



DATE: May 13, 2019

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council

FROM: Paul Spence, Community Development Director

SUBJECT: Ponderosa Homes residential development, Housing Implementation Program 18-001, Subdivision 18-007 (Vesting Tentative Tract Map 8471), and Site Plan Design Review 18-014

RECOMMENDED ACTION

The Planning Commission and staff recommend the City Council:

1. Certify the Mitigated Negative Declaration consistent with the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act; and
2. Adopt a Resolution approving Housing Implementation Program 18-001, Subdivision 18-007 (Vesting Tentative Tract Map 8471), and Site Plan Design Review 18-014 (collectively, the Project Entitlements), subject to the attached Conditions of Approval.

SUMMARY

Ponderosa Homes is proposing a residential subdivision along Lomas Avenue for the development of nine single-family residences. All of the residences will be single-story in height. The proposal requires the approval of the following entitlements:

1. Housing Implementation Program 18-001 will allocate eight housing units to the development (the project receives credit for the existing home that will be replaced).
2. Vesting Tentative Tract Map 8471 (Subdivision 18-007) to subdivide the 4.2-acre property into ten lots (nine residential lots plus a lot for a storm water retention area), establish the grading, drainage, and utility design, dedicate right-of-way for a new public street, and secure necessary easements for utilities and infrastructure.

3. Site Plan Design Review 18-014 will authorize the proposed site plan, architecture, tree replacement, and landscape for the development of nine single-family residences on the site.

The Project is consistent with the General Plan, the Municipal Code, and the Development Code and conforms to the Design Standards and Guidelines. The development will be compatible in design and scale with surrounding development. See the attached Planning Commission Staff Report for additional detail on the topics below (see Attachment 2).

## DISCUSSION

The following is an overview of the Project Entitlements and staff analysis.

On June, 13, 2016, the City Council approved Ponderosa Home's 10-lot, single-family residential subdivision for 1591 Lomitas Avenue, located approximately 150 feet to the southwest of the subject site. This development is nearly completed. The proposed project's lot pattern, home size, landscaping, and architectural style closely match Ponderosa Home's neighboring project.

### Project Description

Ponderosa Homes proposes to subdivide an approximately 4.2-acre site into nine lots (with a tenth lot for storm water retention) and construct nine new single-story single-family homes and related landscape and improvements on a new public street (the Project). The Project proposes to remove the existing single-family home, accessory buildings, and vegetation, including 60 existing trees. The Project will extend utilities to the site, complete the sidewalk, curb and gutter on Lomitas Avenue along the site frontage, and extend the sidewalk along Larry's Place. A new emergency vehicle access will connect to Larry's Place, a public street that connects to Concannon Boulevard.

### General Plan and Zoning Designation

The Project is consistent with the Urban Low Residential – 2 (UL-2) General Plan land use designation. The UL-2 designation allows a density range of 1.5 to 2 units per acre. The proposed density is two dwelling units per gross acre, consistent with the UL-2 General Plan designation.

The Project complies with the development standards for the Suburban Residential (R-S) zoning district, including standards related to height, setbacks, and coverage.

### Housing Implementation Program

The Project requests eight housing units from the 2017 to 2019 General Plan Housing Implementation Program (HIP) allocations (the existing residence provides one credit). The 2017 to 2019 HIP has 62 of 150 allocations available for residential projects that are

not Transferable Development Credit Projects or located in the Downtown Specific Plan Area. Therefore, the requested units are well within the number of units available for HIP allocation.

### Subdivision - Vesting Tentative Tract Map 8471

The proposed Vesting Tentative Tract Map will subdivide the property into nine residential lots and one landscaped stormwater retention lot, dedicate the necessary right-of-way for streets and utilities, and establish the grading and drainage plan for the development.

#### *Lot Pattern, Street Design and Name, Traffic and Parking*

All lots within the proposed development will have access to a public street and exceed the required minimum street frontage width and parcel sizes. In addition, the parcel sizes and lot access will appropriately fit into the traditional single-family neighborhood fabric along Lomitas Avenue.

The project proposes a public street extending from Lomitas Avenue to the existing Larry's Place terminus. The connection between the proposed street and Larry's Place will include emergency vehicle access (EVA) bollards that will allow access only to emergency vehicles. The Project will install a new sidewalk, curb and gutter on Lomitas Avenue along the project frontage and will complete the Larry's Place sidewalk connection to Concannon Boulevard. These public improvements will enhance pedestrian safety and circulation, as well as storm water management in the neighborhood. The Fire Department has reviewed the proposal for consistency with fire and safety codes.

The proposed development will provide sufficient on-site parking at each parcel, will prevent cut-through traffic by installing EVA bollards at the Larry's Place connection, and will not generate enough AM/PM peak hour trips to reduce the level of service at nearby intersections.

#### *Utilities and Grading*

Each parcel will be served by public utilities and all street lighting, signs, and fire hydrants will conform to City standards. The proposed development will be adequately served by underground sewer, water, and storm drain systems. The proposed bioretention area will treat on-site stormwater and will be maintained by the Project's Homeowners' Association. The project retains a storm water easement along the west property line that serves the lots to the west of the project site. This ensures the existing development to the west will continue to drain properly.

The proposed design meets City standards for grading. The site will slope down from Lomitas Avenue to Concannon Boulevard, generally consistent with the surrounding

topography. The proposed building pads along the eastern property line will be lower than adjacent residences, minimizing their impact on adjoining development. Although building pads along the western and northern property lines will be slightly higher than adjacent development, they will have sufficient setbacks and will be built with single-story houses, which will minimize their visual prominence and impact on adjoining parcels.

### *Affordable Housing*

The City's inclusionary housing ordinance allows projects with 10 or fewer homes to pay the In-Lieu fee as an alternative to constructing affordable housing units [LMC § 3.26.050]. The applicant is proposing to pay approximately \$776,000 to satisfy the inclusionary housing obligation.

### Site Plan Design Review

The project proposes two home plans with two architectural styles for each plan, and associated front yard and street frontage landscaping. The proposed house designs are identical to those approved for Ponderosa Homes' other recently approved subdivision on the south side of Lomitas Avenue, except no two-story houses are proposed.

### *Site Plan and Massing*

All proposed residences will be located at or just beyond the minimum required front setback line and will have garages located a minimum of twenty feet from the front property line. The project site plan includes a 7-foot wide landscaped planter strip between the sidewalk and the curb along the proposed public street and the Lomitas frontage. Each lot also contains varied setbacks and home placement to modulate building massing and maintain compatibility with existing development. Proposed building massing is varied using wall plane changes, articulated front facades, and garage setbacks to reduce the garages' visual prominence. Side- and front-facing gables and hip roofs produce varied roof forms. The project site plan and massing are consistent with the City's Design Standards and Guidelines and are compatible with surrounding development.

### *Architecture, Colors, and Materials*

The proposed architecture includes two plan types, each with two distinct elevation styles, and seven total color options. The proposed field colors are mainly light and medium earth tones. Accent colors are used to enhance details and trim. Roof material on all homes is concrete tile in various shades, finishes, and profiles. The Planning Commission staff report describes each of the floor plans and elevation styles (see page 15 of Attachment 2). The different combinations of floor plans, architectural styles, and color schemes will provide sufficient variety in the nine-lot subdivision. The proposed architecture is consistent with the Design Standards and Guidelines.

### *Landscape and Tree Removal and Replacement*

The applicant will plant eight Red Oak trees along the Lomitas Avenue frontage and eight Scarlet Oak trees along the Concannon Boulevard frontage. The Maintenance Division supports the project tree selection as it is consistent with existing street trees and will not likely cause public infrastructure damage. All tree planter areas between the sidewalk and street will be landscaped with groundcover.

The plan foregoes turf within the subdivision, instead using drought-tolerant groundcover, shrubs, stones, and foundation plantings. The only turf used in the project will be in the bioretention basin. The landscape plans indicate consistency with the City's Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (WELO) with estimated total water use less than half of the maximum applied water allowance. Nearly all plants in the proposed palette are low-water use.

A 6-foot tall retaining wall is proposed for Lots 5 and 6 (see page L-4 of Attachment 6) along the Concannon Boulevard frontage. The height of the retaining wall and its setback distance from Concannon Boulevard are comparable to the height and setback of the existing sound wall to the west of the project site. The retaining wall and landscaping along Concannon Boulevard will be maintained by the Homeowners Association.

According to the City's Tree Preservation Ordinance, 37 on-site trees require mitigation. Based on the required 2-to-1 replacement ratios, a minimum of 74 trees with a 24-inch box size are required to mitigate for the protected trees to be removed. The applicant proposes to remove all 60 on-site trees but will mitigate for the removed trees by planting 78 new 24-inch box size trees on-site. The proposed number of new trees to be planted exceeds the required tree replacement ratios, in conformance with the Tree Preservation Ordinance. A majority of new trees will be planted along the new public street, in each lot's front yard, and around the storm water retention area.

### Planning Commission

The Planning Commission reviewed the Project at a public hearing on April 16, 2019, and voted unanimously to recommend approval, subject to the staff recommendations. The Planning Commission received public comment from three homeowners who live adjacent to or in close proximity to the Project site. The Planning Commission Meeting Minutes in Attachment 3 include the full testimony and discussion.

Neighboring property owners expressed concerns with excessive speeding on Lomitas Avenue. The City is currently studying the existing traffic conditions on Lomitas Avenue and potential traffic calming options. Another neighboring property owner expressed concern with construction timing and noise. The Conditions of Approval require compliance with the City's Municipal Code that include the following restrictions [LMC Chapter 9.36]:

Monday through Friday: 7:00am to 8:00pm  
Saturday: 9:00am to 6:00pm

Sunday: Construction prohibited

A homeowner stated that the 11 foot height differential between Lot 5 of the Project and 1565 Concannon Boulevard is large and asked how the height difference would be dealt with.

The lot to the west of the project site, at 1565 Concannon Boulevard, is bifurcated in height. The southern portion of the lot towards Concannon Boulevard will be approximately 11 feet lower than the proposed Project grade. The northern portion of the lot will be approximately four feet lower than the proposed Project grade. However, the building pad for Lot 5 of the proposed subdivision will be located approximately 50 feet from the property line and the proposed home will be single story. Therefore, the proposed home will not have a significant visual impact or present privacy issues on the adjacent lot to the west.

No additional comments have been received as of the date of this report's preparation.

### ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

An Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) has been prepared for the Project in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Attachment 7). This environmental document describes the proposed Project; the location of the Project; evaluates the potential environmental impacts of the Project; and recommends mitigation measures to lessen or avoid certain environmental impacts. With the implementation of the mitigation measures, the IS/MND concludes that the Project will not have any significant environmental impacts. Staff recommends the City Council adopt the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration and instruct staff to file a Notice of Determination following approval of the Project Entitlements.

### FISCAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE IMPACTS

The City will maintain all public utilities and the proposed street right-of-way. A Homeowner's Association will maintain the landscape and retaining wall along Concannon Boulevard, the storm water conveyances upstream of the bioretention area, and the bioretention area itself. At the construction stage, the Project is expected to have positive impacts on the local economy due to construction jobs. The subdivision will also generate additional property tax, and local purchases by the future residents will generate sales tax. The project will be subject to applicable development fees that will offset the financial impacts of the new development. Overall, the project is expected to have no significant fiscal or administrative impacts.

### ATTACHMENTS

1. Location Map
2. Planning Commission Staff Report, dated April 16, 2019
3. Draft Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

4. Planning Commission Resolution 12-19
5. Conditions of Approval
6. Development Plans
7. Environmental Document and Appendix available online at:  
<http://www.cityoflivermore.net/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?t=71361.42&BlobID=19038>

Prepared by:

Jake Potter  
Assistant Planner

Approved by:



---

Marc Roberts  
City Manager

Fiscal Review by:



---

Douglas Alessio  
Administrative Services Director