6. DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS

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601 DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCEDURES

A. PURPOSE AND APPLICABILITY

The purpose of this Section 601 is to specify the steps required to review new development projects within the Forster Ranch Specific Plan area. All private development projects proposed under this Specific Plan shall be reviewed in accordance with the provisions of this Chapter, following an initial screening by the Community Development Department. Upon approval by the City Planner, some of the review phases in this Section may concurrent.

B. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

All entitlement applications shall undergo environmental review in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines and City procedures.

C. RESIDENTIAL GROWTH MANAGEMENT

No allocations for residential development shall be granted until a Tentative Map is approved by the City in accordance with the City’s growth management ordinance, Measure B (Chapter 38 of the Municipal Code).

D. TENTATIVE MAP REVIEW

Applications for approval of Tentative Tract and Tentative Parcel Maps shall be reviewed in accordance with the City's most current Subdivision Ordinance (Chapter 35 of the Municipal Code). Subject to the limitations of the 1998 City-Laing Development Agreement, the City may impose specific conditions on Tentative Maps in addition to the requirements of this Specific Plan.

Preliminary grading concept plans shall be approved in association with approval of a Tentative Map or Site Plan. A site-specific geologic report shall be submitted identifying surface and subsurface investigations providing conclusive findings on the activity of fault traces in Sector P. Grading concept plans shall be reviewed for consistency with the City’s Hillside Development Ordinance and designed to meet the following goals:

a) The natural topographic character of hillsides, as exhibited in ridgeline silhouette and backdrop for development, rounded hill form, and angled hillside slopes shall be maintained and/or reinforced.

b) Significant natural systems and resources associated with hillside environments, including but not limited to primary and secondary ridgelines, significant vegetation and wildlife habitat, special geological features, natural drainage swales and canyons, steep slopes, and important historic or cultural manmade features, shall be maintained and/or restored.
c) The visual character of hillsides shall be maintained, recognizing both the importance of the exposure of hillside development to off-site public views and the importance of providing panoramic views from the hillside.

E. DESIGN REVIEW

All non-residential projects within the Specific Plan area shall be subject to design review in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance.

F. SITE PLAN REVIEW

All projects within the Forster Ranch except custom homes on individual lots shall be subject to Site Plan Review in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance. Subject to the limitations of the 1998 City-Laing Development Agreement, the City may impose specific conditions on Site Plans in addition to the requirements of this Specific Plan.

Site plans shall include design features to avoid potential land use conflicts between dissimilar land uses, both within planning areas and between adjacent planning areas. These features may include landscape screening, berms, walls, judicious setback distances from planning area boundaries, and orientation of land uses to minimize conflicts between adjacent uses.

G. CONDITIONAL USE PERMITS AND VARIANCES

Conditional Use Permits and Variances shall be processed in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance. Upon mutual agreement between the City Planner and the applicant and subject to the processing requirements of the City’s growth management ordinance (Measure B), the review of Conditional Use Permits and/or Variances may be carried out concurrently with one or more of the other review phases described in this Section.

H. MINOR ADJUSTMENTS

Where specifically permitted in Section 5, Development Standards, the City Planner may approve minor adjustments to development standards. Adjustments made to development standards must be consistent with the intent of the design guidelines.

I. SIGNS

Prior to issuance of any sign permit, a Master Sign Plan shall be submitted and processed in accordance with the City’s Sign Ordinance in effect at the time of approval. The Master Sign Program shall apply to a designated Planning Area(s) and include the following information: (a) the number and location of proposed signs; (b) the dimensions; (c) the colors and materials; (d) the method of illumination; and (e) any other information necessary to determine compliance with the City’s Sign Ordinance and Urban Design Program.

Once a Master Sign Program has been approved for any specific Planning Area, a sign permit within that Planning Area may be issued without further discretionary review if it is determined that the proposed sign conforms to the approved Master Sign Program.

602 AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFIC PLAN

A. SCREENING OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS
The City Planner shall screen all proposed specific plan amendments and determine whether such constitutes a minor or major amendment. If the City Planner determines that a proposal is a minor amendment, the amendment shall be scheduled for review in accordance with the Minor Amendments section below. If the City Planner determines that it is a major amendment, the amendment shall be reviewed in accordance with the Major Amendments section below. If not satisfied with the City Planner's determination, the applicant may appeal to the Planning Commission in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance.

B. MINOR AMENDMENTS

Minor amendments to this Specific Plan may be approved by the Planning Commission provided it determines that all of the following criteria are met:

1) If the change involves the transfer of dwelling units between planning areas, the transfer would change the dwelling unit count specified in Chapter 2 for any planning area by no more than 10 percent and would not result in an increase in the maximum number of dwelling units allowed for the Specific Plan as a whole; or, if the change involves an adjustment in planning area boundaries, the adjustment would not change the acreage of any planning area by more than 10 percent; and

2) There is no change in the land use category, (e.g. residential, mixed use, open space, etc.) assigned in Chapter 2 for the affected planning area(s).

3) The change is in conformance with the purpose of the specific plan as set forth in Section 101.

C. MAJOR AMENDMENTS

If the City Planner determines that a proposed amendment does not meet the criteria for Minor Amendments specified above, a major amendment to the Specific Plan shall be reviewed in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance. If the City Planner further determines that a zone change and/or general plan amendment is required, said applications shall be reviewed in addition to the specific plan amendment itself.