



Morse Planning Group
145 N C Street
Tustin, CA 92780

MEMORANDUM

To: Bob Garrison, Managing Director – Southern California Region
The True Life Companies

From: Collette L. Morse, AICP

Date: December 4, 2015

Subject: Firemans Circle, Murrieta, California
CEQA Review and Recommendations

SITE INFORMATION

The site encompasses 13.7 acres on three parcels (35810 Firemans Circle, 35600 Mitchell Road, 35700 Mitchell Road), located at the current terminus of Mitchell Road in Murrieta, California.

Current uses on-site include single-family homes.

General Plan Designation: Multiple Family Residential (MFR); Base Density - 10.1-30 DU/AC

Zoning Designation: Multi-Family 1, Residential (MF-1); Base Density - 10.1-15 DU/AC; Minimum Lot Size – 5 Acres

CEQA RESEARCH

1. The City of Murrieta completed a comprehensive update of its General Plan in 2011. The City Council adopted the Murrieta General Plan 2015 and certified the Murrieta General Plan Update Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) on July 19, 2011.
2. Per the General Plan Land Use Element, the site is located within the Clinton Keith/Mitchell Focus Area, which was an area of change in the General Plan update, and shown as Multiple Family Residential (MFR). One of the goals of this focus area is to provide a mix of Single-Family and Multiple-Family residential uses generally east of Mitchell Road and south of Linnel Lane. The Single-Family and Multiple-Family Residential uses will provide a transition of residential densities from the large lot residential area generally east of Mitchell Road and south of Linnel Lane to the shopping and employment centers north of Linnel Lane and east of McElwain Road. New development anticipated in this Focus Area under the General Plan 2035 includes 869 new residential units.
3. Land Use Designation. The site was redesignated from Rural Residential to Multiple Family Residential in the Murrieta General Plan 2035 Land Use Element.
4. The General Plan Update EIR analyzed 869 new residential units for the Clinton Keith/Mitchell Focus Area, which includes the site.

5. Per the General Plan Circulation Element, Mitchell Road is classified as a Secondary Collector (64' curb-to-curb, 88' row) from Clinton Keith Road north to Linnel Lane.
6. Melia Homes project approvals (immediately south of site) included full ROW dedication and road construction. Public Works has approved a specific alignment. Future development north of Melia projects will be required to do the same. Slight modifications to the alignment through the site could be made.
7. Removal of Mitchell Road through site to Linnel Lane would require a General Plan Amendment to Circulation Map and a traffic study to show that removal works without impacting other roadways and intersections or proposes other solutions.
8. On February 25, 2015, the Murrieta Planning Commission approved the following for Melia Homes (located immediately south of site):
 - a. Adopted the environmental determination. The tentative map and development plans for the multi-family condominium and apartment projects were determined to be compliance with the Mitigated Negative Declaration (State Clearinghouse #2010031072), certified on August 17, 2010. It was determined that the projects did not propose any changes that required revisions to the 2010 Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND). The 2010 MND included the following technical analyses: air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geotechnical, greenhouse gas, hazardous materials, hydrology, noise, and traffic.
 - b. Adopted the resolution to approve Tentative Tract Map 36801 (TPM-2014-453) and Development Plan 2014-364 (DP-2014-364) to construct 80 multi-family units.
 - c. Adopted the resolution to approve Development Plan 2014-301 (DP-2014-301) to construct a 230-unit multi-family development.

CEQA RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Development of multi-family residential on the site is consistent with the General Plan Land Use and Zoning designations.
2. The preparation of an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) is appropriate for future development on the site. The IS/MND will be able to tier off the General Plan Update Program EIR, using available data, analysis, and applicable mitigation measures.
3. Anticipated site-specific technical studies for inclusion in the IS/MND, include:
 - a. Air Quality
 - b. Biological Resources
 - c. Cultural Resources
 - d. Geotechnical
 - e. Greenhouse Gas
 - f. Hydrology/Drainage
 - g. Water Quality

- h. Noise
 - i. Traffic
 - j. Phase I Environmental Site Assessment
4. For the preparation of technical studies, consultants should review mitigation measures in the General Plan Update Program EIR and the Melia Homes IS/MND to determine which are applicable and appropriate for inclusion in the study. If mitigation measures are referenced from the General Plan Update Program EIR, they should be referenced as such. Review of the Melia Homes IS/MND would provide examples of mitigation measures the City has approved.
 5. Estimated City processing time is 6 to 9 months for all applications and CEQA.
 6. City allows the Applicant to hire the CEQA consultant and technical specialists.
 7. Potential CEQA Challenges
 - a. It is anticipated that local attorney Ray Johnson would provide written and oral comments on CEQA document during the public review period and at public hearings.
 - b. In addition, there's were neighborhood opposition to the Melia Homes' projects. It is expected that the neighborhood would also voice opposition to development on this site.