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Saddle Crest: County of Orange General Plan and
Foothill/Trabuco Specific Plan Amendments
REVISED July 24, 2012

County of Orange General Plan Amendments:

1. Transportation Element (Appendix IV-1, Growth Management Plan, Transportation Implementation Manual, Section IV, Santiago Canyon Road “G”):

~~“SANTIAGO CANYON ROAD The majority of the road miles within the United States consist of two lane roadways. As a result, a great deal of work has been done throughout the country regarding the capacity of two lane roads. The most current information and practice are reflected in the 1997 ‘Highway Capacity Manual’. For Growth Management Element traffic analyses of Santiago Canyon Road, the traffic level of service policy shall be implemented by evaluating peak hour volumes in relation to the physical capacity of the roadway, using the Volume-to-Capacity methodology. A lane volume of 1,360 vehicles per hour, which is 0.80 times the maximum directional lane capacity of 1,700 vehicles per hour, represents Level of Service “C”. These lane capacity guidelines shall be used to ensure that the Level of Service “C” capacity of 1,360 vehicles per hour per lane will be maintained”. described in the 1997 ‘Highway Capacity Manual’ (or any subsequent revisions) for rural two lane highways shall be used, based upon peak hour volumes. The directional splits shall be as measured during the peak hours. All other adjustment factors shall be as described in the manual.~~

2. Growth Management Element (Policies, Transitional Areas for Rural Communities):

~~“New development within the Silverado-Modjeska Specific Plan and the Foothill-Trabuco Specific Plan planning areas shall be rural in character and shall comply with the policies of these that plans in order to maintain a buffer between urban development and the Cleveland National Forest.~~

Land use Element (Major Land Use Policy #6, New Development Compatibility):

“To require new development to be compatible with adjacent areas.

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The purpose of the New Development Compatibility Policy is to ensure that new development is compatible with adjacent areas and that it provides either a land use buffer or transition to reduce the effects of one land use on the other.

Sensitive treatment is required where one urban use transitions to another and where an urban use is introduced into an essentially undeveloped area.

New development within the Foothill-Trabuco Specific Plan planning area shall be designed to maintain a buffer between urban development and the Cleveland National Forest, to be compatible with the area, and to reflect the goals and objectives of that Plan.

3. Introduction, Interpretation and Implementation of the General Plan and Specific Plans (new section to be placed after the existing section entitled "Format of the General Plan"):

The Board of Supervisors ("Board") as the legislative body of the County of Orange, has adopted the General Plan and supporting Specific Plans. As such, the Board retains authority to interpret the General Plan and supporting Specific Plans and all of their constituent provisions, including their goals, objectives, policies and implementation measures, such as programs, regulations, standards and guidelines. The provisions of the General Plan and each Specific Plan are to be interpreted in a manner that harmonizes their goals, objectives, policies and implementation measures in light of the purposes of those plans.

It is recognized that in determining plan consistency, no action is likely to be entirely consistent with each and every goal and objective contained in the General Plan or a Specific Plan and that the Board may give greater weight to some goals and objectives over other goals and objectives in determining whether an action is in overall harmony with the General Plan and any applicable Specific Plan in light of the plan's purpose.

In its decisionmaking, the Board shall also consider the environmental consequences associated with a proposed action in applying provisions of the General Plan or a Specific Plan and whether the action will protect resources in a manner it determines best advances that plan's goals relating to environmental resources.

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Foothill/Trabuco Specific Plan (F/TSP) Amendments:

AMENDMENTS TO THE F/TSP TO PROMOTE SUPERIOR BIOLOGICAL OUTCOMES

1. Section I.A., Introduction, Authorization and Purpose

“In August 1988, the Orange County Board of Supervisors directed the Environmental Management Agency (EMA) to convert the then-existing, policy-level Foothill/Trabuco Feature Plan into a regulatory, zoning-level Specific Plan. The purpose of the Specific Plan effort was to set forth goals, policies, land use district regulations, development guidelines, and implementation programs in order to preserve the area’s rural character and to guide future development in the Foothill/Trabuco area.

Since the adoption of the Foothill/Trabuco Specific Plan, advances in scientific and technical information relating to oak tree mitigation/restoration, fire management, preservation of biological resources, hydrology and hydromodification, as well as changes in state laws, have led to the development of environmentally superior methods to protect resources and reduce potential environmental impacts associated with the implementation of projects within the Foothill/Trabuco Specific Plan area. Additionally, since the adoption of the Foothill/Trabuco Specific Plan, the County has undergone certain changes, including the elimination of the potential for the development of several large parcels anticipated by buildout in the Foothill/Trabuco Specific Plan area, as well as other changes.

2. Section I.C.2.a.2) Introduction, Goals and Objectives, Specific Plan Objectives, Area-wide Objectives, Resource Preservation. Add a new objective f)

f) Provide for alternative approaches relating to grading in order to reduce impacts to biological resources, increase on-site open space, and/or further the Plan’s goal of providing a buffer between urban development and the Cleveland National Forest, while ensuring that significant landforms (defined as major ridgelines and major rock outcroppings) are preserved as provided in the Resources Overlay Component.

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3. Section II.C.3.3, Specific Plan Components, Resources Overlay Component, Oak Woodlands, Tree Management/Preservation Plan
 - a. Any oak tree removed which is greater than five (5) inches in diameter at 4.5 feet above the existing grade shall be transplanted. If any oak tree over 5 inches in diameter is either in poor health ~~or~~ would not survive transplantation, as certified by an arborist, said tree shall be replaced either according to the replacement scale indicated below or as provided in an approved Tree Management and Preservation Plan designed to provide more extensive and effective mitigation. If any oak tree dies within five years of the initial transplantation, it shall also be replaced according to the replacement scale indicated below or as provided in an approved Tree Management and Preservation Plan designed to provide more extensive and effective mitigation.”

4. Section III.D.8.8, Land Use Regulations, Land Use District Regulations, Upper Aliso Residential (UAR) District Regulations, Site Development Standards. Add new subsection n.

n. (1) Alternatives to the Site Development Standards in section 8.8(a) (building site area) and section 8.8 (h) (grading standards) may be approved for an Area Plan if the Area Plan would result in greater overall protection of environmental resources than would be provided through compliance with those standards. Such alternatives may be approved if it is determined that the Area Plan or other plan for development implements the Foothill/Trabuco Specific Plan's goals relating to protection of biological resources, preservation of open space, provision of a buffer between development and the Cleveland National Forest, and protection of significant land form features in a manner that would provide greater overall environmental protection than would compliance with the Site Development Standards in sections 8.8(a) and 8.8(h). Approval of such alternative standards shall not be subject to the provisions of section III G 2.0 d.

(2) To the extent that alternative site development standards relating to building site area and grading are approved for an Area Plan as provided in subsection (1), above, those alternative site development standards shall serve as the development and design guidelines for the development in place of the Development and Design Guidelines in section IV C that would otherwise apply.

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AMENDMENT TO THE F/TSP TO PROVIDE CLARIFYING LANGUAGE

5. Section III.D.8.8.i., Land Use Regulations, Upper Aliso Residential (UAR), Site Development Standards

“Each individual project proposal (excluding building sites of one (1) acre or less which were existing at the time of Specific Plan adoption) shall preserve a minimum of sixty-six (66) percent of the site in permanent, ~~natural~~ open space which shall be offered for dedication in fee or within preservation easements to the County of Orange or its designee...No grading, structures (including stables and corrals), walls (except for river rock walls not to exceed three feet), fences (except open fencing) or commercial agricultural activities shall be permitted in the ~~natural~~ open space area. Fuel modification shall be permitted within said open space areas if required by the Fire Chief in conjunction with an approved Fuel Modification Plan; however, the development should be designed so that fuel modification impacts to open space areas are minimized. This provision does not prohibit grading during site development within areas that will remain as open space after development is completed.”

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Amendments to F/TSP Consistency Checklist and Other Conforming Changes to Reflect Plan Amendments:

The following conforming changes to the introductory provisions of the F/TSP and the consistency checklist are proposed to reflect the proposed plan amendments:

1. Section I.E., Relationship to General Plan, Transition Areas for Rural Communities

“New development within the Silverado/Modjeska Specific Plan ~~and Foothill/Trabuco Feature (Specific) Plan~~ planning areas shall be rural in character and shall comply with the policies of ~~these that~~ plans in order to maintain a buffer between urban development and the Cleveland National Forest.

New development within the Foothill/Trabuco Specific Plan planning area shall be designed to maintain a buffer between urban development and the Cleveland National Forest, to be compatible with adjacent areas, and to reflect the goals of that Plan.

It is recognized that additional plans may be established which provide a transition area between urban development and major open space areas.”

2. Section II.F.1.a, Specific Plan Components, Phasing Component, Circulation Phasing, Growth Management Plan

“All applicants of projects proposals which are not exempt from the GMP requirements shall be required to prepare a traffic report, in accordance with the requirements of the GMP Transportation Implementation Manual, as amended, to demonstrate compliance with the GMP Traffic Level of Service Policy.”

3. Section III.E.1.c.3, Land Use Regulations, Landscaping and Fuel Modification Regulations, Landscaping Regulations, Tree Management/Preservation, Tree Transplantation/Replacement

“All oak trees ~~trees~~ exceeding five inches in diameter at 4.5 feet above the existing grade removed in accordance with an approved Tree Management/Preservation Plan

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shall be transplanted. If any oak trees over 5 inches in diameter are either in poor health and or would not survive transplantation, as certified by an arborist, said tree shall be replaced either with minimum 15-gallon trees according to the replacement scale below or as provided in an approved Tree Management and Preservation Plan designed to provide more extensive and effective mitigation. The replacement scale indicated is the minimum number of replacement trees required (other than as specified in an approved Tree Management and Preservation Plan designed to provide more extensive and effective mitigation); however, additional replacement trees may be required on a case-by-case basis.”

4. Appendix A: Foothill/Trabuco Specific Plan Project Consistency Checklist, IV, Grading. Add new subsection 8

8. For projects located within the Upper Aliso Residential District, alternatives to Site Development Standards relating to building site area and grading apply based on a determination of greater overall protection of environmental resources as provided in section III 8.8 n.

5. Appendix A: Foothill Trabuco Specific Plan Project Consistency Checklist, IV, Grading

B. “Each individual project proposal within the Upper Aliso Residential and Trabuco Canyon Residential Districts (excluding building sites of one (1) acre or less which were existing at the time of Specific Plan adoption) shall preserve a minimum of sixty-six (66) percent of the site in permanent, natural open space which shall be offered for dedication in fee or within preservation easements to the County of Orange or its designee...No grading, structures (including stables and corrals), walls (except for river rock walls not to exceed three feet), fences (except open fencing) or commercial agricultural activities shall be permitted in the natural open space area, except as provided by applicable District regulations. Fuel modification shall be permitted within said open space areas if required by the Fire Chief in conjunction with an approved Fuel Modification Plan; however, the development should be designed so that fuel modification impacts to the open space areas are minimized.”

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6. Appendix A: Foothill/Trabuco Specific Plan Project Consistency Checklist V, Resources Overlay Component, B., Oak Woodlands, 2, Tree Management/Preservation Plan

- a. Any oak tree removed which is greater than five (5) inches in diameter at 4.5 feet above the existing grade shall be transplanted. If any oak tree over 5 inches in diameter is either in poor health or and—would not survive transplantation, as certified by an arborist, said tree shall be replaced either according to the Tree Replacement Scale in the Resources Overlay Component or as provided in an approved Tree Management and Preservation Plan designed to provide more extensive and effective mitigation. If any oak tree dies within five years of the initial transplantation, it shall also be replaced according to the Tree Replacement Scale or as provided in an approved Tree Management and Preservation Plan designed to provide more extensive and effective mitigation.”

7. Appendix A: Foothill/Trabuco Specific Plan Project Consistency Checklist, VI, Landscaping and Fuel Modification

- C. Any oak tree exceeding five (5) inches in diameter at 4.5 feet above the existing grade removed in accordance with an approved Tree Management/Preservation Plan shall be transplanted. If any oak tree over 5 inches in diameter is either in poor health or and—would not survive transplantation, as certified by an arborist, said tree shall be replaced either with minimum 15 gallon trees according to the Tree Replacement Scale included in the Landscaping Regulations or as provided in an approved Tree Management and Preservation Plan designed to provide more extensive and effective mitigation.”