

December 13, 2000

Dear Planning Commissioners:

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ELK GROVE
PLANNING DEPARTMENT

I would like to have the following comments addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR).

Presently, Sacramento has five regional malls within a 15 to 30 minute drive of Elk Grove. Why do we need a sixth regional mall? | 1

This mall will lead to the loss of hundreds of acres of agricultural land. All of this land loss must be properly mitigated. It should not be mitigated by making cash payments into a mitigation bank; it should only be mitigated by acquiring land or conservation easements directly south of this project. | 2

This mall will never be served by Sacramento RT light rail. It should not be built in its present location; instead it should be built north of Elk Grove Boulevard. A massive project like this should only be built next to a light rail station or a light rail line. | 3

This mall is being built too close to the Urban Services Boundary (USB). It will create a massive potential for development past the USB. There should be a 1/2 mile buffer of agricultural land between the mall project and the USB. If the buffer is not increased, the USB will eventually fail. | 4

The mall will create massive traffic gridlock in this area. The developers should be required to pay for the entire Grantline Interchange and the mall should not be built until this interchange is completed. The developers should be required to pay for High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane extensions to the San Joaquin County line; both for Highway 99 and Interstate 5. Both HOV extensions should be completed before the mall project is started. | 5

The mall will significantly affect the Air Quality in the Elk Grove and Sacramento area. The mall developers cannot mitigate this effect and therefore the project should not be built. | 6

The Fire Station required for this project should be completed before the mall opens for business. | 7

The economic impacts on the surrounding area will be dramatic. The Florin road mall will be devastated by this new mall. The Elk Grove and Galt downtown businesses will be severely impacted by this project. Will the developers of this project pay a mitigation fee to help all the businesses that will close because of this mall? | 8

Th State of California is experiencing a massive energy crisis. We are presently undergoing Stage 1, Stage 2 and Stage 3 emergencies. The electricity usage of this mall will have a massive impact on the energy usage in this area. I do not think this has been adequately addressed in the DEIR. | 9

Safety of this mall is in doubt. I believe the most recent study on Suburban Propane is flawed. Prior studies by the fire department show this facility is a danger to the mall. A terrorist attack is a possibility at this facility and the resulting catastrophe would be devastating. This issue must be revisited by an independent third party. | 10

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Tim Raboy

35. Letter from Tim Raboy, dated December 13, 2000

Response 1

Draft EIR Section 4.13, Economic and Social Effects, summarizes the Bay Area Economics (BAE) 2000 study of the proposed project which addressed the potential overlap between the proposed project and existing retail areas as well as the potential loss of sales to existing retail areas as a result of the project. Page 4.13-5 of this section states: "The existing population and extensive growth planned for the south Sacramento County area would be capable of supporting the proposed project in the near term (2000 to 2005). While the proposed project may have some potential to compete with existing shopping centers to the north (including Downtown Plaza and Arden Fair Mall), diversion of sales from these centers is not likely to be significant in terms of their continuing economic viability. Other centers located within south Sacramento County should be sufficiently differentiated from the proposed project so as to be able to co-exist in the same trade area." Since no specific comments were made on the adequacy of the Draft EIR, no further response is required.

Response 2

Please see **Topical Response 2 - Agricultural Resources** for an in-depth discussion of this issue.

Response 3

The comment is acknowledged. Because it does not address the content of the Draft EIR and is an opinion, no further comment is required. Please refer to Draft EIR Section 4.2, Traffic and Circulation, where transit issues are addressed.

Response 4

Please note that the Lent Ranch Marketplace project does not involve a modification to the Urban Service Boundary (USB) and the project is in fact included *within* the area planned for development in the General Plan. However, the proposed project, together with the other cumulative projects that are approved, planned or proposed in the area, could result in increasing growth pressure on the City or County to modify the Urban Policy Area and Urban Service Boundary in the future. This increase in pressure, particularly to the south across Kammerer Road, may result in agricultural land being converted to urban type use for the economic benefit of the landowner. Allowing growth beyond the

USB would ultimately be under the control of the City and County. This issue is addressed in Draft EIR Section 8.0, Growth Inducement, and in **Topical Response 4 - Growth Inducing Impacts**.

Please also see **Topical Response 2 - Agricultural Resources** with regards to agricultural buffers.

Response 5

Draft EIR Section 4.2, Transportation and Circulation, addresses project-related traffic impacts. Mitigation measures are proposed which serve to mitigate some of the projected impacts. Other impacts are determined to be significant and unavoidable. Please see Draft EIR Section 4.2 for a further discussion of impacts.

The Grant Line Interchange project would be necessary as a result of the development of many projects in the project area—not just the Lent Ranch Marketplace project. The project would be required to pay its fair-share share towards the construction of the interchange project—along with other projects that contribute to the circulation impacts at that location.

Draft EIR Section 4.2, Transportation and Circulation, page 4.2-71, states that: “The extension of HOV lanes south of Elk Grove Boulevard interchange is identified in the City of Elk Grove’s General Plan Circulation Element, and HOV lanes are planned on I-5 from the City of Sacramento to Elk Grove Boulevard. However, these measures are not currently programmed in the 1999 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). Consequently, while these are a viable mitigation measures, the timing of this improvement is not known and will depend on when Caltrans (acting as the lead agency) submits the project for inclusion into the MTP. As such, this impact is considered to be significant and unavoidable until the timing of this improvement is determined.” It should be noted that mainline improvement projects are programmed through the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) and are funded through various sources including State and Federal funding sources, and local sales and gas taxes, and are, therefore, a State responsibility.

Response 6

The project, the Draft EIR has identified that both individual and cumulative construction and operational emissions would be significant and unavoidable. In addition, numerous mitigation measures have been included in the Draft EIR to alleviate both construction and operational emissions. Such measures can be found on pages 4.3-13, 4.3-19, and 4.3-20 of the Draft EIR. Please note that the City can

adopt Statement of Overriding Considerations (SOC) for these impacts if the City believes the benefits of the project outweigh the impacts.

Response 7

The development and timing of this fire station are at the discretion of the City Council and could either be conditioned as part of project approval or incorporated as part of the Mitigation Monitoring Plan (MMP). In addition, mitigation measure 4.6.4-3(a) requires fair-share contribution to a fire station based on input from the CSD.

Response 8

The project is not anticipated to create devastation to the Florin Mall, or severely impact downtown Elk Grove or Galt as a result of the development of the mall. As stated in the Draft EIR,

“According to the BAE analysis, the Sacramento County retail sector is currently quite healthy, with strong demand and low vacancy rates in existing space. In addition, there is a present and growing demand for the construction of a substantial amount of additional retail space while maintaining Sacramento County’s overall retail shopping center inventory at a level that is comparable to other similarly-sized metro areas.

The existing population and extensive growth planned for the south Sacramento County area would be capable of supporting the proposed project in the near term (2000 to 2005). While the proposed project may have some potential to compete with existing shopping centers to the north (including Downtown Plaza and Arden Fair Mall), diversion of sales from these centers is not likely to be significant in terms of their continuing economic viability. Other centers located within south Sacramento County should be sufficiently differentiated from the proposed project so as to be able to co-exist in the same trade area. For this reason, it is considered unlikely that economic competition from the proposed project would result in business closures in existing retail and commercial centers such that a physical deterioration in the environment would occur. Based on the above analysis, the proposed project is anticipated to have a less than significant impact on the physical deterioration of existing commercial uses in the area.” (Draft EIR, page 4.13-5)

Note that there is no impact beyond 2005 either (cumulative).

Response 9

The project site is located in the Sacramento Utility District (SMUD), an independent operator of power. SMUD is not a California investor-owned utility - therefore it is not subject to deregulation. Deregulation is a major contributor as to the recent power shortages experienced through the State. SMUD also has arrangements with the California Power Exchange, Automated Power exchange, the California

Independent System Operator, Western Systems Power Pool and Northern California Power Pool to purchase and sell short-term power based on current market conditions. Based on City consultations with SMUD staff (Lundstrum, 2001), SMUD expects to be able to provide electrical service to the project in spite of the current state power crisis.

Response 10

Please see Draft EIR Section 4.5, Hazards, which discusses the risk associated with the Suburban Propane tanks located in close proximity to the proposed project. The commentor provided no evidence as to why the Quest study is flawed. As such, no further response is required.