statement of Overriding Considerations (SOC) [Environmental Assessment No. RPPL2021003071 (State Clearinghouse No. 2022060346)] and collectively referred to as the "Project."

The Project would create 37 lots on 233.49 gross acres, including 510 dwelling units within 290 buildings on 10 lots (462 attached and detached for-sale condominium units, including 24 affordable for-sale units; and 47 senior affordable rental apartments, plus one manager's unit), 16 open space lots (12 Homeowner's Association open space lots and four natural open space lots), two lots for a recreation center, seven debris basin lots, one water tank lot, and one lot for the water purveyor. The total earth movement would be approximately 2.85 million cubic yards of grading, including the on-site project improvements. The grading would be balanced on-site, and no import or export of soil is proposed. The VTTM also includes several street frontage waiver requests.

The CUP is required to authorize a density-controlled development, development within a Significant Ecological Area (SEA) and Hillside Management Area, on-site project grading of over 100,000 cubic yards, townhouses within the A-2-1 (Heavy Agricultural - One Acre Minimum Required Lot Area) and A-2-2 (Heavy Agricultural - Two Acre Minimum Required Lot Area) Zones, and for residential uses within the C-3-DP (General Commercial - Development Program) Zone. An OTP is required to authorize impacts to 232 oak trees, including the removal of 219 oak trees (including the removal of 14 heritage oaks), encroachment into the protected zone of 13 oak trees (including five heritage oaks), and placing detention basins around 27 oak trees (including three heritage oaks). The 27 oak trees in the detention basins are counted as removals because of the possible future impacts to the trees, but they are not proposed to be removed and may survive or even thrive within the detention basins. The AHP is required for

the provision of 71 affordable set-aside units, including 24 moderate affordable for-sale units that fulfill the Project's inclusionary zoning requirement, and 47 very low-income senior affordable rental units that are proposed as part of a density bonus request, which also includes two incentives and six waivers. Altogether, inclusive of both on- and off-site natural open space, the Project would preserve over 611 gross acres of natural open space. Additionally, the Project would plant 1,628 trees, including 856 ornamental and drought-tolerant trees, and 772 native trees, including 574 oaks, which will be planted as mitigation trees.

#### Approval and Appeal of the Project

On July 30, 2025, at a duly-noticed public hearing, the Commission approved the Project and certified and adopted the EIR. On August 11, 2025, the County received two appeals of the Commission's approval of the Project and its environmental documents. The Santa Clarita Organization for Planning and the Environment filed an appeal of the Commission's approval, and cited deficiencies with:

- 1) Evacuation planning
- 2) Fire hazard and development within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ)
- 3) Impacts on oak woodlands
- 4) Greenhouse gases and climate change
- 5) General Plan requirements and burdens of proof, and
- 6) The SOC

The Supporters Alliance for Environmental Responsibility filed a second appeal of the Commission's approval of the Project's EIR, stating that the environmental documents fail to impose all feasible mitigation measures to reduce the Project's environmental impacts, and that LA County Planning needs to address these shortcomings and recirculate a revised EIR.

#### Responses to Appellant Claims

As part of the EIR's Wildfire Analysis, both a Fire Protection Plan and Wildfire Evacuation Plan were prepared for the Project, including extensive modeling. The modeling used evacuation routes including 100-foot-wide Pico Canyon Road, a four-lane Major Highway on the County Master Plan of Highways, and 80-foot-wide The Old Road, a two-lane Secondary Highway. The modeling simulated 20 different traffic conditions to determine roadway performance and impacts during evacuation scenarios. Existing site data was also used to generate fire behavior models with features such as topography, vegetation, and weather. Mitigation Measure 4.20-1 will require that the homeowner's association implement a Wildfire Education Program, and that all wildfire-related information be provided to all residents and occupants, including the Fire Protection Plan and the Wildfire Evacuation Plan.

Furthermore, the Project meets or exceeds County parking standards, including covered parking within garages, surface parking lots for the senior apartment units and recreational center, and additional uncovered and guest parking spaces throughout the development as well as short-term and long-term bicycle parking. The senior rental housing exceeds County parking

requirements of six parking spaces by providing 60 spaces. No reductions in parking are proposed.

The Project is located within a VHFHSZ and State Responsibility Area under County Fire Department's (Fire) jurisdiction; the nearest fire station is located 2.6 miles away. The Project is designed with fire resiliency as proposed development will be clustered near existing development to the north and east, and the Project provides two points of public ingress/egress off of The Old Road. This complies with the County's 2015 Safety Element, which was in effect the time the Project application was deemed complete as well as the updated Safety Element which does not apply. Additionally, the development will be surrounded by a 28-foot-wide private driveway, fire lane, and multi-purpose trail, which provides emergency access, serves as a buffer between the development and open space, and provides a recreational amenity to Project and area residents.

The Project will be required to comply with County Building and Fire Codes, which are compliant with California Chapter 7A. These include internal fire sprinklers, non-combustible and fire-resistant roofs and siding, ember-resistant vents and mesh, double-pane windows with tempered glass, and additional insulation. Additionally, the Project will be required to maintain defensible space around structures, and comply with fuel modification and brush thinning requirements, per County Fire Code and as required by the Project's conditions and mitigation measures. The mitigation measures for the Project also include the establishment of a Fire Safety Committee and Coordinator, Senior Housing Carpool Program, and enhanced ignition-resistant construction materials for some of the residences where less than 200 feet of fuel modification is maintained. Furthermore, the applicant will voluntarily contribute \$2M to Fire, which is expected for a new fire engine for the nearest Fire Station 124.

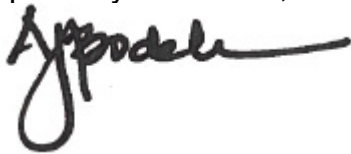
There are 849 trees on the Project site, of which 334 trees would be impacted. The remaining 551 existing trees (61 percent) will be preserved and incorporated into the Project site's landscaping. Regarding oaks, the original Project design would have impacted 232 oak trees, including 219 removals (14 heritage). Three heritage oak trees and 24 non-heritage oak trees proposed to remain within debris basins are counted as removals due to future possible impacts. Thirteen (13) oak trees (including five heritage trees) will also be encroached upon. As presented during the July 30, 2025, Commission hearing, an additional 12 oak trees will be preserved, resulting in a new total preservation of 861 trees. Furthermore, the Project will plant a total of 1,628 trees (856 ornamental trees and 772 native/mitigation replacement trees) within the conservation and landscaped areas, fulfilling requirements for the OTP, SEA CUP, and on-site tree planting.

The Project complies and supports several General and Santa Clarita Valley Area Plan goals, objectives, and policies within Elements, including Circulation, Conservation and Natural Resources, Housing, Land Use, Parks and Recreation, Safety, and Public Services and Facilities. The Project also supports the County's North Star Priority 2: Foster Vibrant and Resilient Communities, Focus Area D - Sustainability, Strategies 1 (Climate Health) and 2

(Green Economy), including many project features and mitigation measures designed to conserve energy, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and overall impacts to climate change. The Project will be fully electrified and will not rely on or include natural gas or other fossil fuel lines. The Project will also comply with California Title 24 building energy efficiency requirements and include solar panels on all buildings, including each residential building and the recreation center. Ninety-two (92) Electrical Vehicle (EV) charging stations and pre-wiring for EV chargers will also be provided throughout the Project. The Project's Transportation Demand Management Program will discourage single-occupancy vehicle trips and encourage alternative modes of transportation, such as carpooling, taking transit, walking, and bicycling. All of this results in the Project having a less than significant impacts to greenhouse gas emissions.

Finally, the SOC is found to be complete as it centers on significant impacts to Transportation that cannot be mitigated to less than significant given insufficient reduction to vehicle miles traveled resulting from the Project. All other impacts to environmental topic areas were found to either have no impacts or be less than significant with or without mitigation. The Project includes a robust MMRP with over 40 mitigation measures to address impacts to many environmental topic areas, including mitigation measures for Aesthetics, Agricultural and Forestry, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Land Use Planning, Noise, Public Services, Transportation, Tribal Cultural Resources, and Wildfire. Impacts are reduced to less than significant for all areas, except for Transportation. The following environmental topic areas did not require mitigation measures as no impacts or less than significant impacts are anticipated without mitigation: Energy, Mineral Resources, Population and Housing, Recreation, and Utilities and Services Systems. Therefore, revision and recirculation of the EIR is not merited nor required.

Respectfully Submitted,



AMY J. BODEK, AICP  
Director of Regional Planning

AJB:DD:SMT:JSH:EGA:lm

Attachments:

- a. All Project materials ([LINK](#))
- b. CEQA documents ([LINK](#))