



State of California • Natural Resources Agency
Department of Conservation
Division of Land Resource Protection
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Edmund G. Brown Jr., Governor
John M. Lowrie, Assistant Director

January 5, 2016

VIA EMAIL: MSTEINMANN@CI.GREENFIELD.CA.US

Mr. Mic Steinmann, Community Services Director
City of Greenfield
599 El Camino
Greenfield, CA 93927

Dear Mr. Steinmann:

**NOTICE OF PREPARATION (NOP) OF A SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL
IMPACT REPORT (SEIR) FOR THE SOUTH END ANNEXATION PROJECT**

The Department of Conservation's (Department) Division of Land Resource Protection (Division) has reviewed the Notice of Preparation of a Supplemental Environmental Impact Report for the South End Annexation Project submitted by the City of Greenfield (City). The Division monitors farmland conversion on a statewide basis and administers the California Land Conservation (Williamson) Act and other agricultural land conservation programs. We offer the following comments and recommendations with respect to the proposed project.

Project Description

The South End Annexation project involves a series of land use actions, entitlements and boundary changes that relate to the City of Greenfield's General Plan and adopted Sphere of influence boundaries. The application requests multiple actions and entitlements, including:

- Rezoning and annexation of the subject properties.
- Minor subdivision (action by the County of Monterey) to detach 50 acres from the Franscioni parcel. This 50 acres will remain in Monterey County jurisdiction as agricultural land.
- Major subdivision and City approval of a Tentative Map to create 149 single family lots.
- Williamson Act contract cancellation and exchange process for 121 acres of the Franscioni property, and creation of 396 acres of permanent Agricultural Conservation Easement as mitigation land.
- Identification and recordation of permanent agricultural land use buffers where required.
- Phased physical development of real property pursuant the use and rezoning of the annexed property.

The project site is currently in agricultural production and the Department of Conservation's Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program classifies the site as Prime Farmland.

Annexation and Williamson Act Contract Cancellation

Pursuant to Government Code (GC) § 51243, if a city annexes land under Williamson Act contract, the city must succeed to all rights, duties and powers of the county under the contract unless conditions in GC § 51243.5 apply to give the city the option to decline to succeed to the contract. Although a city may have protested a contract and although LAFCO may have upheld the protest, conditions in GC § 51243.5 may not have been met to give the city the option to decline to succeed to the contract. If a city proposes to annex land under Williamson Act contract it must notify the Department within 10 days (GC § 56753.5).

Cancellation of a Williamson Act contract requires that notification be submitted to the Department when the County or City accepts the application as complete (GC § 51284.1). Required findings must be made by the board or council in order to approve tentative cancellation, and the cancellation notice to the Department must be submitted separately from the CEQA process. The Department has yet to receive a notice of tentative cancellation.

In order of the County and/or City to meet the notice requirements and facilitate the above mentioned project, notice of tentative cancellation and/or possible annexation should be sent directly to the Director of the Department of Conservation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the South End Annexation Project. Please provide this Department with notices of any future hearing dates as well as any staff reports pertaining to this project. If you have any questions concerning our comments, please contact Farl Grundy, Environmental Planner at (916) 324-7347 or at farl.grundy@conservation.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Molly A. Penberth, Manager
Division of Land Resource Protection
Conservation Support Unit

cc: Monterey County
Board of Supervisors
PO Box 1728
Salinas, CA 93902

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