

- **Hydrology** - Concerns were raised regarding potential stormwater run off impacts as a result of the increase in impervious surfaces associated with building 229 single family homes and associated streets.
- **Hazards** - Concerns were raised regarding potential increased risk from wildfires associated with building 229 single family homes in a Very High Fire Severity Zone.
- **Traffic** - Concerns were raised regarding potential increases in traffic on the roadways in close proximity to the project site during construction and operation of the proposed project. Safety concerns were also expressed in association with traffic along La Tuna Canyon Road and Tujunga Canyon Boulevard. These issues are addressed in Section IV.P (Transportation/Traffic).
- **Utilities and Service Systems** - Concerns were raised regarding increased water usage.

The letters submitted in response to the NOP and comments provided at the scoping meeting are contained in Appendix B to this EIR.

D. ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED

Issues to be resolved include whether or how to mitigate potentially significant environmental impacts from the proposed project, and whether one of the alternatives should be approved rather than the proposed project.

E. ALTERNATIVES

This Draft EIR considers a range of alternatives to the proposed project to provide informed decision-making in accordance with Section 15126.6 of the CEQA Guidelines. The alternatives analyzed in this Draft EIR include: (1) No Project Alternative; (2) All Residential Townhomes Alternative; (3) Mixed Use Residential and Retail Alternative; and (4) Mixed Use Residential/Retail/Office Alternative..

Alternative 1: No Project Alternative

Under Alternative 1, it is assumed that no development of the project site would occur and the existing golf course operations would continue for the foreseeable future.

Alternative 2: All Residential Townhomes

Alternative 2 would consist of the development of 336 townhome units (apartments). The townhomes would be developed in 14 stand-alone buildings of 24 units each. Each building would have a gross area of 36,000 square feet. In total, there would be 504,000 gross square feet of residential space. The buildings would be clustered in the eastern portion of the project site, primarily on that area currently occupied by the driving range and on the northeastern strip of land located between Tujunga Canyon Road and the Verdugo Wash Channel.

The existing golf course would be retained and would continue to be available to the community. A new club house would be constructed and a new parking lot for the golf course would be provided along La Tuna Canyon Road to the west of the new club house.

A large green commons area and/or community center would be provided in the southern portion of the residential area

Alternative 3: Mixed Use Residential and Retail

Alternative 3 is a mixed use residential and neighborhood serving commercial development. In total, there would be 106,525 square feet of commercial uses and 334 residential units (408,800 square feet of residential space). All residential units would be apartments. The development area would be located in the southeastern corner of the project site, largely on that portion currently occupied by the driving range. Commercial uses would occupy the ground floor level. Residential uses (305 units) would be on the second and third levels above the commercial spaces. In addition, 18 row townhomes would be provided on the northeastern strip of land located between Tujunga Canyon Road and the Verdugo Wash Channel; 11 residential units would also be provided at the ground floor level in the western portion of the development area. Total leaseable space would be 515,325 square feet (gross).

The remaining portion of the existing golf course (11.9 acres) would be made over into a community serving park. The park would be dedicated to the City of Los Angeles, which would be responsible for its planning and maintenance. No active recreational facilities are envisioned by this alternative; although such facilities may ultimately be provided by the City.

Alternative 4: Mixed Use Residential/Retail/Office

Alternative 4 is a variation on Alternative 3, and as such would occupy the same development footprint. However, whereas Alternative 3 would provide residential uses on the second and third levels above the ground floor retail, Alternative 4 would provide 150,600 square feet of commercial office space. Similar to Alternative 3, Alternative 4 would provide second and third level residential uses above the large parking structure (partially subterranean) located north of the commercial space, as well as the row of 18 townhomes in the northern portion of the project site and the 11 ground floor residential units in the western portion of the development area.

Also, similar to Alternative 3, Alternative 4 would make over the remaining portion of the existing golf course (11.9 acres) into a community serving park. The park would be dedicated to the City of Los Angeles, which would be responsible for its planning and maintenance. No active recreational facilities are envisioned by this alternative; although such facilities may ultimately be provided by the City.

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A. PROJECT APPLICANT

Snowball West Investments, L.P.
MWH Development
22440 Clarendon Street, 2nd Floor
Woodland Hills, California 91367

B. PROJECT LOCATION

The project site is located at 6433 La Tuna Canyon Road in the Tujunga community of the City of Los Angeles. The 58.32-net acre (60.67-gross acre) project site is an irregularly shaped property that is roughly bounded by Tujunga Canyon Boulevard to the east, and La Tuna Canyon Road to the south. Single-family homes are to the north, and undeveloped land is to the west. See Figure II-1 for the Regional and Vicinity Maps of the project site. Figure II-2 is an aerial photograph of the project site and surrounding area.

C. PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

The project proposes to subdivide and subsequently develop 229 homes on the 58.32-acre project site (approximately 3.93 units per acre). Figure II-3 presents the project's Conceptual Site Plan. The development will be a private community with gated access and private roads. Lot sizes will range from 2,560 to 10,720 square feet in area. Lot widths will range from 32 feet to 40 feet: 84 lots will have a width of 32 feet, 80 lots will have a width of 35 feet, and 65 lots will have a width of 40 feet. The proposed homes will range in size from 1,800 to 2,700 square feet in building area and will have a maximum height of 30 feet (two-stories). Two basic models are proposed: 137 units will have four bedrooms while 92 will have five bedrooms. Each home will have a two-car garage. Table II-1 provides a summary of proposed lot sizes. Figure II-3 is the Vesting Tentative Tract Map; Figure II-4, is the Proposed Lot Layout; and Figure II-5, is the Proposed Grading Scheme.

The proposed 229 homes will be built in two locations. Most of the homes (211 units) will be built in the southeast corner of the project site on the portion of the site currently occupied by the Verdugo Hills Golf Course. A further 18 homes will be built farther to the north, between the Verdugo Wash right-of-way on the west and Tujunga Canyon Road on the east. This smaller enclave will be accessed via a northerly extension of Street "A". This access road will utilize the existing bridge over the Tujunga Wash right-of-way, as shown on Figure II-3 through Figure II-5. Figure II-6 presents a Schematic Street Scene of the proposed homes. Figure II-7 presents a Conceptual Entry Gate Monument to be placed on La Tuna Canyon Road.

located above the development area at the toe of the existing slope. The ditch will direct runoff from the debris basins to the existing storm drain system in La Tuna Canyon Road and from there into the Verdugo Wash. Six debris basins located in existing drainages will retain debris from the surrounding hillsides, protecting the proposed development and preventing the debris from entering the Verdugo Wash.

Table II-2
Grading Summary (In Cubic Yardage)

Earthwork	Cut	Fill	Import
Raw	75,300	111,600	--
Over-Excavation	292,000	292,000	--
Subtotal	367,300	403,600	--
Shrinkage (15%)	0	60,600	--
TOTAL	367,300	464,200	96,900

Source: Permco Engineering and Management, December 12, 2007

Open Space

The project's development plan locates the majority of the proposed homes on the flattest portion of the project site (i.e., that portion currently developed as the Verdugo Hills Golf Course). Areas within the project site with slope gradients greater than 15 percent are proposed to be set aside under conservation easements. In total, the project would include 29.71 acres of open space potentially available for public dedication. Of this total, approximately 16.91 acres would be retained in their current undisturbed condition, while the remaining 12.8 acres would be subject to modification due to the City's fuel modification requirements. In addition, the project would provide 5.44 acres of private open space, which would be maintained by the project's homeowners' association. This area would consist of: (1) 1.64 acres of dense oak trees and a drainage, which would be protected by a conservation easement dedicated to a public agency; (2) 2.63 acres of common private landscape areas; and (3) 1.17 acres of debris/sediment basins. Lastly, the project would provide 6.19 acres of private yard areas to be maintained as open space by the individual homes owners. The proposed open space is shown on Figure II-8.

Native/Ornamental Trees

There are currently 441 trees on the project site: 303 coast live oaks, 18 western sycamores and 120 mature ornamental trees. Project development would involve the removal of 199 of these trees: 85 coast live oaks, 11 sycamores and 103 ornamentals. To mitigate for the loss of these trees, the project would replanting 810 coast live oak trees, 99 western sycamores and 103 mature ornamentals from container stock. These replacement plants represent 9.5:1 replacement of coast live oaks, 9:1 replacement of western sycamores and a 1:1 replacement of mature non-protected species. The plantings would occur within entry points, common areas, road right of-ways, perimeters of detention basins, common slopes,

Environmentally Superior Alternative

In general, the environmentally superior alternative, as defined by CEQA, should minimize adverse impacts to the project site and its surrounding environment. Of the alternatives considered, the "No Project Alternative" does not create any new impacts; therefore, it is environmentally superior to a project which proposes to change existing conditions. However, CEQA requires the identification of another "environmentally superior" alternative when the No Project Alternative is chosen. A comparison of the alternatives reveals that Alternative 2 – All Residential Townhomes, involves less environmental disruption with regards to aesthetics, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology, and recreation. In addition, significant impacts on mature trees (short term), aesthetic views, and recreation facilities, associated with the proposed project, would be reduced to less than significant under Alternative 2. Although impacts on land use, public services, traffic, and utilities would be greater under Alternative 2 as compared to the proposed project, these impacts would remain less than significant. Consequently, as shown in Table VI-25 of the alternatives discussed in this EIR, Alternative 2 is the environmentally superior alternative.

Table VI-25
Comparison of Impacts of Project Alternatives

Impact Area	Proposed Project Impact with Mitigation	Alternative 1 No Project (No Construction)	Alternative 2: All Residential Townhomes	Alternative 3: Mixed Use Residential and Retail	Alternative 4: Mixed Use Residential/Retail/Office
Aesthetics					
Aesthetics Views	Significant	LESS	LESS	LESS	LESS
Light and Glare	L-T-S	LESS	LESS	GREATER	GREATER
Air Quality					
Construction	L-T-S	LESS	LESS	LESS	LESS
Operational	L-T-S	LESS	LESS	GREATER	GREATER
Biological Resources					
Special Status Species	L-T-S	LESS	LESS	LESS	LESS
Riparian/Wetland Habitat	L-T-S	LESS	LESS	LESS	LESS
Trees	L-T-S	LESS	LESS	LESS	LESS
Cultural Resources					
Historic	L-T-S	LESS	SIMILAR	SIMILAR	SIMILAR
Archaeological	L-T-S	LESS	LESS	LESS	LESS
Paleontological	L-T-S	LESS	LESS	LESS	LESS
Geology and Soils					
Seismic Hazards	L-T-S	LESS	LESS	LESS	LESS
Soils	L-T-S	LESS	LESS	LESS	LESS
Hazards	L-T-S	LESS	SIMILAR	SIMILAR	SIMILAR