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Dear Mr. Osborne,

This letter consists of my comments on the Tassajara Parks Draft Environmental Impact Report.

3.1 - Aesthetics, Light, and Glare Impact AES-1, AES-2 and AES-3 I

DEIR study is inadequate with the finding that the impact is less than significant and no mitigation is necessary.

The 30-acre proposed building site consists of a beautiful meadow in the spring. So beautiful that during the spring many people take photos of the wildflower display and the raptors soaring over the meadow looking for prey. Also, light from the housing development would impact the night sky and adversely affect nocturnal wildlife and stargazing.

This impact is significant and irreversible, and a more comprehensive study needs to be conducted.

3.2 - Agricultural Resources

DEIR study is inadequate with the findings that impact is less than significant and no mitigation is necessary.

The 30-acre proposed building site consists of Farmland of Local Importance, currently used as grazing land and as a walnut orchard in the past. Once this land is changed to urban use, it will no longer be available to produce food.

The impact is significant and irreversible, and a more comprehensive study needs to be conducted.

3.3 - Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The more accurate generated trips estimate of 2300 trips daily (please see Transportation and Traffic section) increases greenhouse gas emissions and decreases air quality and a new mitigation study ought to be conducted.

This study is inadequate as it does not include the significance of building over a natural Carbon Sink. A new study ought to be conducted to show the true environmental effects of losing a 30-acre+ (with grading) Carbon Sink. I suggest that the 30-acre building site plus the wetland area remain ungrazed and

allowed to return to its natural meadow/wetland area for a duration of two calendar years to determine the true air quality and greenhouse gas emissions this development will create.

This impact is significant and irreversible.

3.4 - Biological Resources

The 30-acre proposed building site is habitat and reproduction grounds for several endangered species. Because the land has been heavily grazed by cattle, this area that is a natural wetland and which would support vernal pool(s) are dried up prematurely because of lack of vegetation. Beginning after the heavy rains of early spring many frogs (one only needs to be near the area in the evening to hear the frogs croaking), migratory birds (easily seen from street), possibly the Alameda Whipsnake and other amphibian species, are found on the proposed site, until the vegetation is eaten away by cattle and as a result pools of water dry up.

This study suggests that the San Joaquin Kit Fox has been extirpated from Contra Costa County, I disagree with that statement, as I have made several accidental observations of the elusive San Joaquin Kit Fox over the past 7 years.

As this study does address the issue of Nesting Raptors, it did not seem to address the loss of hunting ground.

This study is inadequate as it does not show the true take of endangered species and their habitat. A new more comprehensive study ought to be conducted by allowing the 30-acre proposed building site plus the wetland area to remain ungrazed and allowed to return to its natural meadow/wetland area for a duration of two calendar years to determine the true take of endangered species and habitat.

Also, the reach of the contaminates/pollutants in the water released from the Tassajara Park's water basin into Tassajara Creek will far exceed the 30 acres, and the pollutants could potentially take many more endangered amphibians that will be exposed to the polluted water. Another study should be conducted to account for this inadequacy of the DEIR and should include the expertise from watershed and amphibian conservation organizations.

The wording in this DEIR is inadequate with regards to the 710 acres preserved in perpetuity for park, recreation, and wetland preservation and creation, and habitat for mitigation purposes. Parks and recreation development can have multiple meanings. Take Sharp Park in San Francisco for example; Shark Park was deeded to San Francisco to be a public park, and San Francisco developed the land into a golf course, which is destroying critical habitat for several endangered species among other things. Another example of a type of park use is off-highway vehicle. These are two examples of how the park and recreation land could be used.

Therefore, this DEIR needs a stronger and clear description that outlines future acceptable land use for the 710 acres given to be preserved. Such as; all 710 acres will remain open wildlife corridor(s), wildlife habitat, and mitigated endangered species habitats will be created, restored and monitored so that no

natural or other causes will take essential habitat, especially breeding grounds, from wildlife. Wildlife habitat will not to be disturbed by public access, and no grazing or agriculture use to be allowed that will negatively affect wildlife habitat or open corridor(s).

3.8 - Hydrology and Water Quality

Impact HYD-2: The Project would not deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge.

This study seems to be inadequate.

The proposed 30-acre site consists of wetlands and is very likely to be a crucial groundwater recharge zone for the Tassajara Valley. Tassajara Valley residents depend solely on groundwater for our potable water. Not only will this development prevent water from soaking into the recharge zone, once it is released as "treated" water into the Tassajara Creek is will add pollutants to the watershed. The pollutants, such as herbicides, pesticides, oil and other contaminates, could potentially affect the quality of clean drinking water to Tassajara Valley residents and for native wildlife. Those contaminates could significantly affect the health of people in Tassajara Valley, native wildlife, heritage oaks, and the reproduction of amphibians.

The State of California considers groundwater to be a very important natural resource, so important that Governor Brown has signed into law the creation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). Although, this act concerns medium or high-priority groundwater basins in California and as far as I am aware the Tassajara Valley does not fall into that category, the land that the developer proposes for the 30-acre housing development, the staging area near Finley Road, and the 7 acres given to the SRVFPD, are all very likely to include recharge zones for Tassajara Valley's groundwater which feeds the Tassajara Creek and the Tassajara Valley residents' wells. I respectfully request that a long term study be conducted on all the parcels being considered for development, to determine the potential loss of groundwater and to determine how that will affect the Tassajara Valley watershed, aquifer and all Tassajara Valley Wells. Only then will we be able to determine the possible impacts to the Tassajara Valley watershed from the proposed development.

With the previous and continual development of local open space to create housing and other urban uses, the loss of potential groundwater recharge zones has been accumulating very quickly over the past 5-10 years. Many Tassajara Valley residents have seen their wells produce significantly less water, while others have seen their wells run dry. This serious issue of groundwater loss is a clear inadequacy of the DEIR, please do not approve this development or any other development outside the ULL without first conducting long term studies of the accumulative effect of groundwater loss due to developing open spaces that are important parts of the Tassajara Creek Watershed, groundwater recharge zones and wetlands which hold water and feed the Tassajara Valley's groundwater system.

3.9 - Land Use, Population, and Housing

Voters have overwhelmingly approved an ULL, which clearly draws the line between urban and non-urban uses. Approving this development would only weaken the current ULL policy and provide a precedent for future urban development outside the ULL. This development will permanently destroy sensitive and critical habitat, substantially degrade existing wetlands, watersheds and agriculture land.

3.12 - Transportation and Traffic

The Traffic study is inadequate and needs to be redone for at least the following reasons:

1) Refer to Table 3.12-6: Tassajara Parks Trip Generation. The estimated number of trips generated from the residential component of this development is underestimated. One can easily estimate that each home will have two cars, each person will leave and return at least once a day, that is an additional 500 trips a day. The main reason people move to this area and buy single family homes, is for the schools. Each school has different drop off/pick up times, and elementary schools have several drop off/pick up times. A scenario for Driver A in an average family with two children, assuming the children are in different grades, would most likely have two different drop off/pick up times. That means that a driver will leave and return to their home two different times (4 trips) before 9:00am (the number of trips increases with the number of children). To simply drop off/pick up two children to school would generate 1000 trips daily (weekdays). Then one needs to add shopping trips, trips back to school to volunteer, afterschool activities, misc. trips for Driver A. A closer conservative average estimate for Drivers A would be closer to 2000 trips daily. Drivers B, would most likely have fewer trips and a conservative estimate would be 300 trips daily. That brings the conservative daily total to 2300 trips. One may argue that weekends produce fewer trips, but many families are incredibly busy with activities on weekends, so as the number of trips on weekends may decrease slightly it is unlikely to be a significant difference of total daily trips generated. This estimate does not include regular trips from service and maintenance providers, such as housekeepers, landscapers, nannies etc.

This more accurate estimate only increases the already "Significant unavoidable impacts" to traffic congestion.

2) The Study does not adequately account for the accumulative traffic congestion from the housing developments currently under construction in Dublin and the Alamo Creek housing development in Danville, all of which feed Camino Tassajara and the significant increase of drivers over the past year using Camino Tassajara as a short cut from 580 to 680.

3) The Study grossly overlooks the following intersections along Camino Tassajara:

- Camino Tassajara/Bruce Drive
- Camino Tassajara/Johnston Drive
- Camino Tassajara/Highland Road (has a signal light)
- Camino Tassajara/The many residential Driveways

The Traffic Study needs to be redone, and if the development is approved, the developer ought to install signal lights at all of the above mentioned intersections, including the Camino Tassajara/Finley Road intersection, or the speed limit on Camino Tassajara should be reduced to 25mph to allow for safer entry onto Camino Tassajara.

4) The Study does not include impacts to bicyclists. Camino Tassajara, Finley Road, Highland Road and Diablo Road are very popular bicyclist routes. A new Traffic Study needs to include the impact to bicyclist safety.

5) Finley Road is a narrow road with blind curves. This road is frequented by bicyclist, runners, pedestrians including children, pedestrians with dogs, horseback riders, rural residential traffic, wildlife (including endangered species), and occasional farm equipment. Increasing traffic on this road, especially with large horse trailers is a serious safety hazard. No mitigation can remove the serious impact of an Equestrian Staging Area. This should not be allow under any circumstances.

This Staging Area will also increase crime in the Finley Road neighborhood, as it will be a dark, isolated place for folks to hang out at night. The Contra Costa County Sheriff's Department should be consulted on a study regarding the potential increase in crime this staging area will create.

The beloved Tassajara Valley Old School House is located directly across the street from the proposed equestrian staging area site. If this Staging Area is approved, the developer ought to have a special fund dedicated to the upkeep of this important landmark. As it is quite conceivable that it will be vandalized by folks hanging out at night in the staging area.

If the Staging Area is approved the following road improvements need to be made: a signal light to be placed at Camino Tassajara/Finley Road, speed limit reduced to 15mph, crosswalks at each intersecting road up to and including the Staging Area entrance, additional road signs placed at Camino Tassajara/Finley Road and along Finley Road, informing drivers of blind curves, pedestrian crossings, endangered species habitat, horseback riders, bicyclist etc. The Contra Costa County Sheriff's Department will also need to have a greater presence in the vicinity of the Staging Area.

6) The Study does not include the impact to native wildlife (including endangered species) living in Tassajara Valley who need to cross Camino Tassajara, Finley Road and Highland Road in order to survive. The increased traffic from recently constructed housing developments in close proximity to Tassajara Valley have already had a significant negative impact on wildlife including injury and death. The speed limit should be reduced to 25mpr on Camino Tassajara and road signs informing drivers of blind curves, pedestrian crossings, endangered species crossing/habitat, bicyclist etc. The Contra Costa County Sheriff's Department will also need to have a greater presence on Camino Tassajara to enforce speed limit.

7) The Traffic Study states: Elementary School Driveway and Circulation Impact TRANS-4: The Project would not substantially increase traffic volumes and cause transportation facilities to degrade below acceptable standard levels at the Tassajara Hills Elementary School driveway.

This is an interesting proposal, as my three children have attended Tassajara Hills Elementary School (THE), and my youngest will be there another 5 years. The parking lot at THE is extremely congested at pickup and drop off. Although the SRVUSD states that the school is not at capacity, with regards to traffic congestion it certainly is at capacity.

It is in my opinion that the additions the developer is suggesting would not help the traffic situation significantly with the current enrollment numbers, and will not offset for the increased traffic that will occur with increasing the student population coming from the proposed housing development.

I request that a Traffic Study be done, that includes working with the Contra Costa County Sheriff's Department's, the THE PTA Safety Committee and THE Principal's, as they are very well aware of the dangers affecting the THE students with regards to our increasing traffic congestion. This development will also contribute to the increasingly dangerous traffic congestion on Camino Tassajara, for the THE students using the crosswalk to cross over Camino Tassajara, as more cars will be on the road in the vicinity.

3.13 - Utilities and Service Systems

It is my understanding the EBMUD has submitted comments on the inadequacy of this DEIR with regards to water service.

This DEIR should state that no storm water will be used and that no new wells will be drilled, and all existing wells will be permanently capped on the Northern site. If those items are not included then additional studies will need to be conducted to show impact.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Tassajara Parks housing development.