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LAFCO
c/o Robert Barry
9335 Hazard Way, Suite 200
San Diego, CA 92123

20223 Elfin Forest
Road
Elfin Forest, CA

Aug 18, 2014

Dear Robert Barry:

The Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Town Council thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Annexation Pre-zone and Sphere of Influence Amendment – SA/RO13-29 (Citracado Parkway Reorganization).

As you know, LAFCO removed these three parcels from the Escondido SOI to limit the unplanned advance of industrialization into this unincorporated rural community. These three parcels link the Escondido industrial area with the unincorporated rural community of Harmony Grove. Careful design of this crucial interface could enhance Escondido as well as the Harmony Grove Community by making this area more attractive to income-producing businesses and industrial areas in Escondido, as well as offering recreational, trail-head interfaces for Harmony Grove and the new Harmony Grove Village with its 700+ homes. If properly planned and executed, this visionary area would encourage people in the area to use the nearby business and amenities, preventing fractured, redundant infrastructure and preventing islands of differing government jurisdiction which LAFCO is chartered to prevent.

We believe that the annexation process should preserve the historic Harmony Grove community character and retain rural property values while accommodating limited incursion for industrial uses. The Harmony Grove Community Plan Policy LU-2.1.4 specifies that a buffer zone must be used to separate the rural community from urban areas. The EFHG Town Council has already drafted a possible buffer zone plan as a starting point for collaboration with the City (see attachment).

Of note, this area forms a transportation hub critical to linking several regional commuter and recreational trails that would allow environmentally-friendly, non-motorized access to a large high-tech business park in the City (ERTC; trail #07), a 747-home residential/commercial development in the County (Harmony Grove Village; trail #04), the community of Eden Valley (trail #05B), three County recreational areas (Del Dios Highlands Preserve, Lake Hodges, and Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve; trail #11), and the Reveal Escondido *Creek Walk* (trail #14). These trails also provide County commuter access to the City of Escondido Metro bus service, but only if the critical linkages within the annexation area are allowed. This would create an unprecedented network of trails which would link vast areas of North County recreational and transportation hubs.

We request that LAFCO facilitate discussions between the City of Escondido and neighboring agencies to ensure the continued integrity of the rural communities adjacent to the parcels proposed for annexation. Toward that goal, we ask that LAFCO require an acceptable buffer that is designed to preserve County trail linkages before the final decision is made by LAFCO for annexation of these parcels.

We thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Bonita Baumgartner, Chair
The Elfin Forest/ Harmony Grove Town Council

cc.
Honorable Bill Horn, San Diego County Board of Supervisors
Honorable Dave Roberts, San Diego County Board of Supervisors
Bill Martin, Principal Planner, City of Escondido Planning Department
Maryanne Vancio, Trails Program Coordinator, San Diego County Dept. of Parks and Recreation
Kevin Barnard, President, The Escondido Creek Conservancy
Douglas Dill, Vice Chair, San Dieguito Planning Group

