Righetti Hill Ranch Project Proposal

A Senior Project

Presented to

The Faculty of the City and Regional Planning Department
California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree
Bachelor of Science in City & Regional Planning

By:

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I. Introduction

KMN & Associates has been hired by the City of San Luis Obispo to determine the feasibility of Righetti Hill Ranch, a 150,000 sq. ft. conference center that includes a 125-room business-destination hotel, 75,000 sq. ft. health center, 2,500-seat amphitheatre, and forty workforce dwelling units proposed for the “Orcutt Plan Area.” The site consists of a 230.85-acre property located in the County of San Luis Obispo, southeasterly of the San Luis Obispo’s City limits bounded by Orcutt Road to the west and north, Tank Farm Road to the east and the Union Pacific Railroad to the south.

Should this project be deemed feasible as a result of this study, it is envisioned that the property would be subject to a General Plan Amendment, Zone Change, and LAFCO proceedings as needed for annexation into the city of San Luis Obispo.

KMN & Associates has completed a series of studies as required to assess the project’s feasibility as embodied in the following report.
II. Site Analysis

A. Data Collection and Methodology

In the analysis of the subject property of the Orcutt Area, KMN & Associates utilized photography, aerial photographs, and site visits to observe current site conditions. The City of San Luis Obispo General Plan, Orcutt Area Specific Plan and the Orcutt Area Specific Plan Environmental Impact Report were reviewed as resources in this effort.

B. Land Use and Zoning

Currently, land uses include single-family residential on the western and northeastern areas of the project area and agricultural uses utilized for cattle grazing, located on the southern and eastern portions of the site. The City’s Land Use Element designates the Orcutt Area as Residential Neighborhood and Open Space. The City’s General Plan designates the Orcutt Plan Area as an annexation area and will be annexed prior to development. The project is also located within the City’s Urban Reserve Line. The project site is located adjacent to the Union Pacific Railroad, approximately west of the site. Single and multi-family residential developments surround the project area to north, south and east portions of the site. Surrounding uses include single and multi-family residential uses to the south and southwest portions of the site. Other uses include manufactured housing and commercial storage. Land uses west of the site along Broad Street are dominated by low-density commercial and industrial uses, including the mixed-use development Broad Street Village, which are separated by the Union Pacific Railroad. Orcutt Road is dominated
by rural uses to the east, providing an opportunity for the project area to serve as a gateway to the San Luis Obispo wine country.

Residences along Orcutt Road

Adjacent Agricultural Uses
Righetti Hill

Agricultural/Residential Uses on Site
The subject property is located in the outskirts of the city of San Luis Obispo. While it is connected to the city via principle roadways, the site is not located in existing commercial nodes. The two primary commercial nodes, downtown San Luis Obispo and Madonna Plaza, offer little to no synergy to the subject property. The site does have the advantage of being located in reasonably close proximity to the San Luis Obispo airport and could benefit for future commercial growth associated with air travel which is general consistent with the vision of the community as depicted in the General Plan.
Aside from portions of the westerly edge, the site is currently surrounded primarily with low density to moderate density residential development. Lands to the east are quite rural in nature. Tank Farm Road at the southerly boundary of the site provides good access unencumbered by direct residential access as compared to Orcutt Road.
C. Circulation

*Existing Roadway Network*

Access to the project area is available through US Highway 101, SR (Scenic Route) 227, Broad Street, Johnson Avenue, Laurel Lane, Orcutt Road and Tank Farm Road. US Highway 101 is a north-south freeway connecting south to Los Angeles and north to San Francisco, which includes four lanes in the vicinity of the project area. SR 227, west of the project site, is a north-south state highway, and is designated as South Street, northwest of the site, and Broad Street, west and southwest of the project area.

Broad Street is a north-south four-lane arterial roadway that runs through the City of San Luis Obispo and is located southwest of the project site. It is designated as SR 227 and also provides Class II bike lanes along the street. Broad Street also serves as connection to the San Luis Obispo County Regional Airport.

Johnson Avenue, running parallel to Broad Street, is a north-south arterial roadway that has four lanes and contains Class II bike lanes.

Laurel Lane is a north-south, four-lane arterial roadway north of the project site that connects Johnson Avenue and Orcutt Road.

Orcutt Road provides the northern and eastern boundaries of the project area and is an east-west two-lane arterial roadway that serves as a connection to Broad Street and Johnson Avenue. It also runs southeast of the project area towards Lopez Lake. Class II bike lanes are also provided along Orcutt Road. The portion of Orcutt Road that reaches outside the City’s Urban Reserve Line is designated as a City Gateway, per the Circulation Element of the General Plan. Tank Farm Road, an east-west parkway, connects South Higuera and Orcutt Road and includes Class II bike lanes. It also contains two lanes west of Broad Street and east of the Union Pacific Railroad.

The Circulation Element of the City of San Luis Obispo’s General Plan designated Tank Farm Road as a Road of High Scenic Value, allocated from the Union Pacific Railroad to Brookpine Drive and as a Road of Moderate Scenic Value from Brookpine Drive to Orcutt Road. The Circulation Element also designates Orcutt Road as a Road of Moderate Scenic Value, from the northern boundary of the project site and as a Road of High-Moderate Scenic Value along the eastern boundary of the site.
D. Site Characteristics and Topography

The property is characterized by rolling grasslands, native habitats such as creeks and riparian corridors and non-native species. One of the site’s most notable features is the steep and rocky Righetti Hill- a visual landmark in the southeastern portion of the City. The topography of the project area contributes to a natural setting that defines San Luis Obispo’s picturesque environment. The area has a variety of native habitats, including riparian woodlands, wetlands, and coastal scrub. Non-native habitats include extensive plantings of mature eucalyptus trees and grasslands utilized for cattle grazing. Drainage flows through a series of creeks primarily from the northeast to the southwest areas of the site. All on-site drainage uses are tributary to the San Luis Obispo Creek.
E. Findings and Recommendations

a. Opportunities
   i. Flat, buildable property.
   ii. Site largely undeveloped.
   iii. Unique natural setting with Righetti Hill, creeks, and riparian corridors.
   iv. Spectacular views throughout project area.
   v. Location near the San Luis Obispo Regional Airport.
   vi. Proximity to Tank Farm Road, South Higuera, Broad Street, Johnson and Orcutt Road providing good regional access to the site.

b. Constraints
   i. Union Pacific Railroad located west of the site presents a safety hazard and noise issue to users of the project area.
   ii. Size of conference center incompatible with existing land uses surrounding the site (single/multi-family residential).
   iii. Wetlands and native habitats pose need for mitigation measures for future development.
   iv. Steep topography of the site poses development limitations.
F. Goals and Policies

a. Goal 1.1: Preservation and enhancement of existing native habitats, including riparian corridors, creeks, and wetlands to ensure environmental protection of natural setting.
   i. Policy 1.1.1: Designate __ acres of creeks, wetlands and riparian corridors as Open Space, consistent with the City’s Conservation and Open Space Element.
   ii. Policy 1.1.2: Bridges will be developed to cross over creeks where necessary throughout development, to ensure minimal impact on existing environment.

b. Goal 1.2: Limited circulation and development throughout site that minimizes impacts to creeks and wetlands.
   i. Policy 1.2.1: Access to the site shall be located in areas of minimal impact to the surrounding environment. Limited Access will be available from the access point of Orcutt Road.

c. Goal 1.3: Conservation of unique plant and animal habitats throughout the site, particularly those indigenous to California.
   i. Policy 1.3.1: Avoid and minimize impacts through mitigation measures and LEED-certified design techniques.

d. Goal 1.4: Protection of Righetti Hill, unique landform to San Luis Obispo.
   i. Policy 1.4.1: All new development for Righetti Hill Ranch will leave Righetti Hill virtually untouched and the landform will be used solely for scenic view sheds throughout the property.

e. Goal 2.1: Provide attractive scenic corridors throughout new development and along Orcutt Road and Tank Farm.
   i. Policy 2.1.1: A landscaped corridor will be developed at the corner of Orcutt Road and Tank Farm Road as well as through the development, titled Main Road, providing a pedestrian walkway and vehicular access that will minimize impacts of public views from scenic roadways.

f. Goal 2.2: Protection of historic and cultural resources of site area.
   i. Policy 2.2.1: Welcome Center on site will provide an opportunity to embrace the history of the site and will offer space for community public art displays.

g. Goal 3.1: Provide an adequate, safe circulation system that will promote efficient use of new development in the Orcutt Area.
   i. Policy 3.1.1: Creation of new circulation system throughout development and recommend widening of Tank Farm Road to serve increased uses of the project area.
   ii. Policy 3.1.2: Existing arterial streets and parkways should be improved to provide efficient circulation.
iii. Policy 3.1.2: Recommendation for a bridge across the Union Pacific Railroad to ensure safe access to the project area.

h. Goal 4.1: Encourage land uses that provide employment, generate tax revenue, and provide overall benefit to the local economy.
   i. Policy 3.2.1: Development includes a wide array of land uses, including a Conference Center, Hotel, Spa/Fitness Center, and Outdoor Amphitheatre, all of which would require a need for employment and create jobs for the local community.
   ii. Policy 3.2.2: Employee housing will also be located on site to provide for increase in job creation.
III. Case Studies

A. Monterey Conference Center

*About the Center*

The Monterey Conference Center offers an optimal, walkable waterfront setting for any special event from conferences to tradeshows. The Conference Center offers 61,000 sq. ft. of flexible meeting space, 19,600 sq. ft. of exhibition space and an award-winning 500-seat amphitheatre. The Center is in partnership with three adjacent hotels providing 800 hotel rooms, which include the Monterey Marriott, Portola Hotel and Spa, and Hotel Pacific. Together, these properties provide ballrooms, private meeting rooms, pre-function lobby areas, theater space, and catering. With its central location and an easy drive from San Francisco, San Jose, and the Silicon Valley, the Conference Center reflects the City of Monterey’s tradition of providing ample hospitality to the community and visitors alike. In 2005 and 2006, the Monterey Conference Center was awarded the prestigious “Planner’s Choice Award” by Meeting News, naming the Center as one of the top Conference Centers in the United States.

*History*

The $8,000,000 Center was constructed by the City of Monterey under contract to the Monterey Urban Renewal Agency with the goal of revitalizing downtown Monterey, by providing facilities for medium-sized conferences to community cultural events. The Center was designed by Architects: Von Bourg, Nakamura, Karney and Katsura, Architects of Oakland, and was constructed by Carl W. Olson & Sons of Menlo Park. Due to the Center’s proximity to the coast, the California State and Regional Coastal Conservation Commissions approved the initial construction plans. The project area was also located in a National Historic Landmark area, requiring plan approval from the National Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the State Historic Preservation Officer. The Monterey Conference Center was completed in January of 1975.
Sustainability

The Monterey Conference Center’s mission is to “welcome and encourage cultural and economic prosperity for the City of Monterey, by providing a modern, state-of-the-art meeting facility combined with the award winning service and professionalism, we strive to go beyond expectation of our guests and provide them with an experience unsurpassed in the industry.” With the Conference Center’s commitment to excellent hospitality services, they have promised to facilitate environmental sustainability practices and stewardship. The Center incorporates environmentally responsible initiatives in policy planning and decision-making provides educational programs promoting environmental awareness, and resource conversation opportunities.

B. Fresno Convention & Entertainment Center

About the Center

The Fresno Convention & Entertainment Center covers five city blocks and encompasses five separate facilities, which include Valdez Hall, Saroyan Theatre, Selland Arena, the Exhibit Hall and Robert A. Schoettler Conference Center. Valdez Hall provides 32,000 sq. ft. of multi-functional space for conventions, tradeshows and special events. The hall features a 20’ x 30’ stage complete with lighting and sound. Valdez Hall also provides ten private meeting venues, ideal for pre-function gatherings. Saroyan Theater, known as the “showcase” of the Center, offers 2,353 seats with exceptional acoustics, ideal for Broadway shows, ballets and convention meetings. It is home to the Fresno Philharmonic Orchestra, Fresno Broadway Series and Fresno Grand Opera. The Selland Arena, with a seating capacity of 9,300, is the perfect venue for concerts and sporting events. The Convention Center’s Exhibit Hall offers 77,000 sq. ft. of multi-functional space providing 20 private meeting rooms
idyllic for tradeshown meetings, community gatherings and other special events. The Radisson Hotel, the Central Valley’s premiere full service hotel, offers 321 guestrooms, located adjacent to the Robert A. Schoettler Conference Center, which includes a 13,129 sq. ft. multi-functional ballroom.

**History**

The Fresno Convention Center was established in October of 1966. The Center met greater success than expected, and represents Fresno’s dedication to providing the Central Valley with an array of economic, social, and cultural events. The Center was originally comprised of three separate buildings, consisting of the Saroyan Theatre, a 32,000 sq. ft. exhibit hall and the Selland Arena. The exhibit hall was expanded in 1991 into a new 77,000 sq. ft. space encompassing 25 private meeting rooms, including the Center’s administration and operation facilities. The Fresno Convention Center also showcases community art, reflecting the era in which the Center was established. The Conference Center is ideally located approximately halfway between Los Angeles and San Francisco, offering the Central Valley the ideal venue for various tradeshows and business conferences.

C. Calistoga Ranch

![Calistoga Ranch](image)

**About Calistoga Ranch**

Calistoga Ranch is an exclusive resort located in Upper Napa Valley, in a secluded valley halfway between St. Helena and Calistoga off Silverado Trail. It is a one and a half hour drive from downtown San Francisco. The property is an Auberge Resort, one of the world’s premier resort companies. The site provided a unique opportunity to create a private resort on one of the region’s last available parcels in Napa. The $64 million project provides an intimate connection of indoor-outdoor spaces embracing the natural environment of the secluded valley.
**Calistoga’s Natural Setting**

It was a tremendous design and complex construction effort, with every individual structure built to disturb the environment with minimal impact. Every tree on the ranch was marked to save mostly all of the old-growth trees, with each lodge sited and placed around existing trees and landscape. The architecture of the resort also reflects the region’s unique setting, utilizing rustic materials such as cedar shingles, dry-stacked stone, copper roofs, and black steel doors. Calistoga Ranch was designed to embrace the local wine culture, encompassing the nature, wine and food inherent to the region. The property is 157 acres and includes 47 guest lodges, 27 owner lodges, private dining venues, Lake Lommel, the Mountain Wine cave, and Ranch Bathhouse.

Throughout the development of the property, Calistoga Ranch has taken care in preserving the integrity of the valley’s oak trees, lakes and creeks. Each lodge was developed specifically to maintain the property’s natural state. In response to zoning restrictions, each 1,600 sq. ft. guest lodge was designed as a series of pre-fabricated, modular park model units connected by decks, trellised walkways and outdoor living areas. Located adjacent to the Lakehouse are two private rooms for special events and meeting, where guests can hold private functions and gatherings.

**D. L’Auberge Del Mar**

![Image](image)

**About the Hotel**

L’Auberge Del Mar is a luxury hotel providing 120 guest rooms, a spa, private dining venues and 15,500 sq. ft. of functional indoor/outdoor meeting space, including a 2,000 sq. ft. outdoor seaside event venue. The hotel also offers six meeting rooms that include audio-visual services. ·
E. The Mountain Winery

*The Mountain Winery Amphitheatre*

The Mountain Winery, located in Saratoga, California, offers a 2500 seat amphitheatre offering a unique audio/visual experience for performers and guests alike. The Winery provides a beautiful, natural setting optimal for a variety of special events including weddings, corporate conferences, tradeshows, and private business meetings. It offers impressive vistas showcasing the 600-acre property in the Silicon Valley with landscaped gardens and redwood tree groves, providing the ideal outdoor venue for any occasion.
IV. Design

A. Program

The development program for this analysis is dominated by convention and conference center land uses. Parking associated with this component constitutes a major demand on the usable portions of the site. For the purpose of this study, a 2,500 seat outdoor amphitheater is also proposed. It is envisioned to be an independent concert and event venue while providing support to the convention activities. Sized at 125 guest rooms, the hotel component of the program is modest in comparison to the convention functions. The program also includes a destination-sized health club and spa and 40 residential units designated for on-site employees.

B. Design Alternatives

Alternative One

**Alternative #1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposed Uses</th>
<th>Parking</th>
<th>Square Footage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>125 room hotel</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>75,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150,000 sq. ft. Meeting/banquet facility</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30,000 sq. ft. grand ballroom</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30,000 sq. ft. exhibit hall</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20,000 sq. ft. junior ballroom</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20,000 sq. ft. meeting rooms</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17,500 sq. ft. non-food prep kitchen/back of house</td>
<td>438</td>
<td>17,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7,500 sq. ft. food prep</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>7,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25,000 sq. ft. lobbies, pre function, restrooms, etc.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant (approximate seating)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,000 sq. ft. kitchen</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxury spa and health center</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>75,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indoor/outdoor amphitheatre (2500 seats)</td>
<td>625</td>
<td>40,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shop and storage space</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>20,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employee housing</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>50,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Welcome center</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theater (48 seats)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Parking: 4332
Total Acres: 38
Alternative One capitalizes on the largest developable land area for the Conference Center. In order to minimize disruption to residential areas and rural character to the north and east of the site, the primary access is limited to Tank Farm Road. A significant on-site roadway will be needed to service the conference facility. The hotel, fitness center and spa along with the welcome center are located at the base of Righetti Hill with vistas to the south and west.

The major features of the site including Righetti Hill and the creeks/riparian corridors are preserved in this scheme.
Alternative Two

**Alternative #2**

<table>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>Total Parking:</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Acres:</td>
<td>32</td>
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</table>
Alternative Two has similar characteristics to Alternative One in terms of primary access and conference center configuration. However, this scheme is intended to demonstrate a more compact version of the development as it shifts the conference center to a southeasterly location on site. As a result, a large portion of the site can be preserved for open space, agricultural uses or possibly future residential development. A multi-level parking structure is required in this scheme.

The hotel has been relocated to a buildable area at the northeast base of Righetti Hill. In this location, the hotel takes on more of a destination resort quality as it has immediate adjacency to mature trees and the site’s natural qualities. It also has the potential to capture views of the mountains to the east and could relate to the regions wine industry. It would be linked to the conference center via pathways and footbridges.

Due to the high construction costs anticipated to be associated the parking structure and its potentially negative visual characteristics, it has been determined that Alternative One is the preferred scheme.

C. Preferred Alternative Site Plan
Entrance to the site is accessible off Tank Farm Road via Main Road, which serves as the main arterial throughout Righetti Hill Ranch. The Welcome Center welcomes visitors to the site and also provides a 48-seat theatre for community events. Located adjacent to the Welcome Center is the Righetti Hill Hotel and restaurant, a three-story dwelling that provides 125 guestrooms. It is angled up against Righetti Hill to provide scenic views of the property’s natural setting. Parking for both the hotel and welcome center is located in front. Next to the hotel is the 75,000 sq. ft., two-story spa and fitness center. The 2,500-seat outdoor amphitheatre, built against Righetti Hill, is separated from the hotel and spa by a riparian corridor and is accessible via a pedestrian system that connects visitors to all portions of the property area.
The Conference Center is centrally located on property. It is accessible via Main Road and provides a drop-off for buses and limousines. The Conference Center includes a grand ballroom (right), exhibit hall (center), junior ballroom (left), meeting rooms (facing the creek to the upper right). The kitchen, service corridors and back of house activities are discretely located behind the public areas. There are also two large outdoor patios located adjacent to the grand and junior ballrooms for pre-function activities. An event lawn is linked to the main facilities by pathways and footbridges and is located between the riparian corridors. It is to be available for private events that would capitalize on the site’s scenic nature. Parking for the center is located in front of the center.
Employee Housing

Employee housing is a 40-unit development of residences in duplex and triplex layouts. As the neighborhood takes advantage of the existing trees for context and character while causing as little disturbance as possible to the natural setting of the property. The housing is located with access from Orcutt Road to provide separation for the commercial nature of the conference facilities.

Visual Analysis

In order to better understand the visual qualities of the proposed development, a series of three-dimensional views were prepared. This analysis demonstrates that the development, as proposed, has little or no visual impact on the surrounding existing residential neighborhoods. Much of the land is either contained in open space. The development generally consists of unobtrusive low-rise structures.
Cross Sections

Site Sections were also prepared to depict the horizontal relationship of the proposed development from surrounding uses. The buildings generally range up to forty feet in height and have been set back significantly from adjoining uses. Significant landscape features will also be provided to further buffer development activity.

Site Section 1: From West property line through conference facility to Orcutt Road

Site Section 2: From west property line through hotel and Righetti Hill
V. Environmental Analysis
   A. Potential Environmental Impacts
      a. Traffic
         Based on comparisons with residential studies performed on the subject property, it is anticipated that the proposed development will result in reductions in service levels for surrounding intersections. Street widening programs may be required for Tank Farm Road, portions of Broad Street. Intersection improvements may be needed at Tank Farm Road and Higuera Street.

      b. Noise
         Currently, the main sources of noise from the project area, which include the Urban Reserve Line, include vehicular traffic from nearby roads and highways particularly Orcutt and Tank Farm, train operations from the Union Pacific Railroad west of the site, and airport activity from the San Luis Obispo Regional Airport. Noise impacts from the Righetti Hill Ranch development would result from construction noise, which would be short-term and in relation to construction of buildings and grading activity. New development would create an increase of traffic on nearby arterials, which would cause roadway noise levels to increase throughout the Orcutt Area. However, cumulative development impacts from the Righetti Hill Ranch project would exceed City standard, and is considered a significant and unavoidable impact (OASP FEIR 4.8-1).

         According to the Noise Element of the San Luis Obispo General Plan, conditionally acceptable noise environments, which includes the Righetti Hill Ranch, development should be permitted only after noise mitigation has been designed in congruence with the project, which is included in the Environmental Initial Study, to reduce noise exposure to sensitive receptors. Sensitive receptors to noise include residences, hospitals, schools, and libraries, which have stricter noise exposure targets. Surrounding land uses sensitive to noise in the Orcutt Area include the residential neighborhoods to the north, south, and east of the project area. The mobile home park located near the site would be impacted the most from construction activity. To address this impact, the City Noise Ordinance (Municipal Code Chapter 9.12) limits the hours of construction activity that will affect a residential or commercial property from the hours of 7:00 am to 7:00 pm, on non-holiday weekdays. According to the ordinance, construction from Righetti Hill Ranch would fall under the category of “repetitively schedules and relatively long-term operation (periods of ten days or more) of stationary equipment”.


To address these noise issues, mitigation measures will be included in the Environmental Initial Study of this report. Construction for proposed development shall be limited to reduce noise-producing activities. Long-term traffic noise shall be mitigated through low berms, sound walls and landscape buffers to reduce noise impacts. The landscaped sound buffer will be located near the bio-swale and detention basin, which is located west of the site.

c. Comparison to OASP

The OASP calls for a wide use of single family detached housing, which calls for increased public services such as police, fire, parks and school. It also has greater population impacts compared to Righetti Hill Ranch. Righetti Hill does not have potentially significant impacts on public and utility services. The main impacts of Righetti Hill in comparison to the OASP is that the proposal contains taller structures and has more growth inducing impacts due to the creation of jobs. Righetti Hill Ranch also offers economic impacts to the local economy via the Transient Occupancy Tax.

B. Environmental Initial Study

1. Project Title:

Righetti Hill Ranch

2. Lead Agency Name and Address:

City of San Luis Obispo, Public Works Department

919 Palm Street, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

3. Contact Person and Phone Number:

Environmental Review: Pam Ricci, Senior Planner
Phone: (805) 781-7168
4. **Project Location:**

   The Orcutt Plan Area is a 230.85-acre property in the County of San Luis Obispo, just southeast of the San Luis Obispo city limits. Its boundaries include Tank Farm Road to the south, Orcutt Road to the north and east, and the Union Pacific Railroad to the west.

5. **Project Sponsor’s Name and Address:**
   City of San Luis Obispo, 990 Palm Street, CA 93401

6. **General Plan Designation and Zoning:**

   The Orcutt Plan Area is designated as detached, single-family residential and agricultural uses.

7. **Description of the Project:**

   Righetti Hill Ranch encompasses a variety of uses including a 125-room business/destination hotel, 150,000 sq. ft. meeting/banquet facility, 75,000 sq. ft. spa/fitness center and 10,000 sq. ft. welcome center. The site also includes 40 units of employee housing, in duplex and triplex layouts. Due to the large uses on site, Righetti Hill Ranch also requires a substantial amount of parking facilities, roughly 40 acres total.

8. **Surrounding Land Uses and Settings:**

   Surrounded uses include, single-family and multi-family residential, light industrial and commercial uses along Broad Street. Agricultural uses, including cattle grazing, are also located on site.

9. **Other public agencies whose approval is required:**

   N/A
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aesthetics</th>
<th>Geology/Soils</th>
<th>Public Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>Agricultural Resources</td>
<td>Hazards &amp; Hazardous Materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>Air Quality</td>
<td>Hydrology/Water Quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biological Resources</td>
<td>X Land Use and Planning</td>
<td>Utilities and Service Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Resources</td>
<td>X Noise</td>
<td>Mandatory Findings of Significance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy and Mineral Resources</td>
<td>Population and Housing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FISH AND GAME FEES

X There is no evidence before the Department that the project will have any potential adverse effects on fish and wildlife resources or the habitat upon which the wildlife depends. As such, the project qualifies for a de minimis waiver with regards to the filing of Fish and Game Fees.

The project has potential to impact fish and wildlife resources and shall be subject to the payment of Fish and Game fees pursuant to Section 711.4 of the California Fish and Game Code. The earlier initial study was circulated to the California Department of Fish and Game for review and comment.

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

This environmental document must be submitted to the State Clearinghouse for review by one or more State agencies (e.g. Cal Trans, California Department of Fish and Game, Department of Housing and Community Development). The public review period shall not be less than 30 days (CEQA Guidelines 15073(a)).
**DETERMINATION:**

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Determination</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I find that the proposed project <strong>COULD NOT</strong> have a significant effect on the environment, and a <strong>NEGATIVE DECLARATION</strong> will be prepared.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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, or the mitigation measures described on an attached sheet(s) have been added and agreed to by the project proponent. <strong>A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION</strong> will be prepared.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find that the proposed project <strong>MAY</strong> have a significant effect on the environment, and an <strong>ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT</strong> is required.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find that the proposed project <strong>MAY</strong> have a “potentially significant” impact(s) or “potentially significant unless mitigated” impact(s) 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. <strong>A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION</strong> is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed</td>
<td>June 10, 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (1) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or <strong>NEGATIVE DECLARATION</strong> pursuant to applicable standards, and (2) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR of <strong>NEGATIVE DECLARATION</strong>, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.</td>
<td>X</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

______________________________  ____________________________
Signature                      Date

______________________________  ____________________________
Printed Name                   For: John Mandeville,  
                              Community Development Director
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 analysis in each section. A “No Impact” answer is adequately supported if 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. The explanation of each issue should identify the significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question.

3. "Potentially Significant Impact' is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect is significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.

4. "Potentially Significant Unless 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 17, "Earlier Analysis," may be cross-referenced).

5. Earlier analysis 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) of the California Code of Regulations. Earlier analyses are discussed in Section 17 at the end of the checklist.

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues, Discussion and Supporting Information Sources</th>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>Potentially Significant Issues</th>
<th>Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated</th>
<th>Less Than Significant Impact</th>
<th>No Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ER # 43-07</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

1. AESTHETICS. Would the project:
| a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista? |   |   | X |
| b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, open space, and historic buildings within a local or state scenic highway? |   |   | X |
| c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings? |   |   | X |
| d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area? | 1 | X |   |

There will be an impact relating to the lighting for large surface-level parking facilities.

2. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES. Would the project:

| a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use? |   |   | X |
| b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract? |   |   | X |
| 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? |   |   | X |

The project would not adversely affect agricultural land.

3. AIR QUALITY. Would the project:

| a) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation? |   |   | X |
| b) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan? |   |   | X |
| c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations? |   |   | X |
| d) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people? |   |   | X |
| e) 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 emissions which exceed qualitative thresholds for ozone precursors)? |   |   | X |
There will be insignificant emissions from construction equipment.

### 4. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES. Would the project:

- **a)** Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or indirectly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service? **X**

- **b)** Have a substantial adverse effect, on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service? **X**

- **c)** Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance (e.g. Heritage Trees)? **X**

- **d)** Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of wildlife nursery sites? **X**

- **e)** Conflict with the provisions of an adopted habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan? **X**

- **f)** Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined in Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marshes, vernal pools, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means? 1 **X**

**f)** Mitigation required for wetland disturbance. Adequate locations on site would be available for mitigation.

### 5. CULTURAL RESOURCES. Would the project:

- **a)** Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historic resource? (See CEQA Guidelines 15064.5) **X**

- **b)** Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource? (See CEQA Guidelines 15064.5) **X**

- **c)** Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature? **X**

- **d)** Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries? **X**
Development will not impact any historic, prehistoric, archaeological, or paleontological resources.

6. **ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCES. Would the project:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>X</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Conflict with adopted energy conservation plans?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Use non-renewable resources in a wasteful and inefficient manner?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the State?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Site will not impact energy and mineral resources.

7. **GEOLOGY AND SOILS. Would the project:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>X</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including risk of loss, injury or death involving: I. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated in the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area, or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Strong seismic ground shaking?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Landslides or mudflows?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on or off site landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Site will not impact geology and soils.

8. **HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS. Would the project:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>X</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine use, transport or disposal of hazardous materials?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?  
   |   |   | X

d) Expose people or structures to existing sources of hazardous emissions or hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste?  
   |   |   | X

e) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, it would create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?  
   |   |   | X

f) For a project located within an airport land use plan, or within two miles of a public airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for the people residing or working in the project area?  
   |   |   | X

g) Impair implementation of, or physically interfere with, the adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?  
   |   |   | X

h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of lose, injury, or death, involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residents are intermixed with wildlands?  
   |   |   | X

Site will not create hazards or be a source of hazardous materials.

9. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY. Would the project:

|   |   |   | X
|---|---|---|
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?  
   |   |   | X

b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g. The production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses for which permits have been granted)?  
   |   |   | X

c) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide additional sources of runoff into surface waters (including, but not limited to, wetlands, riparian areas, ponds, springs, creeks, streams, rivers, lakes, estuaries, tidal areas, bays, ocean, etc.)?  
   | 1 | X|

d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation onsite or offsite?  
   |   |   | X
### Land Use and Planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes (X)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area in a manner which would result in substantial flooding onsite or offsite?</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a Federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h) Will the project introduce typical storm water pollutants into ground or surface waters?</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i) Will the project alter ground water or surface water quality, temperature, dissolved oxygen, or turbidity?</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Site will include bioswale and detention basins to control flow of water downstream and to filter and purify runoff.

### Noise

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes (X)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Exposure of people to or generation of “unacceptable” noise levels as defined by the San Luis Obispo General Plan Noise Element, or general noise levels in excess of standards established in the Noise Ordinance?</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) A substantial temporary, periodic, or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive ground borne vibration or ground borne noise levels?</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) For a project located within an airport land use plan, or within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There will be a minor, short-term increase in noise from construction equipment and related traffic.
12. POPULATION AND HOUSING. Would the project:

| a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, | 1 | X |
| either directly (for example by proposing new homes |   |   |
| or businesses) or indirectly (for example, through |   |   |
| extension of roads or other infrastructure)? |   |   |
| b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing or |   | X |
| people necessitating the construction of replacement |   |   |
| housing elsewhere? |   |   |

The project proposes the addition of 40 units of workforce housing located on site.

13. PUBLIC SERVICES. Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision, or need, of new or physically altered government facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

| a) Fire protection? | X |
| b) Police protection? | X |
| c) Schools? | X |
| d) Parks? | X |
| e) Roads and other transportation infrastructure? | X |
| f) Other public facilities? | X |

The project poses no adverse significant impacts relating to public services.

14. RECREATION. Would the project:

| a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood or regional parks or other recreational facilities such that |   | X |
| substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated? |   |   |
| b) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, |   | X |
| which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment? |   |   |

The project will not affect existing or planned parks or trails.

15. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC. Would the project:

| a) Cause an increase in traffic, which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system? | X |
| b) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads and highways? | X |
| c) Substantially increase hazards due to design features (e.g. sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g. farm equipment)? | X |
There will be a significant increase in trips and increase in levels of service from new development.

16. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS. Would the project:

<table>
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<tr>
<td><strong>d)</strong> Result in inadequate emergency access?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>e)</strong> Result in inadequate parking capacity onsite or offsite?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>f)</strong> Conflict with adopted policies supporting alternative transportation (e.g. bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>g)</strong> Conflict with the San Luis Obispo County Airport Land Use Plan resulting in substantial safety risks from hazards, noise, or a change in air traffic patterns?</td>
<td></td>
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<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The project will not affect utility demand or amount of supplies.
### 17. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE.

**a)** Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

Mitigation designed into the project is expected to reduce long-term and short-term significant but mitigable impacts.

**b)** Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of the past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)

**c)** Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

### 18. EARLIER ANALYSES.

Earlier analysis may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, one or more effects have been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or Negative Declaration. Section 15063 (c) (3) (D). In this case a discussion should identify the following items:

**a)** Earlier analysis used. Identify earlier analysis and state where they are available for review.

N/A

**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.

N/A

**c)** Mitigation measures. For effects that are "Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions of the project.
REQUIRED MITIGATION AND MONITORING PROGRAMS

AESTHETICS (Section 1)
D) Exterior lighting fixtures shall feature cut-off screens to minimize light spillage from parking lots, site roadways and other sources. Down-lights shall be used to illuminate footpaths in accordance with public safety standards.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES (Section 4)
F) The site development plan results in disturbance of two small wetland features adjacent to Righetti Hill. The project shall set aside land for replacement at a ratio acceptable to Fish and Game/Army Corp of Engineers standards.

HYDROLOGY (Section 9)
C) Righetti Hill Ranch development will provide a bio-swale and detention basin for runoff from adjacent parking facility that will serve as a connection to nearby creek. Pervious surfaces will also be used throughout parking facility to provide an eco-friendly infiltration system.

LAND USE AND PLANNING (Section 10)
A) The site is currently zoned for single family residential and agricultural uses. The site must be re-zoned and re-designated in the General Plan for uses consistent with the proposed development.

NOISE (Section 11)
C) Righetti Hill Ranch will provide berms and sound walls, located next to the bio-swale (next to Union Pacific Railroad, west of the project area), to reduce noise impacts of railroad and surrounding neighbors. The Conference Center and outdoor amphitheater will also have limitation to hour

POPULATION AND HOUSING (Section 12)
A) The proposed facility will have growth inducing impacts that are in conflict with growth restriction philosophy of the City of San Luis Obispo. The City may need to facilitate housing opportunities in order accommodate needs generated from this project and other support businesses that are likely to follow including future hospitality, construction and related uses.

TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC (Section 15)
A) Traffic impacts must be mitigated through street widening, off-site intersection improvements, and additional signalization of existing intersections. Subject to City and State safety regulations, a vehicular bridge may be required on Tank Farm Road over the Union Pacific railroad right-of-way.
VI. Community Outreach Strategy

A. Community Concern

For the Righetti Hill Ranch project, it is essential to receive and review community input throughout the design and construction process. It is recommended for the purpose of building community consensus to hire an outreach consultant to help administer surveys, stakeholder interviews, and public workshops. It is imperative that the community plays a key role in consensus building for the project to ensure satisfaction for the overall development.

To gain community approval, it is important to indicate the benefits that the Righetti Hill Ranch project has to offer. The development has the opportunity to increase tourism, provide economic benefits via the transient occupancy tax, and aide in the creation of new jobs for the City. The transient occupancy tax has the ability to help create a contract with the City where funds are allocated to support local community service programs. This is a great opportunity for private developers to show their dedication to improving the quality of life for the citizens of San Luis Obispo. Charettes, which refers to a collaborative sessions in which a group of designers draft solutions to design issues while receiving input from stakeholders, could also be key to involving citizens in the design process. They often take place in multiple sessions where the group divides into sub-groups where each group develops design solutions, which is then presented to the entire group. It is a quick way of generating ideas while integrating a wide variety of interests from a diverse group of interested citizens.

Another way of gaining community involvement is organizing stakeholders to participate in the design process is to integrate their ideas through mitigation measures involved with the development constraints of the project. It may be worthwhile to get community opinions on what they think should be implemented to improve the environmental conditions and what programs could be required to mitigate environmental impacts.

B. Development Implementation Strategy

Should the City elect to implement the proposed development, it is recommended that tax-increment financing resulting from hotel and conference center activities be utilized for road construction and other infrastructure requirements. Prior to construction, the project will be subject to more detailed public review including Design Review Board, Planning Commission and Council Hearings.
VII. Conclusions

While Righetti Hill Ranch can be comfortably accommodated on the site, based on case studies and site development limitations, this proposal is not recommended. The program calls for a 125-room business destination hotel to support the 150,000 sq. ft. conference facility. From a feasibility and economic standpoint, the site would require 1,000-1,500 rooms to adequately support the site. More hotel rooms could also be used for long-term airport expansion plans. In general, the project seems financially infeasible and lacks synergy with surrounding land uses, which include low-density residential and industrial uses. The project is also inconsistent with the General Plan, which calls for residential and agricultural uses in the Orcutt Plan Area. If the project went underway, it would require a General Plan amendment and would require a costly entitlement process.

There is a better site option for the proposal on vacant land near Madonna Plaza, which is already close to existing hotels that could support the conference facility. It is also closer to the 101 Freeway and would provide improved commercial visibility of the site. The proposal could also work better with a reduced program that would be more in sync with the local population ratio and surrounding land uses.
Bibliography

City of San Luis Obispo General Plan

County of San Luis Obispo General Plan

City of San Luis Obispo Municipal Code

Orcutt Area Specific Plan

Orcutt Area Specific Plan Final Environmental Impact Report

The Monterey Conference Center website-  
www.montereyconferencecenter.com

The Fresno Convention & Entertainment Center website-  
www.fresnoconventioncenter.com

The Calistoga Ranch website-  
www.calistogaranch.com

The Mountain Winery website-  
www.mountainwinery.com