



**MATHER
ALLIANCE**
Preserve · Protect · Enjoy

To work with stakeholders to advocate for responsible use and management of Mather Field resources.

January 29, 2017

Ms. Catherine Hack
Environmental Coordinator
Department of Community Development
Planning and Environment Review Division
827 7th Street, Room 225
Sacramento CA 94814

RE: Revised Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Mather South Community Master Plan (PLNP2013-00065) ("RNOP")

Dear Ms. Hack:

As an interested party in the above-stated RNOP, the Mather Alliance respectfully submits the following comments regarding this RNOP for consideration. The Mather Alliance serves as members of the Mather Stakeholder Group (MSG), which is an entity formed according to the Sacramento County Board of Supervisor's directive on September 16, 2015. MSG's mission is to work toward reaching maximum agreement on advisory recommendations to the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors for future land use planning at Mather Field.

Environmental Campus Zoning

A Commercial and Offices designation, despite proposed restrictive wording in the development agreement, would lower the approval bar and create an incentive for future developers to attempt to change the intent of the Specific and Master Plan from an environmental education campus to a more traditional commercial development. This would not align with the MSG agreement to preserve the character of Mather Field's natural setting and intentional use to promote environmental education.

The Revised Project Description in the NOP (page NOP-3) states, "Because this [the environmental center] is a unique use, it does not fit neatly within the existing Sacramento County General Plan land use categories. Therefore, the Environmental Education Campus area is proposed to have a General Plan land use designation of Commercial and Offices because this designation allows for a broad range of land uses that are generally consistent with the Environmental Education Campus vision."

The description of the Public/Quasi-Public designation in the General Plan is as follows:

"The Public/Quasi-Public designation establishes areas for uses such as education, solid and liquid waste disposal, and cemeteries. This designation identifies public and quasi-public areas that are of significant size, under county jurisdiction, regional in scope, specified by state law, or have significant land use impacts. Some facilities (e.g., elementary schools and fire stations) are too small or numerous to show on the land use diagram, but may be identified on other diagrams in the plan."



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We believe the proposed 28-acre environmental education center meets all of the public/quasi-public criteria. The acreage is certainly large enough. Public ownership is not a requirement, nor is being under county jurisdiction. The very inclusion of the term "quasi-public" suggests that. If a private university would qualify as public/quasi-public designation in the prior Mather plan, certainly a regional environmental center should qualify also. The Sacramento Board of Supervisors has discretion in interpreting consistency issues with General Plan designations. We believe that the Board can easily make the determination that the proposed regional environmental center is consistent with a Public/quasi-public land use designation.

We realize a Commercial and Office designation could offer a developer a higher monetary value than public/quasi-public designated land, but protecting the intended use of this parcel to promote its natural, cultural, educational, societal, and ecological value aligns more closely with the MSG's vision and agreements.

We strongly urge that the project description be changed to identify the parcel for the Environmental Campus for a public/quasi-public General Plan Land Use Designation. At a very minimum, the project description and environmental document analysis should advertise and evaluate the environmental impact of both options to maintain Board discretion during the approval process.

Reinstating Zinfandel Road to the Original Name Eagle's Nest Road

Although this RNOP does not include road naming, the Mather Alliance considers this RNOP regarding the future of the Mather South Community as an appropriate platform to request to reinstate Eagle's Nest Road within the Mather South community. The road that provides one of the entrances into the Independence at Mather community, south from Douglas Avenue, was originally named Eagle's Nest Road for many decades. In 2013, Sacramento County renamed Eagle's Nest Road to Zinfandel Drive without public outreach. We request that Sacramento County reinstate the Zinfandel Road to Eagle's Nest Road within the Mather South community for the following reasons:

- 1) To capture the essence of Mather's nature preserve landscape.
- 2) The name Eagle's Nest Road gives motorists who will drive through the Mather South community a heightened awareness that they should drive with caution through this specially-protected nature preserve to minimize the adverse impacts on the preserve's wildlife. We assert that if the County retains the name Zinfandel Road, drivers will drive more aggressively to reach their destination because they associate the road as a north-south thoroughfare to and from Highway 50.

We appreciate this opportunity to comment on this RNOP and the effort Sacramento County staff makes to include the community to influence the decisions it makes for the Mather South Community Master Plan. We believe that through this process, we can minimize the adverse effects that the project may have on the community and environment. Thank you for considering our comments.

Sincerely,

David Nahigian

David Nahigian on behalf of the Mather Alliance

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