

Notice of Preparation

Notice of Preparation

To: Office of Planning & Research

PO Box 3044

Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

(Address)

From: City of Arcata Community Dev

736 F Street

Arcata, CA 95521

(Address)

Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report

The City of Arcata

_____ will be the Lead Agency and will prepare an environmental impact report for the project identified below. We need to know the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental information which is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Your agency will need to use the EIR prepared by our agency when considering your permit or other approval for the project.

The project description, location, and the potential environmental effects are contained in the attached materials. A copy of the Initial Study (is is not) attached.

Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date but not later than 30 days after receipt of this notice.

Please send your response to Alyson Hunter at the address shown above. We will need the name for a contact person in your agency.

Project Title: Creekside Annexation

Project Applicant, if any: Foster Avenue LLC

Date February 24, 2016

Signature Alyson Hunter

Title Senior Planner

Telephone 707-825-2040

Reference: California Code of Regulations, Title 14, (CEQA Guidelines) Sections 15082(a), 15103, 15375.

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Summary of Proposed Project

The project proposes the annexation, rezoning, and subdivision of parcel 505-161-011 for residential and assisted living development that would provide housing for approximately 287 residents. The proposed development of parcel 505-161-011 will generally consist of 32 single-family residential units and 32 second units, an assisted living and memory care facility with 100 units, 25 pocket neighborhood cottage units, a preserve and open space along Janes Creek, pedestrian/bicycle trails, and the development and dedication of public infrastructure. Other parcels where parts of the proposed development will occur include APNs 505-151-001, 505-151-009, 505-161-009, 505-161-028, 505-284-009, and 505-284-010. These parcels will be developed with a park, emergency access to Stewart Avenue and Wyatt Lane, and a pedestrian/bike trail accessing to Alliance Road (See Proposed Site Plan). The project will be administered subject to a Development Agreement between the applicant and the City of Arcata.

Site Description

The proposed project site is located at 2000 Foster Avenue on parcel 505-161-011; near the intersection of Foster Avenue and “Q” Street, adjacent to and southwest of the Westwood Neighborhood in the City of Arcata. Surrounding uses include residential development to the north and east, agricultural uses to the west, and a mix of residential and agricultural uses to the south. The site was used as a sawmill and whole-log chipping facility in the past, but has not been used for this purposes since the 1980’s. The project site contains remnants of the former saw mill structure as well as the western bank of Janes Creek, riparian areas, fill materials and gravel, and vegetation including grasses, blackberry bushes, and other low growing shrubs.

Annexation & Rezoning

The project site is located within the City’s Planning Area, Sphere of Influence, and Urban Services Boundary. The City of Arcata has designated the project site in the Arcata General Plan, and pre-zoned it as Residential - Medium Density (RM). The project proposes the annexation and rezoning of this 16-acre parcel. The other parcels in County jurisdiction where parts of the proposed development will occur are not proposed for annexation. Table 1 below lists the existing and proposed zoning for the project site (APN 505-161-011).

Table 1 Existing and Proposed Zoning

Parcel	Existing Zoning (County Jurisdiction)	Proposed Zoning (City Jurisdiction)
(APN 505-161-011) 16 Acres	ML (Limited Industrial) R-1 (Residential One Family) R4 (Apartment Professional)	RL (Residential - Low Density) RM (Residential - Medium Density) with PD (Planned Development) overlay

It is proposed for the northern 1/3 of the project site to be rezoned RL (Residential - Low Density) to allow development of the single-family residential units and second units and for the

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southern 2/3 of the project site to be rezoned RM (Residential - Medium Density) with PD (Planned Development Overlay) to allow development of the assisted living facility and cottage units.

Residential Development & Subdivision

The project proposes a major subdivision of the project site (APN 505-161-011) which would require approval of a parcel map. The proposed project would generally split the northern 1/3 of the project site into individual lots that would be developed with single-family residential and second units. The southern 2/3 of the parcel would be split into two larger lots; one that would be developed with the assisted living and memory care facility and one with the pocket neighborhood cottages. Some of the single-family residential lots less are proposed to be less than the minimum lot width (60 feet) allowed in the RL zone. As stated in Section 9.24.040, the minimum lot width may be reduced to 30 feet where the review authority determines that a lesser proposed width is sufficient to ensure safe and adequate access and parking.

Single Family/Second Units

Single-family lots are proposed within the northern third of the project site (APN 505-161-011). The lots would vary in size from 5,000 s.f. to 6,400 s.f. and would be developed with 32 single family dwellings. All single family lots would include a garage, 28 of which would be detached and 4 that would be attached; 14 with front access and 18 with alley access. The proposed garages also have the potential to be developed into second units in the future which would provide 32 additional units on the single-family residential portion of the proposed development. Single family dwellings will be sold at market rates and will be accessed from streets constructed within the development.

Assisted Living and Memory Care Facility

The proposed assisted living and memory care facility would be located on a common lot in the central portion of the project site (APN 505-161-011) and would consist of 76 assisted living units and 24 memory care units. The facility will be accessed by streets constructed within the development and will have shared parking to the northeast and west of the development.

Cottages/Pocket Neighborhood

The proposed pocket neighborhood would be located in the southern portion of the project site (APN 505-161-011), adjacent to Foster Avenue and the proposed primary access. The cottages would share a common lot with parking provided in two areas to the northeast and southwest. The cottages pocket neighborhood would consist of 25 residential units in rows of individual cottages with shared parking, common walkways, gardens, lawns, and several common buildings. The units are proposed to be restricted to seniors and sold at market rates. These units will be accessed by streets/driveways constructed within the development.

Vehicular/Emergency Access

The proposed project would construct new streets and driveways to serve the development. The project would include public internal streets with the primary ingress/egress (entrance/exit) via Foster Avenue (on the west side of Janes Creek). The new roadway access onto Foster Avenue would be located near the southwestern corner of the project site (APN 505-161-011), approximately 500-feet west of the Foster and "Q" Street intersection. Vehicular access from the

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proposed development to Alliance Road may occur from 17th Street or an extension of Foster Avenue over Janes Creek.

An emergency access road is proposed on parcel 505-151-001 to connect the project site with Stewart Avenue and Wyatt Lane. This all-weather emergency access would pass behind the existing neighborhood to the north, and would head west to access Stewart Avenue and Wyatt Lane through the City-owned property currently containing Ennes Park (APN 505-284-010). Removable bollards or other similar structures will be installed on both ends of the emergency access road to prevent non-emergency vehicular use.

Bicycle/Pedestrian Trails

The proposed project would construct new pedestrian/bicycle pathways to serve the development which are identified in the Arcata Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan (April 2010) including the following (See Proposed Site Plan):

- A pedestrian/bicycle pathway through parcel 505-161-028 is proposed for access to Alliance Road that would include a crossing over Janes Creek. The proposed crossing would include the replacement of an existing overcrossing located mid-way along the eastern boundary of the project site (APN 505-161-011). This crossing, formally known as Lumberyard Road would connect to an existing pedestrian trail that connects to Alliance Road adjacent to the Westwood Court apartments (north of the Heather Lane and Wisteria Lane cul-de-sacs).
- A pedestrian/bicycle access through the Foster Avenue right-of-way is proposed for access to Alliance Road that would include a crossing over Janes Creek. The proposed crossing would include the replacement of an existing overcrossing located in the southeast corner of the project site.
- A portion of the Hammond Trail is proposed to be constructed along the southern boundary of the project site directly south of the proposed cottage units. This Class I shared use pathway will be a minimum of 10 feet wide.
- A north south pathway is proposed on the southeastern portion of the project site that will connect the Hammond Trail with the Lumberyard Road pathway.
- The all-weather emergency access proposed to connect the project site with Stewart Avenue and Wyatt Lane will also function as a pedestrian/bicycle pathway.

Parking

As described above, the project proposes parking dispersed throughout the site. The site plan shows parking for the cottage style units will include 32 perpendicular off-street parking spaces and 9 parallel on-street parking spaces along the west side of the cottage neighborhood. The site plan shows parking for the assisted living and memory care facility will include 65 perpendicular and diagonal off-street parking spaces surrounding the facility and 8 parallel on-street parking spaces to the north of the facility. The site plan shows parking for the single family residential units will include 64 off-street parking spaces provided in garages (2 garage spaces per lot) and approximately 21 parallel on-street parking spaces along the frontage of the larger single-family lots. In addition, 6 parking spaces are proposed off of the east-west trending alley serving the

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smaller single-family lots. In total 205 parking spaces are proposed for the project. Parking requirements will meet the City's development code standards.

Park Land & Other Open Space

As described above, an emergency access is proposed to connect the project site (APN 505-161-011) with Stewart Avenue and Wyatt Lane. This all-weather emergency access would pass behind the existing neighborhood to the north, and would head west to access Stewart Avenue and Wyatt Lane through the 0.21 acre property currently containing Ennes Park (APN 505-284-010). To replace Ennes Park as well as provide the parkland required to accommodate the proposed residential development (287 residents), a new approximately 1.65 acre park will be provided on a portion of City-owned parcel 505-151-009, west of where Ennes Park is currently located.

The proposed development also includes open space along Janes Creek. An open space area is proposed adjacent to Janes Creek and within the Janes Creek 100 foot streamside protection buffer (on the southeastern side of the site). This area would include the proposed constructed wetlands (See description below of wetland mitigation area).

Floodplain

According to the Flood Insurance Rate Map (Community Panel Number 060061 0002 E; Revised Nov. 5, 1997), the 100-year floodplain for Janes Creek covers a portion of the project site (APN 505-161-011). The project proposes modifications within the Janes Creek floodplain to improve creek flows and remove existing obstructions. The project proposes to replace two existing culverts in Janes Creek. Both culverts are proposed to be replaced with open bottom arch pipe crossings which are intended to improve creek flow capacities and improve biological functions. One of the culvert replacements is proposed at what is referred to as the Foster Avenue crossing which is located in the southeastern corner of the project site. The other culvert replacement is proposed at what is referred to as the Lumberyard Road crossing which is located mid-way along the eastern boundary of the project site.

The report "Updated Hydraulic Analysis of Janes Creek" prepared by Domenichelli & Associates, states that the proposed culverts (i.e. arch culverts, with a minimum eight foot span and six foot rise at "Foster Road crossing," and a minimum 10 foot span and five foot rise at "Lumberyard Road" crossing) would: "...result in minimal changes to the FEMA floodplain elevations. Any changes in water surface elevation would occur only in the direct vicinity and upstream of the crossings. Any changes made at either the Lumberyard Road or the Foster Avenue crossing would have no affect on the 17th Street crossing" (March 28, 2005).

Wetland Mitigation Area

The area from the Janes Creek centerline to 100 feet out from the creek's top-of-bank is a protected buffer area, to be designated as a Wetland and Creek Protection (WCP) Zone as defined in the Arcata General Plan. The project proposes to include within the protection zone (or "buffer") a wetland mitigation area. The buffer would be planted with native vegetation, in areas where native vegetation is not already established, and provide natural shade within the creek corridor.

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The project site (APN 505-161-011) contains a number of wetlands and a ditch along the southern boundary of the site as well as the Janes Creek corridor. However, many of these wetlands are relatively small and isolated, and therefore lack conditions to form significant biological habitat that would support measurable wildlife. To pursue the development objectives of the project, the project proposes to fill some of the existing wetlands and mitigate the loss on the project site with a 1.8:1 replacement ratio and 3:1 side slopes (i.e., a ratio of 1.8 acres of replacement wetland for each acre filled/impacted). A total of approximately 0.47 acres (20,285 square feet) of wetlands would be filled for proposed site development. The project's Wetland Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (Winzler & Kelly, 2006) proposes to create 0.85 acres (34,040 square feet) of consolidated wetlands (0.8 acres of mitigation area) to be combined along Janes Creek in the southeastern corner of the project site.

The applicant proposes wetland construction that will mitigate for filled wetlands and will create wetlands of higher biological value/aquatic functions than those filled. Additionally, the proposed constructed wetland, as described in the Wetland Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (Winzler & Kelly, August 2006), will be designed to enhance/convert a compacted area of aggregate base near Janes Creek into a palustrine wetland habitat adjacent to existing wetland/riparian associated with Janes Creek. "Created/Restored Habitat" (Page 7 of the Wetland Mitigation and Monitoring Plan) describes the enhancement and improved biological function/value of the proposed constructed wetlands. Palustrine habitats created the first year will be available immediately for wildlife use. The palustrine seasonal habitat is projected by the applicant's biologists to mature in approximately three to five years. The riparian trees area is intended to provide habitat for land birds and other wildlife in approximately three to ten years. The mitigation area is intended to widen the wildlife corridor through the project area.

The wetland mitigation site has been designed by the applicant to comply with City of Arcata General Plan Policy RC-3 (Wetlands Management) to enhance wetland function with equal or greater functional capacity and value than the proposed filled wetlands. The wetlands proposed for fill are impoundments in compacted fill and aggregate material on a former mill site. Former wetlands prior to mill use, if any existed at the site, would more than likely have been similar to open palustrine field. The proposed wetlands are designed to be of higher functional capacity than those presently existing at the site and will include multiple habitat types (both palustrine emergent and riparian species proposed in the planting plan).

According to applicant information the grading plan for the mitigation site is designed to provide off-channel habitat during storm conditions, provide hydrologic connection with the creek, and prevent fish entrapment by design. Given the type of wetlands filled, the adjacent riparian and creek habitat, and the multiple benefits and habitat types proposed for the mitigation wetlands, the plan as proposed is intended to fulfill requirements of General Plan Policy RC-3 (Wetland Management). The U.S. Army Corp of Engineers (ACOE) typically requires replacement of wetlands of equal habitat type, with equal or greater value. A palustrine type wetland is proposed to meet ACOE requirements. The combination of palustrine wetland species with willows, alders, big leaf maples, cedars, and spruces on the 3:1 slope areas will provide a combination of habitat types. The ACOE also requires replacement wetlands to include palustrine hydrology and thus requires grading to provide adequate groundwater.

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Stormwater

Stormwater facilities will be designed to meet both the Phase II Small MS4 General Permit requirements as well as the Construction General Permit requirements of the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). This will include the on-site retention of stormwater on the project site through low impact development (LID) improvements such as rain gardens, bioswales, and permeable parking areas. This also may include the development of a detention basin in the 100-foot Wetland and Creek Protection Zone for excess stormwater runoff that is not captured through on-site retention during peak storm events. Similar to the wetland mitigation area, the detention basin would be designed to overflow to Janes Creek. Additionally, some of the site runoff may be directed to the adjacent agricultural parcel (APN 505-151-001) to the west of the project site (APN 505-161-011).

Utilities

Proposed development of the project site (APN 505-161-011) would include provision of site utilities. All utilities (water, sewer, gas, electricity, and telecommunications services) are located adjacent to the site and would be extended underground to serve the proposed development. The City of Arcata, through its solid waste disposal contractor, would collect solid waste and recyclables.

Project Studies

Additional studies that have been or will be completed for the proposed project include:

- Biological Report
- Cultural Resources Investigation
- Drainage Report
- Emissions Modeling
- Fiscal Impact Analysis
- Hazardous Materials Investigation & Remediation Plan
- Soils Report
- Traffic Impact Study
- Wetland Mitigation and Monitoring Plan
- Wetland Delineation