

ENVIRONMENTAL INITIAL STUDY

Tierra Robles Planned Development
Zone Amendment 10-002
Tract Map 1996

Shasta Red, LLC

October 26, 2012

INITIAL STUDY CHECKLIST
References and Documentation

Prepared by
SHASTA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
PLANNING DIVISION
1855 Placer Street, Suite 103
Redding, California 96001

**SHASTA COUNTY
ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM
INITIAL STUDY**

1. Project Title:

Tierra Robles Planned Development – Zone Amendment 10-002 & Tract Map 1996, Shasta Red LLC

2. Lead agency name and address:

Shasta County Department of Resource Management, Planning Division
1855 Placer Street, Suite 103
Redding, CA 96001-1759

3. Contact Person and Phone Number:

Kent Hector AICP, Senior Planner (530) 225-5532

4. Project Location:

The project site is located approximately five miles east of the City of Redding, between the unincorporated communities of Bella Vista and Palo Cedro. The 715.4-acre site is bounded by Old Alturas Road to the north and Boyle Road to the south and located 1.6 miles west of Deschutes Road.

5. Applicant's Name and Address:

Shasta Red LLC
Geringer Capital
9595 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 214
Beverly Hills, CA 90212

Representative's Name and Address:

Frank Lehmann
Frank Lehmann & Associates Consulting
1212 South Street, Suite B
Redding, CA 96001

6. General Plan Designation:

Rural Residential 'A'

7. Zoning:

Rural Residential 5-acre minimum (RR-BA-5), Rural Residential 3-acre minimum (RR-BA-3), and Unclassified (U)

8. Description of Project:

The proposed project consists of a residential Planned Development requiring a Zone Amendment (Z10-002) to change the current zoning from Rural Residential 5-acre minimum (RR-BA-5), Rural Residential 3-acre minimum (RR-BA-3), and Unclassified (U) to a Planned Development (PD) zone district establishing a conceptual development plan covering the entire site; and a Tract Map (TR 1996) to divide the 715.4-acre property into 166 residential parcels ranging from 1.5 acres to 7.5 acres in size, and four open space parcels totaling 175.4 acres. As proposed, the project would include a non-contiguous annexation of the 715.4-acre property into County Service Area No. 8, for sewage treatment and disposal. The proposed annexation is considered in this Initial Study, but would be subject to a separate application and approval from the Shasta County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO).

The Planned Development proposes the following design features: (1) Inclusion of solar design in new homes which reduces annual energy usage by 15 percent or more; (2) Variation of housing design and setbacks with not more than 5 percent of the same building footprint or building design; (3) Class 1 public bikeways within the project site; and (4) pedestrian pathways and equestrian trails located along project roadways. The proposed Project would include four open space parcels, ranging in size from 2.62 acres to 150.4 acres, which contain sensitive habitat features and/or species. The largest open space parcel is generally located on steep slopes (>30% slope) adjacent to waterways in the eastern portion of the project site. This open space area would serve as both a conservation and recreation area for the proposed subdivision.

Primary access would be from Boyle Road at the south end of the project with a north-south oriented arterial roadway connecting to Old Alturas Road at the north end of the site. The internal street network would be built to applicable local street standards and would include two bridge crossings of Clough Creek with public utility easements for water, sewer, electricity, telephone and storm-drain improvements within the road right-of-way. Domestic and fire suppression water would be provided by the Bella Vista Water District. The project would require construction of approximately 1.3 miles of sewer line on-site and 3.4 miles of new force main sewer line off-site (and outside the boundary of the County Service Area) within the Boyle Road and Deschutes Road right-of-way. The new off-site sewer main line would extend from the southern portion of the project site to an existing County Service Area No. 8 manhole located near the intersection of Old 44 Drive and Deschutes Road in Palo Cedro. New on- and off-site sewer lines would be sized to meet the requirements of County Service Area No. 8 and LAFCO and upon completion would be dedicated to County Service Area No. 8, which would be responsible for on-going operation and maintenance.

9. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:

Surrounding properties are designated Rural Residential A (RA) and zoned Rural Residential (R-R). Adjacent properties to the east, south, and west consist primarily of 5 to 10-acre parcels used for residential and part-time agricultural uses. Properties to the north consist of 80-acre to 160-acre parcels used for residential and cattle grazing activities. A gun and rod club operation is also located on adjacent parcels northeast of the property. The 715.4-acre project site lies at an elevation of approximately 600 to 650 feet above mean sea level with the topography consisting of broad, nearly level meadows, steep hills, ridges, and gullies. The property is dissected by three major drainage systems which include Clough Creek, which flows southwest across the northwest corner of the property, an unnamed stream that flows south across the east central portion of the property, and a major unnamed drainage that flows from north to southeast across the eastern side of the property. In addition, there are two small streams with attached tributaries which drain the central portion of the property. Along Clough Creek there is a narrow belt of riparian habitat interspersed with upland vegetation with annual grasses. Common species found within this area are willows, black cottonwood, and occasional alders. There are also scattered pockets of riparian habitat located along the creek in the northeast portion of the property. California wild grape, Himalayan blackberry, spike rush are also present. The upland areas of the project site have a vegetative composition that is dominated by blue oaks with scattered gray pine over an annual grassland understory. Tree canopy cover ranges from 10 to 50 percent with the majority of the trees being greater than 6" dbh. Annual grasses and forbs comprise the understory with patches of manzanita, coffee berry, and poison oak being the predominant shrubs. Some occurrences of live oak are also found within the steeper draws of the drainage in the northeast corner of the property. Currently, the property is vacant, but has been used for ranching and cattle grazing activities in the past.

10. Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement.):

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE): Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404 permit;
Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) (Region 5): CWA Section 401 Certification;
National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Stormwater General Construction Permit;
California Department of Fish & Game (CDFG): Fish & Game Code Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement;
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS): incidental take permit under Endangered Species Act (ESA) Section 10 or consultation under ESA Section 7; and
State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO): compliance with National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106.
Shasta County Environmental Health Division
Shasta County Department of Public Works
Bella Vista Water District
Shasta County Air Quality Management District
Shasta Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO)

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

✓	Aesthetics	✓	Agricultural Resources	✓	Air Quality
✓	Biological Resources	✓	Cultural Resources	✓	Geology / Soils
✓	Hazards & Hazardous Materials	✓	Hydrology / Water Quality	✓	Land Use / Planning
	Mineral Resources	✓	Noise	✓	Population / Housing
✓	Public Services		Recreation	✓	Transportation / Traffic
✓	Utilities / Service Systems		Mandatory Findings of Significance		

DETERMINATION: (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of the initial evaluation:

I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.


I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

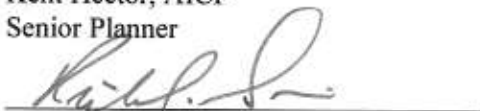
I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Copies of the Initial Study and related materials and documentation may be obtained at the Planning Division of the Department of Resource Management, 1855 Placer Street, Suite 103, Redding, CA 96001. Contact Kent Hector, Senior Planner at (530) 225-5532.


 Kent Hector, AICP
 Senior Planner

10/26/12
 Date


 Richard W. Simon, AICP
 Assistant Director of Resource Management

10/23/12
 Date

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

- 1) A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parenthesis following each question. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if all the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).
- 2) All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.
- 3) Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less-than-significant with mitigation, or less-than-significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more, "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
- 4) "Negative Declaration: Less-than-significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less-than-significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less-than-significant level (mitigation measures from Section XVIII, "Earlier Analyses," may be cross-referenced).
- 5) Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or Negative Declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
 - a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
 - b) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
 - c) Mitigation Measures: For effects that are "Less-than-significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.
- 6) Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g. General Plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.
- 7) Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.
- 8) This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project's environmental effects in whatever format is selected.
- 9) The explanation of each issue should identify the following:
 - a) The significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
 - b) The mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less-than-significant.

I. AESTHETICS: Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	✓			
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State scenic highway?	✓			
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	✓			
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	✓			

Discussion: Based on the related documents listed in the Sources of Documentation for Initial Study Checklist, staff review of the project, observations on the project site and in the vicinity, the following findings can be made:

- a,b) Scenic vistas are defined as expansive views of highly-valued landscapes from publicly accessible viewpoints. Scenic vistas include views of natural features such as topography, water courses, outcrops, and natural vegetation, as well as man-made scenic structures. The primary character of the project site proposed for development consists of broad, nearly level meadows interspersed with oak trees with a grassland understory. The project site is not located within a State scenic highway. However, development of approximately 540 acres of the project site for the proposed planned development would result in the removal of an undetermined number of oaks and other trees along with the introduction of roadways, bikeways, 166 residential dwellings and accessory buildings which could substantially change the visual character of the project site and potentially result in substantial adverse impacts to scenic vistas and resources.
- c) See previous comments under (a,b)
- d) The development of 166 parcels for residential buildings and uses could potentially create a new source of substantial light or glare which could result in night sky illumination and/or other adverse effects on day and nighttime views in and around the area.

Mitigation/Monitoring: Additional project and environmental data, further discussion and analysis of environmental impacts, recommendations for mitigations for potential impacts, and a mitigation monitoring plan, will be included in an Environmental Impact Report to be prepared for this project.

II. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES: In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural, Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Mode (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	✓			
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act Contract?				✓
c) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use?	✓			

Discussion: Based on the related documents listed in the Sources of Documentation for Initial Study Checklist, staff review of the project, observations on the project site and in the vicinity, the following findings can be made:

- a) The portion of the project site proposed for residential development is currently used for cattle grazing. Project implementation would result in the conversion of approximately 540 acres of grazing land to non-agricultural uses which would be considered to be a significant impact on agricultural resources.
- b) None of the parcels within the project site are under a Williamson Act contract. While agricultural uses occur on some adjacent properties, these properties are not zoned for agricultural uses, and are not under Williamson Act contracts. Therefore, project implementation would not result in conflicts with existing agricultural zoning.
- c) See discussion under II.a above.

Mitigation/Monitoring: Additional project and environmental data, further discussion and analysis of environmental impacts, recommendations for mitigations for potential impacts, and a mitigation monitoring plan, will be included in an Environmental Impact Report to be prepared for this project.

III. AIR QUALITY: Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-Than-Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less-Than-Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	✓			
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	✓			
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable Federal or State ambient air quality standard (including releasing emission which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	✓			
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	✓			
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?				✓

Discussion: Based on related documents listed in the Sources of Documentation for Initial Study Checklist, staff review of the project, observations on the project site and in the vicinity, the following findings can be made:

- a-d) The applicable air quality plan for the project area is the Northern Sacramento Valley Air Basin's (NSVAB's) 2009 Air Quality Attainment Plan ("Plan"). The Plan is primarily concerned with the pollutant ozone for which the NSVAB has been designated non-attainment. In particular, the Plan presents strategies necessary to attain the California ambient air quality standard for the 1-hour ozone standard at the earliest practicable date. Due to the scale of the proposed project, further analysis is required to determine the extent to which increases in Nitrogen (NOx), Reactive Organic Gasses (ROG), and Inhalable Particulate Matter (PM10) generated from project construction and operational activities may conflict with or obstruct implementation of the 2009 Air Quality Attainment Plan as well as what, if any, mitigation measures should be incorporated to reduce the impacts to a level that is less than significant. Therefore, these impacts are considered to be potentially significant and will need to be addressed in an EIR.

Another potential air quality impact is the project's incremental increase in emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs). These gases, mainly water vapor, carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), ozone, and chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) all act as effective global insulators, reflecting back to earth visible light and infrared radiation. Scientists have theorized that human activities, such as burning coal to produce electricity and gasoline to run cars have accelerated the accumulation of these gases in the Earth's atmosphere which in turn has been causing the Earth's temperature to rise. Scientists predict a warmer Earth may lead to changes in rainfall patterns, smaller polar ice caps, and a rise in sea levels, along with the corresponding impacts on plants, wildlife and humans.

Individual development projects contribute relatively small amounts of greenhouse gases. However, when added to all other greenhouse gas producing activities around the world, the accumulation of these GHG's results in global climate changes. At this time, no state-wide standards or thresholds of significance has been established for what would constitute a cumulatively significant increase in greenhouse gases for individual development projects. In the absence of these thresholds, impacts from individual projects are considered to be less-than-significant if the project incorporates California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA)