PLEASE RETURN TO
PLANNING DEPT.
CITY OF NAPA
P.O. BOX 660
NAPA, CA 94559

Nichols * Berman
142 Minna Street
San Francisco, California
94105

BIG
RANCH
SPECIFIC
PLAN

FINAL
ENVIRONMENTAL
IMPACT
REPORT

State Clearinghouse
Number 91023045

Prepared
for the
City of
Napa

August 1996
1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE FINAL EIR

This document is the second of two volumes which together constitute the Final Environmental Impact Report (Final EIR) on the Big Ranch Specific Plan for land presently located in both the incorporated City of Napa and unincorporated Napa County. The Draft EIR and this Final EIR have been prepared according to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the State CEQA Guidelines, and City of Napa environmental review procedures.

The Draft EIR describes the Big Ranch Specific Plan, assesses the potential effects of implementing the Plan, recommends mitigation measures to avoid or reduce significant effects, and evaluates alternatives to the Plan. The Plan consists of the Plan text and policies, maps, and a separate Financing Plan. In analyzing the Plan, the Draft EIR assesses full buildout of the Big Ranch Specific Plan Area (BRSPA).

This Final EIR consists of comments on the Draft EIR and responses to the comments. Where appropriate, the Final EIR indicates revisions to the Draft EIR made as a result of the comments and responses.

1.2 ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

According to State law, lead agencies are required to consult with other public agencies with jurisdiction over a proposed project, respond to their comments on the environmental effects of projects and the adequacy of EIRs, and provide the general public with an opportunity to comment on Draft EIRs. This Final EIR has been prepared to respond to such comments, clarify discussions or findings, and correct errors or omissions of the Draft EIR. The City of Napa is the lead agency for this EIR.

The City published the Draft EIR for public review on April 5, 1996, and the CEQA-mandated 45-day public review period ended May 19, 1996. The City of Napa Planning Commission held a public hearing on May 2, 1996 and accepted oral comments on the Draft EIR. The City accepted written comments until May 19, 1996.

Copies of all written comments and minutes of oral comments made at the Planning Commission hearing received on the Draft EIR are presented in this document. Comments are numbered, and responses are cross-referenced using the numbers shown in the margins of letters and public hearing minutes.

The Final EIR will be considered at a Planning Commission hearing when the Commission will determine the adequacy of the EIR in disclosing significant environmental effects of the Big Ranch Specific Plan and for permitting City decisions about the merits of the Plan. When the Commission determines the EIR is complete, it will recommend that the Napa City Council certify the EIR. The Council will hold a public hearing before certifying the EIR.

This Final EIR is available for public review at the City of Napa Planning Department, 1600 First Street, Napa, California, during normal business hours. The Final EIR will be distributed to public
agencies which submitted comments on the Draft EIR, and notice of the Final EIR's availability will be sent to others who commented on the Draft EIR.

The City will hold public hearings before approving or disapproving of the Big Ranch Specific Plan. The EIR must be certified before the City can adopt the Plan, but certification of the EIR does not require acceptance and adoption of the Plan. If the City approves the Plan, mitigation measures contained in the EIR could be required as conditions of approval of the Plan or subsequent actions proposed within the BRSPA.

Immediately following this *Introduction* are the following chapters:

- *List of Commentors* which presents the agency and organization representatives and individuals who submitted written comments on the Draft EIR or commented at the public hearing

- *Comments and Responses* which reproduces the letters received during the public review period and the minutes of the public hearing and provides responses to comments.

### 1.3 STAFF-INITIATED CORRECTION

The significance of impact after mitigation of hydrology *Impact 4.4-4, Erosion, Sedimentation, and Channel Stability*, should be modified in the four places listed below. The Significant Unavoidable Impact (SU) designation should be changed to Significant Impact (S) to indicate that the impact, while significant before mitigation, would be reduced to a less-than-significant level after mitigation.

- **3.1 Significant Unavoidable Impacts** (page 23), delete 4.4-4

- **3.2 Significant Impacts** (page 24), add 4.4-4.

- **Exhibit 3.0-1, Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures** (page 28), change disposition from SU to S

- **Impact 4.4-4, Erosion, Sedimentation, and Channel Stability** (page 97), change disposition from SU to S
2.0 LIST OF COMMENTORS

2.1 WRITTEN COMMENTS

The City of Napa received 43 letters from the following organizations and individuals on the draft Big Ranch Specific Plan and Big Ranch Specific Plan EIR during the public review period on the EIR. Another approximately 300 people signed petitions and duplicate form letters about the Plan and/or EIR. All writers and signatories are listed, including those with comments on the EIR or with comments on the merits of the Plan. Some comments (including those on the EIR) do not pertain to physical environmental issues but either to social and economic effects or the merits of the Plan and BRSPA development. These comments are included in this document, although responses to project-related comments are not necessary in an EIR. However, inclusion in this document will make the commentors' views available to public officials who will make decisions about the Plan itself.

PUBLIC AGENCIES

Phillip Badal (on behalf of Joe Browne), California Department of Transportation, May 23, 1996 (Letter 1)
Brian Hunter, California Department of Fish and Game, April 29, 1996 (Letter 2)
Antero Rivasplata, State Clearinghouse, Governor's Office of Planning and Research, May 23, 1996 (Letter 3)

Larry Bogner (on behalf of Kenneth Johanson), Napa County, Department of Public Works, May 22, 1996 (Letter 4)
John Ponte, Napa County, Congestion Management Agency, May 17, 1996 (Letter 5)

Don Ridenhour, City of Napa, Water Division, April 23, 1996 (Letter 6)
Heather Stanton, City of Napa, Community Resources Department, May 14, 1996 (Letter 7)

ORGANIZATIONS

Betty Anderson, Napa Valley Club Homeowners Association, April 30, 1996 (Letter 8)
Dennis Paterson, Willowbrook Homeowners Association, May 16, 1996 (Letter 9)

INDIVIDUALS

Brenda Adams, Diane Fischer, Libby Murray, and Kyle Murray (Letter 10)

Adriana and Richard Bardouski, April 30, 1996 (Letter 11)
Linda Borders and James Hawker (undated, received May 20, 1996) (2) (Letter 12)
Martha Phyllis Brennan, May 26, 1996 (Letter 13)

Andrea and Louise Clerioi, May 2, 1996 (Letter 14)
Patricia and Ricky Dryden (Letter 15)

Linda Emerson (on behalf of Peter Van Winden), May 20, 1996 (Letter 16)

Muriel Fagiani, May 20, 1996 (Letter 17)

Florence Greer, May 9, 1996 (Letter 18)

Archie and Del Hall, May 19, 1996 (Letter 19)
David Hines, May 15, 1996 (Letter 20)

Julius Jacobs, May 13, 1996 (Letter 21)

Janet and Steven Krupka, May 17, 1996 (Letter 22)

Bruce and Teresa Leino (undated, received May 20, 1996) (Letter 23)

Lawson Martin, May 13, 1996 (Letter 24)
Nancy Maxon, Ronald Maxon, Mary Riley, and Thomas Riley, May 20, 1996 (Letter 25)
Katherine and Leonard McChesney, May 18, 1996 (Letter 26)
Brady and Sharon McManus, May 16, 1996 (Letter 27)
Dean Mills, O'Brien Group, May 20, 1996 (Letter 28)

Bonnie Nesbit, May 13, 1996 (Letter 29)

Stephanie Parks, May 19, 1996 (Letter 30)
Irene Prichard, April 29, 1996 (Letter 31)

Dabid Ramos (on behalf of Jessie Blakley), May 20, 1996 (Letter 32)
Susan Rushing-Hart, May 20, 1996 (Letter 33)
John Rutherford, May 17, 1996 (Letter 34)
Jake Ruygt, May 17 1996 (Letter 35)

Kamta and William Schmitz, May 15, 1996 (Letter 36)
Charles Shinnamon, May 17, 1996 (Letter 37)
Doris and Tom Smeltzer, April 22, 1996 (Letter 38)
Doris and Tom Smeltzer, May 17, 1996 (Letter 39)

Anne Trimpe, May 5, 1996(Letter 40)

Ardy and Lori Van Winden, May 13, 1996 (Letter 41)

Edith Webber (undated) (Letter 42)
Peggy and John Wilkinson, May 17, 1996 (Letter 43)
PETITION SIGNATORIES (Letter 44) ¹

Brenda Adams  Sarah Ann Chennault  Dean Gunnell
Margaruta Alvarado  Jonathan Cohen  Marie Gutierrez
Oscar Alvarado  Eleanor Cole  Deanna Hall
Betty Anderson  Mary Collins  Catherine Hall
Greg Anderson  Jack Collop  Helma Haines
June Anderson  Victoria Cooper  Melony Haines-Ehrnstein
Faye Angerer  (illegible) Corley  Mary Hanners
Jeanie Avellar  Kris Cosca  Ella Hare
Victor Baciarini  Don Defesi  Bonaventure Harms
Samantha Balancio  David Dejesus  Claudia Hathaway
Nathan Barker  Peter Devoluy  Karen Hayes
Laurissa Basayne  Brian Dixon  Nelda Heide
Michael Basayne  Karen Dozier  Leon Hemming
Andrew Bazire  Paul Duling  Tracy Hewitt
Fayrene Beall-Darr
Frank Beckert  Norma Edwards  (illegible) John
Peter Behn  David Elsdon  Ann Johnson
Douglas Berke  Andrea Emerick  Charlie Johnson
Steven Bemat  Bart Finn  Ellen Johnson
Dianne Best  Nathenial Firestone  G. W. Johnson
Jay Blakley  Diane Fischer  Lillian Johnson
Scott Blakley  Faye Fittipaldi  McHenry Johnson
Mary Blanstone  Phyllis Fleming  Sherie Kantner
Margaret Booth  Martha Fotinos  Nellie Kathka
Linda Borders  James Farr  Tim Kehan (illegible)
Don Bourbin
Georg Braun  Pat Froehlich  Frances Kirpatrick
Douella Brazzi  Nancy Fuller
Phyllis Brennan
Cindy Brewer  Helen Gaffney  Bethel Lackey
Emma Brilliant  Benay Garfield  Gerald Landfried
R.D. Brilliant  Virginia Garibaldi  Tara Landfried
Gregory Brown  Marion Giovanini  Margaret Lafoon
Edwin Broyles  Wenonah Glashoff  Norma Larue
Karen Calhoun  Dorothy Glenn  Teresa Leino
John Camerlo  Patricia Gossett  Carolyn Lewis
D.L. Chapman  Scott Graham  Joseph Lewis
H.L. Chapman  Joseph Greer  Ralph Lippert
Stephanie Caselli  Andrea Gregg  Virginia Loeffler
Mr. and Mrs. John Chaulfield  Mike Gregg  Kelly Loftis
Lynn Gunnell  Joshua Loftis
Barbara Logan
Charles Logan

¹ Mispellings represent attempts to decipher illegible handwriting or copies. Some names were omitted where only fragments were legible.
Virginia Logan  
Lillian Longworth  
Olive Lopez  
Barbara Loseth  
Harper Lowe  
Mary Ann Lowe  
Woodrow Lundholm  
Wendy Lynch  
  J.D. Machesky  
  Mr. and Mrs. A.J. Maganini  
  J.D. Mann  
  Robert Mann  
  Joanne Martin  
  Lawson Martin  
  B. Martinson  
  R. Martinson  
  Susan Mathison  
  Tim Mathison  
  Julianne Marx  
  Karen Max  
  Nancy Maxon  
  Leonard McChesney  
  Robert McGahey  
  Brady McGrath  
  Charles McNamara  
  Gertrude McNamara  
  H. R. McNeill  
  Kathleen McPhee  
  A.S. Melligio  
  Shannon Miller  
  Leona Milne  
  Robert Mone  
  Wendy Mone  
  Iva Mostecky  
  Vaclar Mostecky  
  Susan Mullet  
  Elizabeth Muñoz  
  Agnes Murphy  
  (illegible) Neave  
  Mr. and Mrs. Frank Nelson  
  Elaine Netherton  
  Kathy Odell  
  Teresa Olivieri  
  LeRoy Olmstead  
  Shirley Olmstead  
  Barbara Olson  
  Leon Olson  
  Rita Ortega  
  Carol Owen  
  Don Owen  
  Kristi Palmer  
  Ann Parkenson  
  Robert Parkenson  
  Carol Parkhurst  
  Reg Parks  
  Stephanie Parks  
  Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Perkov  
  Annette Perry  
  Donald Perry  
  Don Piel  
  Colleen Ploch  
  Florian Ploch  
  Henry Pohndorf  
  Irene Pohndorf  
  Cione Price  
  Mr. and Mrs. Robert Price  
  Irene Prichard  
  Glen Ragsdale  
  Kathryn Ramey  
  Mary Jo Ramey  
  Irene Rappaport  
  Elsie Ravn  
  Edward Reble  
  Mrs. F.D. Reddell  
  Von Reed  
  Gilbert Reyes  
  Mary Riley  
  Roseann Rios  
  William Rish  
  Earline Roberson  
  G. Robinson  
  Eileen Robles  
  Alex Rodriguez  
  Verna Rodriguez  
  Joanne Roets  
  Eileen Rohan  
  Laverne Rosetti  
  Cynthia Rudd  
  Dean Ruggieri  
  Victoria, Daniel, David, Norma, and Robert Rugg  
  Susan Rushing-Hart  
  Joan Rutherford  
  April Ruygt  
  Alexander Rzepiela  
  Ann Schaefer  
  Susan Schetter  
  Donna Schleicher  
  Scott Schleicher  
  Mildren Schoenfeld  
  Selma Schroeder  
  David Scott  
  Pamela Scott  
  Mel Shank  
  Charles Shea  
  Mary Shea  
  Rod Shetla  
  John Shok  
  Rebecca Sijgers-Knigge  
  W.M. Silket  
  Matt Simas  
  Lauren Sloan  
  Doris Smeltzer  
  Tom Smeltzer  
  Sandra Smith  
  Terrance Smith  
  Anda Sniedze  
  Eleanor Snook  
  Charles Spradlin  
  Emily Stanton  
  Patrick Stanton  
  Hjordis Stevens  
  Jeffrey Stewart  
  Ginger Stucky  
  Jare Swick  
  Mr. and Mrs. Maury Swindler  
  Annie Trimpe  
  Ana Uribe  
  Deborah Walden  
  Dorothy Walker  
  JoAnne Waltz  
  Bradley Watson  
  Edith Webber  
  Helen Weeks  
  William Weeks  
  Tom Weidinger  
  Frederick Weimann  
  Laurie and Russell Weis
Maxine Weldon
Michael Westerberg
Cheryl White
Roger White
Tom Whitehurst
T.O. Williams
Dorothy Winson
Graham Wozencroft

Andrea Emerick
Deltrude Hall
Claudine Hathaway
Karen Hayes
Joel Martin
Ed Miller
Leona Milne

Anda Sniedze
Ana Uribe
Graham Wozencroft
Cheryl White
Harriett Yaho
J.M. Yaho

Bety Zuehlke
Rhonda Zuehlke
Ron Zuehlke

Form Letter Signatories

Brian Dixon

H.D. Powell
Wayne Russell
Joan Rutherford
John Rutherford

2.2 ORAL COMMENTS

The City of Napa received comments from the following individuals on the draft Plan and EIR during the Planning Commission's public hearing on the EIR held on May 2, 1996.

Richard Brockmeyer
Louise Clerici
Muriel Faviani
Charles Logan

Teri Price
Robert Rugg
Susan Rushing-Hart

Tom Smeltzer
Ms. Stevens
Helen Zerba
This chapter contains copies of the letters submitted to the City during the Draft EIR public review period, minutes of the Planning Commission hearing of May 2, 1996 on the Draft EIR, and responses to the written and oral comments. Letters are arranged as listed in 2.1 Written Comments, and comments are numbered in the margins. Responses follow each letter and are numbered to correspond to comments. Responses to public hearing comments follow meeting minutes.

Where two or more comments address a single topic, responses may direct readers to a previous response. Where a response requires revisions to the Draft EIR, the revisions are shown in indented text. Where comments address aspects of the Big Ranch Specific Plan or the Plan's merits -- not the physical environmental effects of implementing the Plan or the EIR's adequacy -- the comments are included in this document for City officials' and the public's information, but no responses are necessary.
May 23, 1996

Letter 1

NAP-29-13
NAP029229
SCH# 91023045

Mr. John Yost
Planning Department
City of Napa
1600 First Street
Napa, CA 94559

Dear Mr. Yost:

Re: Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Big Ranch Specific Plan, a proposal located near State Routes (SR) 29 and 121.

Thank you for continuing to including the California State Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for this project. We have reviewed the above-referenced DEIR and have the following comments to forward:

a. Exhibit 4.6-6, on page 124, identifies intersections that satisfy the Peak Hour Volume Warrant (Warrant #11). This should not imply sole justification for traffic signal installation. Besides the eleven warrants listed in Caltrans' Traffic Manual, a traffic signal warrant study must also consider other factors such as approach conditions, congestion, driver confusion, and future land use. If installed at inappropriate locations, signals can not only cause an increase in rear-end accidents, but may also increase overall delay and reduce intersection capacity.

b. It is not appropriate to state on page 135 of the DEIR that "Caltrans is not expected to approve signalization of the State Rte 121/Trancas intersection." Caltrans has, in the past, installed signals at intersections where only one warrant was met. However, we make the decision whether signals are justified only after conducting a detailed study.

1-1

1-2
c. Due to the generalization of this specific plan and the lack of traffic data supporting the conclusion made in the transportation section, we should be given the opportunity to review a more detailed traffic analysis when specific projects are proposed within the Big Ranch Specific Plan area.

We appreciate the opportunity to work with you on this project. Should you have any questions or require further information regarding this letter, please call Wingate Lew of my staff at (510) 286-5584.

Sincerely,

JOE BROWNE
District Director

By: PHILLIP BADAL
District Branch Chief
IGR/CEQA

cc: Dana Lidster, SCH
LETTER 1

PHILLIP BADAL, CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Comment 1-1 Comment noted.

Comment 1-2 This comment regarding installation of a traffic signal at SR 121 and Trancas is based on past conversations with CALTRANS personnel and past unsuccessful efforts by the City to encourage signalization of this intersection. It is not meant to imply that CALTRANS or the County may not choose at some time to install a signal. The Big Ranch Specific Plan calls for a pro-rata contribution towards installation of that signal to mitigate impacts of the project.

Comment 1-3 The detailed traffic analysis of intersections supporting the conclusions in the Specific Plan are available for review in the City of Napa Planning Department and can be made available to CALTRANS at its request. The traffic model on which some conclusions are based can be reviewed by appointment with the City of Napa Planning Department. The Specific Plan and this accompanying EIR are designed to reduce or eliminate the need for project-by-project traffic analysis. Unless conditions change significantly, the City has indicated that it does not expect to require additional traffic analysis for projects proposed consistent with the Specific Plan.
April 29, 1996

Letter 2

Mr. John Yost
City of Napa Planning Department
1600 First Street
Napa, California 94559

Dear Mr. Yost:

Big Ranch Specific Plan
Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR)

Department of Fish and Game personnel have reviewed the subject draft EIR and are familiar with the site. The two primary areas of concern to this Department are the two drainages that flow through the site and associated riparian vegetation.

The Specific Plan (in Policy C-1) proposes a 50-foot setback measured from the top of bank along both the Salvador Channel and Bel-Aire/Gasser tributary. We support this proposal and further recommend that this setback zone be designated as a wildlife conservation area where no development or encroachment is permitted. Backyards of residential development or parking for commercial development would be precluded from this zone as would pedestrian and/or bike trails.

The proposed culverting of the upper reaches of the Bel-Aire/Gasser tributary will result in the loss of wetlands. Conceptually, the proposed mitigation which creates wetlands near the junction of Salvador Channel and the Bel-Aire/Gasser tributary has merit, but a specific mitigation plan that includes acreage replacement ratios, maintenance provisions, and monitoring will need to be approved before the Department will accept the proposed culverting.

We recommend that, as part of the wetland mitigation, this plan include the reconnection of the Bel-Aire/Gasser tributary to the Salvador Channel with an open channel that supports riparian vegetation. Crossings of these drainages should be minimized and designed as bridges to span the creek allowing vegetation to grow underneath and free passage of wildlife.

The presence of western pond turtles in the channels is of concern to us. We recommend additional information on their numbers and habits be gathered and an evaluation of minimal habitat requirements developed for review. Should additional habitat beyond the 50-foot setback be necessary to maintain a viable population, such protections should be incorporated into the Specific Plan.
Department personnel are available to address riparian, seasonal wetland, sensitive species issues and other biologically related concerns of this planning area. We strongly recommend these areas be addressed during the specific planning stage rather than at the individual project stage when mitigation may be more difficult to agree to. An overall Specific Plan with adequate setbacks and mitigation will simplify future permitting and individual project approval.

The Department has direct jurisdiction under Fish and Game Code sections 1601-03 in regard to any proposed activities that would divert or obstruct the natural flow or change the bed, channel, or bank of any stream. We recommend early consultation since modification of the proposed project may be required to avoid impacts to fish and wildlife resources. Formal notification of proposed channel modifications under Fish and Game Code Section 1603 should be made after all other permits and certifications have been obtained. Work cannot be initiated until a streambed alteration agreement is executed.

The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers also has jurisdiction over the discharge of fill to streams and wetlands under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. We recommend that the Corps be contacted to determine if they have jurisdiction and require a permit.

If you have any questions regarding our comments, please contact Fred Botti, Associate Biologist, at (707) 944-5534.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
Brian Hunter
Regional Manager
Region 3

cc: Regional Water Quality Control Board
Santa Rosa

U. S. Army Corps of Engineers
San Francisco

Mr. Mark Littlefield
U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service
LETTER 2

BRIAN HUNTER, CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

Comment 2-1 Comment noted. EIR Mitigation Measure 4.5-2(2) (page 107) includes provision to modify Policy C-1 of the Big Ranch Specific Plan to restrict structures outside the minimum 50-foot setback zone.

Comment 2-2 Comment noted. The EIR (page 113) discusses general impacts on wetland resources and the likely jurisdiction of the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps). Mitigation Measures 4.5-5(a) and 4.5-5(b) call for consultation and approval by jurisdictional agencies where modifications would be unavoidable. The EIR (pages 254-258) provides details about treatment of the Bel-Aire/Gasser Tributary in the discussion of the O'Brien Group proposal of the Property Owners' Alternative and makes recommendations to mitigate impacts on mature oaks and riparian habitat, special-status species, and wetlands. The EIR (page 257) recommends, as mitigation, revising the O'Brien Group's proposed Conceptual Wetland Mitigation Plan to provide for a continuous open channel connection of the Salvador Channel and Bel-Aire/Gasser Tributary, as suggested by the commentor.

Comment 2-3 EIR recommends measures to prevent "take" of western pond turtle in the Big Ranch Specific Plan Area (BRSPA) in general (Mitigation Measure 4.5-4(a) page 111) and also provides site specific recommendations for the O'Brien Group proposal in the discussion of the Property Owners' Alternative (pages 257-258). The EIR provides information on turtle occurrence in the BRSPA (page 104) and shows the locations of turtle sightings (Exhibit 4.5-2). Implementation of recommendations on EIR pages 257-258 would limit potential impacts on western pond turtle along the Bel-Aire/Gasser Tributary. These recommendations were developed in consultation with the commentor (EIR page 257) and representatives of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (EIR page 111).
Letter 3

May 23, 1996

JERRY CORMACK
CITY OF NAPA PLANNING DEPARTMENT
PO BOX 660
NAPA, CA  94559-0660

Subject: BIG RANCH SPECIFIC PLAN MASTER EIR AND FINANCE STUDY SCH #: 91023045

Dear JERRY CORMACK:

The State Clearinghouse submitted the above named environmental document to selected state agencies for review. The review period is closed and none of the state agencies have comments. This letter acknowledges that you have complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act.

Please call at (916) 445-0613 if you have any questions regarding the environmental review process. When contacting the Clearinghouse in this matter, please use the eight-digit State Clearinghouse number so that we may respond promptly.

Sincerely,

ANTERO A. RIVASPLATA
Chief, State Clearinghouse
NOTICE OF COMPLETION

Mail to: Office of Planning and Research, 1400 Tenth Street, Room 121, Sacramento, CA 95814 (916) 445-0613.

Project Title: BIG RANCH SPECIFIC PLAN DRAFT EIR
Lead Agency: City of Napa
Street Address: 1600 First St
City: Napa
Zip: 94559
Phone: (707) 257-9530
County: Napa

Project Location:
County: Napa
City/Nearest Community: City of Napa
Cross Streets: Big Ranch Rd; Transit St; Tower Ave
Assessor’s Parcel No: 38
Within 2 Miles: State Hwy #: 29 & 121
Airport: Napa Valley Wine Train Schools: Vintage High School

Document Type:
- CEQA: NOP
- NEPA: NOI
- Other: Final Document

Local Action Types:
- General Plan Update
- Specific Plan
- General Plan Amendment
- Master Plan
- General Plan Elements
- Planned Unit Development
- Community Plan
- Site Plan
- Rezone
- Annexation
- Zoning
- Redevelopment
- Coastal Permit
- Other

Development Type:
- Residential: Units
- Office:
- Commercial:
- Industrial:
- Educational:
- Recreational:
- Water Facilities:
- Transportation:
- Mining:
- Power:
- Waste Treatment:
- Hazardous Waste:
- Other:

Project Issues Discussed in Document:
- Aesthetic/Visual
- Agricultural Land
- Air Quality
- Archeological/Historical
- Coastal Zone
- Drainage/Absorption
- Economic/Uses
- Fiscal
- Flood Plates/Seeding
- Geologic/Seismic
- Geology
- Population/Housing Balance
- Public Services/Facilities
- Lakes
- Wetlands/Wetland
- Wildlife
- Growth Inducing
- Landuse
- Correlative Effects
- Water Quality
- Water Supply/Groundwater
- Water Supply/Water Quality
- Water Supply/Water Quality
- Waste Water
- Waste Water
- Waste Water

Present Land Use/Zoning/General Plan Use: Medium Density Residential, High Density Residential (minor acreage), Office, Public (Schools, Park, Hospital)

Project Description: Specific Plan of approx. 430 acres in north east quadrant of City of Napa consisting of 334 acres incorporated land and 96 acres of unincorporated land; all land is within the City’s BUL, Rural Urban Limit Line. The Draft Specific Plan consists of policies (organized in the Plan’s Land use, Transportation, Resource Conservation, Public Facilities/Services, and Safety Elements) a plan diagram illustrating proposed land use designations and circulation, an Implementation Element, and Financing Plan. The Plan identifies development opportunities on about 306 acres land defined as vacant or under-used.

State Clearinghouse Contact:
Ms. Dana Lidster
(916) 445-0613

State Review Begins: 4/18/94
Dept. Review to Agency 5/11/94
Agency Rev to SCH 6/21/94
SCH COMPLIANCE 6/28/94

Please note SCH Number on all Comments

Please forward late comments directly to the Lead Agency

AQMD/APCD: Resources: 4/13

Project Sent to the following State Agencies:
- Resources
- State/Consumer Svs
- General Services
- CARB
- CA Waste Mgmt Bd
- SWRCB: Grants
- SWRCB: Delta
- SWRCB: WQ Quality
- SWRCB: WQ Quality
- SWRCB: WQ Quality
- X Reg. WQCB # 1
- DTSC/CTC
- Yth/Adt Corrections
- Corrections
- Independent Comm
- Energy Comm
- NAHC
- PUC
- Sauna Mtn Mtns
- State Lands Comm
- Tahoe Rgl Plan
- Other:
LETTER 3
ANTERO RIVASPLATA, STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

Comment 3-1 Comment noted, and no response necessary. It is reproduced in this document for information only.
May 22, 1996

Vin Smith, Associate Planner
City of Napa Planning Department
P.O. Box 660
Napa, Ca. 94559

Dear Mr. Smith:

Re: Big Ranch Specific Plan Draft EIR

We have the following comments regarding the Draft EIR dated March, 1996:

Page 12 EXISTING LAND USES: Only a short section of the Salvador Channel approximately 800 feet long is under the jurisdiction of the Napa County Flood Control District.

Page 84 STORMWATER DRAINAGE: Drainage networks A, B and C are not labeled in Exhibit 4.4-4 on Page 83.

Page 93 SUPPLEMENTAL SALVADOR CHANNEL FLOOD ASSESSMENT: The HEC-2 study by the EIR hydrologist extended upstream from the Bel Aire/Gasser tributary. The draft goes on to say that no flood impact would result downstream of the Gasser Ranch but the draft fails to substantiate this statement. The development of the study area will be expected to increase runoffs downstream of Gasser and downstream of the study area. The HEC-2 study should analyze the flows downstream from Gasser and downstream of the study area. The EIR must contain analysis of impacts regardless of the location of the impacted facilities.

Page 94 BRSPA FLOOD CONTROL ALTERNATIVES: Any alternative must also include analysis, and identified channel enhancements or other related mitigations, downstream of the specific plan area.

Page 131 TRANSPORTATION-IMPACT AND MITIGATION MEASURES: The EIR includes a statement at the bottom of the page that the cumulative analysis assumes installation of traffic signals at the State Route 121/Trancas intersection, but on page 135 the EIR indicates that Caltrans is not expected to approve signalization of this intersection. Later on page 138 the document again uses the term “signalized State Route 121/Trancas intersection”. The EIR appears to be inconsistent on the matter of signalization of this intersection.

Page 135 (first paragraph) The statement that the State Route 121/Trancas intersection is in the unincorporated area, not the City, might lead users of the EIR to believe that this fact obviates any significance to the study. The statement needs clarification and the EIR must contain analysis of impacts regardless of the location of the City’s corporate limits.
Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Very Truly Yours,

KENNETH H. JOHANSON
Director of Public Works

by: Larry Bogner
Civil Engineer
LETTER 4

LARRY BOGNER, NAPA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

Comment 4-1 Comment noted. The EIR text (page 12) is corrected to read:

The Salvador Drainage Channel (Salvador Channel) bisects the BRSPA in a northwest-southeast direction, flowing from the Jefferson / Trower intersection to Big Ranch Road and beyond the BRSPA to the Napa River. An approximately 800-foot segment of the Salvador Channel in the BRSPA is in Napa County Flood Control District jurisdiction.

Comment 4-2 Exhibit 4.4-4 has been revised to show drainage networks A, B, and C.

Comment 4-3 The Salvador Channel Flood Assessment refers to the City of Napa Engineering Department as the source of the 100-year peak discharges. These peak flows were based on an ultimate buildout scenario and, therefore, should not require amendment. The writer is referred to Impact 4.4-2 (On-Site Peak Flow Impacts) and the revised Impact 4.4-4 which now refers to the potential downstream impacts of Big Ranch Specific Plan Area (BRSPA) development. Impacts to downstream reaches of the Salvador Channel would occur in the form of channel instability, erosion, and downstream sedimentation during more frequent flood events, as well as the severe 100-year flood.

Revised Impact 4.4-4 is presented below (additions italicized):

**Impact 4.4-4  Erosion, Sedimentation, and Channel Stability**  
Increases in peak flow rates due to development in the BRSPA would intensify the severity of channel erosion, sedimentation, and instability in Salvador Channel.  

Increases in local peak flow rates would have a significant impact on the severity of channel erosion and channel stability as the channel attempts to widen or downcut to reach a new equilibrium between water and sediment transport capacities. As creekbanks fail and trees fall into the channel, a negative feedback is established whereby a new equilibrium would be difficult to reach.

*The impact of an unstable channel through the Shinnamon, Rushing-Hart, and Gasser property reaches also could affect the more stable reach downstream of the Gasser / Bel-Aire Tributary, due to the increased rate of sediment delivery. Excessive sedimentation resulting from an increased upstream sediment load can trigger changes in downstream channel alignment which can lead to bank erosion and further channel instability.*

The destabilizing effects would mirror the pace of development. Since the Salvador Channel is already in an unstable hydraulic and geomorphic condition, the marginal effects of new development would not be an easy matter to document.

**Mitigation Measure 4.4-4** To minimize the impact of BRSPA development on erosion, sedimentation, and channel stability, the following measures should be implemented:

- Implement Mitigation Measure 4.4-2

---

Exhibit 4.4-4
Specific Plan Area Hydrologic Zones

Legend:
- Drainage of surface runoff
- 100-Year Floodplain Boundary
- Culvert
- Pond

Source: William B. Vandiver, P.E.
• Implement the Enhancement Alternative for flood control defined in this EIR to create a table channel form and alignment with increased flood conveyance capacity and bank stability

**Significance After Mitigation** Implementation of the Mitigation Measure 4.4-2 would reduce Impact 4.4-4 to a less-than-significant level. However existing channel conditions would remain very unstable. Implementation of both parts of Mitigation Measure 4.4-4 not only would reduce the impact of BRSPA development to a less-than-significant level but also would eliminate existing on-site and downstream erosion, sedimentation, and channel stability impacts associated with prevailing conditions.

**Comment 4-4** See the response to the immediately preceding comment. The same discussion of the 100-year flood impacts would apply to the analysis of alternatives, since the ultimate buildout scenario covers the minor differences in the project versus alternatives.

For Impact 4.4-4, Erosion, Sedimentation, and Channel Stability, the impact of increased density BRSPA development associated with the Property Owners Alternative and the increases in low to moderate peak discharges could further exacerbate the severity of the impact compared to that attributable to buildout according to the Big Ranch Specific Plan. This assessment has also been added to the alternatives’ discussion.

**Comment 4-5** The EIR indicates that there is a current need to signalize the State Route 121 / Trancas intersection. The EIR assumes, for the cumulative development scenario, that CALTRANS will eventually conclude that signalization is required and thus assumes signalization for this long-term scenario. As the EIR states (page 138), the BRSPA does not contribute significant traffic to this intersection.

**Comment 4-6** The EIR (page 138) does evaluate the impacts of the project on the SR 121 / Trancas intersection and recommends mitigation for its impacts.
May 17, 1996

John Yost
Planning Director
City of Napa
P.O. Box 660
Napa, California 94559
FAX Transmitted to: 257.9522

John:

We have reviewed the Big Ranch Specific Plan. There are a series of questions in the CMP that aid in deciding if a CMP traffic analysis is required. The first is the determination of what is, and is not, a project. Specific plans are included in the list of projects that may require a CMP analysis. The next screen is trip generation level and this project is clearly over the five hundred peak hour trips trigger. The remaining question is whether or not the current project is contained in the CMA land-use base model.

That is where we have some difficulties arising from the fact that the land use in the City models used for the Big Ranch analysis does not appear to be wholly consistent with the current CMA models. The CMA models have been improved and updated in the land use as well as other features. The 1992 versions used by the City and the 1995 CMA versions are not necessarily equivalent. The current CMA 1992 base model has 737 dwelling units in the area, while the City’s model has 977, a significant difference, which grows by 2010 to approximately 400 units. Since all the Napa communities had several months to examine the land use figures for the 1992, 2000 and 2010 CMA models, the difference is surprising. In addition, if the model used for the analysis has a 2010 horizon (and this is not clear from the text), the 2010 land use data must have been generated well in advance of the CMA’s 2010 land use set, which is the only set that all of the jurisdictions have agreed upon. The future year set used for the Specific Plan’s analysis may be significantly different.

In short, it is not possible to come to the conclusion, given the level of detail of information on the City models, that an analysis sufficient to meet the CMP analysis requirement has been completed.

I would be happy to meet with City staff and the consultant to discuss these items. I can be reached at 259.8179.

Sincerely,

John Ponte
Manager
Comment 5-1 Traffic analysis for the Big Ranch Specific Plan Area (BRSPA) began in 1992, in advance of the previous and current series of projections used in the Congestion Management Plan (CMP) model. In 1992, in order to conduct a cumulative assessment of traffic impacts, City of Napa Planning Department staff made relatively high estimates of growth for the north Napa area and for the City as a whole to ensure that the EIR analysis was conservative and indicated a "worst case" scenario. This worst case projection was entered into the City-wide traffic model to estimate impacts of the plan. This stand-alone "Big Ranch" projection predates the CMP model and is not consistent with subsequent Citywide 2010 projections prepared by the City for the Congestion Management Agency traffic model. However, all 2010 projections for the CMP model have assumed buildout of the BRSPA consistent with the number of units and amount of other development described in both the Big Ranch Specific Plan and EIR. Therefore, the EIR model is a "worst case" analysis of project impacts on the CMP network. BRSPA development also is accounted for in the 2010 CMP projections and analysis.
City of Napa, California  
INTER-OFFICE MEMO

Letter 6

TO: Planning Director, John R. Yost

FROM: Acting Water Div. General Manager, Donald G. Ridenhour, P.E.

DATE: April 23, 1996

SUBJECT: Big Ranch Specific Plan, Draft Environmental Impact Report

The Water Division has reviewed the Draft EIR for the Big Ranch Specific Plan dated March, 1996 and have found only one error in Section 4.9, Public Services, in the water supply section. On page page 175 of the Draft EIR, under Impact 4.9-2, the table identifying the various water demands based on development type does not total correctly. The previous paragraph correctly identifies the total water demand created by the BRSPA. The total in the table was not corrected and currently reads 79.6 MGY and should read 99.8 MGY as the previous paragraph reads. All other numbers in the table are correct. Please find attached a copy of the page with the correction noted.

All other information in the water supply section is correct. Please contact me if you have any questions regarding the correction requested above.

attached

BIGRANCH8/RIDENHOUR/TXTLIB3
**Impact 4.9-2 Water Demand**

- BRSPA development would increase water demand. LTS
- It is unclear if adequate water supplies would be available during drought years. SU

Buildout of the BRSPA would result in development of new homes and offices, creating new water demands. New development would use an estimated total of 99.8 millions of gallons a year (MGY) (306 acre-feet a year) as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Demand[^a]</th>
<th>Net New Development</th>
<th>Demand (MGY)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single-family housing</td>
<td>125,195 gallons / unit / year</td>
<td>577 units</td>
<td>72.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-unit housing</td>
<td>65,700 gallons / unit / year</td>
<td>215 units</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical office</td>
<td>71,687 gallons / 1,000 square feet / year</td>
<td>184,000 sf[^b]</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial office</td>
<td>26,720 gallons / 1,000 square feet / year</td>
<td>12,000 sf</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[^a] Demand uses standard Napa Department of Public Works use rates by land use.

[^b] This number includes 76,000 square feet (sf) of increased hospital use. As it is unclear what use this space would be used for, it was included into this category. However, it is possible this additional space could be used for other purposes which could result in different water demand.

Note that under an existing City program, developers of new development would be required to retrofit existing development with ultra-low flush toilets and other low water use fixtures. The City estimates that retrofit requirements could save up to 38.4 MGY for the new development proposed in the BRSPA. However, even if the maximum water saving were obtained under this program, new development in the BRSPA would still represent a city-wide demand increase of 61.4 MGY.

According to the City of Napa Water Department, this extra demand would not create adverse impacts in normal years. City water supply has been adequate during normal years, but shortages have occurred during drought years, most recently the 1988-1992 drought. The State Water Project (SWP) cut water deliveries to Napa by as much as 70 percent in 1991, and the City's local reservoirs also were low – requiring the City to purchase water from other agencies in the Sacramento Valley and enacting water conservation measures. While droughts will occur in the future, it is not possible to predict what and when future legislative and administrative actions could affect water delivery from the SWP. A lack of water during a fire emergency could lead to an adverse physical change in the environment. Due to the uncertainty of water supply during drought years, this would be a potentially significant impact.

**Mitigation Measure 4.9-2** The following standard City mitigation measure would further reduce less-than-significant water supply impacts: 121

- Incorporate water (and energy) conservation measures into project design and construction in accordance with applicable codes and ordinances
- New development would be required to participate in the City's existing offsite retrofitting program

121 Policy Resolution No. 27, op. cit.
**LETTER 6**

**DONALD RIDENHOUR, CITY OF NAPA WATER DIVISION**

**Comment 6-1** Comment noted. The EIR text (page 175) is corrected to change the total from 79.6 to 99.8 million gallons per day, as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Demand $^a$</th>
<th>Net New Development</th>
<th>Demand (MGY)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single-family housing</td>
<td>125,195 gallons / unit / year</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multi-unit housing</td>
<td>65,700 gallons / unit / year</td>
<td></td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical office</td>
<td>71,687 gallons / 1,000 square feet / year</td>
<td>184,000 sf $^b$</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial office</td>
<td>26,720 gallons / 1,000 square feet / year</td>
<td>12,000 sf</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>99.8</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$a$ Demand uses standard Napa Department of Public Works use rates by land use.

$b$ This number includes 76,000 square feet (sf) of increased hospital use. As it is unclear what use this space would be used for, it was included into this category. However, it is possible this additional space could be used for other purposes which could result in different water demand.
May 14, 1996

Office Memo

To: John Yost, Planning Director

From: Heather Stanton, Director Community Resources

Re: Big Ranch Road Specific Plan Input

There are two items of that need to be noted and addressed during the current Big Ranch Road Specific Plan document preparation which I bring to your department's attention.

Garfield Community Park: As you see from the attachments dating back to 2/12/91 our initial review of this Specific Plan was during a time we were negotiating with the Beck Development company for relocation of the "Gasser Farm House" onto Garfield Park and because it was undetermined what type of development costs would be associated with this concept we were unable to make a "for certain" determination of costs which might exceed fees generated by the Park Fees. Because no clear alternative for development was finally determined we were unable to ascertain the "shortfall" which would have necessitated the need for a Garfield Park Fee.

As you are aware the City did identify such a fee during the No. Jefferson Street development of $425.00/unit which was to be utilized for both the development of the neighborhood park and 50% of Garfield Park development. It is equally important that we consider the imposition of a new park development fee on the homes to be constructed in this specific plan to assist with the other 50% of the development costs of Garfield Park and with the development of the new park development discussed below.

Joint Development with NVUSD: Since the inception of this planning process in 1991 the NVUSD has identified the need for an additional elementary school site will be required by the build out of this specific plan. In order to accommodate and assist with that need and in the spirit of cost effectiveness the City will be reviewing the plan for development of lands that lie adjacent to Vintage Farm to provide an additional 3 to 4 acres of lands to be utilized as both park and school joint development. These acres would be secured through the Quimby Act and purchase from the developer.

Please contact me if you are in need of further information concerning this subject.

cc: Sherrie Stone
    Mike Dencavage
LETTER 7
HEATHER STANTON, CITY OF NAPA
COMMUNITY RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

Comment 7-1  The letter is a staff level communication, not a comment on the adequacy of the EIR, and no response is necessary.
April 30, 1996

City of Napa
Planning Department (5121)
P.O. Box 660
Napa, Ca. 94559

RE: Big Ranch Specific Plan

Dear Sir or Madame:

This letter will serve as a formal protest by the Napa Valley Club Homeowners Association to the above captioned General Plan Amendment and Rezoning and the Financing Plan by the City of Napa. The association is located at 131 Valley Club Circle, Napa, California and consists of 130 individual homeowners and taxpayers. The association is in complete opposition to the proposed plan to develop the surrounding area, between Trancas St. and Garfield Lane and Big Ranch Road and Jefferson St, as indicated on the enclosed documents. The association is further opposed to the extension of Trower and Sierra Aves, to be connected with Garfield Lane and the widening of Big Ranch Road to a four lane street. The association's opposition is based on the potential traffic congestion and high-density housing should the plan be adopted by the City of Napa. The association believes that property values within the area would decline significantly as well as cause the association's members to be subjected to numerous safety hazards. The association also objects to the environmental impact the proposed housing and street construction would cause the area.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Betty Anderson
President, Board of Directors
Napa Valley Club Homeowners Association

enc.

131 Valley Club Circle
Napa, California 94558
(707) 255-8236
Comment 8-1  The writer expresses an opinion about the merits of the Big Ranch Specific Plan and raises no comments on the adequacy of the EIR. No response is necessary, but the comment is presented in this document for City officials' and the public's information.

Nevertheless, the EIR identifies the medium density residential land use designation presently established by the City of Napa's General Plan for land surrounding existing Napa Valley Club development (Exhibit 4.1-1) and also illustrates the City's and Napa County's respective zoning classifications (Exhibit 4.1-2). Existing zoning provides for residential development at the same density as the Napa Valley Club (RL-6) on immediately surrounding land.

Due to these land use designations and zoning classifications, development could occur without City adoption and implementation of the pending Big Ranch Specific Plan. Full buildout of the BRSPA in conformance with the City's existing General Plan land use designations could result in development of 1,707 new housing units compared with up to 792 units if the City adopts and implements Big Ranch Specific Plan. The EIR's General Plan Alternative (pages 236-242) assesses the environmental effects of implementing the land use designations presented in Exhibits 4.1-1 and 4.1-2.

All of the lands considered for future development by the Big Ranch Specific Plan are located inside the City's existing Rural / Urban Limit (RUL), as is the Napa Valley Club. In order for no development to occur, as suggested by this comment, the City would need redesignate (or purchase) the lands for open space or another undeveloped use and redraw the RUL to exclude those lands.

According to the EIR (page 131), the segment of the "Soscol / Big Ranch Connector" in the BRSPA would extend between the Salvador Channel bridge and Trancas Street. The EIR also identifies this four-lane road segment as a major improvement project identified by the City's already adopted General Plan. The Big Ranch Specific Plan would not change that General Plan improvement and does not recommend construction of a four-lane road north of the Salvar Channel bridge.

According to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) which guided the preparation of this EIR, an economic impact is not considered to be a significant effect on the environment. CEQA section 21068 states that an effect is significant if it results in a "substantial, or potential[ly] substantial, adverse change in the environment". State CEQA Guidelines section 15131(a) states that "economic or social effects shall not be treated as significant effects on the environment", although economic impacts can be significant if they result in a physical effect on the environment. For example, a proposed suburban shopping center might have an adverse economic effect on downtown merchants. In this example, while the loss of downtown income would not directly cause any physical effects, it might result in a significant effect if it indirectly caused the downtown area to deteriorate physically.

It would be speculative to assess economic impacts of BRSPA buildout on property values of existing suburban development in the planning area. However, future buildout would be preceded by installation of infrastructure (such as extension of public water and sewer facilities) and road construction (which would increase access by emergency services vehicles). While some existing BRSPA residents might not benefit directly from such improvements (such as those with water and sewer service), one purpose of the BRSPA planning process would be to improve conditions areawide.
City of Napa
Planning Department (5121)
P.O. Box 660
Napa, CA 94559

Re: Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Big Ranch Specific Plan

The 124 residents of the Willowbrook community, located at the intersection of Big Ranch Road and Garfield Lane, have a number of concerns with the environmental impacts related to the proposed Big Ranch Specific Plan (BRSP) and to the analysis of these impacts presented in the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR).

Our main concern relates to the transportation (traffic) impacts related to increased traffic on Garfield Lane and on Big Ranch Road. Garfield Lane provides the primary access to Willowbrook and is presently lightly traveled being used primarily by the residents of Willowbrook, The Napa Valley Club and the residents of Garfield Lane. Garfield Lane also provides access to Garfield Park and is heavily used for young people’s sports events at the park. It is also used by joggers and walkers from the neighborhood as well as by physical education classes and track team members from Vintage High School. The present character of Garfield Lane is aptly described by the use of the word “Lane”. Since it is not a through street it is used primarily by neighborhood residents and others who are familiar with the usual activities along the Lane it is a relatively safe byway for these mixed activities.

The proposed circulation scheme presented in the DEIR, which involves connecting Garfield Lane and Sierra Street to develop a through street between Big Ranch Road and Jefferson Street, would destroy the present character of Garfield Lane and result in significant increases in the amount of traffic on what would be a significant east-west through street between two already busy thoroughfares.
The predicted traffic volumes presented on Exhibit 4.6-11 indicate increases in Garfield Lane traffic of 233% to 375% as compared to the existing conditions presented on Exhibit 4.6-2. We consider the predicted volumes both excessive and unreliable.

Our main concern with respect to increased traffic is embodied in the discussion of "Residential Livability" presented in Section 4.6 of the DEIR (pages 123 and 124). As this section indicates there are no quantitative methods for analyzing the impacts of increases in traffic in residential street environments or for "...establishing objectively "how much traffic is too much" on a residential street...." The section goes on to state that "The maximum number of vehicles acceptable in a residential environment is a subjective psychological value which is not well understood."

We believe that the predicted traffic volumes attendant to the connection of Garfield Lane and Sierra Avenue to develop a through street between Big Ranch Road and Jefferson Street are unacceptable as predicted and are also most likely understated. We also believe that these traffic impacts are not adequately dealt with in the DEIR. The "Residential Livability" discussion in Section 4.6 only characterizes the problem but does not evaluate the impacts.

As an example of how the predicted traffic volumes are likely understated we would like to point out that the extension of Villa Lane from it's present dead end to Garfield/Sierra would result in an alternate through route (short cut) from Trancas Avenue eastbound to Big Ranch Road northbound avoiding the left turn signal at Trancas and Big Ranch. It would also result in a similar short cut for traffic from Big Ranch southbound to Trancas westbound.

We want to make it clear that we consider the only acceptable way to minimize the traffic impacts in our residential area is NOT to adopt the Circulation Plan presented on Exhibit 4.6-7 in the DEIR.
We would instead support the adoption of the Optional Circulation Alternative presented on Exhibit 5.4-1. While we have concerns relating to the additional traffic on Garfield Lane which would be generated by the north-south connection of Trower Avenue to Garfield Lane we believe that this scheme would result in significantly less impact on our residential area while still satisfying the transportation requirements associated with the proposed Big Ranch Specific Plan. In addition, our analysis of the evaluation of the Optional Circulation Alternative presented in Section 5.4 of the DEIR leads us to conclude that the optional alternative has lesser impacts in the overall project scope in not only the Transportation area but also in the areas of Geology and Soils and Vegetation and Wildlife. Considering the impact evaluation presented in Section 5.4 we do not understand why the “optional alternative” was not selected as the preferred scheme.

Willowbrook
Homeowners Association

Dennis Paterson
President
LETTER 9

DENNIS PATerson, WILLOWBROOK HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

Comment 9-1 The impacts of the project are estimated based on a citywide traffic model which seeks to predict behavior based on land uses, expected destinations, travel times, and a variety of other factors. The model takes into account the proposed modifications in the roadway system and, to some degree, modifies traffic based on the shortest route between destinations. The model is based on average or typical travel behavior. However, a model cannot fully account for human behavior. The estimates represent the best professional assessment but may overstate or understate actual traffic impacts.

Comment 9-2 As the writer notes and the EIR states (page 123), standard traffic handbooks and texts do not contain quantitative methods for analyzing the impacts from changes in traffic volume. There is general agreement in the transportation profession that a threshold exists between acceptable and unacceptable levels of traffic to maintain a residential character on a street, but there is no widely used procedure to indicate whether an increment of new traffic on a street would or would not be noticeable to residents.

While the TIRE Index (EIR pages 123 and 125) was developed to provide this type of evaluation, no documentation is available to explain how the TIRE Index values were derived or how the threshold of noticeability was determined. The EIR refers to the residential livability of residential streets to acknowledge the potential impact, and Impact 4.6-3 illustrates application of the TIRE methodology to Jefferson Street. Because the TIRE Index does not provide a standard methodology to measure residential livability impacts objectively, it was not applied to other BRSPA streets in the EIR but can used by readers of the EIR to extrapolate future conditions.

A variety of factors characterize residential street livability in addition to traffic volume. Some can be quantified, such as estimated increases in traffic-generated noise levels. Other factors, such as aesthetic ones, may be more subjective and cannot be measured. For instance, the EIR (Exhibit 4.8-6) estimates that the peak hour traffic noise level change on Garfield Lane west of Big Ranch Road would increase 3.9 decibels (dB) over existing conditions due to traffic generated by BRSPA development alone and with traffic generated by both BRSPA and cumulative development. The EIR (page 155) notes that a 3.0 dB change is considered just perceivable and at least a 5.0 dB change is required before any noticeable community response is expected. In another example, the EIR (Exhibit 4.7-4) estimates worst case carbon monoxide (CO) concentrations for six BRSPA intersections for existing and future traffic conditions. Estimates reflect idling time under congested conditions (highest concentrations) or smooth flowing traffic under unconstrained conditions (lowest concentrations). The EIR found that CO concentrations would decline in the BRSPA despite increased traffic volumes and attributes the decrease to future effectiveness of vehicular emission controls.

In these contexts, development in general and BRSPA buildout in particular may result in environmental changes compared with existing conditions. However, change per se may not constitute a "significant" impact under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). According to the State CEQA Guidelines (Section 15382) a "significant effect on the environment' means a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the project, including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic or aesthetic significance ...". Each EIR chapter identifies the criteria used to determine the significance of impact.
from adopting and implementing the *Big Ranch Specific Plan*.

**Comment 9-3** The *EIR* (page 260) determined that the Optional Circulation Alternative would be the environmentally superior alternative.

This *EIR*'s preparation was part of the overall planning process which involved development of base environmental data on existing BRSPA conditions, formulation of alternatives, their assessment and refinement, and selection by the City of a draft *Plan*. The introduction to the *EIR*'s chapter on alternatives indicates that this is one type of *EIR* prepared as part of the public planning process. Another type, as the comment suggests, is when EIRs assess different land use and circulation alternatives at equal levels of detail from which the preferred alternative is selected.

The City can adopt or modify the *Big Ranch Specific Plan* as presently defined or can adopt an alternative if City officials believe the alternative would be more appropriate for the BRSPA.
May 16, 1996

City of Napa
Napa Planning Dept.
955 School Street
Napa, CA  94558

Attention: Planning Director, John Yost

Subject: Opposition to Proposed Road Uses Regarding:
Sierra Avenue          Trower Avenue
Villa Lane            Valle Verde Drive

As residents of 1265 Sierra Avenue, our family would like to object to the proposed road expansion of Sierra Avenue, as well as the proposed expansion of main artery streets into Sierra Avenue. The selection of our home on Sierra Avenue was very much driven by the rural/urban environment which surrounds our neighborhood.

Our children, ages 11 and 14, and the adults in our household frequent the Vintage Farm and the Austin Miller bike trail. A major thoroughfare adjacent to the farm (and the disturbance of open space) does not seem appropriate. Many of our friends and neighbors walk and ride bikes through the area, enjoying the wildlife and the farm animals. Cutting a major boulevard through this area would destroy wildlife habitats and make our neighborhood unliveable. Our side of Sierra Avenue is a community, a neighborhood. Life on Sierra Avenue between Highway 29 and Jefferson is like perching on a freeway fence.

El Centro Avenue and El Salvador seem to work well in funnelling traffic to Big Ranch Road. Also, since Trower Avenue is already an established 4-lane street with lights at highway 29 and a 4-way stop sign at Jefferson, it seems better planning to continue it to Big Ranch Road. To preserve quality & community in neighborhood planning, we need very few traffic throughways, and small, protected access roads into neighborhoods. Extend Trower, don't degrade an established neighborhood.

Please review the original general plan and make changes appropriate to Napa as it exists presently and consider the need to retain our rural/urban environment. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Brenda Adams
Diane Fischer
Libby Murray
Kyle Murray

Brenda Adams
Comment 10-1 The writers express an opinion about the merits of the Big Ranch Specific Plan and raise no comments about the adequacy of the EIR in assessing the environmental effects of adopting and implementing the Plan. Therefore, no response is necessary, but the comment is presented in this document for City officials' and the public's information.

Nevertheless, the Big Ranch Specific Plan recommends connecting Sierra Avenue-Garfield Lane across the Salvador Channel as a collector street. This is the same classification as recommended in the existing citywide General Plan's Circulation Element (page 7-8) which defines a collector street as follows:

Collector streets link small areas of neighborhoods to the arterial street system and supplement the arterial system's primary function. They also carry much of the through traffic within residential, industrial, and commercial areas and serve to connect adjacent neighborhoods. An important part of their function is provision of access to abutting property.

The existing General Plan (page 7-23) also defines and illustrates street standards for collector and other types of streets. Collector streets typically have 70-foot rights-of-way (cross-sections) consisting of two travel lanes (12 feet wide apiece), two optional bike lanes (five feet wide each), two parking lanes (eight feet wide each), two landscaped strips (six feet wide each), and two sidewalks (four feet wide each). According to Working Paper #1, Sierra Avenue currently has a paved width of 40 feet within a 60-foot right-of-way and curbs, gutters, and sidewalks. Garfield Lane at the Salvador Channel currently has a 45- to 48-foot right-of-way with no curbs, gutters, or sidewalks and at Pheasant Lane has a paved width of 50 feet within a 74.5-foot right-of-way with curbs, gutters, and five-foot sidewalks.

1 Exhibit 21, "Summary of Existing Street System Inventory", Working Paper #1, op. cit.

2 Exhibit 21 appears to contain a measuring or typographical error and shows a paved width of ±48 feet in a 45-foot right-of-way.
John Yost, Planning Director
City of Napa Planning Department
P. O. Box 660
Napa, CA 94559

Dear Mr. Yost:

We would like to register our disapproval of the Draft Big Ranch Specific Plan. We do NOT want a road running alongside our home. Please site Trower Ave. eastward to Big Ranch Road or southward alongside Vintage High School and Garfield Park to connect with Garfield or Valle Verde.

Since a significant portion of the traffic on this extension of Trower Blvd. would be generated by Vintage High School and participants of Garfield Park the burden of the impact of increased traffic, noise, and litter, should be located along those properties that will be the primary contributors of same. Please do not make private residences bear the burden—we don't want it!

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Richard and Adriana Bardouski
Comment 11-1 The writers express an opinion about the merits and environmental effects of adopting and implementing the Big Ranch Specific Plan's Circulation Plan but raises no comments about the adequacy of the EIR. Therefore, no response is necessary, and the comment is presented in this document for City officials' and the public's information.
Letter 12
Comment in reference to pg. 93 of the BRSPEIR-

We would like to take issue with the comment regarding results of the flood assessment; this meeting was actually a closed meeting which was not attended by the public. We were not notified of this meeting and were are property owners in the above area and also within close proximity to the Salvador Channel.

Thank you,
Linda Borders
James Hawker
56 Garfield Lane

12-7

MAY 1996
RECEIVED
City of Napa
Planning
Comments regarding the EIR of the Big Ranch Area: We are property owners at 56 Garfield Lane. We purchased our home approximately 8 years ago. At that time we inquired at the planning department concerning future plans for the area. We, of course, were aware that our 1 acre parcel was zoned for 6 houses as well as those adjacent parcels. However, we were told that the path through Garfield Park would remain a path due to its "dedicated path" nature, i.e. named after a local citizen. We found, after many meetings, however, that this was not the case. My husband has attended all meetings r/t the Big Ranch Specific Plan - there was never an issue of development or not - it was destined to happen. Of course, this is very interesting in light of the recent overwhelming voter turn-out against development. Perhaps the planning commission and the city council should look at your goals. Do you want to be creative? If you do, then take the challenge of designing an area of passive and active use that contains native oak, snowy egret, great blue heron, salmon, a multitude of frogs, kingfisher birds, owls, salamanders and even a sighting of a mountain lion. The challenge would be to incorporate this into a livable design for recreation with safe walking and bike paths. These paths would also relieve the current safety hazards in relation to the traffic from the ball park. The Vintage Farm should be retained and possibly, once again, some open field areas could be used for vineyard projects as they were in the past. Of course, if you choose to pursue the goal of rampant development in this area you will lose a remarkable opportunity to do something unique. This area has great potential. A crisscross of new roads will cause a profound environmental impact to both citizens and wildlife.

Thank you,
Linda Borders
James Hawker
56 Garfield Lane
LETTER 12
LINDA BORDERS AND JAMES HAWKER

Comment 12-1 Notice of a meeting to discuss the Salvador Channel was sent to all owners of property adjoining the channel, including the Napa Valley Club Homeowners Association (but not each member of the association). Property owners in the Big Ranch Specific Plan Area (BRSPA) who did not own property along the channel were not invited in order to focus the analysis and discussion on those most affected.

Comment 12-2 The comment is correct. As described on EIR page 12 and discussed in response to Comment 8-1, the City and County currently designate all BRSPA land in their respective jurisdictions for some type of development, primarily residential, depending on whether individual parcels are located in incorporated or unincorporated parts of the BRSPA. Moreover, as noted on EIR page 10 and elsewhere, the entire BRSPA is located inside the City's Rural / Urban Limit (RUL) which identifies the farthest extent of urbanization in Napa through the year 2000. The purpose of the Big Ranch Specific Plan is to "update and augment previously adopted General Plan policies which designate the BRSPA for development", and among the objectives enumerated on EIR page 13 are to "provide for the orderly development of land within the area and establish appropriate zoning and General Plan land use designations" (emphasis added).

Comment 12-3 The EIR's Biotic Resources and Alternatives' sections provide detailed evaluations of the potential impacts of the Big Ranch Specific Plan and individually proposed development projects on biological resources of the BRSPA. Construction of new roads and more intensive residential use would impact the existing vegetation and wildlife which currently use the area. The EIR (page 102) notes most of the species identified by the writers. It is possible that mountain lion occasionally pass through the BRSPA, but the planning area probably is not an important part of the range for any individuals due to the extent of existing development there. Where appropriate, the EIR makes recommendations to protect sensitive resources, such as mature native trees, special status-species, and wetlands.

The Big Ranch Specific Plan would provide overall direction about the BRSPA's primary circulation system, land use, and density, but landowners or developers of specific BRSPA parcels would be responsible for designing individual development projects they propose in the future. Exhibit 2.2-1 shows that the Big Ranch Specific Plan would retain Garfield Park as a community park (P) which would be operated and maintained by the City of Napa's Community Resources Department (presently responsible for the park). The EIR (page 16) states that "The proposed Land Use Plan would not change the PQ or Park and Open Space District POS designations, respectively, of either Vintage High School (about 48 acres) or Garfield Park (about 15 acres).

In addition, Exhibit 2.2-1 also shows that the Big Ranch Specific Plan would retain Vintage Farm (PQ) to be operated and maintained by the Napa Valley Unified School District. In fact, the EIR (page 16) reports that the Plan would redesignate about ten acres of Vintage Farm land from RL-6 (permitting Residential Low density development) to Public / Quasi-Public District (PQ). This change would eliminate potential private development opportunities on that parcel.

Comment 12-4 The comment expresses an opinion about the merits and environmental effects of adopting and implementing the Big Ranch Specific Plan's Circulation Plan. EIR Impacts 4.5-3 and
4.5-4 (pages 110-112) address impacts on wildlife habitat and special-status species. *EIR* Impact 4.6-3 discusses general effects of traffic volume increases on the livability of residential streets, and Impact 4.8-6 estimates that future traffic volumes would increase noise levels attributable to traffic by 3.9 dB while stating (page 155) that "outside a laboratory, a three-decibel (3 dB) change is considered a just-perceivable difference" and that "at least a five-decibel (5 dB) change is required before any noticeable community response would be expected". 
I am opposed to extending Trourne to Darbyfield Lane. I don’t understand why Traverse cannot be extended directly to Big Ranch Rd. Darbyfield Lane is our last bit of country living. It is a narrow road. Many people, including many Senior Citizens walk this road daily. It is bad enough when Little League is in session. At the drivers of these children ignore the speed limit. I understand your intention is to widen part of Darbyfield Lane, which would mean removing the beautiful big trees along it. Also your proposed street would run along side of Vintage Farm where Vintage High School students take classes in animal husbandry. Each hour of the
School day, there would be student crossing a potentially busy street. And, of course, increased traffic due to the vicinity. High school students trying to cut from school, often at high speeds, would pose more danger to our pedestrians. It's a terrible idea to disrupt the lives of so many homeowners.

Garfield Lane, where it crosses the Saunder Creek (or Channel), is flooded often, and of course, will flood much worse with more road construction and another construction in that area. Valley Club Circle would be in line for more flooding as that same creek runs behind many of our homes.

The flood waters of 1995 came to within 20 ft. of my property and flooded some of our fields. As any proposed building between that creek directly behind my home and Crown of the Valley Hospital would...
LETTER 13

MARTHA PHYLLIS BRENNAN

Comment 13-1 Trees within the rights-of-way of Garfield Lane and other roadways in the Big Ranch Specific Plan Area (BRSPA) could be affected by roadway improvements. Mitigation Measures 4.5-2(b), (c), and (d) would provide for the protection and replacement of mature oaks and the use of native species in landscaping along public rights-of-way. Where appropriate, this would include treatment of trees along Garfield Lane.

Comment 13-2 The project would include construction of standard sidewalks along Garfield Lane / Sierra Ave which should allow for safe student access to and from schools in the vicinity. The street is designated a "collector" in the City's General Plan and has long been planned to carry a greater amount of traffic than a local street. It is true that traffic will increase significantly relative to the very light traffic on these unconnected streets today. After further review of the model, it is possible that the model has understated the attraction of traffic to this corridor. To test possible range of impacts, the total current peak hour east / west traffic in the corridor was evaluated. Trancas was found to carry approximately 2,500 trips both ways, and the corridors north of Trancas carry approximately 600 trips both ways. Although the model found that, due to distance and speed, Sierra / Garfield was not necessarily a more efficient route, if it is assumed that Sierra / Garfield captures ten percent of the existing Trancas trips and 20 percent of those north of Trancas, it would be carrying approximately 370 total trips at peak hour in both directions. This number would be reduced considerably by the addition of traffic controls (such as stop signs) along Sierra / Garfield intersections. However, using the "worst case" assumption of 370 trips, the amount of traffic on the street would be comparatively low for a "collector" and should not pose an unusual risk to students using the street. As with any street in the City, there is an ongoing evaluation of safety risks. Although the traffic model currently does not indicate a need for additional controls, these can easily be installed. A further mitigation is recommended to address this issue:

The City should evaluate the traffic on the Sierra / Garfield approximately one year after the streets are connected to determine if additional traffic controls are warranted to protect pedestrian safety or to address traffic conflicts. If warranted, appropriate traffic controls should be installed.

Comment 13-3 For the severe floods of the order of magnitude experienced during the winter of 1995, the additional development envisaged in the BRSPA would not increase the maximum extent of flooding through the Napa Valley Club reach of the Salvador Channel, as long as Mitigation Measure 4.4-3 is implemented. Two of the principal landowners / prospective developers in the BRSPA -- Chuck Shinnamon and the O'Brien Group -- have agreed in principle to satisfy the setback requirements cited in the Salvador Channel Flood Assessment\(^1\) and this EIR. The City will be responsible for implementing the zero net fill policy which would ensure that floodplain development would not increase local and upstream flood elevations during the regulatory 100-year flood.

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\(^1\) Salvador Channel Flood Assessment, op. cit.
Mr. John Yost, Planning Director  
City of Napa Planning Department  
P.O. Box 660  

Dear Mr. Yost:

I am writing this letter in response to the Draft Program Environmental Impact Report prepared by Nichols-Berman for the Big Ranch Specific Plan.

My comments are as follows:

1. Refer To:
   Page 115, "Jefferson Street is a four-lane north-south arterial."

   Response:
   In the Big Ranch Specific Plan area, Jefferson Street is 4 lane for about 1/2 block between Trancas Street and Rubico Street. At Rubico, Jefferson Street becomes a 2 lane and remains that way to its end at a vineyard, north of Salvador Avenue.

   14-1

2. Refer To:
   Page 135 - Paragraph 3, Line 2 "However, left-turn lanes should be provided at all intersections (as currently are present at Garfield, El Centro, and Salvador)."

   Response:
   There are no left-turn lanes at either El Centro Avenue or Salvador Avenue. There presently is a left-turn lane at Garfield Avenue. It is the only left turn lane on Big Ranch Road.

   We live off of El Centro Avenue and travel daily on Big Ranch Road. We feel a left-turn lane from Big Ranch Road on to El Centro is necessary for safety reasons especially with the high speeds that are travelled on Big Ranch Road.

   14-2

Yours truly,

Louise Clerici
Comment 14-1  The comment is correct, and the text should be modified accordingly. The traffic model correctly includes Jefferson as a two-lane street, but an error was made in the text.

Comment 14-2  The comment is correct, and reference to left-turn lanes on Salvador and El Centro should be deleted. These intersections are under County jurisdiction, and the traffic model shows virtually no impact on these roads due to development in the Big Ranch Specific Plan Area. Therefore, no mitigation is proposed as part of the Specific Plan.
Planner Commissioner
1600 1st Street
Napa, CA 94559

ATTENTION: John Yost

SUBJECT: BIG RANCH

Dear Sir,

We strongly oppose the new plans for the Big Ranch development for the following reasons.

1. We live on Sierra Avenue near the intersection of Jefferson and Sierra. The traffic situation here is already intolerable. Making Sierra a through street to Big Ranch road would increase the traffic, speed, accidents, pollution, and noise. We have lived here since the end of August 95, and have witnessed at least 8 accidents in the intersection. Increasing traffic would only make the situation worse.

2. We appreciate living in a neighborhood that is within walking distance of open agricultural space. Why, do we need to fill every available space within Napa City? What will be left for our future generations? We appreciate living in a SMALL town atmosphere. This was a primary reason for living here.

3. We are concerned about the future availability of water, clean air, and open space. The majority of Napa voters turned down Propositions X and W in the March elections. Please respect their wishes to keep Napa City and Valley a clean, quiet, and peaceful community.

Sincerely,

Rick and Patricia Dryden

Rick Dryden
Patricia Dryden

1258 Sierra Avenue, Napa, California 94558
Comment 15-1 Please see the response to Comment 13-1. While there likely would be a significant increase in traffic compared to the very light traffic experienced today, the traffic analysis does not indicate that a signal is warranted at the Jefferson / Sierra intersection as a result of the project. However, as noted in response to Comment 13-1, the traffic model may understate the traffic impacts. Further, preventable traffic accidents are one element of a "signal warrant". If the number of accidents rises significantly as a result of the project or if the traffic is considerably greater than currently anticipated, a signal could become necessary, as discussed in the mitigation set forth in response to Comment 13-1.

Comments 15-2 and 15.3 The comments pose rhetorical questions to express the writers' opinions about the merits of the Big Ranch Specific Plan and development of the Big Ranch Specific Plan Area. No responses are necessary, but the comments are presented for public officials' and the public's information.
May 20, 1996

HAND-DELIVERED

John Yost, Planning Director
City of Napa Planning Department
P.O. Box 660
Napa, CA 94559

RE: Comments on Big Ranch Specific Plan
Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)

Dear Mr. Yost:

We are writing on behalf of Peter Van Winden to comment on the Big Ranch Specific Plan DEIR. Mr. Van Winden owns two parcels of land (APN 38-240-2 and 38-240-16) comprising a total of 26.8 acres in the northern portion of the Specific Plan area. As indicated in our comments below, we believe that the Property Owners’ Alternative is environmentally superior to the Proposed Project and to the other proposed Alternatives evaluated in the DEIR. We therefore urge the City to reject the Proposed Project in favor of the Property Owners’ Alternative.

Our comments on the Big Ranch Specific Plan DEIR are as follows:

Page  Comment
1  The first sentence indicates that the DEIR evaluates the impacts associated with the Proposed Project. However, the DEIR also evaluates the impacts associated with various alternatives to the Proposed Project, including the Property Owners’ Alternative. The sentence should be revised to clarify this point.
The list of "Administrative Actions" to be taken in connection with the adoption of a Specific Plan for the Big Ranch area should reflect the fact that the Council might decide to approve one of the Project Alternatives, rather than the Proposed Project itself.

The DEIR’s No Project Alternative assumes that there would be no new development in the Specific Plan area. In reality, however, if no new plan is adopted, the area will develop pursuant to its existing zoning and General Plan designations. In other words, the true No Project Alternative is actually the DEIR’s General Plan Alternative, and as such, would result in greater environmental impacts than either the Proposed Project or any of the other Alternatives. The DEIR thus substantially understates the actual environmental impacts associated with selecting this alternative.

It is true that the "environmental setting" or baseline from which the Proposed Project and its alternatives must be evaluated is based on the actual physical conditions of the area as it now exists. (Environmental Planning and Information Council v. County of El Dorado (1982) 131 Cal.App.3d 350.) However, the "environmental setting" is not synonymous with the No Project Alternative. Where, as here, the failure to adopt a new plan for an area will result in development of the area under an existing plan, the No Project Alternative must analyze the impacts associated with full development of the area under the existing General Plan/zoning designations, using the "environmental setting" of the area as the starting point for the analysis. (CEQA Guidelines section 15126, subdivision (d)(4); See also Remy, Thomas & Moose, Guide to the California Environmental Quality Act 1995 Supplement, p.37.)

The No Project and General Plan Alternatives should accordingly be consolidated. Such consolidation will ensure that the DEIR conforms to the requirements of CEQA and that both the public and the City’s decisionmakers are fully
informed as to the environmental impacts associated with the true No Project Alternative.

After listing the various Project Alternatives, the DEIR indicates that the Optional Circulation Alternative is the environmentally superior alternative. The analysis contained in the DEIR, however, does not appear to support this conclusion. Please see our comments regarding pages 126 and 252-260, below.

The last sentence on this page indicates that density issues merely "represented fine-tuning or specific development expectations of property owners." However, the more significant issue surrounding preferred densities for the Specific Plan area relates to the policy objective of preserving the long-term integrity of the existing Rural Urban Limit ("RUL") boundary. Providing for sufficient densities now will ensure that future growth will occur within the existing RUL and will not create pressure to move the RUL out further into agricultural/open space lands. This point should accordingly be included as one of the issues involved in the determination of preferred densities.

Summary of Findings - Transportation: Please see our comments regarding page 126, below.

Residential Uses: The DEIR refers to the City's policy of "feathering" densities closer to the RUL. The Property Owners' Alternative achieves this objective while simultaneously furthering the equally important objective of maintaining the long-term integrity of the existing RUL boundary through the provision of adequate densities within the RUL. The Property Owners' Alternative maintains an 80 foot agricultural buffer along the eastern RUL and most of the northern RUL. It includes a 40 foot buffer along the northwestern corner of Mr. Van Winden's property near Vintage High School and near land that is already developed without any agricultural buffer whatsoever. The Property Owners' Alternative thus maintains both the feathering approach and the agricultural setbacks.
In light of the goal of preserving the RUL's existing boundary, the establishment of one acre estates within the City would constitute a waste of a valuable resource. The Property Owners' Alternative includes a wide strip of ED-2 lands along Big Ranch Road to buffer new homes from the agricultural uses to the east. The Property Owners' Alternative also includes an ED-3 designation along the northern portion of the Specific Plan area, along with the 80 foot setback. The lands to the north have been broken into a variety of sizes and shapes and appear to have lost most, if not all, of their agricultural value. As such, they do not need the same protection as the lands east of Big Ranch Road. The ED-3 lot sizes, in conjunction with the 80-foot setback, will provide appropriate feathering along the north.

General Plan Policy, Conservation Element, A.1.a.: The DEIR indicates that Mr. Van Winden's northernmost parcel has been singled out for imposition of the CR-7 overlay. All of the other parcels that are adjacent to the RUL line, including Mr. Van Winden's southernmost parcel, are instead subject to Specific Plan Policies LU-6, LU-7 and C-6, which are less restrictive. What is the justification for treating Mr. Van Winden's northern parcel differently than other parcels which abut the RUL?

Mitigation Measure 4.1-3: Please see our comments regarding page 48, above.

Changes in Existing Transportation: The Proposed Project calls for a number of road improvements which are not included in the Property Owners' Alternative. Nevertheless, the DEIR states that the Property Owners' Alternative would provide the best level of service of any of the proposed alternatives and is the environmentally superior alternative with respect to traffic impacts. (See DEIR at p.261.) In addition, because the Property Owners' Alternative does not include certain road improvements otherwise required by the Proposed Project, it will create fewer impacts to the Gasser Tributary, the Salvador Channel and
vegetation. Specifically, the Property Owners' Alternative would: (1) retain the 300-foot section of the Gasser Tributary that would be removed under the Proposed Project; (2) reduce the number of creek crossings called for under the Proposed Project; (3) retain two of the 30" oak trees that will be removed under the Proposed Project; and (4) provide for a wetland, riparian and upland mitigation enhancement area east of Valley Verde Drive where the Proposed Project would instead create five residential lots. In light of the foregoing environmental benefits, why does the DEIR still consider the Proposed Project to be preferable to the Property Owners' Alternative?

226-227 Density: Please refer to our comments regarding pages 26 and 45, above.

227-228 Circulation: Please refer to comments regarding page 126, above.

228-229 No Project and General Plan Alternatives: Please refer to our comments regarding page 25, above.

233-242 No Project and General Plan Alternatives: Please refer to our comments regarding page 25, above.

252-260 Analysis of the Property Owners' Alternative: The DEIR indicates that the Property Owners' Alternative would involve the same or similar impacts as the Proposed Project with respect to land use, population, geology and soils, hydrology and channel stability, vegetation and wildlife, aesthetics, noise and public services (except for the additional fire and school services needed for the small increase in population). With respect to transportation, the Property Owners' Alternative would create less impacts than the Proposed Project because it would provide a better level of service and require fewer channel/creek crossings. Why then is the Proposed Project considered preferable to the Property Owners' Alternative?

260 Land Use: Please refer to our comments regarding pages 26 and 45, above.
Transportation: Please refer to our comments regarding page 126, above.

We very much appreciate this opportunity to comment on the Big Ranch Specific Plan DEIR. Please call us if you have any questions or would like additional details regarding any of our comments.

Very truly yours,

DICKENSON, PEATMAN & FOGARTY

LINDA EMERSON

LE: sm
LETTER 16
LINDA EMERSON

Comment 16-1 The comment technically is correct in observing that the EIR assesses adoption and implementation of the Big Ranch Specific Plan (the "project") and alternatives. However, the EIR Introduction (page 7) briefly explains that "Chapter 5.0 Alternatives to the Draft Specific Plan describes and presents a comparative analysis of alternatives to the Draft Specific Plan (emphasis added)", and the introductory background to 5.0 Alternatives (page 225) distinguishes between EIRs which consider alternatives in equal detail (from which preferred "projects" are selected) and EIRs which evaluate alternatives and compare the outcome with "projects" as proposed. The comment expresses an opinion and suggests a revision which would give disproportionate and misleading emphasis to the analysis of alternatives conducted for this EIR. Thus, the suggested clarification would be inappropriate in the EIR.

Comment 16-2 The comment technically is correct. As stated in response to Comment 9-3, the City can adopt or modify the Big Ranch Specific Plan as presently defined or can adopt an alternative if City officials believe the alternative would be more appropriate for the Big Ranch Specific Plan Area (BRSPA). However, it is more likely that the City would further refine the Plan by modifying it to reflect some elements of one or more alternatives than it is likely for the City to adopt an EIR alternative. This partly is because of the City's six-year planning process during which time numerous alternative land use and circulation patterns were identified, preliminarily assessed, and widely discussed, eventually resulting in the Plan evaluated in the EIR. This also is because the alternatives only consist of land use and circulation plans not accompanied by policies and implementing programs. Thus, an alternative could not necessarily graft Big Ranch Specific Plan policies to the land use and circulation plan to produce a comprehensible usable plan for City officials, residents, and landowners / prospective developers.

Comment 16-3 Section 15126(d)(4) of the State CEQA Guidelines requires every EIR to evaluate a "no project" alternative. Duek v. Anaheim Redevelopment Agency has interpreted this to mean no development. Therefore, the EIR's No Project Alternative assumed that no development would be built in the BRSPA at this time and that there would be no changes to the existing conditions. Other growth in the area projected by the existing General Plan would continue to occur with the No Project Alternative, but this alternative was not assumed to contribute to cumulative development. The No Project Alternative does not foreclose BRSPA development at a later time but assumed maintenance of the status quo for the foreseeable future for comparison with the project and other EIR alternatives. This means that, in addition to no development occurring, prevailing ("baseline") site conditions also would persist unabated or unmitigated.

As the writer observes, according to Environmental Planning and Information Council v. County of El Dorado, CEQA's "no project" requirement also could mean buildout of a site under existing land use designations or zoning. The EIR's General Plan Alternative assumes that the entire BRSPA would be


2 Environmental Planning and Information Council v. County of El Dorado, 131 Cal.App.3d 354.
developed consistent with the current General Plan land use designations and zoning classification which would allow development of 1,707 housing units and provides for a "grid" circulation pattern.

Contrary to the writer's suggestion, the concepts of "no development" and "development according to existing zoning and General Plan designations" are not synonymous. Because evaluations of each reveal different information, the EIR examines both and permits readers to compare the differences in outcome -- between these alternatives themselves, among all the alternatives analyzed, and with the Big Ranch Specific Plan. The EIR distinguishes between the two concepts and, in assessing both, addresses both the legal and informational requirements of CEQA which an analysis of the No Project Alternative alone, the General Plan Alternative alone, a "consolidated" No Project-General Plan Alternative, or a "true" No Project Alternative (the writer's words) would fail to accomplish. EIR Exhibit 5.6-1 (pages 263-264) shows that the General Plan Alternative would result in more significant and significant unavoidable impacts than would be expected with either the No Project Alternative or adoption and implementation of the Big Ranch Specific Plan.

**Comment 16-4** The comment expresses an opinion about the pattern and density of development provided by the Big Ranch Specific Plan Land Use Plan in relation to two-fold policies of the existing General Plan that the Rural / Urban Limit (RUL) "defines the limits of urban development under the General Plan" (EIR page 48) and that the City should "provide a variety of housing types by tenure and price in all residential areas, compatible with the character of the area" (EIR page 48).

One impetus for the planning process initiated for the BRSPA was the City's determination that prevailing densities permitted by the existing General Plan land use designations and zoning classifications were inappropriately high for that part of the City in particular and compared with the lower densities recently being approved elsewhere in Napa. The introductory background discussion to the EIR's analysis of alternatives (pages 226-227) explains that densities higher than currently permitted by the General Plan would be unacceptable and, therefore, would not constitute reasonable or feasible alternatives. The planning process underway demonstrates that General Plan densities are considered unacceptable and, therefore, only were analyzed to comply with the requirement to assess the General Plan Alternative (see the immediately preceding response to Comment 16-3). Accordingly, this aspect of defining the appropriate density for the BRSPA generally was resolved before undertaking the planning process and preparing the EIR.

The EIR (pages 49-50) also reports on the General Plan update process, as of the EIR's publication. The EIR states that policies would "preserve the existing RUL and encourage infill development" and notes that

The Concept Report ³ does identify a handful of small areas where the RUL could be expanded, including an area just east of Big Ranch Road between the Salvador Channel and Trancas Street. The Concept Plan identifies the Salvador Channel as an appropriate permanent physical boundary for Napa in this part of the City. The Draft Specific Plan would not modify the RUL, and the possible impacts of doing so are not evaluated in this report.

**Comment 16-5** The comment expresses an opinion about the merits of the Big Ranch Specific Plan

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³ Concept Report, City of Napa General Plan Update, City of Napa Planning Department, March 1994. As this Final EIR was being prepared, the Draft General Plan was nearing completion for publication for public review. The two documents are on approximately parallel schedules.
Land Use Plan compared with the plan illustrated for the Property Owners' Alternative. For a different opinion, the writer and readers are referred to Letter 43 submitted by the immediately adjacent neighbor who lives outside the BRSPA.

**Comment 16-6** Mr. VanWinden's parcel is the only parcel subject to new development in the BRSPA which is directly adjacent to the RUL, without at least an intervening road between it and the land outside the RUL. The other properties near the RUL are adjacent to the eighty-foot wide corridor of Big Ranch Road which acts as sufficient buffer consistent with the General Plan and Specific Plan policies of conserving Napa's agricultural resources.

**Comment 16-7** The EIR does not indicate that the Big Ranch Specific Plan is preferable to the Property Owner's Alternative. As the EIR notes (page 3), it evaluates environmental impacts of the conceptual plan identified by the City Council in September, 1992. Other alternatives may be environmentally superior or better achieve the objectives of property owners but may not achieve other goals and objectives of the Plan as established by the City Council.

**Comment 16-8** See responses to Comments 16-4 and 16-5.

**Comment 16-9** See response to Comment 16-7.

**Comment 16-10** See responses to Comments 16-4 and 16-5.

**Comment 16-11** See response to Comment 16-7.
Napa, California
May 20, 1996

Letter 17

City of Napa
Planning Department
150 1st Street
Napa, Calif.

Re: the DEIR for the Bynum Ranch Specific Plan

On June 30, 1995, the planning Director of the City of Napa indicated in a memo to the city Manager indicating that the Bynum Specific Plan and DEIR were among the top priorities of the planning department. These items were listed as below the general plan update, which was listed 1st as "clearly the most important project" for the department's priorities from July - December 1995. At this date, none of the general plan was complete enough to circulate to the public. However, the planning department is proceeding with the Bynum Specific Plan.

The question of why this has priority over the general plan is one that hasn't been answered fully.

As Supervisor Mike Oglyon at the interest of LATCO, of which he is Chairman, raised a question of the possibility of the City of Napa proceeding with the annexation of that county "hardline" with the city limits of Napa. The matter was on the public agenda for the May 21, 1996 meeting, the city council with little discussion of problems "decided not to take any action."

The question is "Why is the annexation perceived to be an "efficient" way to provide community services? Why is the city looking at the annexation of county area in an "undeveloped" area before proceeding with the existing problem, considering the growth inducing factors of the DEIR?"
LETTER 17
MURIEL FAGIANI

Comment 17-1 The Big Ranch Specific Plan project began in 1991, preceding the General Plan update. The history of this project is described in the introduction to the Specific Plan. The City Council and Planning Director establish the priorities of the Planning Department. The Big Ranch Specific Plan Area (BRSPA) has long been identified as one of those priorities.

The City's policy on development and annexation is set by the City Council, not by LAFCO. The City's General Plan identifies the BRSPA as an area subject to development and requiring further planning before development. Therefore, the draft Specific Plan and EIR are consistent with the General Plan. The EIR recommends measures to mitigate growth inducing aspects of approving and implementing the Specific Plan. This EIR does not evaluate alternative citywide development patterns.
Questions and Comments Regarding DEIR Big Ranch Area

Who is funding the EIR draft? Is it the City, potential developers, or a group of property owners? What is the cost of this draft?

I walk daily along the Garfield path over the Salvador Channel bridge and have done so for over 15 years. Any and all work that has been done upstream has had significant effect on stream channel, adjacent vegetation, and native wildlife. The waterfowl are disappearing. Channel flows become greater and swifter with less rainfall and with heavy rains flooding of bridge and baseball parking lot are frequent. Another bridge on the channel which will accommodate the proposed traffic resulting from the Sierra/Garfield through street will undoubtedly have more adverse effect on the channel, its course and its inhabitants. How can this adversity be minimized?

In the EIR Draft, “TRAFFIC” terms, patterns, general information present conflicting prospects.

It seems the Draft suggests “Relieve Traffic Congestion at the expense of the Residential Sierra Neighborhood.”

The “livability on Jefferson” was specified on pg 23. What about the LIVABILITY on Sierra/Garfield when the Through Street becomes the fastest, most direct route from Big Ranch Road to Jefferson or HIway 29? Certainly, the existing number of autos to travel the new Through Street would be sufficient to question the quality of LIVABILITY on it. Will the additional traffic of the approximately 1000-1500 autos provided by the proposed development be considered in the final EIR Report?

Grid Circulation addresses noise, air quality etc. on the residential streets, but fails to address two very important factors:

1. Traffic safety. The study cited was done in 1992. Can we expect a new study of traffic on Sierra and each of the other streets which will be changed in this process? Will there be a tonnage limit on commercial vehicles traveling Sierra/Garfield?

2. Quality of Life. How will the Property Values along the residential streets be effected?

Sincerely, Florence Greer
3679 Parrett Ave
Napa, CA 94559
LETTER 18
FLORENCE GREER

Comment 18-1 This EIR was prepared under Agreement Number 6651, dated June 6, 1994, between the City of Napa and the environmental consultant, Nichols • Berman. The City obtained funding from some owners and prospective developers of land located in the Big Ranch Specific Plan Area (BRSPA) under separate contracts with those individuals. The total contract amount of Agreement Number 6651 was $74,955, of which $64,280 was allocated for preparation of the EIR (Administrative Draft, Draft, and Final EIR documents) and $10,675 was allocated for preparation of the separate Financing Plan. Agreement Number 6651 subsequently was amended three times in 1995 (and increased by $21,120) to expand the scope of work not covered by the original June 1994 agreement. The scope was amended to conduct additional biologic, hydrologic, and engineering analyses requested by the City in order to provide technical assistance needed by City staff to prepare the Big Ranch Specific Plan.

Comment 18-2 The EIR (page 113) discusses anticipated impacts on wetlands. Mitigation Measure 4.5-5(a) would provide for detailed review of improvement plans affecting wetland resources, including stream crossings. The mitigation measure states that roadway crossings should be designed to minimize the extent of fill and disturbance to creek channels, provide adequate clearance to maintain use of the channel for wildlife movement, and be free of impediments which could obstruct movement by amphibians and fish. The preliminary design information available from Chuck Shinnaman, who would construct the bridge on Garfield Lane, indicates that the new bridge would have a greater floodway under crossing area than the existing bridge. This would improve the flood situation in the immediate vicinity of the bridge.

Comment 18-3 Please see the response to Comment 13-1. Any increase in traffic on a residential street is not desirable for those who live along it and may affect their quality of life. The amount of peak hour traffic on Sierra Avenue and Garfield Lane is likely to increase considerably over that experienced there today. Assuming the worst case scenario discussed in response to Comment 13-1, the number of traffic could be as many as 370 peak hour trips (or 3,700 average daily trips (ADT)). Although this "worst case" still would be a relatively small amount for a designated collector street (collectors generally have 5,000 to 10,000 ADT), this amount of traffic would have a considerable impact on adjacent residents. According to the Appleyard analytical framework discussed by the EIR (pages 239-240), 3,000 daily trips exposes residents to some level of traffic and noise impacts. However, while the perceived impacts on the neighborhood could be substantial, the issue in an EIR is whether the resulting impact represents a level which could be considered a significant environmental impact. The "worst case" ADT is low for a collector and would not generate noise or other environmental impacts inconsistent with other collector streets lined by residences in the City, and no additional mitigations are recommended. Nevertheless, the mitigation to add traffic controls, suggested in response to Comment 13-1, should reduce the traffic in the corridor below the 300 trip threshold.

Comment 18-4 Although the analysis for the Big Ranch Specific Plan was conducted in 1992, it accounted for planned development and the extension of Jefferson Street (now completed). There has been little additional change in development patterns or conditions in the area which would warrant additional traffic analysis.

Comment 18-5 Most heavy commercial vehicles are required to remain on truck routes unless delivering to a local address. Sierra / Garfield is not a designated truck route within the City.
Comment 18-6  Access and egress to collector streets from driveways usually are not controlled. Local intersections typically are controlled by stop-signs, if warranted by the City’s Public Works Department.

Comment 18-7  According to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), an economic impact itself is not considered to be a "significant effect" on the environment. Section 21068 of CEQA states that an effect is significant if it results in a "substantial, or potential[ly] substantial, adverse change in the environment". Section 15131(a) of the State CEQA Guidelines states that "economic or social effects shall not be treated as significant effects on the environment. (Environmental documents prepared pursuant to CEQA focus on determining "significant effects" in order to identify measures required to mitigate impacts by substantially reducing the effects to less-than-significant levels or avoiding the impacts altogether.) As described in response to Comment 8-1, economic impacts are only considered significant when they result in a physical effect on the environment. That response explains that it would be speculative to assess economic impacts of BRSPA buildout on property values. Section 15144 of the State CEQA Guidelines acknowledges that drafting an EIR or preparing a Negative Declaration necessarily involves some degree of forecasting. While foreseeing the unforeseeable is not possible, an agency must use its best efforts to find out and disclose all that it reasonably can.

Section 151454 of the Guidelines continues

If, after thorough investigation, a Lead Agency finds that a particular impact is too speculative for evaluation, the agency should note its conclusion and terminate discussion of the impact.

The City cannot speculate about issues largely influenced by economic trends which cannot be reliably predicted, and the EIR does not do so.
Ladies and Gentlemen:

We would like to voice our strong opposition to the Big Ranch Specific Plan. We have some concerns that we would like answered.

1. "It" another thru road needs to be opened as an access to the Big Ranch Road area, why is the Sierra-Barfield connection planned, instead of using Trower Ave. as the main connection?

Trower Ave. is already wide enough to accommodate additional traffic, there are bike lanes currently on that street, and there is already a traffic light at Highway 29. Since the fire station is on Trower and Borax, opening Trower to Big Ranch Road would give the firetrucks direct access to the surrounding area without having to zig zag thru a residential area.

2. There is already a bridge at Jefferson and Trower Ave. over the Calaveras Channel. A new bridge would be necessary on the proposed Sierra Ave.-Barfield connection, is this additional cost using funds in a fiscally responsible manner? Since we walk over the present bridge at Barfield Lane, we know that flooding occurs there whenever there are heavy rains, why would you want to develop an area that already has a problem?

3. Since I teach at Vintage High School, I have a major concern with the fact that you are proposing a major thoroughfare thru the school campus. I am aware that two classes leave the main campus and walk to the Vintage Farm each hour. Another group of students are also returning from the farm to the main campus. During the day MANY (500-300 students walking each way) would be crossing your proposed street at Sierra-Barfield. Have you considered the potential safety problems that will arise with this volume of students using that area each day? This would not be a problem if Trower was extended to Big Ranch Road.

4. Vintage High School has many students bussed from South County. Many of these students arrive early and then walk to Luckys or to the 7-11 Store on Sierra for snacks or breakfast. If Sierra-Barfield is completed as planned, Sierra would then become an major access road to the freeway. As you know, there are no sidewalks on Sierra Ave.
first letter to the freeway. Now that is not a problem, but if that street becomes a thoroughfare as proposed, it will become a major problem. Widening that street would mean that the large old trees presently there would have to be removed, in order to accommodate the traffic and pedestrian traffic on that street. This would become an environmental disaster and is totally unnecessary. Questions about safety plans are made for this problem and for the environmental impact that would result from the tree removal. (This may not happen immediately, but we all know that in future years it would have to be done.) Would you want to create this problem when extending Sierra St. or not, because NONE of these problems.

Has the Napa Valley College District been consulted on the potential of a proposed Sierra/Griffiths? I can't believe that they would support a road through the campus. We have concerns for the students, but these.

we would appreciate a response to our specific questions, not just a form letter.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Artie and Ira Mc
1504 Sierra Ave.
Napa, California 7588
Comment 19-1 Trower Avenue is a designated arterial and was planned as a through street to Big Ranch Road in the City's current General Plan. The City Council reviewed more than ten alternative circulation plans during its several-month review of concept plans before selecting the alternative presented in the Big Ranch Specific Plan in September, 1992. At that time, the Council determined that Trower should not go through to Big Ranch Road. Therefore, adoption of the Specific Plan would require the simultaneous adoption of a General Plan Amendment to reflect this change. Among the factors considered by the Council in making its preliminary selection of an alternative were the impacts of a through arterial on Big Ranch Road and the possible growth inducing impacts of an arterial close to the RUL.

Comment 19-2 The City's General Plan shows Sierra / Garfield as a connected "collector" street requiring the construction of a bridge. A future road and bridge at this location would be designed to avoid exacerbating any existing flooding problem in the area.

Comment 19-3 See the response to Comment 13-1.

Comment 19-4 The Big Ranch Specific Plan proposes to close the median at SR 29 and Sierra, thereby limiting access from SR 29 to Sierra and allowing only northbound access to SR 29 from Sierra. It is not clear why the commenter believes that connecting Sierra to Garfield would affect student travel patterns to nearby stores. The traffic analysis indicates that there would be relatively little impact on the segment of Sierra west of Jefferson with implementation of the Specific Plan if the median is closed as recommended in the Plan and EIR.

Comment 19-5 As noted in response to Comment 18-2, the EIR (page 113) discusses anticipated impacts on wetlands. Mitigation Measure 4.5-5(a) would provide for detailed review of improvement plans affecting wetland resources, including stream crossings. The mitigation measure states that roadway crossings should be designed to minimize the extent of fill and disturbance to creek channels, provide adequate clearance to maintain use of the channel for wildlife movement, and be free of impediments which could obstruct movement by amphibians and fish.

Comment 19-6 The School District received copies of the Draft Specific Plan and EIR.
May 15, 1996

Planning Department  
City of Napa  
1600 First Street  
Napa, CA 94559

Re: Proposed Land Uses North of Trancas Street and East of Big Ranch Road

Dear Sir:

I would like to add my voice to the opposition against the proposed land uses north of Trancas Road, east of Big Ranch Road, west of Jefferson Road, and south of Trower Avenue. I am a resident and live at 98 Valley Club Circle, which is right in the middle of the proposed land uses.

The proposed extension of Trower Avenue to Garfield Lane, Sierra Avenue to Garfield Lane, Villa Lane to Garfield Lane, and other proposed roads would substantially and adversely affect our neighborhood. The increased traffic would not only affect the peace and tranquility of our neighborhood but would pose an increased danger to the children who live there.

Additionally, the proposed change of the Gasser Ranch House area to high density residential and of other areas to high density residential and medium density residential will unalterably change the neighborhood, affect the enjoyment of our property, and reduce property values.

I urge you to defeat this proposal.

Very truly yours,

David H. Hines

DHH:kes
Comment 20-1 Implementation of the Big Ranch Specific Plan would increase traffic in the area, as described in the EIR. While there is some correlation between increased traffic and traffic-related safety concerns, the traffic projected to result from implementing the Specific Plan would be typical of residential neighborhoods and would not create an unusual safety concern. Please see the response to Comment 15-1.

Comment 20-2 The comment expresses an opinion about the merits of the Big Ranch Specific Plan Land Use Plan for part of the Big Ranch Specific Plan Area (BRSPA). The comment concurs with the views articulated in Letter 8, and the writer is referred to responses to Comments 8-1 and 18-7.
The Planning Director,  
City Hall,  
Napa, CA.  

NAPA, May 13, 1996

Letter 21

Dear Sir:

Your office or the City Council asked for public comment regarding the proposed plan to create a new development within the boundaries of the Big Ranch Road, Trower St., Garfield Lane, Trancas, and Jefferson portions of Napa.

I believe the plan is ill-conceived, full of complexities, a future nightmare traffic problem, and entails the construction of far too many residences for the area concerned. My immediate concern as a resident of the Napa Valley Club is with the proposed widening of Garfield Lane and its extension across the tributary creek to the westerly street now separated by the Vintage High School property.

Garfield Lane in its present width is an extremely important street for a number of reasons: 1) It serves as a valuable vehicular approach to the City League Ballpark, and is safe and restricted in its traffic flow. 2) It is invaluable for bikers, walkers, and joggers — a safe and most desirable area utilized by hundreds of such citizens each day. It also is utilized by scores of physical education classes from Vintage High School as an exercise outlet along Big Ranch road, then down Garfield and back to the high school grounds.

All of this would be impacted, affected and damaged by an extension and widening of this road. The increased density from new residents would mandate a huge increase in traffic along Big Ranch Road, especially where it would intersect with the proposed Trower Street extension. As it stands even now, Big Ranch Road has become a dangerous, heavy-travelled, and high-speed thoroughfare, hardly if ever patrolled or under the surveillance of either City Police or Highway Patrol. It is very rare indeed to see patrol cars of either jurisdiction along this road. The speed limit is exceeded routinely. It is dangerous because of its two lanes and very narrow width for walkers, joggers or any pedestrians to utilize. Instead of a country road it has become a three-mile-long speedway and a dangerous substitute for heavily traveled Highway 29 for the extent of its three miles-plus north-south length. Imagine what the impact of
hundreds of new residents in the proposed plan under consideration would add to the already over-burdened two-lane road. It also is obvious that along with the Trower Street intersection, if Garfield Lane is widened and extended it also would require a second, expensive traffic control light. I have not even gone into the expensive and obvious necessity to construct a sturdy bridge across the creek to allow for fire engines, heavy delivery trucks, etc.

Weighing all of these alternatives, what is the municipal advantage of adding hundreds of homes, bridges, traffic lights, pedestrian and cyclist hazards to the area? Building for the sake of building or development for the sake of greater urbanized population, and the widening and extending of streets so that Napa can boast a larger urban population, hardly makes sense. Both county and city residents should make their wishes known. It is hoped that the crushing defeats recently of the W and X propositions will be taken into consideration by the municipal authorities concerned, because added tax revenue balanced against heavy expenditures, and public safety are simply not enough reason to proceed with such a undesirable development and ill-conceived plan. As tax-paying citizens we expect more from our governing body. As one person recently said: "What? The Big Ranch development project again?"

Respectfully,

Julius Jacobs, 45 Valley Club Circle, Napa
LETTER 21
JULIUS JACOBS

Comment 21-1 The Big Ranch Specific Plan Circulation Plan would extend Trower Avenue from its present dead-end at the western property line of the Van Winden parcel in an eastern direction and then south to Garfield Lane. Trower Avenue would not intersect Big Ranch Road. However, three alternatives analyzed in the EIR assume a Trower Avenue extension to Big Ranch Road -- the General Plan Alternative, Grid Circulation Alternative, and Optional Circulation Alternative.

Comment 21-2 Comment noted. Please see the responses to Comments 15-1 and 20-1.

Comment 21-3 Comment noted. The commenter notes his concern with increased traffic but does not indicate any failure of the EIR to evaluate this issue. The Big Ranch Specific Plan recommends several modifications to Big Ranch Road, including widening the road and other changes. As development occurs in the Big Ranch Specific Plan Area (BRSPA) and as the volume of traffic increases, there is a tendency for average speed to slow in response to the increased traffic and mix of drivers. Further, although the model does not currently indicate the need for additional traffic controls, over time any problems with speed and increased traffic are likely to be addressed by the installation of additional traffic controls which also would slow traffic. Finally, under the Plan, the unincorporated parts of the BRSPA ultimately would be incorporated into the City leading to more active enforcement of existing traffic laws and the ability of the City to reduce permitted speeds in the corridor.

Comment 21-4 The comment expresses an opinion about the merits of the Big Ranch Specific Plan, about aspects of the Plan (primarily involving the Circulation Plan), and about future development in the Big Ranch Specific Plan Area (BRSPA). The writer is referred to responses to Comments 8-1 and 12-2 which describe that the BRSPA presently is designated and zoned for development which could occur without adoption of the Big Ranch Specific Plan. Buildout of the BRSPA according to existing General Plan land use designations and zoning classifications could result in the addition of 1,707 new housing units, as assessed by the EIR’s General Plan Alternative (pages 236-242).

The EIR notes (page 1) that the BRSPA planning process included preparation of a Financing Plan, a separate document from the EIR and Big Ranch Specific Plan documents. The Financing Plan would establish a funding mechanism to pay for the installation of "backbone" infrastructure and utilities in the BRSPA with funds generated by BRSPA development fees, not paid by existing BRSPA residents or other City of Napa residents.
John Yost, Planning Director  
City of Napa Planning Department  
P. O. Box 660  
Napa, CA 94559

Dear Mr. Yost:

We would like to ask that the following questions regarding the Draft Big Ranch Specific Plan/EIR be addressed. The proposed extension of Trower Blvd. to join Garfield Lane seems in violation of General Plan policy. This extension is not a, "logical and reasonably direct path" to Big Ranch Road. It will create a sizeable increase in traffic on Garfield Lane, a lane currently used by high schoolers, elementary classrooms and joggers and walkers of all ages from the surrounding community. Where does the EIR address how the safety of these pedestrians will be protected?

Garfield Lane was intended for local residential access. The General Plan states that "incursions of unwanted through traffic" should be prevented—the current EIR does not address how this will be done. We'd like answers to our concerns and we'd like Trower to be extended DIRECTLY to Big Ranch Rd. in keeping with the General Plan.

Respectfully,

Steven & Janet Krupka
LETTER 22
JANET AND STEVEN KRUPKA

Comment 22-1  Please see the responses to Comment 15-1 and 20-1.

Comment 22-2  The City's General Plan designates Garfield Lane / Sierra Avenue as a collector street. Collector streets are not planned to be local streets but are intended to collect traffic from local streets and deliver it to the arterial network (such as Jefferson Street and Big Ranch Road). Please see the response to Comment 19-1 regarding Trower Avenue.
The Napa Planning Commission c/o
The City of Napa Planning Department
1600 1st Street
Napa, California

Bruce and Teresa Leino
3701 Parrett Avenue
Napa, California 94558
Tuesday, May 14, 1996

Re: Sierra Avenue Area Land Use Proposal

Dear Napa Planning Commission,

As homeowners and residents of property that borders Sierra Avenue, we want to voice the strongest opposition possible to the proposed addition of hundreds of ill-suited new homes to this neighborhood. We also emphatically oppose the extension of Sierra and Trower Avenues to Garfield Lane. We feel that the construction of these new houses and the two new “Cross-Town Expressways” would serve only the worst interests of our existing neighborhoods, families and the entire Napa community. Some crucial considerations:

- The corner of Sierra and Jefferson is already a seriously over-burdened intersection. Adding more traffic to this bottleneck would just create more of an ugly traffic mess. Do we want more big-city traffic in Napa? I pray not. And how are Trancas Avenue and Jefferson Street going to handle the extra cars? Just take a drive around five-o’clock and you’ll have an answer!  

- Many of the families in our neighborhood have small children. We fear for the excessive traffic that would surely be speeding down Sierra Avenue at all hours if this proposal goes through. The relatively safe traffic situation in our neighborhood would be lost for the sake of “progress.” What a ghastly thought! We certainly didn’t envision having to live next to an expressway.

- What about the green belt south of Vintage High? Is Napa going to say goodbye to another beautiful open space? Will the power of money again speak louder than the preservation of natural, wide-open spaces, full of wildlife and vegetation which benefit all Napa? Don’t we all appreciate the “in-the-country” feeling that Napa affords its lucky citizens? Think about what we’re losing here!

- What will happen to the flood waters that have made a habit of appearing every few years? Housing developments sitting on top of a natural flood plain are a disaster waiting to happen. It is nonsense to over-pave an already flood-prone area. How will this new development give us more natural drainage? It is now dangerously insufficient. Take a look at what happened last year to the newly-developed areas in the southern region of Sacramento and you’ll see the adversity that poor planning can bring.

Please consider our arguments against this greed-driven, foolish proposal. Reject it in its entirety.

Sincerely,

Bruce and Teresa Leino

Bruce and Teresa Leino
Comment 23-1 Please see the responses to Comments 9-1, 13-1 and 15-1.

Comment 23-2 Please see the responses to Comments 18-3 and 20-1.

Comment 23-3 As noted in response to Comment 12-3, the Big Ranch Specific Plan would retain both Garfield Park and Vintage Farm south of Vintage High School and also would provide policies for development on private land contiguous to the Salvador Channel.

EIR Exhibit 2.2-1 shows both Garfield Park (P) and Vintage Farm (PQ), and the EIR text (page 16) states that the Plan would not change their land use designations, except to designate about ten acres of Napa Valley Unified School District land adjacent to Vintage Farm land from RL-6 (permitting Residential Low density development) to Public / Quasi-Public District (PQ).

Northwest and upstream of Garfield Lane, the BRSPA segment of the Salvador Channel crosses public land, and southeast and downstream of Garfield Lane the Salvador Channel is adjacent to privately-owned land. The EIR (page 13) reports that one objective of the Big Ranch Specific Plan would be to "conserve and protect the critical natural resources of the area, especially the Salvador Channel, Bel-Air / Gasser Tributary, and other riparian corridors (emphasis added)." The EIR (page 18) further reports that Salvador Channel alterations would involve interrelated hydrologic and biologic efforts to accommodate flood control functions while protecting riparian habitat values in and adjacent to the channel. Approval and implementation of the Draft Specific Plan would initiate no changes by the City but would establish criteria for individual owners of property along the channel to meet when developing their parcels on a project-by-project basis (emphasis added).

The EIR's hydrology and biological resource analyses evaluated impacts and identified mitigation measures related to the Salvador Channel, including Mitigation Measures 4.4-3 (pages 96-97) and 4.5-2(c) (pages 109-110).

Comment 23-4 Mitigation Measure 4.4-3 provides for controls on development within the regulated 100-year floodplain to protect against just the situation cited in the comment. Mitigation Measures 4.4-2 and 4.4-4 address increases in site peak flow rates and the potential channel instability which could result.
May 13, 1996

Planning Commission
City of Napa
955 School
Napa, CA 94559

Re: Big Ranch Plan

According to your 4/10/91 Notice of Scoping meeting on the Big Ranch Plan, the catalyst for the preparation of the Big Ranch Specific Plan was the 40 acre Gasser Ranch Project. The Beck Development Company was to fund the Specific Plan, Financing Program and EIR subject to development agreement which establishes a payback program from other projects in the plan area.

It is my understanding that the Gasser project is not presently active. If that is the case, what is the catalyst to reactivate the Big Ranch Plan and who is going to fund the Plan?

24-1

Based on the recent negative vote on real estate projects, does it make any sense to find out if the people of Napa want the Big Ranch Plan before we spend money and energy on something that is not wanted in Napa?

If you visit downtown Napa, it is very apparent that our infrastructure is in very bad shape. Doesn't it make sense that we improve downtown Napa, which is very important, before we undertake projects like Big Ranch?

Very truly yours,

Lawson Martin
Comment 24-1 The writer's understanding is correct that the City undertook the planning process for the entire Big Ranch Specific Plan Area (BRSPA) after receiving an application from the Beck Development Company to develop the Gasser Ranch, that the Beck Development Company provided the original funding to the City to carry out the planning process, and that the Beck Development Company subsequently withdrew its application. Other landowners / prospective developers had discussed projects with the City for their parcels elsewhere in the BRSPA before the City initiated the planning process, and those landowners / prospective developers voluntarily delayed their projects pending preparation of a Big Ranch Specific Plan. Those other landowners / prospective developers remained interested in pursuing their projects after the Beck Development Company abandoned plans for the Gasser Ranch. The O'Brien Group then formulated plans for the Gasser Ranch. The Property Owners' Alternative (EIR pages 248-260) reflects the O'Brien Group, Shinnamor Property, and Johnson / Big Ranch Road Investors Property projects discussed with City staff plus informal discussions of other landowners / prospective developers with staff during the planning process.

The City of Napa funded formulation of the Big Ranch Specific Plan (prepared by Planning Department staff members), and a group of BRSPA landowners and prospective developers provided funds to the City to pay for the environmental studies needed to prepare the Plan and EIR (prepared by the environmental consultant, Nichols • Berman), as described in response to Comment 18-1. The overall planning process also involved independent formulation of a BRSPA Financing Plan developed as a separate document from the Plan and EIR, as described in response to Comment 21-4. The Financing Plan establishes a funding mechanism to pay for installation of "backbone" infrastructure using fees generated by BRSPA development. Development of these BRSPA facilities would not use City funds or divert money from other parts of Napa.
Mr. Yost  
Napa City Planning Department  
16200 1st Street  
Napa, CA 94559

Reference: Environmental Impact Report, Big Ranch Road Site Plan.

Dear Sir:

We understand the plan, as currently written, proposes to widen Big Ranch Road using our front yard. In addition, plans call for extension of sewer and water lines to the North of our home. These lines are for service to proposed new homes to be constructed north and west of our property. They are being installed without serving the city residents like us already located along Big Ranch Road.

Our home is and has been a part of the City of Napa. Big Ranch Road, immediately in front of our home, is outside the city limits. Traffic already travels at [or often above] the lawful 50 mph limit, imposing significant risk of collision and noise disturbance to city residents entitled to quiet enjoyment of their private property. Despite our status as city residents for some years, we still do not enjoy the benefit of city water or city sewer service. We cope instead with a private well for drinking water and a private septic waste disposal system.

We propose that:

1. If expansion of Big Ranch Road is really necessary, then use the open land on the east side of the road, not front yards on the west side. Please note that along most of its length the graded surface of Big Ranch Road divides private, city homes on the west side from agricultural lands on the east side. Any widening of the roadway to the west of the existing Big Ranch Road would impose catastrophic loss of value and extreme danger to existing west side homes, our home included. Concern for the environment and simple economic sense dictate that road widening be on the east side. Open grass areas, walnut trees, Christmas trees and grape vines must suffer the expansion before city residents are forced to accept the dangers to children playing in extremely diminished yards and the noise of truck and automobile traffic almost in the front room of lovely homes, and the destruction of the treasured plants and trees of well-tended front yards.

2. If building new homes north of existing Napa city homes necessitates extending water and sewer service past existing city properties, then the city of Napa should certainly serve first, any homes already a part of the city first. Environmental considerations should be enough to mandate such a conclusion but beyond those, justice and equity demand service to city residents before invitations be offered to others.

Please consider our proposals and report your conclusions to us so we may act appropriately.

Sincerely,

Ronald G. Metcalf  
Thomas Riley  
Nancy R. Mason  
Mary Riley

2129 Big Ranch Road  
Napa, CA 94558; phone: [707] 226 1350
LETTER 25

NANCY MAXSON, RONALD MAXSON, MARY RILEY, AND THOMAS RILEY

Comment 25-1  EIR Impact 4.6-2 (page 131-138) identifies off-site circulation conditions outside the Big Ranch Specific Plan Area (BRSPA) which would affect cumulative traffic impacts and assumes completion of the "Soscol / Big Ranch Connector" together with other improvement projects previously identified by the City's adopted General Plan. The "Soscol / Big Ranch Connector", not part of the Big Ranch Specific Plan Circulation Plan, would consist of "a four-lane arterial street with a left-turn lane (five lanes altogether) from a point near [south of] the Salvador Channel Bridge on Big Ranch Road approximately 0.125 to 0.25 mile north of Trancas Street to a junction with Soscol Avenue near La Homa Drive". This road widening would occur south of the writers' home at 2129 Big Ranch Road which is located north of the Salvador Channel Bridge on Big Ranch Road.

The Big Ranch Specific Plan also calls for limited widening north of the bridge to Garfield Lane in order to add bike lanes and a dual left-turn lane. Such widening would improve entering and exiting safety from Big Ranch Road homes, including the writers'. Such widening would occur largely within the existing right-of-way and could involve covering of the existing drainage ditch on the west side of the roadway.

EIR Exhibit 4.9-3 shows that 16- and eight-inch water lines would be constructed along Big Ranch Road from Trancas Street to Garfield Lane, in front of and north of the writers' home at 2129 Big Ranch Road, respectively. EIR Exhibit 4.9-5 also shows proposed sanitary sewer segments in front and north of the writers' home. The EIR (page 172) indicates that

Draft Specific Plan Policy PF/S 2 requires new BRSPA development to connect with the City water system and to protect existing wells from potential contamination or destruction (emphasis added).

The EIR (page 181) reports that Policy Resolution No. 27 of the City of Napa requires all projects to connect to the Napa Sanitation District for sanitary sewer service but also indicates that only improvements to existing buildings served by approved septic disposal systems and strictly limited new building improvements distant from NSD [Napa Sanitation District] facilities may be temporarily served by septic disposal systems if the continuing or proposed septic system service is approved by the health officer, subject to Article V of the City Zoning Ordinance (emphasis added).

Thus, the writers would have an opportunity to connect to City water service and probably would be required to connect to NSD sewer facilities unless temporarily exempted.

The BRSPA Financing Plan discussed in responses to Comments 21-4 and 24-1 would fund the extension of the facilities shown in EIR Exhibits 4.9-3 and 4.9-5, and the writers would be responsible for making their own connections. If the writers wished to connect to public water and sewer service under existing conditions (without the Big Ranch Specific Plan), they would be responsible for extending the desired facilities.

Comment 25-2  EIR Mitigation Measure 4.1-5 recommends adding a policy to the Big Ranch Specific Plan requiring any widening of Big Ranch Road in the BRSPA -- north or south of the Salvador Channel --
to occur on the west side of the roadway in order to prevent any encroachment in the County's agricultural zone which could reduce productivity and / or induce unplanned urbanization.

As noted in response to Comment 25-1, implementation of neither the Big Ranch Specific Plan nor General Plan would result in the widening of Big Ranch Road in the vicinity of the writers' home. The Big Ranch Specific Plan Circulation Plan contains no provisions related to Big Ranch Road, and the General Plan's "Soscol / Big Ranch Connector" would be located south of the Salvador Channel Bridge and south of the writers' home. As discussed in response to Comment 16-4, the EIR (pages 49-50), in reporting on the General Plan update process, notes that

The Concept Report ¹ does identify a handful of small areas where the RUL could be expanded, including an area just east of Big Ranch Road between the Salvador Channel and Trancas Street. The Concept Plan identifies the Salvador Channel as an appropriate permanent physical boundary for Napa in this part of the City. The Draft Specific Plan would not modify the RUL, and the possible impacts of doing so are not evaluated in this report.

If the General Plan update as ultimately approved and implemented reflects this RUL change, widening to build the "Soscol / Big Ranch Connector" could occur or: the eastern side of Big Ranch Road, as suggested by this comment, or could occur on both sides of the existing roadway.

If the updated General Plan does not contain and implement such an RUL change, the City would not have the authority to make roadway improvements on the east side of Big Ranch Road outside City jurisdiction in the unincorporated area of Napa County.

Comment 25-3 Same as response to Comment 25-1.

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¹ Concept Report, op. cit. As also noted in response to Comment 16-4, a Draft General Plan for public review was nearing completion as this Final EIR was being prepared.
Vin Smith, Associate Planner  
City of Napa Planning Department  
PO Box 660  
Napa, CA 94559

RE:- Draft EIR, Big Ranch Specific Plan

Dear Mr. Smith:

We, as two concerned citizens of the City of Napa, request that you make known to the Planning Commission our reactions to DEIR for the BRSP.

If the Sierra Avenue- Garfield Lane connection and Trower Avenue extension are to become arterials from Highway #29 to Big Ranch Road, as proposed, we register our strongest possible opposition, for these reasons:-

1. Make no mistake about it, no matter what you think to the contrary, both these roads will become arterials, and heavily travelled ones at that. Motorists are constantly seeking quicker ways of getting from northwest Napa to southeast Napa, and vice versa, by avoiding Trancas Street (and its multiple traffic lights) in any way possible. They will use these newly proposed arterials extensively, even to the point of reducing present traffic on El Centro Avenue.

2. This newly created surge of vehicles will reach its maximum impact between the proposed intersection of Trower Avenue and Garfield Road, somewhere west of Pheasant Lane, and Big Ranch Road. This Garfield Lane link will soon become a congested roadway with nothing to prevent it happening.

The more direct, and certainly the more logical approach, would seem to be to extend Trower Avenue straight to Big Ranch Road.

If there is concern over the possible necessity of having to widen Big Ranch Road isn’t that going to have to be done in the short term anyway? Sections of the affected strip are already in place, or proposed.

For the reasons above stated, we strongly endorse the alternate Grid Circulation Plan.

Yours very truly,

Katherine O. McChesney

Leonard W. McChesney
Comment 26-1  Please see the responses to Comments 9-1, 13-1, and 15-1. The traffic projected for Sierra / Garfield does not approach the traffic for a typical arterial which is 10,000-20,000+ trips. In fact, even under the "worst case" scenario described in the response to Comment 13-1, the amount of traffic would be relatively low for a typical collector (5,000-10,000).

Comment 26-2  The commentors note their opinion about the possible severity of the traffic problem. Please see the response to Comment 9-1. Please see the response to Comment 19-1 in regard to extending Trower Avenue to Big Ranch Road.

Comment 26-3  Widening of Big Ranch Road is proposed from Trancas to Garfield.
City Planning Department
1600 First Street
Napa, CA 94558

Dear Planning Commission:

This letter is to reference the present *Enviromental Impact Report for Big Ranch Specific Plan (City of Napa) 90-146 & 94-077-DEIR*.

As a Napa resident and homeowner for over twenty-three years, and as voting citizens of this fine town, both I and my husband take extreme objection to the present proposed land uses as shown to us by the enclosed copy (please refer to the attached). We have voted for low growth on all past issues, and most recently helped to defeat the Soscol project. What you propose to do with the above Specific Plan for Big Ranch Road is the most ludicrous of all! It would most certainly highly impact, as you show it, a low density residential neighborhood comprised mostly of young families, with young children, with HEAVY TRAFFIC FLOW, DECREASE PROPERTY VALUE, and INCREASE CRIME RATE TO THE AREA! We are appalled that a planning commission that so strongly opposes growth, and proposes to support the safe and low-crime rate of Napa, professing it to be a good place to raise children and retire in, would even take into consideration the above proposal.

A. With our police protection already not supporting excessive speeding down Trancas and Jefferson, how can you validate this proposal as safe to the neighborhoods of Bel-Aire and Garfield Lane?

B. With NO TRAFFIC LIGHTS to help allow exiting from the Bel-Aire neighborhood, or to help our children cross the already overflowing Jefferson (especially now that you have so generously extended it all the way over to Salvador), how do you propose to provide extra safety to our children, and offer to reduce what will most certainly increase collisions and speeding in our neighborhood?

C. During morning school hours, lunch, and afternoon dismissal, Jefferson is already difficult and dangerous to cross, what action do you propose to take to alleviate this situation, when you add even more traffic flow into the picture by your proposal?

D. Are there plans to increase police surveillance in the area by the impact this is sure to bring?

E. Are there plans to add already needed traffic lights along Jefferson?
F. Are there plans to help alleviate the teenagers who will now speed thru our neighborhood exiting out to Big Ranch Road, Jefferson, and the Freeway?

G. Why is a proposal being made that will have such a bearing impact on a family neighborhood of young children and retired people, being considered over TROWER AVE. access???? Especially, since Trower has already been designed and widen for heavier flowing traffic, is already receiving said traffic flow, and would have far less of an impact than Sierra??

H. If you come down Sierra, will you widen the streets, put in bike paths, and add sidewalks where none exist? Will stoplights be added to Diablo and Sierra, or where children cross for school?

This proposal is taking low density, estate residences, and medium density neighborhoods and homes and turning them into a high density, heavy traffic area. How can you consider doing this? Have you really thoroughly considered all the negative ramifications of this proposal? We strongly urge you to re-think this proposal and vote it down! Help to conserve, NOT destroy, the family atmosphere of our long-time, established neighborhoods.

Sincerely,

Sharon Kay McManus and Brady W. McManus
Exhibit 2.2-1
Proposed Land Uses

Legend:
ER Estate Residential
LR Low Density Residential
MR Medium Density Residential
HR High Density Residential
PQ Public, Quasi-Public
P Park
O Office
NC Neighborhood Commercial
GC General Commercial

Source: City of Napa
LETTER 27
BRADY AND SHARON McMANUS

Comment 27-1 The commentors note their concerns about project impacts but do not note any failure of the EIR to evaluate impacts. Traffic analysis is incorporated in the Big Ranch Specific Plan, and property values are an economic issue, not an issue evaluated in an EIR. There is no evidence that the project would lead to an increased crime rate in relation to the rest of the City.

Comment 27-2 The commentors note their concern with excessive speeds on some roads, but there is no evidence that current traffic speeds or accident rates in the Big Ranch Specific Plan Area (BRSPA) are excessive or unusual compared to the rest of the City. The traffic analysis does not indicate that the project would contribute to unusual safety concerns.

Comment 27-3 The Big Ranch Specific Plan proposes a traffic signal at the Jefferson / Trower intersection to address both traffic and pedestrians at this corner. Please see the response to Comment 27-1.

Comment 27-4 Please see the responses to Comments 27-3 and 27-2.

Comment 27-5 The EIR (pages 186-188) evaluates police protection impacts. However, because police protection is not considered an impact on the physical environment, no mitigation measures are recommended. Property taxes and other revenue from BRSPA development would be expected to allow for additional police services should the City Council conclude that such additional service is necessary to serve the area.

Comment 27-6 Please see the response to Comment 27-3.

Comment 27-7 There is no evidence that there would be a significant increase in traffic due to teenagers in the BRSPA as a result of the Specific Plan, although the routes they take may change due to the modified road network.

Comment 27-8 Please see the response to Comment 19-1 in regard to Trower Avenue.

Comment 27-9 No traffic signals currently are proposed along Sierra Avenue. No specific improvements currently are proposed for Sierra Avenue except in newly developed parts where sidewalks would be required. Please see the response to Comment 15-1.

Comment 27-10 Comment noted.
May 20, 1996

City of Napa
Planning Department
1600 First Street
PO Box 660
Napa, Ca 94559

Re: Big Ranch Environmental Impact Report - Comments

Dear Mr. Yost:

The O'Brien Group has received the above referenced Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Big Ranch Specific Plan. We have reviewed the document and submit the following comments:

General

The O'Brien Group's major concerns to date are with the Implementation Plan (phasing), the Financing Plan, infrastructure improvements, streetwidths, drainage and creek setbacks. Comments regarding these concerns are listed below as well as in forth coming comments on the Specific Plan and the Financing Plan.

The comments below are organized by chapter and page for ease of review and response for the EIR consultant.

Project Description

14 Figure 2.2-1 - This figure shows no Rubicon St. extension from Villa Lane to Valle Verde Dr. Figure 2.2-1 also indicates a Valle Verde Dr. extension to Villa Lane. As indicated later in the DEIR, this circulation pattern is not considered environmentally superior to that of the Property Owners' Alternative. Please see Transportation below for further discussion.

28-2 Figure 2.2-1 also needs to reflect that the HR zoning is south of the Gasser tributary.

Summary of Findings

29 MM 4.6-2 - See Transportation below.

30 MM 4.9-2 - See Public Services below.

Land Use

56 MM 4.1-5 - Refers to all streets within the Plan being designed to City standards. Language should be included in the DEIR that references the work done by a subcommittee of the Traffic Advisory Committee, Staff, and the Property Owners' with regards to reducing street/right-of-way widths for the Plan Area. In addition, text should also be included in the DEIR that states that the implementation/use of smaller street widths would result in the following benefits:
Transportation - the smaller the street the slower the speeds of travel and the more pedestrian oriented they become. Thus, the safer the street will be for children, walkers, and cyclists to transverse.

Hydrology - The less impervious surface (roads/sidewalks) the less runoff to the storm drain system/creeks will occur.

Aesthetics - The less street area (roads/sidewalks) the more open space and landscape area. In addition, the greater the street area the more urban and less rural looking the area will be.

Mitigation measures requiring the use of smaller street width designs should be incorporated in the aforementioned sections in order to assist in minimizing the impacts resulting from development within the Plan area.

Geology and Soils

75  **MM 4.3-1** - Please see Hydrology & Channel Stability - 96 MM 4.4-3

Please see Transportation - 126 Changes in Existing Transportation.

Hydrology & Channel Stability

96  **MM 4.4-2** - Mitigation measure 4.4-2 requires projects of four units or more draining directly or indirectly to the Salvador Channel or Gasser Tributary to provide enough stormwater detention capacity to detain post-project 100-year peak flows. Is this a standard Citywide policy? If not, why is this being required in the Plan area?

As a result of a site walk done a couple of years ago with Fred Botti, Department of Fish & Game (DFG), Jerry Cormack and Jim McCann of Planning, Mr. Naefro of Public Works, Bob Carlson of Parks and Recreation, a representative of Nichols-Berman, Bill Cramer of Beck Development and Chuck Shinnar mon, property owner, it was the general agreement that the setback for the Salvador Channel would consist of a 25' riparian corridor on both sides of the channel and a 20' pedestrian easement on one of the sides of the Channel. However, the EIR indicates setbacks of 50' - 150' on the westside of the channel and 100' - 150' on the eastside of the channel. Why is such a large setback now being required? In addition, please clarify how the 150' setback was derived. It should be noted that in some cases, on the Gasser property, the 150' setback extends beyond the 100 year flood zone.

Current conceptual plans developed by the O'Brien Group after consultation with Fred Botti of DFG and based on the aforementioned agreement indicate an average of a 100' setback from top of bank along the Salvador Channel and an average of a 50' setback from top of bank along the Gasser Tributary. We believe these standards meet or exceed the DFG's standards or any standard that had been previously discussed and/or agreed upon.

We are therefore requesting that the 150' setback along the Salvador Channel be modified to what was previously agreed upon (45'). We are also requesting that the 50' setback along the Gasser Tributary be modified to state that the minimum setback is 25' which would be consistent with the above agreement (25' for riparian and 20' for pedestrian. In the case of the Gasser Tributary no pedestrian trail is planned). In addition, we are requesting the final determination regarding either setback would be made by the Department of Fish and Game in conjunction with staff and the property owner as site specific development applications are made.

97  **MM 4.4-4** - Mitigation measure MM 4.4-3 indicates that a zero net fill policy is an acceptable way of minimizing potential flood impacts. However, MM 4.4-4 indicates that the enhancement alternative should be implemented for flood control. The two options result in very different impacts, environmentally and financially. Mitigation Measure MM 4.4-3 would result in a minimal disturbance to the Channel and minimal costs. Mitigation measure MM 4.4-4 would require a complete disturbance of the Channel and a major investment of money. It should also be noted that the zero net fill alternative (MM 4.4-3) is supported by the Department of Fish and Game.
Based on this, we would request that MM 4.4-4 - be removed or modified to be consistent with MM 4.4-3. This wording should also be included in the Specific Plan.

Biological Resources

114 MM 4.5-5(c) - Text should be modified to indicate that the developer should be responsible for implementing erosion control plan details not the civil engineer.

Transportation

126 Changes in Existing Transportation - Within Exhibit 4.6-7 the extension of Rubicon St. to Big Ranch Rd., the Rubicon Bridge over the Salvador Channel, and the extension of Valle Verde to Villa Ln. are shown as roadway improvements required to be constructed by new development. However, according to the DEIR, the Property Owners Alternative which does not contain any of these improvements is the most environmentally superior alternative and provides the best level of service. Also, the DEIR’s Biologist and Hydrologist (as it relates to the above mentioned improvements) indicate that the Property Owners’ Alternative is the preferred alternative. In addition to this, the City’s Fire and Police Departments and the City’s Transportation Advisory Committee have all identified these improvements as not necessary. Yet, the Specific Plan and DEIR indicate that the Property Owners’ Alternative is not the preferred Alternative. Please clarify how this was determined and why these roads have been deemed to still be necessary.

In addition, in September of 1995, Mr. Fred Botti of DFG reviewed the Property Owners’ Alternative circulation plan. Mr. Botti indicated that the Property Owners’ Alternative was preferable to earlier plans based on the following:

The more chopped up the tributary and channel became as a result of the street crossings the less valuable they were. As a result of this the Property Owner Alternative reflects two less crossings.

The value of the tributary would be enhanced if it was more ecologically and visually connected to the Salvador Channel. The Property Owners' Alternative shows the wetland mitigation area for the Gasser Development where the proposed Valle Verde Dr. extension was proposed by the Specific Plan.

Avoid significant native trees and vegetated areas. Two 30 inch oak trees are saved in the Property Owners Alternative as a result of not extending Valle Verde Dr. to Villa Lane.

Mitigation closer to the channel and in a larger contiguous area would be of greater value than mitigation spaced out along the tributary. The Property Owners' Alternative shows the wetland mitigation area for the Gasser Development where the proposed Valle Dr. extension was proposed by the Specific Plan. This will allow for a better visual and ecological connection between the two channels.

The Property Owners' Alternative also offers the following benefits:

Retention of a 300' stretch of Gasser Tributary that is removed by the Specific Plan.

Creek crossings are significantly reduced as a result of Rubicon St. being extended to Valle Verde Dr. and Valle Verde Dr. not being extended.

Retention of 2 - 30' Oak trees that were to be removed with the extension of Valle Verde Dr.

Replaces 5 lots that were east of Valle Verde Dr. with a wetland, riparian and upland mitigation enhancement area. This will increase the value of the tributary by making it more ecologically and visually connected to the Salvador Channel.

Access to the Harris property would be provided via the Rubicon Street - Valle Verde Dr. Connection.
Based on the above, there are no off-setting benefits, or need, satisfied by extending Valle Verde Dr. to Villa Ln., or by extending Rubicon St. from Valle Verde Dr. to Big Ranch Rd., or by building the Rubicon Bridge over Salvador Channel. We would request that the improvements be removed from the DEIR, Specific Plan and Financing Plan.

**MM 4.6-2** - The DEIR states that SR 29 needs to be widened to 3 lanes in each direction at its approach to Trower Ave. In addition, the DEIR states that a double left-turn lane for northbound SR 29 needs to be provided.

These improvements are regional improvements resulting from cumulative development throughout the City. The impacts resulting from the development of the Big Ranch Specific Plan, especially as development will occur over the next 10 - 15 years, are minimal. Any improvements at this location should be considered as a city-wide improvement and should therefore be funded as such.

**Public Services**

General - The O'Brien Group is in agreement that the necessary infrastructure needs to be available to meet the needs of new development. However, we feel that the proposed phasing/infrastructure plan does not take in to account that development will occur over a 10 - 15 year period of time or that development will occur within different sectors of the project area. For example, many of the water, sewer, and roadway improvements listed as Phase I improvements primarily support development in the northern end (north of Sierra/Garfield) of the Project area.

We are therefore requesting that language be included in the DEIR, Specific Plan and Financing Plan that states the following:

If a property owner wishes to develop, and the owner can provide the necessary infrastructure improvements prior to or concurrent with development, then that landowner shall be allowed to submit the necessary applications and move through the process.

In addition, the Phasing Plan should be modified to show the infrastructure necessary to accommodate development as it occurs either in the north end or south end and over a 10 - 15 year period of time.

Below, is a list of improvements that we feel would be necessary Phase 1 improvements for development to occur in the southern end (south of Sierra/Garfield) of the Plan area.

**MM 4.9-1 - Water**

The 24" line from Silverado Trail to Big Ranch Rd. be connected.

The 16' line from Trancas St./Big Ranch Rd. to Garfield Ln.

The 8" line proposed within Villa Lane be extended through to Garfield Ln.

**Note.** The line to Garfield could go via Villa Ln. subject to further testing and review by the City's Water Department.

See Attachment 1.

**MM 4.9-4 - Sewer**

The 12" line within the proposed Valle Verde Dr. be shown in the Villa Lane extension to the northern property line of the Gasser parcel.

The 12" line within the Rubicon St. extension to Big Ranch Rd. This line needs to be shown within the proposed Rubicon St. (right-of-way) to Valle Verde Dr., across to the Salvador Channel, and along the channel to Big Ranch Rd.
A 12" line from Villa Ln. to the existing 18" line along the Salvador channel.

The 8" line from Rubicon St. to Villa Ln.

See Attachment 2.

Road

Extension of Villa Lane to the northern boundary of the Gasser property.

Extension of Rubicon St. to Villa Ln.

See Attachment 3.

175  MM 4.9-2 - This mitigation measure indicates that as a result of new development 79.6 MGY of water will be used and the retrofitting of toilets will save 38.4 MGY. The DEIR then states that the new development would still represent a city-wide demand increase of 61.4 MGY. How was this number derived?

180  Figure 4.9-5 - Figure 4.9-5 should show a 12" sewer connection from Villa Lane to Big Ranch Rd. following the Salvador Channel.

Alternatives

230  Property Owners Alternative - In the DEIR this alternative is indicated as the Environmentally Superior Alternative. In addition, it is also indicated that this alternative will provide the best Level of Service (LOS C). How is it that the Grid Alternative provides a better overall service level at LOS D/F?

Valle Verde Dr. is planned as a dead end street without the construction of a cul-de-sac.

240  Analysis of General Plan Alternative - According to Exhibit 5.2-3 the Optional Circulation Alternative and Property Owners Alternative are equal with the Grid Alternative producing the highest mileage with traffic above 300 VPH. Why is the Optional Alternative preferred?

249  Exhibit 5.5-1 Valle Verde Dr. extension to Villa Lane and Rubicon St. extension from Valle Verde Dr. to Big Ranch Rd. needs to be removed from the exhibit.

252  Property Owners' Alternative - Impact Analysis

Below is a summary comparison, as concluded by the DEIR, of the impacts created by the Property Owners' Alternative vs the Specific Plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use</th>
<th>Similar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pop</td>
<td>Same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geo/Soil</td>
<td>Same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hydro</td>
<td>Same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veg</td>
<td>Same - with exception of perceived setback impacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans</td>
<td>Better - fewer bridges (only 2 channel crossings) and better level of service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noise</td>
<td>Same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>Same with the exception of Fire and schools (resulting from the increase in population) and Cultural (only if the Gasser Home is demolished which has not yet been determined).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the above summary which indicates that the impacts associated with the Property Owners' Alternative and the Specific Plan are very similar and in some cases (land use and transportation) the Property Owners' Alternative is better. How/why was the Property Owners Alternative not the preferred alternative?
Land Use - The DEIR notes that the extension of Villa Lane in the Property Owners' Alternative would result in the loss of parkland for right of way. It should be noted that the land in question is vacant unused land that could be declared as a surplus site and thus sold off as residential property. This right of way take should then be considered reasonable.

Loss of Mature Oaks and Riparian Habitat - How were the two mature Valley Oaks location determined?

Potential Impacts on Wildlife and Special-Status Taxa - The DEIR indicates a proposed lot should be eliminated to allow for the creation of the upper basin without disturbing the habitat along the channel. It should be noted that this lot is adjacent to where the tributary will be culverted so the loss of any habitat area is minimal.

Noise - The normal flight pattern for helicopters was previously mentioned as being along Trancas Rd.

Land Use - The DEIR states that there is no "rule-of-thumb" which indicates whether more or less distance would be effective in minimizing urban-rural conflicts. However, the DEIR author then concludes that more development equals greater conflict. How is one type of growth (Grid and Optional Circulation Alternatives) preferable than another (Property Owners' Alternative) when the difference in units is incrementally insignificant?

Without the benefit of having prepared conceptual land plans for the various options (similar to what was done for the Gasser Property) how can a fair comparison be made between the proposed Alternatives?

Cultural Resources - Loss of cultural resources is not determinable, at this time, in the Property Owners' Alternative - especially for the Gasser Property. Therefore, it would be premature to say that the Optional Circulation Alternative is the Superior Alternative.

We look forward to continuing to work with you and your staff as the Specific Plan review process continues.

If you have any questions or need clarification on any of the above, please feel free to contact me at (415) 377-0300.

Sincerely

Dean K. Mills
Forward Planner

Attachment 1 - Proposed Phasing Plan - Water
Attachment 2 - Proposed Phasing Plan - Sewer
Attachment 3 - Proposed Phasing Plan - Road

cc: Steve Zales, The O'Brien Group
Zeller, Hoff, & Zeller, Inc.
929 Randolph Street
Napa, Ca 94599-2997
LETTER 28
DEAN MILLS, O'BRIEN GROUP

Comment 28-1  Comment noted. The writer is correct in noting that the EIR’s analysis of alternatives found that the Property Owners’ Alternative would result in the fewest vehicle miles traveled (VMT) at the poorest service levels (LOS D-F) of the alternatives evaluated (page 258), that the Property Owners’ Alternative would result in residential street impacts very similar to the Draft Specific Plan’s circulation pattern (page 258), and, in terms of transportation alone, that the Property Owners’ Alternative would be the environmentally superior alternative (page 261). However, the comment leaves a misimpression by neglecting to mention the EIR’s overall conclusion (page 260), in consideration of all environmental topics not solely transportation, that
Of the five alternatives assessed in this EIR, the Optional Circulation Alternative would be the environmentally superior alternative.

Comment 28-2  EIR Exhibit 2.2-1 shows an eight-parcel area designated High Density Residential (HR), extending both north and south of the Bel-Aire/Gasser Tributary. Three weights of lines distinguish among parcel boundaries (lightest weight), proposed land uses (middle weight), and proposed roads (heaviest weight) and are used consistently throughout the EIR.

Comment 28-3 Mitigation Measure 4.1-5 should be revised to indicate that roads should be developed to City street standards unless an alternative street standard is approved by the Public Works Director, as stated in the Big Ranch Specific Plan (page T-18). The City has not adopted alternative street standards to date, although there has been substantial discussion about possible benefits and costs of such alternatives. This EIR has not evaluated the possible environmental benefits and costs of modified standards and, therefore, does not make a recommendation or include revised standards.

Comment 28-4 The detention capacity mitigation addresses the present unstable condition of the Salvador Channel through the Big Ranch Specific Plan Area (BRSPA). Not all drainageways/creeks in the City’s jurisdiction are in such a degraded condition. Moreover, any mitigation can be negated by the City if sufficient overriding cause is proved. Such proof could consist of computations showing that local (sub-watershed) two- to ten-year peak flow rates would not increase significantly following proposed development.

The reference to the California Department of Fish and Game’s (CDFG) suggested setback requirements contradicts the principles agreed upon by the principal landowners/prospective developers and their consultants, the City, and the EIR hydrologist at meetings in 1995. These meetings were held to provide the landowners/developers with a clear sense of the issues investigated in the Salvador Channel Flood Assessment. At that time it was clear that all parties understood why the expanded flood setbacks were necessary and how existing development plans would need to conform to the floodplain development restrictions in order to protect existing and future housing units from more severe flooding. This was particularly true to the Gasser/O’Brien reach which includes a secondary flood channel. This secondary channel only exists in the Gasser/O’Brien reach, and, therefore, the setbacks were more extensive along that reach.

The channel setbacks cited in the EIR were taken directly from the Salvador Channel Flood Assessment which is supported by hydraulic calculations. This evidence supersedes the minimum restrictions which
routinely are proposed by CDFG representatives. The CDFG recommendations are based on concerns over riparian habitat and have less to do with the hydrologic function of a channel and its active floodplain.

**Comment 28-5** Impact and Mitigation Measure 4.4-4 does not specifically address the issue of flood control. The impact/mitigation measure is entitled "Erosion, Sedimentation, and Channel Stability": It is true that the measures have different financial and environmental impacts. However, while the environmental impact of Mitigation Measure 4.4-4 would be adverse in the short-term (that is, a loss of some existing willow thicket), the mid- and long-term impact of the measure would be beneficial. After a true channel restoration, more diverse riparian vegetation can develop within the channel corridor and in a more stable hydrologic condition. A stable channel form also would reduce local erosion and downstream sedimentation impacts. There are significant potential allies for implementing such a channel enhancement, including the Napa County Resource Conservation District, CDFG's Fisheries Restoration Grant Program, and Regional Water Quality Control Board (erosion control grant funding). Again, note that the City can ignore any specific mitigation if it is convinced of the overriding benefit gained through the project(s). In discussions the EIR hydrologist had with the CDFG's Fred Botti, Mr. Botti also indicated support for a true channel restoration (that is, the enhancement alternative), as long as he could be assured that the resulting channel would not require frequent in-channel/floodplain vegetation maintenance (disturbance).

The proposed no net fill option would leave unstable banks and would not fully meet the General Plan objective of "preserving stream and riparian habitats in a natural, healthy state ...". The no net fill policy would leave the channel in its current highly disturbed state. Over enough time, the channel will tend to return to a stable state of a typical natural riparian corridor. However, this could take many years. The high cost of "re-engineering" the channel to hasten the natural restoration process and the difficulty in obtaining necessary permits have led to the "no net fill" alternative being considered a less-than-desired but acceptable alternative.

**Comment 28-6** Comment noted. In response to the comment, the EIR discussion of Responsibility and Monitoring under Mitigation Measure 4.5-5(c) (page 114) should be revised as follows:

Responsibility and Monitoring  Individual applicants' civil engineers would be responsible for preparing and submitting detailed erosion control plans to the City to review their effectiveness and adequacy of monitoring provisions before issuing grading permits. The civil engineers applicants' grading contractor would be responsible for implementing the plans, once approved.

**Comment 28-7** Same as response to **Comment 28-1**.

**Comment 28-8** Please see the response to **Comment 16-8**.

**Comment 28-9** The EIR identified the Trower / SR 29 intersection as a potential future problem that should be addressed in long-range planning for the City. As noted in the Big Ranch Specific Plan, projected conditions at Trower and SR 29 are unrelated to development in the Big Ranch Specific Plan Area (BRSPA), and, therefore, no mitigation is recommended.

**Comment 28-10** The phasing and financing of infrastructure improvements are still under discussion. However, certain areawide improvements would be prerequisites to virtually any further development in the BRSPA, as discussed in various parts of the Specific Plan and EIR. The Specific Plan sets forth the improvements and the EIR evaluates the potential environmental effects of providing or not providing the overall improvements. The EIR does not address the phasing or financing of those improvements.
but assumes they will be provided in a timely manner. After adoption of the Specific Plan, any property owner may apply to develop a property and make the case that a particular improvement identified as needed in the Plan would not be required before development of that particular property. The City will evaluate each project for its consistency with the Plan and for its conformance with meeting minimum standards.

**Comment 28-11** The commentor sets forth an alternative phasing plan which he believes would be more appropriate. Please see the immediately preceding response to **Comment 28-10**.

**Comment 28-12** In response to **Comment 6-1**, the total water demand shown in the table was corrected to reflect the amount given in the EIR text (page 175). The correct number is 99.8 million gallons per year (MGY). In response to **Comment 28-12**, the 61.4 MGY was derived as follows:

\[
99.8 \text{ MGY} - 38.4 \text{ MGY} = 61.4 \text{ MGY}
\]

**Comment 28-13** Exhibit 4.9-5 shows this connection schematically north of the Valle Verde connection to Villa Lane.

**Comment 28-14** Same as response to **Comment 28-1**. As the EIR notes (bottom of page 239), the grid pattern was somewhat better than others in relieving traffic in this already congested corridor, thereby having fewer miles traveled through congested intersections.

**Comment 28-15** Please see the response to **Comment 28-1**. The DEIR concludes (page 261) that the Property Owners Alternative is environmentally superior with respect to transportation (but not overall).

**Comment 28-16** Exhibit 5.5-1 is incorrect and should be revised to show the cul-de-sac noted by this comment. The cul-de-sac is an element of the writer's plan for this part of the BRSPA which would allow for proposed wetlands mitigation north of the cul-de-sac.

**Comment 28-17** The EIR selected the environmentally superior alternative from among all five alternatives studied (page 260). In addition to transportation, as discussed in response to **Comment 28-1**, the EIR reports (pages 260-262 and Exhibit 5.6-1) that some aspects of the Property Owners' Alternative would be superior to the other alternatives but not preferable to the Big Ranch Specific Plan and that, while both the Optional Circulation and Property Owners' Alternatives would result in the fewest traffic noise impacts on existing residential streets, the total amount of BRSPA development envisaged by the Property Owners' Alternative would make the Optional Circulation Alternative environmentally superior. Of the 11 environmental topics assessed, the EIR found the Property Owners' Alternative unreservedly superior in only one category (transportation) and the Optional Circulation Alternative fully superior in five categories, the most of all five alternatives analyzed.

**Comment 28-18** Exhibit 5.5-1 is incorrect and should be revised as indicated by Comment 28-18.

**Comment 28-19** Same as response to **Comment 28-17**.

**Comment 28-20** The comment is incorrect. The Villa Lane right-of-way would affect both developed and undeveloped Vintage Farm parcels. While the undeveloped parcel is vacant, Vintage Farm uses it to keep horses.

From the beginning of the BRSPA planning process, the Napa County Department of Education indicated that the County intends to continue operating Vintage Farm at its present location despite the
Exhibit 5.5-1
Property Owners Alternative

Legend:
- RL Residential (Low Density)
- MR Residential (Medium Density)
- HR Residential (High Density)
- ED Estate District
- P-Q Public/Quasi-Public
- POS Park & Open Space
- MO Medical Office
- CO Commercial Office
- CEN Expanded Neighborhood Commercial
- CR Creek Overlay District
- RH-25: CR-6
- RL-6: CR-6
- RM-9: CR-6
- P-Q: TI
- MO: TI
- CEN: TI
- North

Source: City of Napa
existing residential land use designation.\(^1\) There have been no subsequent indications during formulation and review of the Big Ranch Specific Plan or EIR that the County or Napa Valley Unified School District (which conducts programs at Vintage Farm) have any plans to discontinue existing programs.

There are numerous reasons for the County to keep Vintage Farm. One is the cost of acquiring an alternate location in Napa County where agricultural land values are high. It would be expensive to relocate, regardless of the potential development value of the County's BRSPA parcels, thus regardless of the revenue received from their sale. Another is the unavailability of candidate relocation sites nearby, thus in sufficiently close proximity to Vintage High School to represent a feasible alternative to the County's existing BRSPA parcels.

The EIR (page 253) characterized the loss of land at Vintage Farm as "equivalent to the loss of public parkland". (The comment omits equivalent.) According to the EIR (page 43), however, conversion of Vintage Farm would result in an actual loss of prime soils (Coombs gravel loam-0 to 2 percent slope), if the land were to be sold for residential development as the comment suggests. Conversion of this land would constitute a significant impact under CEQA, based on the criteria used by the EIR (page 52) which include "conversion of prime agricultural land to non-agricultural use or impairment of the agricultural productivity of prime agricultural land".

**Comment 28-21** The two mature oaks generally were located during field surveys by reviewing the topographic map of the Gasser Ranch site. These trees were located in areas identified as dense vegetation on the topographic map, and no engineered survey was performed to locate trunk locations accurately. EIR Mitigation Measure 4.5-2(c) (page 109) calls for detailed mapping of all tree trunks exceeding 12 inches.

**Comment 28-22** EIR recommendations (pages 257-258) about modifying the Gasser Ranch project were made to limit potential impacts on western pond turtle and general wildlife use of the Bel-Aire / Gasser Tributary. The recommendation to create a basin at the upper end of the tributary is intended to provide secure habitat for western pond turtle at the terminus of the modified open channel. The basin should be created without disturbing the existing riparian cover along the channel segment to be preserved. Habitat enhancement is recommended for both construction-related disturbance and the long-term effect of humans and pets on turtle use of the Bel-Aire / Gasser Tributary, not only the loss of the upper channel segment.

**Comment 28-23** The EIR (pages 156 and 164) reports that the Queen of the Valley heliport is adjacent to Trancas Street. The EIR (page 164) further describes that there are two approved flight paths to and from the heliport. One is via Trancas Street, but the second crosses the southwest part of the BRSPA. Weather determines which flight path is used.

**Comment 28-24** The comment expresses an opinion that the number of housing units assumed by the Property Owners' Alternative (876 units) is incrementally insignificant compared with the number assumed by the Grid and Optional Circulation Alternatives (792 units). The 84-unit difference represents ten percent more units and a corresponding increase in residential population living in closer proximity to the permanent agricultural zone with the Property Owners' Alternative compared with the

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Grid and Optional Circulation Alternatives.

**Comment 28-25** The introductory background discussion to Chapter 5 of the EIR describes the process used to identify alternatives for analysis, focusing on residential density and circulation as the primary issues of concern in prior discussions by City officials and the public. The EIR (page 225) acknowledges that the Property Owners' Alternative defined some site-specific development concepts at different levels of detail "but depart[s] from the Draft Specific Plan and all other alternatives primarily in terms of number of units and circulation patterns". The level of detail used to assess the other four EIR alternatives was applied to the Property Owners' Alternative except where additional site-specific definition of potential development concepts permitted greater in-depth analysis. More detailed site-specific analysis afforded identification of comparably detailed mitigation measures which may help the City streamline permit granting for individual development projects once proposed which the City may not be able to accomplish for parcels where future development concepts were less well defined. Development projects proposed after adoption of the Big Ranch Specific Plan which conform with the assumptions of the Plan examined in an accompanying EIR do not need additional environmental review. However, subsequent environmental review could be required if projects depart from the Plan's or EIR's assumptions.

**Comment 28-26** Two proposed O'Brien Company lots would correspond to one recorded archaeological resource, at least eight O'Brien Company lots would correspond to a second recorded resource, nine additional O'Brien Company lots would correspond to one archaeologically sensitive area, and at least three more O'Brien Company lots would correspond to a second sensitive area. For this reason, the EIR (page 260) states that

> Properties considered for development include archaeologically sensitive areas. Residential lots and channel restoration efforts are proposed where two known sites and two sensitive areas are located. Known and potential resources would be affected and would need to be protected during the development process.

In addition to identifying residential lots where known and potential resources are located, the Property Owners' Alternative assumes higher density development than the Big Ranch Specific Plan, Grid Circulation Alternative, or Optional Circulation Alternative. This would limit opportunities to avoid resources through site planning compared with the flexibility lower density would permit.
May 13, 1996

John Yost, Planning Director
City of Napa Planning Department
P.O. Box 660
Napa, Ca. 94559

Re: Big Ranch Specific Plan (BSRP), EIR Draft
std. March 1996.

Mr. Yost,

I own and reside at 2051 Big Ranch Rd, on abt. 1.65 acres, Parcel Assessment No. 038-170-005-000. While I favor a planned build-out of the Big Ranch area, I do have some concerns on how the ref BSRP will impact me, as follow:

1) Exhibit 2.2-1 (Proposed Land Uses) proposes a local street along the rear (West end) of my property that backs up to the Shelter Creek development and an east-west street along the south side of my property between Big Ranch Rd and Shelter Creek. I request that this east-west street be planned for the north side of my property as shown on Exhibit 5.5-1 (Property...
(Owners' Alternatives)

3) While I have no problem with the proposed change to the zoning of my property from ED-2 to CR, I currently don't have any plans to develop the available areas of my property, but a future developer might.

(3) On page 57(4.1 hand this) the paragraph beginning, "According to the EIR's traffic analysis", it states that it would be necessary to widen Big Rauk Rd. to four through lanes between Francie Street and the Salvador Channel.

In sub-paragraph beginning, "add a policy requiring any widening of Big Rauch Rd. in the BKSPA, north of the Salvador Channel, to occur entirely on the west side of the roadway request that this read only...

...order to be more consistent with the discussion under 4.1, request that this read only "north of Salvador Channel".

NOTE: Any widening of Big Rauch Rd. would necessitate the removal of my two mature (at 80' high) evergreen trees. I don't know how we can adjudicate this.
Under Mitigation Measure 4.9-4, page 151, requirements for handling existing sewage disposal systems (septic systems) during construction and connection to the NSD & the proper destruction of these systems. In my case, the buildout of the available areas of my property would require the destruction of my septic system. The connection of existing homes, as in my case, to the NSD should also be addressed.

Sincerely,

Bonnie L. Nesbit

3051 Baj Ranch Rd.
Napa, CA. 94558
Tel: 252-8550
LETTER 29
BONNIE NESBIT

Comment 29-1 As described in response to Comment 28-2, three weights of lines used in exhibits throughout the EIR distinguish among parcel boundaries (lightest weight), proposed land uses (middle weight), and proposed roads (heaviest weight). One line mentioned by this comment separates land uses -- Low Density Residential (LR) on the writer’s parcel and Medium Density Residential (MR) on the adjacent Shelter Creek (the writer's west property boundary). The second line this comment mentions is an error in Exhibit 2.2-1 and should be a light weight parcel boundary, not a middle weight land use designation. Neither the Big Ranch Specific Plan nor Property Owners’ Alternative envisages new roadways in that part of the Big Ranch Specific Plan Area (BRSPA). In addition to Exhibit 2.2-1, the EIR (page 18) lists Plan circulation components but also states that “developers of individual properties within the BRSPA would be responsible for building internal streets for their projects”.

Comment 29-2 The writer is referred to responses to Comments 25-1 and 25-2. The “Soscol / Big Ranch Connector” would be located in front of this writer's parcel (unlike the writers of Letter 25), but the City would not have the authority to widen Big Ranch Road on the eastern unincorporated County side unless annexed to Napa. Implementation of this existing General Plan circulation improvement, if built, would have secondary visual impacts from the loss of the trees mentioned by this commenter. Neither the existing General Plan nor pending Big Ranch Specific Plan contains heritage tree policies, and the City does not currently have a tree preservation ordinance. Thus, the significance of impact from the loss of this writer’s trees, if removed for road widening, could be partly but not entirely reduced by Mitigation Measure 4.5-2(d) which potentially could result in planting of replacement landscaping along the street frontage.

Comment 29-3 As discussed in response to Comment 25-1, the EIR (page 181) states that Policy Resolution No. 27 of the City of Napa requires all projects to connect to the Napa Sanitation District (NSD) for sanitary sewer service. New infill development on the writer's parcel would be subject to this requirement. In a situation where new infill development occurred in the area of the existing housing unit’s septic system leachfield, both new and old units would be required to connect to public sewers. In a situation where new infill development avoided the existing unit's leachfield, both new and old units would be required to connect to public sewers facilities unless the existing unit were to be temporarily exempted, as permitted in certain circumstances by the Zoning Ordinance (Article V, Section 12,140). No additional NSD or City of Napa regulations would be required.
Attention Planning Commission
City of Napa Planning Dept
PO Box 1640 - Napa, Calif 94558
May 19, 1976

Letter 30

Questions and Comments regarding EIR
Bay Ranch Road, Garfield Lane, Serena.

Where is funding for EIR draft coming from?
City? Certain property owners? Increase property taxes? Additional taxes?

Why interrupt Garfield Lane??, turnover is a straight line. Garfield Lane has to be cut into curved many ways.

Traffic flow of automobiles, commercial trucks
Tonnage vehicles with loaded up tractors on them does not warrant a cut into Garfield Lane. It will over power this area and lead to freeway 29 to get to Highway 29?? The impact will disturb and affect the stream channel, adjacent vegetation and native wildlife, our water will disappear and become obsolete.
A bridge of any kind on the channel to accommodate the proposed traffic will have most affect on the channel. What happens when during heavy winter rains? Is the care of the terrific floods? Manyo.
Homes have water pumps under the house. Think about the vintage school of agriculture we are destroying the progress of our children agriculture education and their future animal farm. The student access to crossing to get to the farm for animal care on feeding.

Can Garfield Lane take this with 780 plus more homes in this area? Save our collection and property values. What help when Napa Transit comes in for all these new people coming in on this small road?

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely, Stephanie Park
91 Valley Club Ct
Napa, Calif
94558

P.S. Hope you really read this.
LETTER 30
RESPONSE TO STEPHANIE PARKS

Comment 30-1 As described in the responses to Comments 18-1 and 24-1, a group of BRSPA landowners and prospective developers provided funds to the City which is administering a separate contract with the environmental consultant to prepare the EIR.

Comment 30-2 Due to the similarities between Letters 18 and 30, the writer is referred to the responses to Comments 18-1 through 18-7. The remainder of the letter expresses the writer's opinions about the merits of the project and is presented for the information of City officials and the public.

Comment 30-3 The transportation analysis addresses the impacts on Garfield Lane. See also the response to Comment 9-1.

Comment 30-4 The City's existing transit plan does not call for bus access on Garfield Lane at this time. Garfield Lane would be designed as a collector street with somewhat greater width than normal streets and should be able to accommodate bus traffic should the transit plan change in the future.
Dear Sirs,

In regards to the Big Ranch Specific Plan:
I highly object to the proposed roadway system, namely, where Troyer Ave. is extended south. It makes better sense to me to bring it down along the high school property, through a small corner of Garfield Park, meeting up with Villa Lane, as I have high fights on the enclosed copy of the map.

The reason is, that it would affect fewer people and disrupt less personal property. Also, we don't need more traffic through a residential area...

Another concern I have is drainage. My home is located in an area that is susceptible to flooding in a rainy winter, such as in 1994. This issue was brought up when the Willowbrook project was planned. We were assured the problem would be better after it was finished. It wasn't. It was worse. Before, the overground water poured over into the big field. Now it backs up into my yard.

As you can see on the Hydrologic map, the water coming down from the north drains through my property. We need to divert some of that into a waterway west of this, or build a much larger underground pipe that can contain heavy rainfall.

My husband built a dyke around our house when we first moved here in 1971, or we would have been flooded many times. But in wet years it hardly contains it. We still have to sandbag our driveway.

Please consider the issues I have mentioned. It's very important to me.

Thank you.

Irene Prichard
Comment 31-1  The commentor's property is located just upstream of the entrance to a 48-inch storm
drain which conveys stormwater from the small headwaters watershed and parts of the Willowbrook
and Napa Valley Club developments to the Salvador Channel at the southwestern boundary of the Napa
Valley Club. This is identified as Network B on revised Exhibit 4.4-4. At higher discharges, some of
the flow in the 48-inch pipe is diverted into the Weinert Ditch and proceeds southeast across Big Ranch
Road (EIR page 85). Given the size of the pipe and the relatively limited watershed area, it is possible
that local sedimentation in the vicinity of the pipe inlet has created conditions of backwater flooding on
the writer's property. The writer is advised to alert the City to this problem so that any maintenance-
related problems are addressed. It is possible that the local topography may require re-grading. If
sedimentation is found to be the principal cause of the nuisance flooding at 139 Rosewood, some
agricultural runoff / sediment controls would be required on the upslope property. This would
necessitate cooperation between landowners and the City.

The remainder of the letter expresses the writer's opinion about the merits of the Big Ranch Specific
Plan, primarily the Circulation Plan, requiring no response.
May 20, 1996

Letter 32

VIA HAND DELIVERY

John R. Yost, Planning Director
City of Napa, Planning Department
1600 First Street
Napa, California 94559

Re: Draft Big Ranch Specific Plan
Draft EIR

Dear Mr. Yost:

This office represents Jessie Blakley, the owner of 30 Garfield Lane, Napa. Ms. Blakley resides within the Big Ranch Road Specific Plan Area. This letter is written for the purpose of providing comment on the Transportation findings of the Draft Environmental Impact Report ("Draft EIR") prepared for the Draft Big Ranch Road Specific Plan.

Of primary concern is the Draft EIR’s flawed assessment of the impact of the circulation plan proposed under the Draft Big Ranch Road Specific Plan. Specifically, the Draft EIR does not accurately consider the impact of the extension of Trower Lane into Garfield Lane, or for that matter the extension of Villa or the connection of Sierra and Garfield. The proposed circulation plan of the draft specific plan, if accomplished, would change the character of Garfield Lane, a Local Access Street (in this instance a dead end street), by an extension of Trower, an Arterial street under the 1986 City of Napa General Plan. The traffic flow estimates in the Draft EIR do not reflect the proposed change of use. Accordingly, the conclusions reached in reliance upon the flawed data are suspect.

The Comparison of Service Level Computations shown on Exhibit 4.6-5 raises the issue of either inadequate information or improperly applied information. The chart projects, without any supporting data, a level of service rated "A" at the Garfield Lane/Villa Lane intersection and "B" at the Garfield Lane/Big Ranch Road intersection. The same chart shows the Trower/Jefferson intersection level of service is rated "F" and the Sierra/Jefferson intersection is rated "E". The streets with unacceptable LOS ratings are under, the circulation plan, the same streets with the acceptable LOS ratings under Exhibit 4.6-5. There is no reconciliation of this discrepancy in the Draft EIR.

The volume projections shown in Exhibit 4.6-11, upon which many of the Draft EIR’s assumptions are based, appears to reflect that the extension of Trower...
will assume the characteristics of a Local Access Street, rather than the Arterial nature of Trower. This assumption is untenable given the fact the Trower extension will provide direct access to Big Ranch Road through Garfield Lane. The estimated figures of Exhibit 4.6-11 for Trower east of Jefferson and Garfield are particularly suspect given their conflict with the actual traffic volume data reflected in Exhibit 4.6-2.

The Draft EIR concludes that the proposed circulation plan will have Less-than Significant impact on the residential livability in the area. This conclusion was apparently reached by examining only one street in the area and by ignoring criteria which the Draft EIR identifies as a proper method for determining livability. The Draft EIR states that the TIRE Index is the only methodology which provides a quantitative evaluation of residential livability. However, the Draft EIR does not provide data for the application of the TIRE Index. The Draft EIR goes on to state that "a given change in average daily trips (ADT) creates a greater impact on a residential environment of a street with a low pre-existing traffic volume than on a street with a higher existing ADT." (page 125) Clearly, streets which presently dead end, such as Villa, Sierra and Garfield, will be significantly impacted if they become thorough fares for the Big Ranch Road area. Nonetheless, the Draft EIR goes on to conclude "there would not be significant impacts on the residential livability of those streets with implementation of the Draft Specific Plan." (page 138-139)

It bears pointing out that alternatives circulation plans considered by the Draft EIR would substantially improve the transportation issues considered.

Very truly yours,

RAMOS & ELLWEIN

[Signature]

David G. Ramos

DGR:ml

cc: Jessie Blakley
**LETTER 32**  
**DAVID RAMOS**

**Comment 32-1** The analysis of intersections supporting the findings in the *EIR* is available for review in the City of Napa Planning Department. The traffic model used to evaluate projected land uses is available for review with an appointment.

**Comment 32-2** The commentor indicates that there is some discrepancy between the LOS ratings in Exhibit 4.6-5 and the Circulation Plan. The commentor implies that traffic at the Trower / Jefferson and Sierra / Jefferson intersections would travel through to cause future congestion at the Garfield Lane / Villa Lane and Garfield Lane / Big Ranch Road intersections and that this future congestion is not reflected in Exhibit 4.6-5. Please see the response to *Comment 13-1*. The congestion at the Jefferson Street intersections with Trower and Sierra primarily reflects the large amount of north / south traffic on Jefferson and the delays caused by this traffic rather than any large amount of east / west traffic on Trower or Sierra. The Trower / Jefferson intersection is particularly congested due to the adjacent destination of the high school and the arterial nature of Trower to its intersection with a second arterial, Jefferson. The model does not project a large amount of traffic continuing to travel along Trower to the intersection with Garfield. Likewise, the model does not project a large amount of traffic traveling through Sierra / Jefferson and proceeding to Big Ranch Road. See also the response to *Comment 9-1*. Should traffic be considerably greater than anticipated by the model, additional traffic controls may be necessary as set forth in the response to *Comment 13-1*. In no case is it expected that traffic in this corridor would exceed the capacity of the roads or intersections to accommodate it at an acceptable level of service.

**Comment 32-3** Please see the responses to *Comments 13-1 and 18-3.*
Jon Yost;

Letter 33

I have many concerns regarding the preparation of the BFRSP EIR and am writing to share as much as I am able in the time allotted.

1) I believe that those located within the Big Ranch Road Specific Plan neighborhood should be given an extension of time to evaluate the EIR. Many were not given proper notice of the availability of the EIR or the Draft. Many years ago I attended city meetings concerning the development of the condominiums on Garfield Lane. In more recent years I attended meetings (such as the field trip of Feb. 1992) concerning the roads that the city officials and the developers wanted extended in the area. I spoke at times and signed lists to receive future information. I then attended all of the meetings that Dan Marks invited me to concerning the Salvador Channel, and discussions with those who wanted to develop in this area. The last meeting was approximately a year ago. It was my understanding at that time that information would be available in about two weeks.

On April 5 1995 the EIR became available to the public. However, many did not know. I was very disappointed to find that my name was lost from the lists of those interested and/or living in the Big Ranch Road Specific Plan Area. I was not notified of the availability, until I received the notice/card (dated April 19) received the week of the 22 announcing the City Planning meeting which was held on May 2, 1996. Then I was put on the waiting list to borrow the EIR. My other options were to stand at the counter at 1600 First Street to read the approximate 300 page EIR, go to the library (if their copy was not in use) or to purchase my own. There has not been sufficient notification, availability, nor sufficient time to read and respond to this large document. Many others in this area were not notified either of the EIR or of the City Planning meeting. I believe that those effected will also include those people that live as far west as Highway 29 and those downstream of the Salvador Channel. I do not believe all of the people that will be directly affected have been notified. Again, I believe that the period of public comment to the County Planning Commission must be extended.

2) Why has the creek not been adequately addressed in the EIR?

a.) I find that there is miss-information concerning this waterway. It seems that the city believes that this is a man-made creek. This is inaccurate. Our City
and County have maps that show that there were waterways in this area at least 100 years ago. There is a reference map dated Jan 21, 1895 that is located in our library. This clearly shows that this creek arises in the hills to the west, between Dry Creek and Napa Creek, passed through Zena W. Garfield’s property of the Napa Rancho, and then joins the Napa River (section #5). It drains much of North-West Napa. This map was compiled by O H Bukman and was approved by the supervisors. A second map is located on the wall to the left upon entering our tax assessors office, this is the County of Napa’s Official Map, dated January, 1915. The area can be further studied with the use of tank map #41 which is undated, but is named Salvador Union School District and a large portion of property was owned by Mr. Parrett. Again, the creek is obvious. In the Recorder’s office a Plat map (509-26 # 76 g) shows a part of Rancho de Napa, this is dated June 12, 1885 and Jan 11, 1869. It does seem that at times the area has been called a slough and other times there are mention of several “dry creeks”. In the sixteen years that I have lived here, the water has always flowed within the creek traversing my property.

I was also able to locate maps on the UC Berkeley campus that plainly show an unnamed waterway. These may be seen in the map room located in the basement of the Giannini Building. *(I have enclosed enlarged copies of the significant portions).*

And finally, the US Department of the Interior Geological Survey has a topography map with aerial photos of 1948, plane-table surveys of 1951, and photorevised in 1980 that clearly indicates that this creek had been here prior to the 1970 alterations.

b.) Prior to the building of Willowbrooke, Napa Valley Club, and the Napa Little League, I went before both the planning Commission and the City Council to express my concern about how development in this area would cause flooding. I shared pictures showing that the creek was already at it’s capacity.

I explained how the areas that were planned for development, were the very areas that water already flowed to, infiltrated, and saturated during normal rainy seasons. I explained that when the tide was in, and the river was full that the water had no place to go. Instead it would back up to the low lying areas. It had seemed to me that if sixty percent of the ground would be covered with the construction it would indeed be detrimental to the the surrounding areas to fill in and cover the low-lying areas.

I was told that the tide had no affect on this creek. I was told that it would not
cause me flooding problems. This occurred approximately 10 to 12 years ago. So the Willowbrooke, Napa Valley Club, and Little League complexes were developed, then, within the last 3 years or so, Jefferson St. has been put through, developments have occurred west of highway 29, and off Jefferson and El Centro. All of these areas have attempted to divert water into what is now called the Salvador channel.

The in fill of low-lands, the replacement of open space with buildings and blacktop, the stripping of the banks, alteration to the banks, rock to hold the banks, and removal of a cement drive that traversed the creek at Garfield Park, the planting of willows to prevent flooding of the little league parking lot to the east (and, I am sure changes that I am not aware of), have had devastating affects.

The changes to the creek has caused reactions to this waterway such as: the wash down of rock and the filling of large holes located within the banks of the creek (with the disappearance of the bluegill/perch fish, displacement of turtles and disappearance of what I believe were river otters) the planting of Willows at the baseball park to divert the creek flow from the East and away from the parking lot, has successfully been diverted to the West bank where it is now under-cutting the bridge, the bicycle path, and is destroying my right-of-way.

Of all the changes the continued diversion of water to the creek, which is already past capacity has both influenced the flow and apparently caused four "100-year floods" at my home within the past 10 years. Napa City, County and even FEMA do not seem to recognize this area as a flood hazard area, however, I know that it is. Flooding is now a frequent occurrence at my home. During this past 1995-96 winter there have been a minimum of five times when my access was cut off. Prior to my home flooding "lake-like" areas develop both to the north-west and southern areas of my home. The EIR does not adequately reflected the location, duration, nor extent of water the flow which, coincidentally, occur most often with high tides.

Recently there has been much interest in Managing the Napa River and the prevention of flooding in the future. Dr. Luna Leopold spoke before a group of people in Yountville, during December of 1995, and then again, before the Community Coalition on March 23,1996. He reiterated the same concerns I had voiced in the early to mid 1980's when he explained that urban development can increase the flood level by 3-4 times, or with parking lots as much as 20 times. I strongly urge you to acknowledge that this has already happened over the last twelve years, and with the proposed developments, will only get worse.
It seems that if the Napa community are concerned with the flooding of the river that they should concentrate on the whole picture and all of the Rivers tributaries, not just what occurs south of Trancas. To build more and more storm drains that collect more and more water that no longer is able to infiltrate and saturate the ground, is not a solution, but rather only impacts those already living along the creek and adds to the flooding of olde town Napa. There is no conceivable way that the creek can hold more water.

FINANCES

Where is the money to come from to meet the basic necessities such as water, sewage and emergency protection?

PARKS

The neighbors surrounding the Garfield park area seem to enjoy the park in its low impact state. The suggestion of having a community park in this area is not responsive to the interests or needs of the neighborhood. We already do not have the funds necessary to maintain things already built (on the whim)... why continue to burden ourselves with more debt? There are a large number of people that would be willing to volunteer time and energy to keep this an open space area.

Although the Little League already exists and there are a lot of children and their families involved, it is like an exclusive club. It seems that only those who play baseball, are the best in that field, and have parents who can afford the time and/or money to assist them are allowed. In the past, many have been turned away. There are many children in Napa who either do not have the interest or the skills for this formalized sport. It seems that we do not have much to offer a large percent of our children. We do not support all of our community's children in their interests during their formative and teen years (such as art, music and nature or sciences). Then if they find unacceptable interests to occupy their time, we blame their parents. The Garfield Park is a prime property and at a prime location for the children of North Napa to use as a passive park.

In the BRRA there are already a vast amount of people that are involved in the use of this park. Bel Aire school children use this for studies of the sciences (they touch on anthropology, history, nature, survival and a variety of other skills). Vintage High School has an agriculture department, located at the Vintage farm. Our young
adults will be unable to continue these activities with livestock once a development occurs. The neighboring people will complain just as they did when the Gasser-Keller family farmed just north of Trancas. Their livestock will be at an increased danger to roaming family pet dogs. Most all of the livestock was destroyed in the 1993/1994 school year. The PE classes, track team, and various others use this area as a course. A large portion (of the approximate two-hundred) senior citizens of the condominiums use this area for walks/exercise, either for health reasons or just to enjoy the peace and quiet punctuated by the profusion of birds that make this area their habitat. There are already a large number of feral cats in this area that disrupt the nesting of these uncommon birds. The influx of people that would come with the proposed development, would also bring an influx of pets. The serenity would be destroyed. All of the water, sewage and street development needed for a development of this magnitude would cause devastation to the animal life in and dependent upon the creek.

The city is already having a difficult time meeting the commitments of public safety.

1) “Salvador Channel where only pedestrian access currently is provided”.....This is a false statement. This is the right of way to my home. I have used it for over sixteen years. This was a privately owned bridge and it provided access to two homes (until the 160+ year-old hacienda was demolished two years ago), and at one time several out buildings for probably well over forty years.

2) I believe that there are biological, archeological, and historical issues that have not been addressed. Our local history goes back much farther then when Ca. became a part of the U.S. (the Bancroft library has information on people such as James, Garfield, Yount and the Vallejo’s that we don’t even acknowledge locally).

3) The creek is not man-made, but rather man manipulated. Maps may be found at our local library, assessors office, recorders office, and at the UC Berkeley campus that verify this. The creek has been noted for well over one hundred years. (changes can be noted if you view the movie “Pollyanna”, recorded in 1960, that show the enormous oaks, and the hillocks and dips, or contours of the land).

4) The biological studies must be considered inaccurate, since the report is based on the false assumption that the creek is man-made I believe it is invalidated. Also
given the 1995 weather, flood conditions and devastation caused to the species of and about the creek (a large amount of turtles, craw dads, salamanders, lizards, tadpoles and fish were displaced), the report could not reflect an average year. There are also steel head and salmon that use this waterway during migration, what is to become of them? It seems that the frogs and turtles are of no concern.

Were only species of concern studied? 33-15

It seems that there were three biologists (aquatic, bird, and plant), here last year. Each spent three days in the area. Though, I believe that these were very knowledgeable people, how can their studies be considered intense or extensive? Where is the report on the birds?

Why is there no mention of the hundreds of species of birds that migrate, feed, and nest in this area? There are native pigeons hummingbirds, quail, owls, and such that are easily recognized, there are water-associated species such as a variety of ducks, geese and herons (many have never even seen the great blue nor the elusive greenback that live in this neighborhood), and a number of raptors. Why wasn't the local Audubon Society notified? 33-18

Is one to believe that the doubling of population, automobiles, as well as pets (the cats and dogs), will not affect the life along the Salvador Channel? How can the city possibly expect to monitor this?

I believe that the Valley Oaks (Quercus lobata) and the the Black Walnut (Juglans californica) are very significant. These trees are of historical importance to us. This area is very crucial to both tree species for reproduction purposes! The Juglans is protected by law! The city shirked its responsibility during 1979 when it allowed the black walnut trees to be destroyed. The responsibility to preserve these trees that canopied Garfield Lane, was given to the city along with the use of the Lane all the way to my property! However, most of the trees were destroyed along with the native squirrels that lived in them, and were replaced with Magnolias. **Why aren't the three huge, probably pre-historic (pre-European), Valley Oaks located on my property not noticed when this study was conducted?**

5) The creek will not hold more water but rather cause more flooding. Even the setbacks suggested are not sufficient. In reality acres are covered in water (prior to my property being inundated) that property of Chuck Shinnammon and the Gasser's to the south of me.

Dr. Leopold (learned professor of UCB) has explained that building homes may increase the flood problem by 3 to 4 times, and blacktop by as much as 20 times. When the tide is in and the river is full the creek has no place to go except for the land that is low. Building in this area only adds to the devastation of Olde Town Napa's flooding.

Maybe the area between the Salvador channel and the Gasser tributary should be used as seasonal wetlands and ground saturation of all of that water that drains from the North west hills, the developments of north-west Napa city and comes to join the river just north of Trancas Street (the EIR does acknowledge that six-square miles are drained).

6) There are many that use the Garfield park area, such as our Senior citizens, our
high school students and many of our grade school students (especially those of Bel Aire School). It is used as a source of nature studies, a walkway for students (Vintage farm students cross over from the main campus hourly) or PE and Track, and as an area that our senior citizens receive their daily exercise. The development of roads will be dangerous to them.

7) Our high school students should not be forced school in portables should the BRSP planned development cause crowding. (The Vintage Farm program will likewise be in jeopardy if an influx of people and their pets move into the area).

8) Maybe it would best meet our needs to have a Northern Napa open space park. There are many programs for organized sports such as the Napa Little League. This is sort of an elite group. Many of our children are either not interested in sports, unable to play because of their physical abilities, or do not have the opportunity due to the cost or time restraints of their parents. Maybe this area should be left for passive play (bicyclists and pedestrians) and the enjoyment of nature.

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It was explained to us at the Planning meeting that we could only address the EIR, however, throughout the EIR many references are made to the Draft. If the EIR is based on the Draft how can one adequately address the EIR yet not refer to the DRAFT as the EIR does? It is not humanly possible for one person to mention all of the information that they disagree with or perhaps the mis-information they have noticed. Much fact is based on assumptions, predictions, or maybe.

Why is it that in one study a speed of 5MPH is used and in another 25 MPH?

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page 1) Can it be explained why the EIR would supersede the General Plan, or rather why it should be implemented prior to the new General Plan? Who is the lead agency that developed the EIR? If it was paid for by the developers couldn't it be considered as a conflict of interest from their view-point (an act of dissemblance)?

page 3) If the responses to the NOP were not available until the 20 of May, how would it be possible for the general public to evaluate these records and respond within the 45 days allocated?

page 4) Who was sent a second NOP in July 1995, and how was the public informed of the city council meeting? How many landowners in the area did city staff maintain contact with? If one must be kept on a waiting list, then, it does not seem that the Draft EIR is circulated "widely". We should have been informed that we were to direct our letters to Jon Yost.

page 5) Since this draft EIR is based on a Specific Plan then why does it not contain the details of such but rather use the guidelines for a general plan? I disagree with the categories of significance and/or what can or can not be done to "mitigate". The EIR does not provide accurate site-specific information. The Working papers were not available for public inspection until May 17.

Page 6) The 'Paper's are apparently five years old. Recently it seems that
we have had problems meeting our water, sewage, and garbage needs. We have not
had the funds to maintain our schools, sidewalks, or drainage. There were recent
conflicts with the city and those who protect the public (such as the police), concerning
money. We are hoping to manage the Napa River but are unsure of where we will get
all of the funds. How will the city meet all of the financial costs needed to implement
the BRSP? (Why are some resources noted, throughout the book, over twenty years
old?)

If this report is a "...factual objective public disclosure..." and does not
"...advocate a position for or against..." then why does it seem to tell us numerous times
that it will be implemented, mention that the area is under-developed, or speak of
"planned buildout"...?

18) I do not believe that the "conservation and protection of the Salvador
Channel" is possible with the proposed development. It seems that the middle section
of the BRRSP EIR now contains the most open space, with 2 homes on over 45 acres
(which are contingent to the park and school properties). This is also the area that
supports the biggest diversity of life. It is also an area that is to have some of the
highest density. Feathering is not an accurate description of the proposed
development.

178) Many very important issues addressed in the EIR seem to be based on
assumptions that other things may happen; an example is if the city of American
Canyon stops using the Soscol Treatment Plant there would be more capacity to
accommodate flows. How can the EIR continually use assumptions to base it's study
on?

181) When will details be available? If I were allowed to respond to the EIR and
the referral to the Draft Specific Plan: Figure 5.4, I would have to object to the city
and the NSD obtaining an easement across my property. It seems that the rotting/gas
smell can not be elevated from a man hole located on Garfield. It almost seems that
the maintenance is often done only after it becomes an emergency situation such as
when the sanitation pipe broke in Wilth last year.

Will those property owners living in the BRRSPA be forced to become part of the
NSD? If so, who will have to pay for this hookup and for the destruction of currently
used septic systems? How are the easements to be paid for?

183) Man holes are already located in the flood zone! Will anyone do anything
to mitigate this, if so, who is responsible... the city, county or the NSD?

184) If the exposed manholes were built up 3 to 5 feet, what would prevent
someone from filling the area around the man holes as was recently done at the Napa
Little League?

If the city does not have funds to maintain the current manholes, where will they
find this money in the future?

If it is true that the NSD can handle the 300,000 gallons of waste water during
dry weather, then where will this excess go during wet months? Who is going to pay for the expansion of NSSRT? 33-41

If improvements are made that will last for 16 years what is the plan to provide for Sanitation after that and when will these issues be resolved?

There are at least 14 man holes located along the creek (4.9-4); It would seem that at least 10 of these have been under water for long periods of time. This means that in Jan 1995 for 2 days, in March of 1995 for 5 days and during the past winter for a minimum of 5 days, that sewage, creek, and probably well water has been mixing; this does not seem healthy to humans or the assorted biological species that use the waterway. (Additionally, the one currently located at the Western end of Garfield lane consistently smells of rot and gas. In 1982 the current sanitation sewer line that traverses the creek just south of Garfield lane was uncovered by the flow of water. The solution was to pour rip-rap over the bank). This must be addressed.

251 The report speaks of high density and a store on approximately 5 acres owned by Mr. Chuck Shinnamon. I am opposed to these ideas. How many homes will be flooded? We do not need a store.

253 I do not want significant flood impact to my property.

This is my incomplete letter.

S. Rushing-Hart
73 Garfield Lane,
Napa, Ca. 94558
LETTER 33
SUSAN RUSHING-HART

Comment 33-1 Comment noted. The City followed established procedures circulation and notification procedures for the EIR. On April 5, 1996, the City published the Big Ranch Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report, issued a Notice of Draft EIR Completion / Availability, and established a 45-day public review period to receive written comments on the EIR (until May 19, 1996). In addition to distributing the required number of EIRs to the State Clearinghouse and to other departments and Districts for public agency review, the City published an 1 / 8-page display ad (which included a map of the Big Ranch Specific Plan Area (BRSPA)) in the Napa Valley Register on April 5, 1996.

In addition to comments submitted by public agency representatives, the City received written comments from 43 individuals, organizations, and public agency representatives, including comments on both the Big Ranch Specific Plan and the EIR (Letters 8 through 43).

The City also held a formally announced public hearing of the Planning Commission on May 2, 1996 to accept further comments on the EIR. Ten individuals addressed the Commission (Comments 45-1 through 45-17).

Comment 33-2 Both the City and EIR preparers are aware that the Salvador Channel is an historic drainage which was altered for flood control purposes.

Comment 33-3 The writer attended a public meeting at which the results of the Salvador Channel Flood Assessment were discussed. During that presentation, it was made quite clear that the study supported the contention that there was a significant flood hazard in the Salvador Channel reach which includes at least parts of the Shinnaman, Rushing-Hart, and Gasser / O'Brien parcels. Moreover, specific recommendations restricting development in active 100-year floodplain areas were presented in the flood study (which was distributed to all interested parties prior to the meeting) and at the meeting.

Comment 33-4 The thrust of the comment is understood. The Salvador Channel through the cited reach can hold more water. However, a lot of additional water potentially would increase the depth and severity of overbank flooding. Since the Salvador Channel Flood Assessment identified floodplain fill as having the greatest potential impact on local flooding, setback distances have been incorporated into EIR Mitigation Measure 4.4-3. A zero net fill policy also has been incorporated into Mitigation Measure 4.4-3. Implementation of this mitigation measure, in conjunction with Mitigation Measure 4.4-2 (detention capacity for subdivisions of more than four units and use of grass swales for stormwater runoff) would remedy any future flood impacts stemming from future development within the BRSPA.

Comment 33-5 As noted in the responses to Comments 18-1, 21-4, and 24-1, the EIR notes (page 1) that the BRSPA planning process included preparation of a Financing Plan, a separate document from the EIR and Big Ranch Specific Plan documents. The Financing Plan would establish a funding mechanism to pay for installation of "backbone" infrastructure and utilities in the BRSPA. Development fees would generate funds and would not be paid by existing BRSPA or other City residents.

Comment 33-6 The comments referring to Garfield Park are noted but should be addressed to the
Community Resources Department, the City agency responsible for operating and maintaining this and other municipal parks in Napa. The Community Resources Department defines parks to according to size, function, and service area and has designated Garfield Park as a community park. Community parks generally are ten to 100 acres large, serve an area one-quarter to one-half mile from the park, and provide such facilities as community centers, community swimming pools, gymnasiums, ballfields, picnic areas, and play areas. By comparison, neighborhood parks generally are one to ten acres large, serve an area about one-quarter mile from the park, and provide picnic areas, play equipment, open turf areas, and some specialized sports' areas.

Garfield Park's designation as a community park was established before preparation of the Big Ranch Specific Plan and EIR. As the EIR states (page 16), the Plan would not change the Park and Open Space District POS designation of Garfield Park (about 15 acres), thus retaining the park as is. The Community Resources Department would initiate any future changes at Garfield Park. In the past, its plans for Garfield Park included construction of picnic and barbecue areas, multi-purpose youth fields, and restrooms on the undeveloped southern half of the park, but implementation would depend on the amount and availability of funds generated by future development in the area served by Garfield Park, including the BRSPA. 1

The comments referring to the Little League also should be addressed to the Community Resources Department. The Little League leases the baseball fields and ancillary facilities developed on the northern part of Garfield Park from the City. The Little League has not indicated any change in its intention to continue to lease the developed area of Garfield Park. In the past, the Little League has expressed an interest in contributing to planned park improvements with the understanding that additional fencing around the baseball fields would not be required and that existing fencing would be removed to permit access to the parking lot. 2

Comment 33-7: Implementation of the Big Ranch Specific Plan -- including building the Sierra-Garfield connection and developing residential uses in the BRSPA -- would affect operations at Vintage Farm. 3

In the first case, Vintage High School students cross Sierra Avenue at the present dead-end to and from Vintage Farm at class period changes (approximately 45-minute intervals), for an estimated total of more than 200 round-trips per day. The people who operate Vintage Farm are concerned that through vehicular traffic on Sierra-Garfield would pose a safety hazard to these pedestrians.

In the second case, based on observations during the past three to five years, improved accessibility to the Farm (and its higher visibility) with construction of public streets and an increased residential population with BRSPA housing development would be expected to increase urban-rural conflicts in general and the incidence of break-ins, vandalism, and theft in particular. 4 In a recent incident, some

1 Working Paper #1, op. cit.
2 Ibid.
3 Nichols • Berman conversations with M. L. Oxford, Director of Regional Occupational Programs, Napa County Department of Education, and Leilani Schwartz, Vintage Farm, June 17, 1996.
4 A family lives on the farm, and their presence is known to discourage trespass and vandalism compared to a one-year period when no one was present. Nichols • Berman conversation with Leilani Schwartz, Ibid.
pigs were stolen from the Farm (but returned).

In addition to potential impacts on the Farm, the proximity of a new residential population -- living at urban densities without an intervening buffer or barrier -- could result in conflicts in the event that new neighbors complain about dust, noise, odors, or other aspects of Farm activities. In addition to pigs, students typically keep horses, sheep, and chickens at Vintage Farm and routinely disc the pasture for weed control / fire protection. No impacts on Farm animals by domestic pets were reported in conversations with County personnel, including by a teacher who has worked at the Farm for the last approximately 20 years.

Vintage Farm is an important resource, and its programs are integrated into students' days (not limited to after school activities). It is one of the County Department of Education's "regional occupational programs" (ROP). The Department designs programs to complement those offered by the Napa Valley Unified School District (NVUSD) at Vintage and Napa High Schools and is required by the State to demonstrate that jobs exist in the fields covered by its programs. Student interest in the Vintage Farm programs is not declining. For these reasons, impacts on the Farm, its programs, or program participants would be considered potentially significant.

In order to address these potentially significant impacts, **Big Ranch Specific Plan Policies LU-5, LU-6, C-5, and C-6 (EIR Mitigation Measure 4.1-3) should be revised to expand their application to residential land adjacent to the eastern and southern property boundaries of Vintage Farm. The Villa Lane extension could satisfy the 80-foot setback required by the C-7 overlay district along the eastern property boundary, and the solid fence or wall (described below) could satisfy the set-back requirement along the southern Farm boundary. Sellers of new housing units adjacent to the Farm should be required to give potential buyers "right-to-farm" notice in compliance with Section 17.60.090 of the Napa Municipal Code. The following additional mitigation measures would be required:**

- Provide a safety crossing on the roadway in the event that Sierra Avenue is extended beyond its present dead-end. At a minimum, a pedestrian crosswalk should be painted on the pavement and caution signs installed to require motorists to stop for pedestrians. A signal possibly could be installed, equipped with pedestrian crossing buttons.

- Build a solid security fence or wall around the eastern and southern property boundaries of Vintage Farm as a condition of City approval to develop housing units on residential land adjacent to the Farm. The wall should be designed to prevent illegal entry into the Farm from the outside and to prevent increases, attributable to Farm activities, of ambient noise levels immediately outside the Farm. (Mitigation 4.8-1 provides sound wall standards which would be adequate to mitigate urban-rural impacts at Vintage Farm.)

The City should be responsible for designing and building a pedestrian crossing as part of infrastructure improvements covered by the **Big Ranch Specific Plan** and Financing Plan. Individual developers of housing units should be responsible for completing the fence or wall segment along their respective common property lines (before the Villa Lane extension) before the City grants occupancy permits for contiguous units.

**Comment 33-8** Comment noted. As noted by the commenter, cats and other pets already are common in the BRSPA, and cats from future residents should not pose a significant new impact on nesting activity. Of greater concern is the impact of pets and children on aquatic species, particularly western pond turtle. **EIR recommendations (page 257) were made to provide secure retreat habitat for turtles**
and other wildlife on the Gasser Ranch site. *EIR Mitigation Measure 4.5-2(a)* (page 107) was recommended to provide appropriate setbacks from creeks to protect riparian habitat and mature oaks in the planning area.

**Comment 33-9** The *EIR* (page 113) discusses possible impacts of development on wetlands and creek water quality. Sewage would be collected and treated as part of the municipal wastewater treatment system and would not enter the creeks. The greatest concern regarding degradation of water quality is the short-term effect exposed soils could have on sediment loads. The *EIR* recommends Mitigation Measure 4.5-5(c) in order to provide for detailed erosion control plans.

**Comment 33-10** Without a page reference, it is not possible to respond directly to this comment except to say that public access across the existing Salvador Channel bridge between Sierra Avenue and Garfield Lane is limited to pedestrians. Neither the *Big Ranch Specific Plan* nor *EIR* addresses private bridges which previously or currently exist in the BRSPA.

**Comment 33-11** Comments on impacts to biological resources are addressed elsewhere in the appropriate responses to this letter. The *EIR* (pages 212-224) addresses archaeological and historic resources and summarizes both the prehistory of the area and the Spanish, Mexican, and American historical periods. As the *EIR* describes (page 218), both archival research and a field survey were conducted to provide input for formulation of the *Big Ranch Specific Plan* and for identification of required mitigation measures. The *EIR* archaeologist identified the presence of three recorded archaeological sites in the BRSPA and determined the locations of two archaeologically sensitive areas. *Plan* policies C-9 and C-10 incorporate the archaeologist's recommendations.

**Comment 33-12** Without a page reference, it is not possible to respond directly to this comment because neither the *Big Ranch Specific Plan* nor *EIR* refers to the Salvador Channel (or Bel-Air (or Gasser) Tributary) as man-made. The comment is correct in stating that the segment of the Salvador Channel has been modified. The *EIR's* hydrology analysis (page 82) characterizes four zones and their condition on the Salvador Channel, and the *EIR* biological resource analysis (page 100) states that "much of the Salvador Drainage Channel was modified substantially in 1964 when the Napa Flood Control District made flood control improvements".

**Comment 33-13** As the *EIR* notes (page 100), some segments along Salvador Channel and Bel-Aire / Gasser Tributary have been cleared of vegetation by drainage improvements, but this should not be interpreted as implying that the creeks are "man-made".

**Comment 33-14** The heavy rains may have affected the abundance of particular species within the Salvador Channel, but it is unlikely that such rains could have accounted for the complete elimination of a particular species of concern. Future development in the BRSPA would not be expected to represent a significant impact on the occasional use of the creeks by steelhead and salmon. *EIR Mitigation Measure 4.5-5(a)* (page 113) includes a provision to prevent the construction of impediments for fish and amphibians at new creek crossings.

**Comment 33-15** Yes. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) directs environmental documents to assess significant or potentially significant impacts, not all conceivable effects of less-than-significant impact. The *EIR* (page 106) lists the criteria used to determine the significant of impact on biological resources from approving and implementing the *Big Ranch Specific Plan*, including "impacts on a population or critical habitat of special-status plant or animal taxa".
Comment 33-16  Plant and animal surveys were conducted during appropriate flowering or breeding periods to provide for detection of any species of concern. EIR Appendix 7.4 provides details about each of these survey efforts. The EIR description of wildlife (pages 101-102) incorporates information on bird species observed during the wildlife surveys.

Comment 33-17  Future development would affect the wildlife habitat value of the area, particularly for sensitive species, but Big Ranch Specific Plan policies and EIR mitigation measures would protect sensitive habitat features, such as creeks and mature trees.

Comment 33-18  The Audubon Society does not appear to have been included on previous City lists as an interested organization and was not notified of the availability of this EIR. It seems that the Audubon Society may have been omitted because, in early City coordination with the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), the CDFG indicated that special status bird surveys were not considered required.

Comment 33-19  EIR Mitigation Measures 4.5-2(a) through (d) were recommended to protect and replace native trees in the BRSPA, particularly valley oak. BRSPA black walnut trees are of agricultural origin and, therefore, are not considered to be of special-status. Individual oaks on the commentor's property were considered to be part of the dense riparian vegetation along Salvador Channel and, therefore, were not identified individually in Exhibit 4.5-2.

Comment 33-20  See the responses to Comments 33-3 and 33-4. Dr. Leopold was referring to situations where undeveloped lands are converted to urban or suburban use. In the BRSPA, nearly all of the area had been developed to the extent that runoff from the perimeter is funneled efficiently to the Salvador Channel via drainage ditches and storm drain systems. Thus, the response time for runoff within the BRSPA is set and will not change dramatically due to some infill development. The design rainfall intensity for rainstorms is directly proportional to the response (concentration) time for runoff, and peak flows are proportional to rainfall intensity. It is true that some increases in runoff would occur due to the loss of local watershed infiltration capacity. However, such increases would not come close to the three to four times cited by Dr. Leopold for radical conversions of previously undeveloped lands.

Comment 33-21  The comment expresses an opinion about BRSPA development based on information provided in the EIR. No response is necessary.

Comment 33-22  Same as response to Comment 33-6.

Comment 33-23  The EIR (page 4) summarizes the purpose of the May 2 Planning Commission hearing as providing an opportunity for Commissioners and the public to make comments on the adequacy of the Draft EIR in analyzing and disclosing the environmental effects of adopting and implementing the Draft Big Ranch Specific Plan. It states (emphasis added)

Comments should address the adequacy of the EIR or should contain questions about the environmental consequences of adopting and implementing the Draft Specific Plan. (The City will invite comments on the Plan itself as part of its normal public review process.) ...

The Big Ranch Specific Plan and EIR were published simultaneously, and the Plan was available for public review in the same ways and during the same period as was the EIR.

As a planning level document, the EIR must necessarily be general. It also is essential for the EIR to
anticipate and forecast future conditions to the greatest extent possible without speculating. For this reason, specific assumptions are developed for the analysis and identified in the EIR. Assumptions are based on standard analytical practices of the professionals providing input to City staff and the environmental consultant. The assumptions are disclosed in the EIR both for reader information and for future users of the document. For instance, as individual development projects are proposed in the future to implement the Big Ranch Specific Plan, the City can grant building permits to those which conform to the assumptions used in the Plan and EIR without additional planning and environmental review. However, the City would conduct additional focused analyses of projects which depart from those assumptions. In addition, changed environmental conditions in the future could affect the severity of impact from a subsequently proposed project. Revealing the assumptions used for analysis in the EIR will provide reviewers of future projects with a basis for determining whether potential effects were adequately anticipated and assessed in the current document or whether additional updated evaluation would be necessary. Public review of both drafts is intended to provide information, disclose impacts, foster discussion, and identify errors and omissions which need to be corrected.

Comment 33-24 The comment about speeds of 5 and 25 miles per hour is not clear, and it is not possible to respond without speculating.

Comment 33-25 The Big Ranch Specific Plan (not the EIR) would supersede the General Plan in the BRSPA. The General Plan provides policies for the City as a whole. Thus, it necessarily is general, since policies must be equally applicable in all parts of Napa. However, conditions and needs vary throughout Napa, and the City also has adopted specific detailed policies only applicable to those areas. The specific policies must conform to the general citywide policies of the General Plan yet address unique circumstances exclusive to or particular to the area covered, such as the BRSPA. When the specific policies supersede the General Plan, therefore, they support and augment the underlying policies of the General Plan and do not depart from the General Plan in ways which would be inconsistent with or would conflict with the fundamental principles of the General Plan.

There is no relationship, only a coincidence of timing, between the updating of the City’s General Plan and Napa’s preparation of the Big Ranch Specific Plan. Preparation of the Big Ranch Specific Plan proceeded substantially more slowly than normally is the case with specific plans which cover smaller geographical areas than citywide general plans do. In addition, the purpose of specific plans is to provide implementation programs to permit planned development to occur after a general plan has indicated the overall pattern and sequence of growth. Because the BRSPA has been located inside the original Rural / Urban Limit line established by the City in 1975 to designate the farthest extent of urbanization through the year 2000, prior Napa General Plans acknowledged that the BRSPA was an appropriate location for development during the 25-year planning period. Updating a community’s general plan requires considerable time and expense to collect current information, to reevaluate and confirm the applicability of former policies, and to identify issues, formulate new policies, and reach consensus on the revised vision for the planning horizon of ten or more years. Due to their congruent schedules, however, preparers of the Big Ranch Specific Plan benefited from the knowledge that the General Plan update was not departing dramatically from the basic underlying concepts enumerated in the existing General Plan, thus providing consistent policy direction for application in the BRSPA.

The City of Napa is the lead agency for the EIR (EIR page 1). Responses to Comments 18-1, 21-4, 24-1, and 33-5 address funding of the EIR. It is standard City policy to require prospective developers of proposed projects to deposit funds with the City to cover processing costs and consultant fees and then for the City to execute “third party” contracts with independent consultants to conduct technical environmental analyses. This practice separates the City’s consultants from project proponents, permits
independent third-party review of projects, and protects the public from bias. Nevertheless, the City ultimately must take responsibility for the resulting environmental documents. This is done when the City "certifies" EIRs as complete and effectively takes authorship of the EIRs.

**Comment 33-26** The comment is unclear. Responses to the two Notices of Preparation (NOPs) are part of the public record and have been available for public, City staff, and consultant review since received. The NOP response period is 30 days. Responses to the February 1991 NOP were received in March 1991; those to the July 1995 NOP were received in August 1995. The 45-day public review period for the Draft EIR closed May 19, 1996. Comments on the Draft EIR also are part of the public record and are available to the public, both by examination at the City of Napa Planning Department and by publication in the Final EIR (this document).

**Comment 33-27** A Notice of Preparation is sent to local and State agencies. The last substantive City Council meetings on this project occurred in 1992, although the Council has authorized revisions in the consultant contract and scope of services and has received occasional progress updates from staff since that time. No special notice was given for meetings after 1992 until the Notice of Completion was distributed and a hearing on the Draft EIR was scheduled before the Planning Commission.

**Comment 33-28** The comment is unclear. All EIRs are required to be prepared in conformance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), a State statute enacted in 1970 and subsequently amended. The Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) has prepared and periodically updates the State CEQA Guidelines which provide direction for the entire environmental review process for public agencies and others to follow in implementing the provisions of CEQA. Other publications provide additional guidance and interpretation for use by EIR preparers, such as the Guidelines to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Remy, Thomas, Moose, and Yeates, and Successful CEQA Compliance, Step-by-Step Approach, Bass and Herson. Local governments also are required to adopt environmental guidelines directing compliance with CEQA in their jurisdictions in conformance with the State CEQA Guidelines. OPR also has compiled and updates publications to assist local governments in preparing planning documents required by State planning law, including the State of California General Plan Guidelines and Specific Plans in the Golden State. Other sources include such publications as California Land Use & Planning Law, Daniel Curtin, Jr., and Guide to California Planning, William Fulton.

Reference to "categories of significance" is unclear. "Significance criteria" listed in the respective topical analyses of the EIR generally were derived from Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines ("Significant Effects"). One initial step in the preparation of every EIR on any project is to identify the appropriate criteria to use in determining the significance of impact by verifying the applicability of Guideline criteria to the project, local circumstances, and past practices and / or defining substitute or additional criteria expressly for use in a specific EIR. The City of Napa ultimately is responsible for determining the significance of impact for this EIR and all environmental documents completed in its jurisdiction. The categories or topics selected for analysis were inclusive (not focused). However, CEQA directs EIRs to assess "significant" impacts, not all conceivable effects, and to dismiss from analysis effects of little or no significance. The State CEQA Guidelines define "significant effect on the environment" as meaning "a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the project including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic or archaeological significance".

Working Papers #1, #2, and #3 were submitted to the City of Napa Planning Department on March 1,
April 1, and May 28, 1991, respectively, have been available for public review since that time, and provided the basis for public comment on preliminary land use and circulation alternatives beginning in September 1991.

Comment 33-29 Information initially collected in Working Papers #1, #2, and #3 was expanded, updated, and augmented throughout the planning and environmental review process through subsequent focused studies (such as hydrological analyses and field surveys for special-status plant and animal species) and interviews, letters, and telephone conversations, all referenced in the text and footnotes of the EIR. Data gathering to assess water and sewer impacts of BRSPA buildout continued in 1994, 1995, and 1996 (EIR footnotes 118, 122, 129, 130, and 131).

Comment 33-30 Existing inadequacy of School District, City, or County funding is not a CEQA issue. The EIR (pages 186 and 190) states that, according to the State CEQA Guidelines, "an economic or social change by itself shall not be considered a significant effect on the environment. A social or economic change related to a physical change may be considered in determining whether the physical change is significant".

Comment 33-31 As noted in response to this writer’s preceding comments, please refer to responses to Comments 16-1, 21-4, 24-1, and 33-5 related to the Financing Plan formulated to implement the Big Ranch Specific Plan.

Comment 33-32. EIR references to "adoption and implementation" of the Big Ranch Specific Plan and "planned buildout" according to the Plan consistently, carefully, and intentionally use terminology to indicate what "would" occur if adopted, implemented, and built out, to distinguish the Draft Plan (or specific development projects) from foregone conclusions which "will" occur. Nevertheless, the response to Comment 8-1 (and other responses) describes the expectation, expressed in existing General Plan land use designations and zoning classifications, of future development within the BRSPA. Existing development has not occurred at densities permitted by the prevailing General Plan land use designations and zoning classifications or those envisaged by the Big Ranch Specific Plan.

Comment 33-33 The comment expresses an opinion about the merits of the Big Ranch Specific Plan, specifically the Plan’s effectiveness in conserving and protecting the Salvador Channel.

The term "feathering" refers to the practice of reducing the density of development at the perimeter of the urban area in order to make a transition between urban / suburban density and rural density. Existing General Plan land use designations and zoning classifications would permit Medium Density Residential development (about six units per acre) throughout most of the undeveloped parts of the BRSPA, extending the prevailing density established in the Bel-Air Park subdivision and Napa Valley Club as far east as Big Ranch Road without a density reduction. The Big Ranch Specific Plan would permit some increased densities east of the Bel-Air Park subdivision, in the central part of the BRSPA, but would reduce densities farther east along Big Ranch Road to Estate Residential densities of two to three units per acre compared with six units per acre. Big Ranch Specific Plan development would be higher density than presently exists along Big Ranch Road where housing units occupy sites of one acre or more but would be lower than could occur today without adopting the Plan.

Comment 33-34 Same as response to Comment 33-23. The EIR discloses constraints and discusses matters which have yet to be resolved. The EIR cannot speculate about these matters further but provides the information to inform decision makers. The EIR determines (page 184) that the uncertainty about the Soscol Treatment Plan capacity to accommodate cumulative wastewater flows is a
"significant unmitigable" impact and reports (page 185) that (emphasis added)

no measure currently is available to mitigate the potentially significant cumulative impact to the
Soscol Treatment Plant until the future capacity of the plant is clarified. Future capacity depends upon
potential plans of the NSD [Napa Sanitation District] for the plant and future decisions by the City of
American Canyon concerning its plant allocation. Because the EIR cannot predict the outcome of the
NSD's ongoing process to evaluate facilities and determine American Canyon's participation, no
mitigation is possible. This would be result in a potential unmitigable impact.

Comment 33-35 Detailed plans would be prepared after adoption of the Big Ranch Specific Plan (and
accompanying Financing Plan), according to the Implementation Element of the Plan. The
Implementation Element defines sewer facilities by phase, thus showing the order or sequence for
installing these facilities, but does not provide a schedule with dates for implementing any of the phases.

Comment 33-36 The EIR (page 56) reports that Big Ranch Specific Plan Policy LU-2 would
require the City / and or an applicant [for a new development project] to apply to LAFCO [the Napa
County Local Agency Formation Commission] to amend the City and NSD spheres and to incorporate
the subject parcel before or concurrent with any development application for areas outside of the
respective spheres.

The EIR (page 56) also states that

Due to the need to install basic "backbone" infrastructure in the BRSPA before individual property
owners (or prospective developers) can seek City approval for their projects or LAFCO annexation of
their parcels, the following additional measure is recommended:

- The City should ask LAFCO to amend both the City's and NSD's spheres of influence and to
  annex unincorporated parcels outside both jurisdictions into the City and District

The City will be responsible for deciding which annexation approach to adopt as part of the process of
reviewing the merits of the Big Ranch Specific Plan.

As discussed in response to Comments 25-1 and 29-3, however, existing City zoning and Policy
Resolution No. 27 also relate to maintenance of septic systems and public sewer connections. In this
case, the writer could retain the existing septic system to serve the present housing unit or could connect
to NSD sewers. Any future development on the writer's parcel would be required to connect to NSD
sewers. Developers of new housing would be responsible for paying connection fees; owners of existing
units would be responsible for paying connection fees.

Sewer easements are obtained in a number of ways, depending on the particular circumstance. The
NSD currently has an easement along the Salvador Channel, and no additional easements across the
writer's parcel are currently proposed as part of Specific Plan improvements.

Comment 33-37 EIR Mitigation Measure 4.9-6 (pages 183-184) would be required to mitigate this
impact. It states

Keep access points out of the floodplain to prevent infiltration and inflow. One option would be to
keep existing access points at the same elevation. This would require raising a mound of material
(approximately three to four feet high) around newly-exposed manholes. ...
The EIR (page 184, Responsibility and Monitoring) states that the City would be responsible for maintaining current manhole elevations (if the Salvador Channel is widened) and for coordinating this mitigation with the NSD.

*Comment 33-38* Same as the immediately preceding response to *Comment 33-37* which acknowledges that raising a mound of material around a manhole would be necessary to provide access.

*Comment 33-39* Same as response to *Comment 33-37*.

*Comment 33-40* Treated and untreated wastewater is discharged into the Napa River.

*Comment 33-41* Individual BRSPA developers would be responsible for building (and paying for) segments of the new 12-inch line parallel to the existing North Napa Sanitary Sewer Relief Trunk (NNSSRT) which cross their properties when installing infrastructural facilities their project would require. The County would be responsible for paying for any over-sizing of the parallel line.

*Comment 33-42* The comment is unclear. The cost of designing and installing major infrastructural facilities requires public agencies to plan in ten- and 20-year increments or longer. The design "life" of public facilities attempts to anticipate demand. However, all public service agencies routinely update their facility plans to project future demands and identify long-term solutions, including the appropriate phasing of providing new or upgrading old facilities.

*Comment 33-43* Same as response to *Comment 33-37*.

*Comment 33-44* The Salvador Channel through this reach is highly unstable with actively collapsing banks and dense willow growth extending into the channel. This result is significant channel and bed erosion, particularly in the vicinity of large channel obstructions. The implementor of Mitigation Measure 4.4-4 would need to tailor any stable channel design so that the sewer pipe would not be exposed and no severe stabilization measures (such as grouted rip rap) would be required.

*Comment 33-45* Existing flood boundaries and depths would not expand if the Shinnamon units were built, as long as the cited setback distances were used.

*Comment 33-46* Comment noted.

*Additional Note* The numerous attachments accompanying Letter 33, including maps and photographs, are part of the City's permanent project file and are available for review at the City of Napa Planning Department during normal business hours together with the originals of all comments received on the EIR.
Letter 34

JOAN AND JOHN RUTHERFORD 3508 WILLIS DR NAPA CA 94558 (707)224-0217

John Yost, City Planner
Napa City Hall
1135 Third Street
Napa CA 94559

May 17 1996
subject: Gasser/O'Brian subdivision EIR

Dear Mr. Yost,

To create nearly double the density of existing/surrounding developments seems impossible to justify from an environmental and/or human conditions aspect. Napa is a 'newlywed' to the over-population reality and if it doesn't gain some 'good sense' soon the middle class in this town might just as well live in Santa Rosa, Petaluma or, god forbid, San Jose.

Mr. Marks stated, in a very cavalier manner, that this report doesn’t even pretend to deal with traffic, water or sewage issues... It certainly doesn’t address the thousands of tons of water to be shed by hundreds of acres of cement, asphalt and roofs, during just one winter squall.

Traffic, unfortunately is part of the planet’s environment. The amount of vehicular excursions created by these 900 some living units equals, an incredible 2,700 per day. You are actually about to assign most of these vehicles to roads through family neighborhoods, unbelievable! There is no way to control the unreasonable rates of speed through these neighborhoods now. For someone’s margin of profit to further this danger to our young and old alike is just not do-able.

This group’s population ploy is either embarassingly obvious or we Napans are being taken for fools. We’ve got to trust you folks to take a tottering Village in the right direction.

Truthfully,...

John Rutherford
Comment 34-1 The report does address the "thousands of tons" of watershed from the lands of the Big Ranch Specific Plan Area (BRSPA), albeit in less dramatic language.

Comment 34-2 An average household generates approximately ten trips per day. In this area, it can be expected that the estimated 792 net new households would generate 7,920 daily trips.

Comment 34-3 Please see the response to Comment 20-1.
May 17, 1996

Letter 35

John Yost, Planning Director
City of Napa Planning Department
P.O.Box 660
Napa, CA 94559

Re: Notice of Draft EIR Completion, Big Ranch Specific Plan
City File # 90-146 & 94-077.

Dear Sir,

As a resident of Willis Drive, I value the open space that is provided by the Garfield Park area. The Big Ranch EIR does not address the importance of the undeveloped lands in the area as a place to seek solace from the hectic activities of everyday life. Skyline Park, Westwood Park and Alston Park provide open space for their prospective neighborhoods but the Big Ranch Road area has no place so designated. Napa is still considered a rural city and we should maintain this. Development in the area of Garfield park should be prevented or minimized in keeping with its current landuse.

The Garfield park area should also remain undeveloped because of its refuge for wildlife. I have "birded" this area for the last eight years and have compiled a list of nearly 70 species that utilize this area for forage or nesting. Wood ducks have been residents for the last three years to my knowledge. Green-back Heron and Snowy Egrets are regular visitors seasonally. A number of species nest in the oak trees that borders the creeks. None of this information was addressed in this EIR report. The value of this area to raptors and aquatic birds is barely mentioned in the report. I found only seven lines on vegetation and wildlife on page 238.

Garfield Creek/ Salvador channel/ Gasser channel is an important haven for wildlife including the Northwestern Pond Turtle. The 15 foot setback recommended in this EIR is grossly inadequate to protect this ecosystem. This drainage is part if the Dry Creek drainage and although altered by channelization it is inhabited by a number of crustaceans and amphibians and is one of very few perennial streams that pass through the city of Napa. Every attempt should be made to enhance this resource rather than further confine it.

This EIR report suggests that Rubicon Street should be pulled through with the development of the Gasser property. This is unrealistic because this street is too narrow to support the traffic load that would be generated by the proposed land use. The bend in this street makes for hazardous driving and could lead to collisions with greatly increased traffic. Either the street needs widening or straightening or the development should be scaled way down.

Sincerely,

Jake Ruygr
3549 Willis Dr.
Napa
**LETTER 35**  
**JAKE RUYGT**

**Comment 35-1** As noted in response to Comments 7-2, 12-3, 23-4, and 33-6, the Big Ranch Specific Plan would retain Garfield Park as a City community park, its existing designation. Future use and development of Garfield Park -- such as with picnic and barbecue areas, multi-purpose youth fields, and restrooms as previously identified by the City's Community Resources Department -- will be determined by that department as an entirely separate process from the planning process now underway for the Big Ranch Specific Plan Area (BRSPA). The writers' preferences about the level of park development ultimately undertaken there should be addressed to the Community Resources Department.

**Comment 35-2** Comment noted. The EIR discussion of wildlife (pages 101 and 102) identifies wildlife species observed during BRSPA surveys. Although no raptor nests were detected in the planning area during field surveys, EIR Mitigation Measure 4.5-4(b) was recommended to prevent the loss of any active raptor nest which could be established in the future. Setbacks were recommended to protect the Salvador Channel and Bel-Aire / Gasser Tributary corridors, including provisions in Mitigation Measures 4.5-2(a), 4.5-4(a), and 4.5-5. Mitigation Measure 4.5-5(a) recommends a minimum setback of 50 feet rather than the 15-foot setback noted by the commentor. Mitigation Measure 4.5-4(a) includes provisions to minimize possible "take" of western pond turtle, and recommendations (page 257) for treatment of the Gasser Ranch site would further limit potential impacts on western pond turtle associated with the Bel-Aire / Gasser Tributary.

**Comment 35-3** The comment addresses the merits of the Big Ranch Specific Plan Circulation Plan. Nevertheless, the City included the discontinuous alignment of a Rubicon Street extension in the Plan to discourage use by through traffic, specifically to prevent Rubicon Street from becoming an alternate route to Trancas Street and, thus, to avoid impacts on existing residents from increased traffic volumes on their neighborhood streets. Traffic analyses conducted early in the planning process to study potential internal circulation patterns determined that roadway capacities meeting normal City standards could accommodate traffic generated by land uses and densities identified for the BRSPA.
MR J ohn Yost, Planning Director
City of Napa, Planning Department

Regarding BRSP

Dear Mr. Yost,

My wife and I own 8.98 acres, including 924.5 feet which borders the Van Wyden property on its northern boundary, which is the northern RUL for the BRSP. We are impressed by the thoroughness of the BRSP and draft EIR reports. The land use zoning, as depicted in Figure 2.3 and transportation roadway system plan, as depicted in Figure 7.3 in the draft BRSP, which have evolved after 6 years of study and meetings are acceptable to us. However, the property owner's alternative land use plan and alternative transportation plans are not. The property owner's alternative land use plan is also inconsistent with the city's long-standing policy of reducing density as the RUL is approached. Why should the eastern RUL be
protected more than the northern RVC?

We would hope that, regardless of what diversity is given to the vine winery land, when development does occur that a permanent solution be found for the present seasonal flooding that occurs, to our knowledge, in three places also. The northern border of the vine winery property of which I can only locate have described in network B+C pg 45 of the BISP draft or report.

I feel confident that NASA city officials will consider what I have briefly documented in making their decisions which will have considerable impact on the quality of our lives. If anyone is interested in visiting our property for a personal inspection please feel free to contact us and we will be more than happy to arrange a visit or answer any questions we may be forthcoming.

Sincerely,

William Smith

Wanda Smith
**LETTER 36**

**KAMTA AND WILLIAM SCHMITZ**

**Comment 36-1** More development has occurred north of the Rural / Urban Limit (RUL) and Big Ranch Specific Plan Area (BRSPA) than east of the RUL and BRSPA. Land to the north is characterized by rural ranchettes where agricultural operations primarily are for personal use (not self-sustaining commercial enterprises) whereas land to the east is in active agricultural production and part of the County's larger permanent agricultural zone. Ranchettes typically have a rural appearance or character due to low densities and large lots and such activities as keeping of livestock (horses for recreation and farm animals for non-commercial consumption). However, ranchettes function primarily as residential land uses and do not constitute agricultural land uses for the production of food and fiber. In view of policies to protect agriculture and prevent conversion to non-agricultural urban uses, the City and County give first priority to maintaining the viability of productive agricultural land.

**Comment 36-2** Since seasonal ponds typically are regulated by the Corps of Engineers as jurisdictional wetlands, they may not be developable. If development is granted for these areas, off-site mitigation probably would be required. In that case, the ponding areas likely would be filled or drained artificially by the developers.
May 17, 1996

John Yost, Director  
Napa City Planning Department  
1600 First Street  
Napa, CA 94559  

Re: DEIR, Big Ranch Road Specific Plan  

Dear Mr. Yost:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Big Ranch Specific Plan. Although we have some questions and concerns about some of the conclusions, we must commend your staff and the consultant, Nichols-Berman, and its team for the thorough job that has been done.

We offer the following comments:

**General:** It is our strong opinion that the Property Owners' Alternative is the environmentally superior alternative for a number of reasons which will be addressed further in this letter. We also have concerns and questions about creek setbacks and flooding issues along the Salvador Channel, about some of the infrastructure requirements and the timing of their implementation, inefficient use of land in an agricultural valley, urban/rural setbacks, and the Alternatives section.

**Land Use:**

1. Although the DEIR discusses the loss of agricultural land on pgs. 52 to 55 and concludes that loss of agricultural lands in the Specific Plan area is less than significant, we suggest that the development of large lots (i.e., 1 unit per acre) is a poor use of land. It is commonly stated by the citizens of Napa as well as by both the City of Napa's General Plan and the County of Napa's General Plan that urban uses should be located in urban areas. One acre estates are not an urban density and should be classed as semi-rural. In fact, the DEIR states on page 63 that, "In addition, high density land uses have beneficial environmental effects. This is because they can accommodate housing demands on smaller more efficient areas than lower density land uses where large-lot land-extensive development uses land and other resources inefficiently. Higher densities within the existing urban area help the City retain the existing RUL, reduce pressures to expand the RUL, and prevent rapid or unplanned growth." Although this particular section specifically addresses apartment densities in the interior of the Specific Plan, the same reasoning is equally true in the areas nearer the edge.

2. The DEIR suggests that there is no “rule of thumb” indicating what distance is appropriate for an agricultural setback nor for the density near the fringe. The City adopted the “feathering” concept several years ago (late 1980's) as well as the agricultural buffer concept. Since the adoption of these, however, the City has approved quite a few projects that back up to existing, mature commercial vineyards. The following is a partial list of those projects:
Dry Creek Village; 60 foot wide lots zoned RL-3 against the RUL; remaining lots in the subdivision are zoned RL-3/4.5. Agricultural buffer appears to be 80 feet.

Woodside Garden; 75 to 90 foot wide lots zoned RL-3 against the RUL. Ag buffer is 80 feet.

Guerrero Estates; 65 to 72 foot wide lots zoned RL-3 against the RUL. Overall subdivision density is 4.5 units per acre. Ag buffer is 80 feet.

Vineyard Vista; 74 foot wide lots zoned RL-3 against the RUL. Ag setback is 80 feet.

Kent Orchard Estates; lots are of varying widths zoned RL-3 against the RUL. Overall subdivision density is 3.4 units per acre. Ag setback is 80 feet.

Apparently, these recently approved developments have complied with the feathering concept and with the setback concept. Again, it is important to note that they directly border producing vineyards. It is our opinion that the lands lying north of the RUL in the Specific Plan area are not now, nor will they ever be, viable agricultural lands. Given all of the above, the designation of land as one acre estates is not appropriate. The Property Owners’ Alternative uses land wisely and efficiently and we believe that it is the environmentally superior alternate.

Salvador Channel:

1. Page 75 suggests that a 50 foot setback and/or creek reconstruction is needed for seismic reasons. Napa City Code currently requires a setback based upon 2 feet horizontal for every 1 foot of vertical height measured from the toe of the bank to the top of the creekbank plus 20 feet. If, in fact, this setback is truly needed for seismic hazard reasons, we would appreciate more detailed information from the Consultant. Perhaps a better way to address it is to follow the current City Code and also have the issue concurrently addressed in the Geotechnical Report required of the developer when a specific project is proposed.

2. The table on Page 96 lists setback distances from the top of the bank for the purpose of minimizing flood impacts in the Specific Plan area. The majority of the ground on the northeast side of the channel in the vicinity of the Shinnamom and Rushing-Hart parcels is already above the 100 year elevation and, thus, this setback is not necessary. We suggest that no fill be allowed to be placed in the floodplain area on the southwestern side unless it can be shown by a professional hydraulic analysis that existing earth can be removed to compensate for the proposed fill. This work would have to comply with Fish & Game requirements as well as planting requirements contained in other sections of the DEIR.

3. Page 97 suggests that the “Enhancement Alternative” is the preferred approach to solving flooding and habitat issues on the channel. Given the setbacks suggested in greater detail below, the channel will slowly have the ability to naturally develop the low flow channel that is desired. It will have the bankfull capacity outlined by Dr. Leopold at the Napa River Flood Coalition meeting and will also have the flood terraces he recommends. We suggest that removal of non-indigenous trees such as acacia and others and re-planting with riparian species might be appropriate. In an ideal world, the Enhancement Alternative is an attractive concept. Nevertheless, it appears to be very expensive and would destroy much of the creek and existing habitat and would cause removal of mature oaks. We believe that leaving the channel and its habitat alone is the best solution combined with the flood terraces and plantings outlined above.

4. Several years ago, there was an extended walk along the creek with Fred Botti of Fish and Game, Jerry Cormack and Jim McCann of Planning, Matt Naclerio of Public Works, Bob Carlson of Parks and Rec, a representative of Nichols-Berman, Bill Cramer of Beck Development, and myself. At that time, there was general agreement that the creek trail would be on the north side of the creek from Big Ranch upstream to the existing bridge crossing north of the Windchime. It would then cross the creek and follow the southwest and west side of the creek up to at least Garfield. There was general agreement that 45 feet of easements were needed on the trailside (25 feet for riparian purposes and 20 feet...
John Yost
Big Ranch Road Specific Plan Draft EIR

for pedestrian purposes) and 25 feet on the other side for riparian purposes. This agreement seems to be getting lost. Can the Consultant shed more light on the setbacks currently being proposed? We suggest that a meeting be coordinated with Fish & Game, the Consultant, City staff, and the property owners to discuss this in greater detail.

5. There is suggestion (Pg. 23) that Impact 4.4-4, Erosion, Sedimentation, and Channel Stability, is a significant unavoidable impact because the channel will continue to be “unstable” unless the channel is reconstructed. For the reasons outlined above, it is our opinion that the channel will become stable in time due to natural processes. We suggest that this Impact be reviewed again and that it become an impact that can be mitigated as outlined earlier in this letter.

Infrastructure:

1. There appears to be some disagreement between the DEIR (MM4.6-2) and the Draft Specific Plan in relation to Highway 29. The Draft Specific Plan says that there are small, but cumulative impacts on the road but that the modifications are not related directly to development in the area and that mitigation is not necessary. We suggest that the mitigation measure be modified to reflect the need to pay a proportionate share of the costs for the additional lanes. The most appropriate would be to pay into the City’s Traffic Mitigation Fee program.

2. We suggest that Big Ranch Road only be widened for 4 lanes from Trancas north only as far as is necessary for safe transitions to and from the narrower section to the north. The requirement that the road be widened for 4 lanes to the existing bridge (almost 1200 feet) is too inflexible.

3. We suggest that additional hydraulic analysis needs to be performed on the water supply system in relation to the phasing of improvements. For the first phase, we would like to investigate the possibility of having an 8” water main installed in Villa Lane from its current terminus at the north end of Villa up to Garfield. There would be cross-connections from the existing waterlines at the ends of Rubicon and Valle Verde, and through the Queen of the Valley. A 16” line would be installed in Big Ranch Road up to the existing bridge and then extended in a subsequent phase as other properties develop. We believe that this system would create sufficient fire and domestic flows needed for first phase development.

4. We suggest that both east-west 12” relief sewer lines could easily be constructed through the Shinnamom and/or Gasser/O’Brien property which would be much cheaper than going under the Channel at Garfield Lane. Because the trunk is on the southwest side of the Channel in this area, this would preclude the need for such a deep and expensive line in Garfield Lane. This would also be environmentally superior because it avoids a creek crossing.

Aesthetics:

1. MM 4.10-4 suggests that landscaping should be installed around the project perimeter at initial project implementation or after site preparation. In building projects, final site grading is not completed until all of the utilities are in place, streets are complete, and all sidewalks and driveways are poured. It is very important to balance the earthwork on the site; this final balance is not known until all of the above are complete. Although all developers have their civil engineers go through rigorous calculations to balance the amounts of cut and fill, there are many unknowns that affect this balance. Lanscaped areas are used to absorb the additional earth or are used as places to remove earth to achieve a balance. Only after site grading is complete is landscaping then installed. Landscaping first would create a very difficult situation. Although these are noble thoughts, it would cause the construction process to be substantially more expensive and much more difficult to manage. There is also the suggestion that construction of adjacent sites occur concurrently, if possible. Although this is a nice idea, it rarely happens. We suggest that these measures be dropped.
John Yost  
Big Ranch Road Specific Plan Draft EIR

Cultural Resources:

1. We believe it imperative that the City notify any property owners who may have archaeological sites on their properties. This has to be done in a way that is congruent with State law and ethical processes but we don’t believe that it is reasonable to withhold this information (MM 4.11-1).

Alternatives:

1. We see no discussion under the “No Project” Alternative about the underlying General Plan. Presumably, if the Specific Plan is not adopted, development in the Big Ranch Road area will be governed by the existing General Plan. As such, “No Project” doesn’t mean no development; it actually means development at substantially higher densities than proposed by the Specific Plan or any of the other alternatives.

2. Please refer to the tables on pages 239 and 240. Using the criteria contained in these, the Circulation Plan contained in the Property Owners’ Alternative is the environmentally superior alternative. Please note that the Property Owners’ Alternative has the most favorable numbers in the Vehicle-Miles-Traveled Table and in the VMT Percentages Table. It also comes very close to the best rating in the “residential livability” category.

3. The Circulation Plan of the Property Owners’ Alternative has been recommended to the Planning Commission and City Council by the City’s Traffic Advisory Committee. It avoids several creek crossings that would be needed if the other circulation plans are adopted. By all the indices and criteria listed, it appears to be the environmentally superior alternative.

4. Enclosed is a drawing entitled, “Conceptual Circulation Plan, Big Ranch Road Specific Plan” and dated May 1996. This drawing shows a very conceptual outline of how a road system might be laid out in the future for the area north of Garfield Lane. The drawing was prepared in response to concerns raised by residents in the area concerned about traffic if Trower Avenue were to be connected to Garfield Lane. It would allow both residential and emergency traffic to travel north-south and east-west but it would purposefully be arranged in a somewhat circumspect manner. It would allow utility services to be installed in a logical manner and would allow traffic to move through the area. It would preclude significant through traffic and may be preferred by the existing residents. It is important to understand that this is a long-term plan that will take many years to implement and develop and will not occur overnight. A final layout could be very different but could easily incorporate the basic concept that is outlined.

Again, we appreciate the opportunity to present our comments about the Draft Environmental Impact Report. Please let us know if there is additional information that we might be able to provide.

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]

Charles W. Shinnammon, P.E.
LETTER 37
CHARLES SHINNAMON

Comment 37-1 Comment noted.

Comment 37-2 The commenter notes that, in his opinion, "the land lying north of the RUL in the Specific Plan area are not now, nor will they ever be, viable agricultural lands". As noted in Letter 43 (John and Peggy Wilkinson), some of the activities occurring on properties just north of the RUL are agricultural in character and could have impacts on adjacent residential uses in the City. Even if the land were not currently in semi-agricultural use, there are many examples in the Napa Valley of land returned to active agricultural use which either was abandoned from that use many years ago or was thought at one time to be unable to support active agriculture. The City's current policy is to establish adequate buffers to allow agricultural uses to be retained and / or established in adjacent areas.

Comment 37-3 Mitigation Measure 4.3-1 recommends a 50-foot setback to be consistent with hydrology and biology measures recommended along the Salvador Channel.

Comment 37-4 Bill V (to be provided for Final EIR)

Comment 37-5 The writer incorrectly asserts that the Enhancement Alternative was put forth as the preferred flood control alternative. The reason it was recommended, as noted in the language of Impact 4.4-4, was to alleviate the channel instability problem in the reach. As a rule, providing a flood terrace would provide the benefits referred to in a general sense by Dr. Leopold. However, in this case, a stable low flow channel is not likely to develop if a flood terrace is added. The bottom width of the channel is too wide to create stability and is inefficient from a sediment transport standpoint. Only a restoration channel cross-section tailored to the bankfull discharge and sediment transport requirements of the reach would solve the stability problem. With respect to the loss of existing riparian vegetation attending the Enhancement Alternative, it should be noted that the creation of a flood terrace as recommended by the writer also would result in the loss of much of the riparian corridor vegetation. Due to the presence of the overbank fill and higher elevations along the Napa Valley Club boundary, the bulk of the excavation for a flood terrace would need to be done on the west side of the channel. Finally, the Enhancement Alternative could take a number of different forms, including a more sinuous meandering form / alignment or a straighter one: In this way, loss of the most significant oak trees could be avoided. The most important attribute of such a restoration channel would be its ability to transport its water and sediment load without future unpredictable instability (excessive erosion and sedimentation).

Comment 37-6 Same as response to Comment 28-4.

Comment 37-7 See response to Comment 37-5 above. It is the EIR hydrologist's opinion that Impact 4.4-4 would be significant and unavoidable.

Comment 37-8 As the Specific Plan notes, conditions at Trower and SR 29 are caused by impacts unrelated to development in the Big Ranch Specific Plan Area (BRSPA). The contribution by developers to the citywide traffic impact fee would contribute to eventual improvements at this intersection, should they be required and should it be necessary for the City to contribute to those improvements.
Comment 37-9 The Specific Plan indicates that Big Ranch Road should be widened to four lanes to approximately the Salvador Bridge, subject to refinement and further analysis at a later date as to the exact length of the widening. The EIR should be corrected to reflect the Specific Plan. This modification would not change any of the conclusions or analysis in the EIR.

Comment 37-10 Several alternative water supply systems were evaluated before adopting the system shown in the Specific Plan. The system in the Specific Plan is the ultimate system required according to the Water Department. As noted in the response to Comment 28-10, the exact phasing of water system improvements is still subject to discussion and is not directly addressed in the EIR.

Comment 37-11 The sewer plan presented in the Specific Plan and EIR is conceptual in nature and shows approximate connection and line locations. If alternative locations achieve the same result of relieving the surcharge pressure in the North Napa Sanitary Sewer line at lower cost, those alternatives should be considered by the Napa Sanitation District at the time projects are proposed.

Comment 37-12 Comment noted. Mitigation Measure 4.10-4 is revised as follows:

Mitigation Measure 4.10-4 The following mitigation measures would reduce construction impacts:

- Install and maintain landscaping around the perimeter of project sites as an initial phase of project implementation or, if not feasible at the outset, immediately after final grading.

- Schedule construction of adjacent sites to occur concurrently, if possible, to minimize the length of time visual impacts will occur.

Comment 37-13 Information about archaeological and historical resources is extremely sensitive and is restricted to landowners, prospective developers, and their design and development professionals in order to prevent vandalism and looting or unintentional damage. Therefore, it is not appropriate to disseminate such information to the general public in order to protect valuable cultural resources, but, where available, such information is routinely provided to planners, engineers, and other land development professionals for legitimate purposes in order to take the presence of cultural resources into consideration when planning and designing their projects. Surveys by archaeologists and historians to determine the presence or likely presence of cultural resources have been conducted on only a small fraction of land statewide and usually correspond to land where proposals for various development activities have required investigations to be carried out. Consequently, archival searches by landowners / prospective developers frequently do not reveal records of known resources unless surveys were conducted previously, although certain types of site features and surveys of nearby lands can suggest the relative cultural sensitivity of parcels.

Landowners, prospective developers, and members of the public who participated in the BRSPA planning process were informed about the archaeological sensitivity of the BRSPA when it was determined and reported in Working Paper #1, based on an examination of Napa County’s environmental sensitivity maps and Napa County Historic Resources Survey and communications with the Northwest Information Center of the California Archaeological Inventory. Working Paper #3 further reported that "an archaeological survey will be conducted to identify steps necessary to protect this [previously recorded resource] and, if present, other resources from future development". The archaeological survey provided the basis for the EIR analysis (EIR footnote 161).

Comment 37-14 Same as response to Comment 16-3. The EIR (pages 25-26 and 228-229) lists and summarizes the underlying concepts of the No Project Alternative, the General Plan Alternative, and the
other alternatives analyzed in addition to presenting the respective evaluations and comparing the outcome of all alternatives in Exhibit 5.6-1.

Comment 37-15 Same as responses to Comments 28-1 and 28-18. When viewed solely in terms of transportation impacts, the Property Owners' Alternative would be the environmentally superior alternative, as noted by this comment and the EIR (page 261). However, when considering the other environmental topics evaluated in the EIR, the Optional Circulation Alternative would be environmentally superior.

Comment 37-16 Comment noted. The EIR (pages 3-4) describes that the City Council selected the Circulation and Land Use Plans contained in the Big Ranch Specific Plan, first in September 1992 and again in September 1993. When reviewing the merits of the Plan, either the Planning Commission or Council could request staff to make revisions to the Circulation Plan, Land Use Plan, or Plan policies.

Comment 37-17 There is an almost infinite number of alternative circulation schemes which could serve the BRSPA, each of which would achieve a different set of goals. At least ten were considered during the Specific Plan process. The alternative presented by the commentor may indeed minimize through traffic, but it may not meet some other goal, such as facilitating emergency access through the BRSPA. The City Council is the body with the responsibility of balancing competing goals and arriving at an acceptable plan. As noted in response to Comment 16-8, the Circulation Plan evaluated in the EIR is the plan selected by the City Council in September 1992 after an arduous evaluation and review of many alternatives. Other alternatives may be environmentally superior or better achieve the objectives of property owners but may not achieve other goals and objectives of the Specific Plan established by the City Council.

Additional Note The numerous attachments accompanying Letter 37, including memoranda and maps, are part of the City’s permanent project file and are available for review at the City of Napa Planning Department during normal business hours together with the originals of all comments received on the EIR.
1383 Rosewood Lane
Napa, CA 94558

April 22, 1996

John Yost, Planning Director
City of Napa Planning Department
P. O. Box 660
Napa, CA 95559

Dear Mr. Yost:

We received your letter regarding the Draft Big Ranch Specific Plan and would like to register our concerns and request for changes prior to the May 2nd Planning Commission meeting.

Since moving to our home in Napa 8 years ago we have been aware of the possibility for eventual development in the area between the high school and Big Ranch Road. We have attended a number of meetings over the years to remain informed and to be able to voice our thoughts on density, traffic and related concerns. As you know, the proposed developmental plans three years ago contained various options for extending Trower Blvd. One option put it straight through to Big Ranch Rd. Another option diverted Trower alongside Vintage High School and the Little League park to dump onto Garfield Ln. These plans were then dismissed in favor of a plan that was not previously shared with area residents.

At a City Council meeting on Sept. 8, 1992 at approximately 10:30 PM, Charles Shinnamon, a land owner and developer, not a resident of the area, came forward with a new road alignment and an impressive letter from his attorneys. His proposed plan had NOT previously been made public. Only those present at the City Council meeting that night had the opportunity to review the new road alignment and voice their objections. Within 30 minutes of viewing the new proposed road alignment the City Council approved it! This plan ultimately benefits those wishing to develop their land, while ignoring the property rights of other residents. It will take at least a third of our property (which the city will have to condemn in order to take) to put in the newly proposed road. We along with other concerned neighbors will lose a substantial amount of property to meet the desires of large landowners to develop their land.
We feel that the City Council and Planning Dept. hastily made a poor decision without proper consideration of the desires of ALL the land owners in the area. They did this to expedite the process and appease the developers. This new road alignment affects more property owners than the previous plans. As pointed out by Mr. Shimmaman’s lawyers, for the City to be able to condemn our property through its power of eminent domain they must establish ALL of the following:

a. The public interest and necessity require the project
b. The project is planned or located in the manner that will be most compatible with the greatest public good and the least private injury. This is where we feel the council erred—this new plan actually causes the most private injury as more property owners are affected—and it certainly doesn’t do the greatest public good as all the residents on Garfield, Rosewood and Sierra will be adversely affected with the increased traffic, noise, and safety issues.

c. The property sought to be acquired is necessary for the project.

The Council’s decision to move the road was wrong and needs to be changed. If the city maintains the current road alignment there will be at least two MORE property owners whom they will have to pay not only fair market value but severance damages based on adverse visual impact and irritation noise caused by the project, including compensation for the diminution in value of our properties caused by increased noise and decreased privacy resulting from the proximity of Trower and the carving up of our property. All that Mr. Shinnamon argued applies to the rest of us and as already stated there are more parcels affected by his proposition than any other. We will not accept this change quietly. We look forward to a reversal of this decision.

Sincerely,

Tom & Doris Smeltzer
1383 Rosewood Lane
Napa, CA 94558

May 17, 1996

Letter 39

John Yost, Planning Director
City of Napa Planning Department
P. O. Box 660
Napa, CA 94559

Dear Mr. Yost:

This letter is to ask questions and share our concerns regarding elements of the Draft Big Ranch Specific Plan/E.I.R. Our first concern is the proposed turn of Trower 90 degrees south and extending it to join Garfield Lane. Is this not in direct violation of several aspects of General Plan policy? Such an extension would not be a, "logical and reasonably direct path" to Big Ranch Road. This proposal, "fails to prevent an undue concentration of traffic on Garfield Lane." It instead creates an undue concentration of traffic on Garfield Lane. This extension would fail to, "prevent incursions of unwanted through traffic," onto a lane intended for local residential access. The draft EIR fails to recognize or address any of the above-mentioned adverse impacts of joining Sierra with Garfield Lane and swinging Trower south to join Garfield Lane.

Each change proposed and addressed by the EIR is seen as an individual entity. What about the cumulative effects caused by all of these changes once they are implemented in concert with one another? How will the safety and aesthetic character of Garfield Lane be preserved?

Bel Aire Park elementary school has adopted "Crusher Creek" as their watershed. Students from first through sixth grade take walking field trips throughout the school year to conduct animal population studies, wildlife research, trash pick up, and restoration projects. The data collected each year gets passed on with the students as they progress through the grades and observe the changes, over time, of this watershed. The EIR does not address how these students will safely visit this watershed if these changes take place. It does not address the negative impact the human intervention will have on the wildlife whose habitats are studied by these youngsters.

I look forward to the issues listed in this letter being addressed. The extension of Trower to Garfield is not an alternative!

Sincerely,

Tom & Doris Smeltzer
LETTER 38
DORIS AND TOM SMELTZER (APRIL 22, 1996)

Comment 38-1  The comments address the planning process and the merits of the Big Ranch Specific Plan itself, primarily the Circulation Plan, not the adequacy of the EIR and, therefore, no response is needed.

LETTER 39
DORIS AND TOM SMELTZER (MAY 17, 1996)

Comment 39-1  Please see the response to Comment 19-1. As noted in response to Comment 22-2, Garfield/ Sierra is a designated collector street, not a local access street.

Comment 39-2  The relationships among environmental changes were taken into account in the analyses and reflected in the EIR. One example includes the hydrology and biology analyses of the Salvador Channel which the respective technical analysts coordinated with each other and the City staff throughout the identification of conservation concepts, formulation of the Big Ranch Specific Plan, and assessment of the Plan in the EIR. Both also participated with resource agency representatives (California Department of Fish and Game, Corps of Engineers, etc.). A second example includes the relationship of noise and air quality to traffic. Both the noise and air quality analyses took traffic generation of Big Ranch Specific Plan Area (BRSPA) development into account, with the significance of impact correlating closely to vehicle trips. Where relevant, the EIR also analyzed cumulative impacts of BRSPA development at buildout, combined with other development elsewhere in the study area, including traffic, air quality, and public service impacts.

Comment 39-3  Please see the responses to Comments 18-3 and 20-1. The existing visual character of Garfield Lane would be changed (not "preserved") both by road building and residential construction adjacent to the roadway. However, change per se is not considered a significant impact under CEQA. It is likely that introduction of the Napa Valley Club and Willowbrook projects in the 1980s resulted in a more dramatic change from visual conditions before these projects’ development than would occur with construction of development permitted by the Big Ranch Specific Plan.

Comment 39-4  The creek study and restoration program by Bel Aire Park elementary school, noted by the commenter, is not part of the Big Ranch Specific Plan. Student activities presumably will be monitored by school teachers and staff, with access provided along the open space setbacks of the creek corridor.
Dear Nepa Planning Commission:

I wish to express my opposition to the development of the Big Ranch Road area. The negatives are almost too many to list, but I will try:

1) Increased traffic/speed
2) Increased noise
3) Increased pollution to streams & wildlife
4) Increased crime
5) Increased traffic safety problems
6) Reduced places to ride bikes, walk, play, basketball, enjoy animals.

Where will the kids play? Where will people be able to walk dogs and ride bikes without having to stop at a stop light? Big Ranch Road is used for Bay Area Back Roads. Non-organized and other miscellaneous groups they too would lose out.

We don't need "high density" housing. What we need are more undeveloped areas like Muñoz and more areas that are as well maintained as Big Ranch Road and Muñoz lane.

Why doesn't the developer spend time...
developing the Downtown area instead?

We don't need more people, crime, pollution and traffic in Nepe. Let's keep what we have so that our future generations and we can enjoy it. The people of Nepe-Valley Club are unwilling to choose to live in this special area. Don't tell it away from us or our neighbors.

Sincerely,
Ann Trimpe
97 Nepe Valley Club
Nepe, Ca. 94563
Comment 40-1  The letter expresses the writer's opinions about the merits of the Big Ranch Specific Plan, and does not address the adequacy of the EIR, and required no response. However, as noted in response to Comments 7-2, 12-3, 23-4, 33-6, and 35-1, the Plan would retain Garfield Park as this part of Napa's community park. Reference also is made to Letter 7.
May 13, 1996

Napa Planning Department
1600 First St.
Napa CA 94559

Dear Members of the Planning Department:

We are opposed to the density levels in the land use proposal (exhibit #2.2-1). As life-long Napa residents, and property owners in this area since 1974, we strongly believe that this area, particularly the land north of Rosewood Lane, is a productive agricultural region and should remain at estate level density.

We urge you not to allow pressure from developers to destroy the character of this area.

Let's not become another San Jose.

Sincerely,

Ardy Van Winden
Lori Van Winden

encl. see map attached for suggested densities

cc. City Council
LETTER 41
ARDY AND LORI VAN WINDEN

Comment 41-1 The writers express an opinion about the merits of the Big Ranch Specific Plan, primarily land use plan density in the northern part of the Big Ranch Specific Plan Area (BRSPA), but raises no comments about the adequacy of the EIR. Therefore, no response is necessary, and the comment is presented in this document for City officials' and the public's information.
Mr. Yost and
City Planning Group

"I smell something rotten (not in
Denmark," but in Napa!"

Why are you wanting to make

I never come through to Sausalito
here instead of going to Big Ben & Co.

As always, there must be someone
who benefits by this decision!

Next time an election comes up I
am really going to investigate all of

Eddy M. Webster
89 Valley View Circle
Napa, Ca
94558

One Seaport Plaza, New York, NY 10292
LETTER 42
EDITH WEBBER

Comment 42-1 The writer expresses an opinion about the merits of the Big Ranch Specific Plan, primarily Circulation Plan, but raises no comments about the adequacy of the EIR. Therefore, no response is necessary, and the comment is presented in this document for City officials' and the public's information.
May 17, 1996

Mr. John Yost, Planning Director  
City of Napa Planning Department  
P.O. Box 660  
Napa, CA 94559

Re: Big Ranch Specific Plan and Environmental Impact Report

Dear Mr. Yost:

We are property owners at 2351 Big Ranch Road. Our property is on the Rural Urban Line (RUL) to the north of the property Mr. Peter Van Winden owns and wishes to develop (as covered in the "Property Owner’s Alternative") and which is evaluated in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

When we purchased our property in 1992 we were aware that it was located on the RUL. We were also told, by your department specifically, that if any development were to take place along the RUL, it would be appropriately feathered, to preserve the density character of existing development. We were also told that any development would be compatible with adjacent development. The Specific Plan provides that these parameters be followed. The 20 acre parcel located immediately adjacent to ours and on the RUL is zoned ED-1. We accept this designation, however we note that several of the alternatives set forth in the EIR contemplate densities much greater than ED-1 for properties along the north of the RUL including this 20 acre parcel.

Our property is a 3 acre parcel on which we keep livestock and horses. We consider our property to be very "ranch like" because of its location and the properties located all around it. Immediately in front of our property (on Big Ranch Road) is a one acre parcel, owned by Mrs. Estis, currently housing a horse. Immediately behind our property is another 9+ acre parcel owned by Dr. Bill Schmitz which is used for livestock breeding. There are several parcels to our north along El Centro Street which are also used or proposed to be used for livestock and horses. As you are well aware, the property located on the east side of Big Ranch Road is all Agricultural Preserve, used for farming grapes. In general, the area located within 1/2 mile of the RUL to the south is currently used for vineyards, orchards, nurseries and live stock grazing. This is the nature of the area in which we live. We are surrounded by rural properties and people with a love of rural life and an interest in rural living.
The exception to this is the property owner who purchased his 20 acre parcel (immediately adjacent to ours) for development purposes. At the time the property was purchase however, and to this day, this property is located in the county and zoned ED. We understand that because Mr. Van Winden has found favor with the Planning Commission and members of local government, he was able to lobby to have his property included in the “sphere of influence” of the City. This in and of itself is ridiculous since there is a much more logical Sphere of Influence boundary at Napa Valley Club where densities were permitted to be very high. We believe that the decision to include this property in the City is simply an accommodation to a long time Napa resident with well known legal counsel. This is not the subject of this letter however.

We understand the City’s need to expand its boundaries however, we strongly believe that it is considering options in the EIR which do not follow the guidelines set out for development of the Big Ranch area.

Specifically we have the following concerns as they relate to all of the alternatives proposed but most specifically the Property Owner’s Alternative:

1. Land Use. The BRSP policies note that “parcels in new subdivisions contiguous to or directly adjacent to the RUL … shall be designated CR-7, Agricultural Buffer Areas…” and that “parcels with frontage on Big Ranch Road are subject to some agricultural impacts…” If these are the policies of the BRSP, how could the City be considering the “Property Owner’s Alternative” zoning densities for property along the RUL? This alternative provides for densities of ED-2, ED-3, ED-4 and ED-6 on a 20 acre parcel. The “property owner” in order to maximize his development potential has proposed that the City evaluate densities which become greater moving from east to west along the properties located adjacent to the RUL. This is a method of tricking the planning commission and neighbor’s into thinking that there will be “feathering” along the backyards of the homes proposed to be built on this property. Such high density development will result in houses as close together as those located in and around Vintage High School. (some as close as 11 feet apart!) These houses will have long skinny backyards all fronting the RUL and our property. This is totally unacceptable to us for obvious reasons and totally inconsistent with the guidelines set up for development along the RUL. This is of utmost importance to us and Dr. Schmitz our neighbor.

2. We believe that since the Specific Plan is to be adopted by ordinance, the zoning designations set forth in the plan, especially those which impact Mr. Van Winden’s property along the RUL must be designated ED-1 and not ED-2, ED-3, ED-4 and ED-6 as proposed in the EIR Property Owners Alternative.

3. Transportation and Safety. We have some significant concerns regarding safety and increased traffic on Big Ranch Road. As you are well aware and acknowledge in the Specific Plan, Big Ranch Road currently functions as a “rural highway” and is characterized by relatively high speed traffic. We have personally been hit in our car
while stopped with our signal on waiting to turn into our driveway. In addition, our neighbor, Dr. Schmitz was almost killed several years ago turning into the same driveway. Since we have lived here (almost 4 years) we have witnessed 3 other accidents between cars attempting to turn off of Big Ranch Road. If you request accident reports for Big Ranch Road from the police department we are sure that you will find that there are many accidents due to the high speeds at which people travel on our street. We have a small child and moved to “the country” to be away from “highway” traffic and dangers. Allowing additional development along Big Ranch Road, and providing east-west connector roads will only create a safety hazard not unlike that which exists on any busy highway in California. This issue is not sufficiently considered and evaluated by the EIR. Big Ranch Road is not intended for travel at high speeds. The shoulders are not wide enough to allow safe passage by pedestrians or cyclists yet drivers regularly travel over 65 mph. Increased development will cause this issue to become acute and will result in many injuries along the road.

4. Resource and Conservation. We must bring to your attention the adverse impact development will have on water drainage to our property. A portion of our property and the Van Winden property as is very low. We have had severe problems with water flooding in the low part of our property at times of heavy rain. Over the last year, Mr. Van Winden has been filling his property, starting with his frontage on Big Ranch Road in preparation for potential development. This filling has caused our drainage issues to become very acute, often resulting in a foot or more of water in our livestock field and driveway. Any development of this property, especially development of more than one home per acre, will significantly impact our property by causing water which currently sits on Mr. Van Winden’s property to be funneled onto ours.

5. Vegetation and Wildlife. The EIR, when referring to the Property Owners Alternative, states that there is a lack of “any sensitive biological resources on the parcel” and states that “no nest locations or movement corridors for wildlife would be affected.” This could not be further from the truth. We have several large egrets which move from a small pond on our property, back and forth to another pond located on the Van Winden parcel. These birds use our areas for feeding, nesting and breeding. We have many wild ducks, quail and geese which nest and live between our property and the Van Winden parcel. Our barn (located within 14 feet of the RUL) is home to families of barn owls every spring. These owls hunt in the evenings in the Van Winden parcel for food. All of these species of wildlife would be severely affected by development as set forth in the EIR along the RUL.

In addition, we believe that the pond located on the Van Winden parcel might be considered a wetland and be subject to the Army Corps of Engineers jurisdiction. The EIR does not address this body of water, yet the Property Owners Alternative places 3 or 4 houses per acre on the area where this pond sits.
7. Noise. The EIR states that the Property Owners Alternative would have the least impact on noise in the area. This could not be further from the truth. People will be living on top of one another and the number of homes proposed in this alternative would greatly increase the noise levels on Big Ranch Road. We currently enjoy the sounds of bullfrogs in the evening. The development will create traffic noise, living noise and during construction, development noise which will totally block these wonderful country sounds. The development may even have an impact on the bullfrog breeding. The EIR does not adequately address the issue of noise.

7. Public Services. We are very concerned about the impact additional development will have on the public schools in Napa. We all know that the public education system in California is in a terrible state. Children tested in California rank among the lowest in scholastic achievement in the country. The development considered in all of the alternatives would greatly impact the public school system in our community. Children would be forced in attend schools in trailers and the teacher to student ratio would increase. This issue is not adequately addressed in the EIR.

8. Aesthetics. Aesthetically, development as set forth in all of the alternatives, as well as the Draft Specific Plan, would have visual effects like development in any high density subdivision. Visually, the rural, ranch-like nature of the area will be permanently ruined.

9. As stated in the EIR, development would adversely affect the rural character of the area, thus the historic integrity of property located on Big Ranch Road. Our home was built in the 1800's and has been preserved as a rural farmhouse. Suburban density development would severely adversely affect the past settlement and agricultural heritage of our home and this area of Napa.

In summary, we strongly oppose all of the alternatives set forth in the EIR because we feel that the EIR does not adequately address the areas we have outlined above. We also feel that development, especially development of the Van Winden parcel along the RUL, should be kept at a minimum to avoid forever destroying the wonderful rural nature of the Big Ranch Road area. We would support the ED-1, CR-7 designation given this parcel and other areas on Big Ranch Road.

If you have any questions regarding our comments, please feel free to call us at 707-259-1412.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide our input.

Very truly yours,

Peggy and John Wilkinson
2351 Big Ranch Road
LETTER 43
JOHN AND PEGGY WILKINSON

Comment 43-1 The Big Ranch Specific Plan is the "project" pending before the City and evaluated in the EIR. As noted in the responses to Comments 9-3 and 16-2, the City can adopt or modify the Plan as presently defined or can adopt an alternative if City officials believe the alternative would be more appropriate for the Big Ranch Specific Plan Area (BRSPA). However, it is more likely that the City would further refine the Plan by modifying it to reflect some elements of one or more alternatives than it is likely for the City to adopt an EIR alternative. Unlike some EIRs which evaluate alternatives in equal detail in order to select the "preferred alternative" as "the plan", this EIR assesses alternative concepts to identify differences in outcome with the Plan which evolved from the six-year BRSPA planning process. In this context, the EIR (page 225) states that the "Property Owners' Alternative provides an opportunity to examine site-specific development concepts on some individual parcels in the BRSPA". Some aspects of some landowners' / prospective developers' concepts for their parcels would not conform with the Big Ranch Specific Plan land use plan and policies, if adopted by the City.

Comment 43-2 This comment expresses the writers' preferences about the land use designation and zoning classification related to density on an adjacent property within the BRSPA. See the response to the immediately preceding comment.

Comment 43-3 Please see the responses to Comments 26-3 and 21-3.

Comment 43-4 See the response to Comment 36-2 regarding the filling of seasonal ponding areas. If these are being filled, there could be regulatory jurisdiction issues involved. This should be discussed with the City. It is up to the Van Windens to ensure that their fill does not create nuisance drainage conditions on adjacent properties. Some arbitration / negotiation with the Van Windens may be required to settle any grievance over the fill activities.

Comment 43-5 The EIR did not evaluate specific development plans for the Van Winden parcel as part of the Property Owners' Alternatives. The reference made by the commentors to the Johnson / Big Ranch Road Investors property incorrectly assumes that the discussion encompasses the Van Winden parcel. No active nests were observed on the Van Winden parcel during the detailed wildlife surveys, although it is likely that heron, ducks, and other birds use the depression or pond for foraging. The EIR (page 105) discusses the presence of this potentially sensitive wetland features on the Van Winden parcel. Mitigation Measure 4.5-5(b) would require further review of possible jurisdictional wetlands on the Van Winden and other parcels proposed for development.

Comment 43-6 Wildlife (including non-native aquatic species, such as bullfrog) tend to acclimate to constant noise sources, such as traffic. Construction-generated noise, traffic, and other disturbance may affect wildlife activity, as the EIR acknowledges (page 110).

The comment is correct in noting that the EIR (page 261) found that the Property Owners' Alternative (and Optional Circulation Alternative) would result in the fewest traffic noise impacts on existing residential streets due to the relatively low number of peak hour VPH (emphases added). However, the comment fails to note that the EIR (page 262) concluded:
but the greater total amount of BRSPA development envisaged for the Property Owners' Alternative would make the Optional Circulation Alternative environmentally superior.

Comment 43-7 As noted in response to other comments in this document (Comments 8-1, 16-7, and 33-30), according to the State CEQA Guidelines “an economic or social change by itself shall not be considered a significant effect on the environment. A social or economic change related to a physical change may be considered in determining whether the physical change is significant”. The EIR (pages 195-196) reports that the Napa Valley Unified School District uses portable classrooms at all the schools which BRSPA students might attend (Bel Aire Elementary, El Centro Elementary, Salvador Elementary, Redwood Middle, and Vintage High Schools). The EIR also states (page 196) that current capacity is sufficient to accommodate BRSPA students at the elementary and middle schools and would be sufficient after planned completion of four additional portable classrooms at Vintage High School. Due to the adequacy of existing and planned school facilities to accommodate students, no significant physical change would occur, as defined by CEQA. The writers' other concerns, therefore, relate to the merits of the project, not the environmental impacts of BRSPA development, and no additional response is necessary.

Comment 43-8 The comment is correct in observing that the existing character of the BRSPA would be transformed and, at buildout, would be expected to look like urban/suburban development built recently elsewhere in Napa and other similar communities. The significance of that change tends to be a highly subjective matter which varies from viewer to viewer.

Comment 43-9 Comment noted. The remainder of the writers' comments express a position about future BRSPA development.
May 18, 1996

John Yost, Planning Director
City of Napa Planning Department
P.O. Box 660
Napa, CA 94559

Dear Mr. Yost:

The undersigned hereby register their concerns about deficiencies in the Draft Environmental Impact Report prepared on the Draft Big Ranch Specific Plan.

1. Garfield Lane primarily is a country lane which provides safe passage for a very large number of pedestrians during all daylight hours. Vintage High gym classes and the cross-country team use it frequently and consistently, usually daily. Garfield Lane use is intended primarily for local residential access. Garfield Lane residents and other residents proximate to Garfield Lane strongly desire that Garfield Lane be preserved for its primary intended use and for the continued safety of its many pedestrians. Why does the Draft EIR fail (a) to sufficiently describe and/or emphasize the current and intended use of Garfield Lane; (b) to identify the adverse impacts on the environment of making Garfield a "collector" street; and (c) to produce any, much less any acceptable, mitigations of such adverse impacts.

2. An extension of Sierra to join Garfield Lane would be a superfluous, expensive access route which would create a cross-town freeway between route 29 and Big Ranch Road. It would totally eliminate the safety currently provided by Garfield Lane for its numerous pedestrians during all daylight hours. It would destroy forever the aesthetic character of Garfield Lane. Why does the Draft EIR fail to identify these adverse impacts on the Garfield Lane and surrounding environment and fail to produce satisfactory mitigations of these adverse impacts. The conclusion reached in the Draft EIR "_____would not be expected to change regional driving habits and invite drivers on SR29 to use Sierra Avenue-Garfield Lane to reach the eastern part of Napa" is incomplete and insufficient both in its scope and in its analysis of what would be involved. Regardless of the potential involvement of SR29 traffic, the use of such an access route between SR29 and Big Ranch Road by city traffic alone would increase vastly.
3. An extension of Trower directly to Big Ranch Road may be necessary. But to turn Trower 90 degrees south and to extend it to join Garfield Lane would be in direct violation of several aspects of General Plan policy, to wit:

a. Such an extension of Trower is not a "logical and reasonably direct path" to Big Ranch Road.

b. Such an extension of Trower "fails to prevent an undue concentration of traffic" on Garfield Lane." On the contrary, it creates an undue concentration of traffic on Garfield Lane.

c. Such an extension of Trower would fail to "prevent incursions of unwanted through traffic" onto a lane intended for local residential access.

The draft EIR utterly fails to take cognizance of or address all the above-mentioned adverse impacts of joining Sierra with Garfield Lane and swinging Trower south to join Garfield Lane. Why is the Draft EIR so blatantly deficient?

4. The Draft EIR briefly mentions impacts on "Public Services" and in most cases indicates "No mitigation required". Yet, both the Napa City and Napa County budgets currently are insufficient to maintain public services. How, then, can the City possibly fund the vastly increased demands that almost 800 new dwellings would place on the systems?

(a) Proposition 13 limits the revenues gleaned from property owners, and (b) Anticipated tax revenues from the proposed new 800 units can only "contribute" to defraying the increases in public services costs which they will create. They cannot fully cover the actual costs they will generate. These impacts, then, must be borne by all the Napa electorate. Will this entire electorate favor so geographically-specific a burden? We do not have the answer to this cumulative environmental impact question in the Draft EIR.

[Signature]
J.O. Williams

[Signature]
35728 Allen Drive

[Printed Name]
J.O. Williams

[Printed Name]
35728 Allen Drive

3-161
May 18, 1996

John Yost, Planning Director  Letter 44
City of Napa Planning Department
P.O. Box 660
Napa, CA 94559

Dear Mr. Yost:

The undersigned hereby register their concerns about deficiencies in the Draft Environmental Impact Report prepared on the Draft Big Ranch Specific Plan.

1. Garfield Lane primarily is a country lane which provides safe passage for a very large number of pedestrians during all daylight hours. Vintage High gym classes and the cross-country team use it frequently and consistently, usually daily. Garfield Lane use is intended primarily for local residential access. Garfield Lane residents and other residents proximate to Garfield Lane strongly desire that Garfield Lane be preserved for its primary intended use and for the continued safety of its many pedestrians. Why does the Draft EIR fail (a) to sufficiently describe and/or emphasize the current and intended use of Garfield Lane; (b) to identify the adverse impacts on the environment of making Garfield a "collector" street; and (c) to produce any, much less any acceptable, mitigations of such adverse impacts.

2. An extension of Villa Lane to Garfield Lane and an extension of Rubicon to Villa Lane would provide three times the access to Garfield Park which the existing traffic pattern provides. This pair of street extensions would provide swifter and greater emergency access as well. The three points of access being: (a) from Big Ranch Road; (b) from Trancas (via Villa Lane); and (c) from Jefferson (via Rubicon and Villa Lane). The extension of Villa Lane to Garfield Lane and Rubicon to Villa Lane would: (a.) provide adequate access to Garfield Park; (b.) still comply with General Plan policy; and (c) preserve the aesthetic character of this rare Napa country lane.

3. An extension of Sierra to join Garfield Lane would be a superflous, expensive access route which would create a cross-town freeway between route 29 and Big Ranch Road. It would totally eliminate the
safety currently provided by Garfield Lane for its numerous pedestrians during all daylight hours. It would destroy forever the aesthetic character of Garfield Lane. Why does the Draft EIR fail to identify these adverse impacts on the Garfield Lane and surrounding environment and fail to produce satisfactory mitigations of these adverse impacts. The conclusion reached in the Draft EIR "...would not be expected to change regional driving habits and invite drivers on SR29 to use Sierra Avenue-Garfield Lane to reach the eastern part of Napa" is incomplete and insufficient both in its scope and in its analysis of what would be involved.

Regardless of the potential involvement of SR29 traffic, the use of such an access route between SR29 and Big Ranch Road by city traffic alone would increase vastly.

4. An extension of Trower directly to Big Ranch Road may be necessary. But to turn Trower 90 degrees south and to extend it to join Garfield Lane would be in direct violation of several aspects of General Plan policy, to wit:

a. Such an extension of Trower is not a "logical and reasonably direct path" to Big Ranch Road.

b. Such an extension of Trower "fails to prevent an undue concentration of traffic" on Garfield Lane." On the contrary. It creates an undue concentration of traffic on Garfield Lane.

c. Such an extension of Trower would fail to "prevent incursions of unwanted through traffic" onto a lane intended for local residential access.

The draft EIR utterly fails to take cognizance of or address all the above-mentioned adverse impacts of joining Sierra with Garfield Lane and swinging Trower south to join Garfield Lane. Why is the Draft EIR so blatantly deficient?

5. The Draft EIR briefly mentions impacts on "Public Services" and in most cases indicates "No mitigation required". Yet, both the Napa City and Napa County budgets currently are insufficient to maintain public services. How, then, can the City possibly fund the vastly increased demands that almost 800 new dwellings would place on the systems?
John Yost  
Director, Napa Planning Dept  
1600 First Street  
Napa, Ca, 94559  

Letter 44  
May 18, 1996

Regarding EIR report Big Ranch Road

Among the many questionable and conflicting maps and tables published in this Draft, several questions arise.

At present I shall ask: Why will the "Specific Plan", when adopted, supersede the LAND USE DESIGNATION of the 1986 General Plan? This conflicting view certainly begs for more study and more satisfactory answers for the existing residents of this area.

Though this letter is brief, I intend to follow closely the actions of your department in the hope that the "best interests" of our citizens be served.

Concerning just some of the problems not well defined in the EIR Draft are those pertaining to those healthy family oriented activities that currently exist in this area and how to safeguard them.

What about the safety of all the Seniors who depend on safe streets for pedestrian activity?

Will the young parents strolling with toddlers be forced to drive to another area to safely expose their children to some natural environment?

The Vintage High Farm is a vitally important resource in our community! What Impact will any development have on this activity?

How has the safety and enjoyment of the young people using the Little League Park been evaluated?

I believe it is the function of the Planning Department to preserve what is best in Napa.

There has been very little time to study this EIR Draft for the Big Ranch Area. Not all of the Property owners were notified in a timely manner and the study/discussion period has been short.

When will the NOP responses be available as part of the public record?

It is very important that all of this information be available to the residents to facilitate full understanding of the EIR report.

Many other issues regarding residential density, traffic congestion, distruction of natural resources, air and noise pollution have been inadequately addressed.

It is my hope that the Planning Department will take the necessary time to preserve the 'Character' of this area.
John Yost, Director
Napa Planning Department
1600 First Street
Napa, Ca. 94559

May 14, 1996

Re: EIR Draft Big Ranch Road Area

Dear Mr. Yost,

I did not receive any notice regarding "PUBLIC HEARING ON THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR BIG RANCH SPECIFIC PLAN (CITY OF NAPA)."

Because I live in a location directly affected by any development in this area, I request more time and more hearings to evaluate this information. I also request that Notices be sent to all residents in the whole Bell-Aire neighborhood.

Thank you.

In reading this Draft, there are many things that concern me.

- The flooding on Salvador Channel
- The unmitigated Traffic problems
- The supersedence of the 1986 General Plan
- The sewage transport and treatment requirements of any additional development in this area, etc, etc.

On page 184, the EIRD states doubts about the capacity to handle the sewage transport and treatment requirements of any additional development in this area. Doesn't the impact of this fact demand solutions before this EIR Draft be adopted?

I would appreciate more studies of all these concerns.
44 RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

Comment 44-1 Please see the responses to Comments 19-1 and 22-2. The Big Ranch Specific Plan does not "make" Garfield a collector street; the City's General Plan has designated it a collector street for more than 20 years. As noted in the responses to many comments, the Plan would further change the character of Garfield Lane and would lead to an increase in traffic on the street. However, the changes which occurred when Napa Valley Club and Willowbrook were built resulted in arguably equal or greater changes to the character of the area than would be expected from implementing the Specific Plan. Because no significant adverse environmental impacts were identified, no mitigation measures were required. This does not mean that the changes resulting from this Plan would be not considered important to people immediately affected.

Comment 44-2 Please see the responses to Comments 20-1 and 44-1.

Comment 44-3 Please see the responses to Comments 32-3 and 9-1.

Comment 44-4 Please see the response to Comment 19-1.

Comment 44-5 As discussed elsewhere in this document (see Comments 8-1, 18-7, and 43-7), the State CEQA Guidelines do not define social and economic impacts as "significant" unless related to a physical impact on the environment. The extent to which future predominantly residential development would or would not "pay its own way" would depend largely on the value of housing units built and the resulting property taxes generated in relation to City and other public agency budget allocations to pay ongoing operating and maintenance costs. The Financing Plan prepared as part of the planning process (also referred to throughout this document) would provide the mechanism for new BRSPA development to fund capital improvement costs of building infrastructural facilities needed to serve future BRSPA residents. Although the comment does not relate to environmental effects of the project, its presentation in the Final EIR makes the petition signatories’ opinions available to City officials and the public.

Comment 44-6 Please see the responses to Comments 44-1 and 44-2.

Comment 44-7 The applicants have stated their opinion regarding an alternative circulation plan for the area. Please see the response to Comment 37-17.

Comment 44-8 Please see the response to Comments 44-1, 44-2 and 44-3.

Comment 44-9 Please see previous responses to Letter 44.

Comment 44-10 Same as the response to Comment 33-25.

Comment 44-11 Please see the response to Comment 19-1.

Comment 44-12 The Big Ranch Specific Plan would retain Vintage Farm and assumes continued operation by the Napa County Department of Education / Napa Valley Unified School District for the indefinite future. The Plan reflects this commitment to Vintage Farm by changing the present RL-6 zoning of one Farm parcel to PQ (quasi-public) to remove any suggestion that residential development is considered appropriate there. The response to Comment 37-7 discusses potentially significant impacts on the Farm from implementing the Plan, identifies Plan policies (LU-5, LU-6, C-5, and C-6)
which would address those impacts, and requires additional mitigation — to ensure pedestrian safety across a Sierra Avenue extension and avoid urban-rural conflicts by building a protective wall or barrier around the Farm.

Comment 44-13 Same as the response to Comment 33-1.

Comment 44-14 As noted in response to Comment 33-26, responses to the two Notices of Preparation (NOPS) are part of the public record and have been available for public, City staff, and consultant review since received. The NOP response period is 30 days. Responses to the February 1991 NOP were received in March 1991; those to the July 1995 NOP were received in August 1995.

Comment 44-15 City officials ultimately will be responsible for determining the adequacy of the EIR both in disclosing the effects of adopting and implementing the Big Ranch Specific Plan and in providing sufficient information to make decisions about the Plan. In the absence of more explicit comments about the deficiencies of the EIR analyses, it is not possible to respond further without speculating.

Comment 44-16 Same as the response to Comment 33-1.

Comment 44-17 The Napa Sanitation District is responsible for "solving" potential downstream capacity limitations of the Soscol Treatment Plant (not the City), but the City, through the Big Ranch Specific Plan and accompanying Financing Plan, can provide funding to build local wastewater collection facilities in the Big Ranch Specific Plan Area, as outlined in the Plan and EIR (pages 176-185). Treatment plant capacity limitations are a districtwide issue involving long-term planning and decisions for provision of wastewater treatment services -- with or without development in the BRSPA. The EIR discloses these potential impacts and, therefore, is "adequate" for decision-making purposes. Certification of an EIR as complete is a separate action from approval of a project -- adoption of the Plan -- and certification of an EIR does not require or automatically involve approval of the project studied in the EIR.

Comment 44-18 As noted in response to Comment 44-15, City officials ultimately will be responsible for determining the adequacy of the EIR, but without more explicit direction about the studies requested, it is not possible to respond further without speculating.
OTHER BUSINESS

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR BIG RANCH SPECIFIC PLAN

PROPOUNENT: CITY OF NAPA

Public hearing on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) which has been completed for the Big Ranch Specific Plan. The DEIR considers the environmental impacts which could result from adopting and implementing the Big Ranch Specific Plan (BRSP) and its Financing Plan. The Draft BRSP provides a guide for development of the Big Ranch area (approx. 430 acres) along with policies related to Land Use, Transportation, Resource Conservation, Public Facilities/Services, and Safety; and, identifies needed infrastructure improvements to facilitate the buildout established by the Plan.

The DEIR is an informational and environmental disclosure document which will be used by the City when considering the adoption of the Big Ranch Specific Plan. The Program EIR has been prepared to disclose and evaluate possible impacts on Land Use, Population, Geology and Soils, Hydrology and Channel Stability, Vegetation and Wildlife, Transportation, Air Quality, Noise, Public Services, Aesthetics, Cultural Resources and Cumulative Impacts. After completion of the 45 day EIR public review period, all comments and responses will be incorporated into a Final EIR which will be considered along with the Big Ranch Specific Plan at future hearings before the Planning Commission and the City Council.

The Big Ranch Specific Plan Area is located in the north east quadrant of the City of Napa and is bordered by Trancas Street, Big Ranch Road, Trower Avenue, and existing development just east of Jefferson Street. (APN Book 38). The original file number for this project was 90-146.

Planning Director Yost introduced Dan Marks, a previous City of Napa Principal Planner, who was available to present this item and explain the scope of the hearing.
Dan Marks, Project Manager, expressed his pleasure in bringing the Draft EIR to tonight’s public hearing. He emphasized that the evening’s meeting is not on the Specific Plan; it is for comments on the adequacy of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The EIR was drafted by the firm Nichols/Berman under his direction. He clarified that there will be no response to comments this evening; comments will be recorded and responded to in writing in the Final EIR that will be available towards the middle of June. Mr. Marks noted that Staff will continue to take public comments on the Draft EIR until May 19, 1996.

Regarding the Specific Plan itself, Mr. Marks stated that the Land Use Plan in the Specific Plan was conceptually agreed to by the City Council in September of 1992. It calls for approximately 800 housing units of various types, approximately 200,000 square feet of commercial development, which is expected to occur over a 10-15 year period. The circulation system includes an extension of Trower south to Garfield and Villa Lane north to Sierra and the construction of the Sierra/Garfield connection as well as a variety of other road improvements. The infrastructure plan also calls for an extension of the existing large water main from its current terminus at Silverado Trail and Trancas to Big Ranch Road and then north on Big Ranch Road. There will be several other water improvements also as part of the plan to serve the project area. Finally, there will be construction of many new sewer mains. These are detailed in the Specific Plan and in the CEQA document.

The EIR identifies several different levels of impact. At the highest level are significant unmitigatable impacts. One was the cumulative traffic impacts at the intersection of State Highway 121 and Trancas. Both water service and water demand were also found to be significant, unmitigated impacts primarily due to the fact that there are uncertainties in water supply during drought years. Finally, there is a significant impact in regards to the sewer system, largely because there is a lack of a firm plan for expansion of the Soscol Treatment Plant. If the City Council agrees that these are significant impacts, they will have to make findings of overriding consideration before they can adopt the plan.

The next level of impact are those which are potentially significant which can be mitigated to an insignificant level. The plan found many of those kinds of impacts. Finally, the EIR concluded, based on its analysis, that there were many other less than significant impacts.

Chair Mulford opened the public hearing.

Robert Rugg, 20 Garfield Lane, stated that he and his neighbors have had a number of discussions regarding the Draft EIR and the things they think are severely adverse impacts; in reviewing the Draft EIR, the things that most concern them don’t seem to be addressed in the EIR. They are not acknowledged or recognized as having adverse impacts. Garfield Lane is primarily a country lane and it provides safe passage for a very large number of pedestrians during all daylight hours. Vintage High gym classes and the cross country team use that lane daily because it is safe, with very low traffic flow. Garfield Lane is intended primarily for a local residential access route, that’s its intention, that’s what it is. The Garfield Lane residents and other residents proximate to the Lane desire that it be preserved for the continued safety of all those who use it. The extension of Villa Lane to Garfield and Rubicon to Villa Lane would provide to the City about three times the access that is provided by the single access route of Big Ranch Road to Garfield. The Garfield Lane residents don’t see any significant adverse impacts of the extension of Villa Lane to Garfield and Rubicon to Villa Lane; so in that regard, the EIR need not address any adverse impacts. On the plus side, besides providing traffic flow directly to Garfield Park, it also will provide a much greater degree of access for emergency vehicles, which would be an advantage to all. They feel the EIR appropriately addresses those things. However, when you come to two other extensions, Sierra and Trower to Garfield, they see extremely adverse impacts on traffic flow which are not addressed in the EIR. Sierra goes through to Route 29; if it’s extended and joins Garfield, it would create a cross town freeway on Garfield Lane because there are not enough arterial routes between Route 29 and Big Ranch Road. This is not addressed in the EIR, it is ignored. The extension of Trower directly to Big Ranch Road might be necessary; that would not affect them at all. However, when it turns 90 degrees and sweeps south and joins Garfield, the impacts are horrendous, and are not addressed in the EIR. It’s interesting to note that in the draft plan, General Plan policy is cited on Pg. T-18; almost every one of these policies are violated by the draft plan and are not addressed by the EIR.
Susan Rushing-Hart, 73 Garfield Lane, stated that many of the neighbors were not given mailed notification that the Draft EIR or Specific Plan are available. She suggested that there are biological, archeological and historic issues have not been addressed: there were both natives and Mexicans here before California became a part of the United States; the creek is not man-made; maps in the Recorders Office, the Assessor’s Office, our library and the UC Berkeley campus verify that the creek has been here for over 100 years. The biological studies must be considered inaccurate because the man that did the studies believed that the creek was man-made. There are steel head and salmon that migrate in the creek; development will be devastating to those life forms. The creek will not hold any more water, it’s been flooding during recent heavy rains. During the flooding of 1984, 1992, 1993 and this last winter, even though flood waters didn’t come into her home, she was not able to leave; the rains flooded much of the Shinnammon and Gasser properties in the last few years.

Dr. Leopold, (an expert on creek and river systems) recently spoke about the Napa River; he said that building homes may increase the flood problem by three or four fold and new streets and blacktop will cause it to increase by 20 fold. As more building is planned for this area, all of the places that the water used to go to, such as the Napa Valley Club, the little league, El Centro, even in the western hills, all those areas have been built up. People keep trying to force more and more water into the creek and it won’t hold it. Another issue is that the manholes along the creek aren’t covered; every time the water is high, the waste water and the creek water intermingle. There are at least five manholes that have been underwater a lot of last winter and this past winter during December, January, February, March and April. There are many people who use Garfield Park; they are the senior citizens, the high school students, the grade school students and even the little league children. There are people who ride their bikes or walk, there are children at the nature studies and we have a lot of senior citizens that are in danger. If the Big Ranch area is developed, some of our high school students will be forced to attend school in portables. She suggested that passive play and the enjoyment of nature should be addressed a little bit more in this area.

Helen Zerba, 2119 Big Ranch Road, expressed concern that the consultant has not looked at the storm water system. She has resided in the area for 30 years; last year was the first year that water entered her house. The bridge near her house is man-made and unable to pass any more water; the water comes into her house and her residence is not even close to the creek. She suggested the consultant take a better look at the storm water system because there are no longer little reservoirs that used to be over on the other side of the creek. During a heavy rain the water comes down and goes into the creek and floods. And the heavy flow of water is taking the land away; her neighbor lost a foot of her land for about 30 feet inland and out and she had to bring in fill. The consultant should look at the water in the creek before they let other people drain into it. Just the one part is man-made, the rest of the creek has been there for many years. When she first moved to the area; the Napa Valley Club development on Garfield used to be a big lake of water, now that water has to go somewhere.

John Rutherford, Napa, stated that the increased density in Napa’s newer subdivisions compared to the older neighborhoods demonstrates a wrong approach to city planning. The town’s population has increased ten fold since many of us were in high school. Major traffic, crime and graffiti are signs of that increase. It seems we are here to protect what’s left of our lifestyle. Please help keep the fox from guarding the chicken house by limiting developers input.

Tom Smeltzer, 1383 Rosewood Lane, stated that he concurred with many of the remarks of previous speakers. He noted that the plan claims that the circulation system is designed to discourage use by through traffic; that seems like a very subjective statement. Obviously, any time you are going to have roads, you are going to increase traffic levels. A little later on, the document talks about widening Big Ranch Road below Salvador Channel; no net traffic is being added, why do we need to widen Big Ranch Road? The plan also claims that the Sierra/Garfield connection and the extension of Trower to Garfield will not change local driving habits. He begged to differ from personal experience and from numerous people he has spoken to. People from the west will use it as an avenue to get to Big Ranch Road or going up to Oak Knoll to have access to Silverado Trail or Trancas. We are looking at a major increase in traffic in that neighborhood.
Ms. Stevens, 118 Valley Club Circle, referred to the Gasser Ranch property and showed pictures depicting a good half of the Gasser property flooding on at least three occasions from 1992 to today. She explained that the Salvador Channel is lower on the western side than the eastern side. People on the east side watched the channel very carefully during the recent storms to see when the water would come up high enough to flood their homes; it never did, but it certainly was at capacity. This does not seem to be addressed in the Draft EIR.

Charles Logan, 40 Garfield Lane, addressed traffic circulation; the extension of Trower to Garfield needs a better solution.

Teri Price, 3500 Willis Drive, questioned how the extension of Rubicon to Villa Lane would effect her and her neighbors ability to cross Jefferson Street in the morning when they are trying to get to work. She invited the Commissioners to drive through that intersection some morning; it is almost impossible and you are lucky not to be in an accident. It is the same at lunch time and 5:00-5:30 in the afternoon. Due to Lucky’s Market, turning north onto Jefferson Street is incredible; it is very, very dangerous. She expressed surprise someone hasn’t been killed there yet.

Richard Brockmeyer, 2060 Big Ranch Road, asked if there were any projections on the effects of the additional traffic on residents who exit their driveways onto Big Ranch Road and the impact on the Salvador Channel east of Big Ranch Road.

Louise Clerici, 4032 Wisteria Way, referred to Pg. 115, “Jefferson Street is a four-lane north-south arterial.” She stated that in the Big Ranch Specific Plan area, Jefferson Street is four lanes for about one-half block between Trancas and Rubicon. At Rubicon, Jefferson Street becomes a two-lane and remains that way to the end. She then referred to Pg. 135, Para. 3, Line 2, “However, left turn lanes should be provided at all intersections (as currently are present at Garfield, El Centro, and Salvador).” She stated that there are no left turn lanes at either El Centro Avenue or Salvador. There presently is a left turn lane at Garfield; it’s the only left turn lane on Big Ranch Road. They live on El Centro Avenue and travel Big Ranch Road daily; they feel a left turn lane from Big Ranch Road onto El Centro is very necessary for safety reasons especially with high speeds that are traveled on Big Ranch Road.

Muriel Fagiani, 905 Caymus Street, questioned if the Gasser property can be developed without the Specific Plan? She feels the question should be answered by the EIR consultant because Mr. Marks said that an unmitigated problem is the water situation. If water and sewage could be extended to the Gasser Ranch property, could the property be developed without the Specific Plan? She referred to Pg. 72 of the EIR and a discussion of seismic materials; noting the earthquakes in Southern California and San Francisco, she suggested there should be new maps and data and, since the site is so close to the Soda Creek fault, it would be good idea to get some new material. She questioned the Specific Plan, Pg. Intro-5, which states that the EIR and Specific Plan can be amended at any time; she wondered if that was there because this Specific Plan will be changed. She also noted reference to the General Plan of 1982, 1986 and the forthcoming revised General Plan. She asked if staff or the property owners involved with the developments had access to the proposed, revised General Plan? She asked whether the revised General Plan, when adopted, will incorporate land use designations and policies of the approved Big Ranch Specific Plan itself?

Noting no additional speakers, Chair Mulford advised that written comments regarding the Draft EIR can be submitted through May 19, 1996; he expressed appreciation to the audience for participating in the public hearing process.

The public hearing was closed.
45 RESPONSE TO PUBLIC HEARING COMMENTS

ROBERT RUGG

Comment 45-1 Please see the responses to Comments 44-1, 44-2 and 44-3.

Comment 45-2 Please see the responses to Comments 32-3 and 9-1.

Comment 45-3 Please see the response to Comment 19-1.

SUSAN RUSHING-HART

Comment 45-4 Same as response to Comments 33-1 through 33-46.

HELEN ZERBA

Comment 45-5 The loss of floodplain storage due to past development could have resulted in a worsening of the flood situation, although the EIR hydrologist has not seen any hard documentation to prove such a thesis. Mitigation Measure 4.4-2 (On-Site Peak Flow Impacts), Mitigation Measure 4.4-3 (On-Site and Downstream Flooding Impacts), and Mitigation Measure 4.4-4 (Erosion, Sedimentation, and Channel Stability Impacts) all address the issues raised by the commentor. Channel setbacks are the most critical of the incorporated mitigation measures from the standpoint of flooding. These setbacks and the supporting zero net fill floodplain policy, if implemented, would ensure that the existing situation would not deteriorate further. It is the hydrologist’s recollection that the commentor also attended the meeting of landowners / prospective developers when the Salvador Channel Flood Assessment results were described and all questions were answered.

JOHN RUTHERFORD

Comment 45-6 The speaker expresses an opinion about development and not the adequacy of the EIR, and no response is necessary.

TOM SMELTZER

Comment 45-7 The proposed project would lead to additional traffic on Big Ranch Road, and the City’s traffic consultant for the project has recommended that, to allow for adequate safety and circulation, widening of the road to four lanes is required.

Comment 45-8 Please see the responses to Comments 32-3 and 9-1.
MS. STEVENS

Comment 45-9  The western floodplain of the Salvador Channel which is referred to was cited as an important secondary flood channel in the Salvador Channel Flood Assessment. The EIR (page 93) also highlighted it (see the subsection, Salvador Channel Flood Assessment). This conclusion was not unveiled in any of the prior flood studies done along the reach. It was instrumental in determining the channel setback distances listed in the table under EIR Mitigation Measure 4.4-3.

CHARLES LOGAN

Comment 45-10  The speaker expresses an opinion about the Big Ranch Specific Plan, specifically the Circulation Plan, and not the adequacy of the EIR. Therefore, no response is necessary.

TERI PRICE

Comment 45-11  The proposed extension of Rubicon to Villa Lane would lead to a slight increase in traffic on Villa Lane due to the increased number of homes and the use of Rubicon as an alternative access route to destinations along Villa Lane. The impacts are not expected to be significant (an estimated 29 total peak hour trips).

RICHARD BROCKMEYER

Comment 45-12  The Specific Plan calls for widening Big Ranch Road to allow for dual a left-turn pocket (north of the bridge) and four lanes of traffic south of the bridge. This widening should allow for safer exit and entrance onto Big Ranch. As noted in response to Comment 21-3, increased traffic and development tends to slow traffic and should increase safety for those exiting and entering Big Ranch Road as a result.

Comment 45-13  The most significant impact which could arise from Big Ranch Specific Plan Area (BRSPA) development on the Salvador Channel east of Big Ranch Road would be some increased channel instability due to two factors:

- Increased peak flows for low to moderate intensity rainstorms
- Increased sediment loads and downstream sedimentation due to continued upstream instability and flashier peak flows for these low-moderate intensity rainstorms

LOUISE CLERICI

Comment 45-14  Same as response to Comments 14-1 and 14-2.

MURIEL FAGIANI

Comment 45-15  Yes. The Gasser Ranch could be developed without City adoption of a specific plan for the entire BRSPA. Existing City policies would permit residential development due to the Medium Density Residential General Plan land use designation and Residential Low zoning classification (about six units
per acre) of the two Gasser Ranch parcels (see EIR Exhibits 4.1-1 and 4.1-2). Existing water lines in Valle Verde Drive Villa Lane could be extended north into the Gasser Ranch parcels, although such extensions would not address larger citywide water delivery issues related to Zone 2 and 3 boundaries and to providing a looped system (see EIR Exhibits 4.9-2 and 4.9-3). Similarly, existing sewer lines could be extended to serve the Gasser Ranch — probably from Rubicon Street rather than Villa Lane in order to avoid the 14-inch line in Trancas Street which presently is at or over capacity (see EIR Exhibits 4.9-4 and 4.9-5). (Alternatively, Gasser Ranch development would need to expand the capacity of the Trancas Street line east to the North Napa Sanitary Sewer Relief Trunk (NNSSRT) near the Napa River.)

Comment 45-16 The California Division of Mines and Geology (CDMG) classifies faults and fault traces as active or not active based on evidence of past seismic activity. Faults classified as active exhibit surface displacement during the past 11,000 years. The two faults nearest to the BRSPA, the northern segment of the West Napa fault and Soda Creek fault, do not show evidence of active faulting.

The CDMG establishes Fault Rupture Hazard Zones throughout California in compliance with the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act. The purpose of the Act is to prohibit the location of most structures for human occupancy across the traces of active faults and, thus, to mitigate the hazard of fault rupture. The Act requires site-specific geologic investigations to demonstrate that sites within Alquist-Priolo zones are not threatened by surface displacement from future faulting.

The CDMG has established an Alquist-Priolo zone on the southern segment of the West Napa Fault, south of the airport, but designates no Alquist-Priolo zones elsewhere on Napa County, including nowhere near the BRSPA.

Therefore, additional seismic studies are not required and would not be warranted in the BRSPA.

Comment 47-17 The ability to amend a Specific Plan is guided by State law and City ordinance. State law currently restricts the number of times a General Plan can be amended in any given year for non-charter cities but provides no such limits on Specific Plans. The City of Napa, a charter city, currently limits the periods when applications for General Plan amendments will be accepted. There is no such restriction in current City ordinance regarding Specific Plans. The Specific Plan simply provides information as to the amendment process.

Comment 45-18 The General Plan provides goals and policies to guide development for the City as a whole, while a Specific Plan focuses on a smaller part of the City and provides more detailed and specific guidance. The Specific Plan must be consistent with and help implement the General Plan. In this instance, since the preparation of the Big Ranch Specific Plan began before the comprehensive General Plan revision, to some degree the Specific Plan has guided the preparation of the draft General Plan for the Big Ranch Specific Plan Area (BRSPA). Therefore, the General Plan Concept Plan is fully consistent with the land use designations and policies of the Big Ranch Specific Plan. The Draft General Plan is not yet available but is expected to be consistent with the Specific Plan.