



TOWN OF FAIRFAX

STAFF REPORT

September 4, 2019

TO: Mayor and Town Council

FROM: Ben Berto, Planning and Building Services Director
Garrett Toy, Town Manager *GT*

SUBJECT: Authorize the Town Manager to execute an agreement with Ascent Environmental, Inc., to prepare the Environmental Impact Report (EIR), at the applicant's costs, for the Marinda Heights Subdivision (aka "Wall Property") in an amount not to exceed \$649,000.

RECOMMENDATION

Authorize the Town Manager to execute an agreement with Ascent Environmental, Inc., to prepare the Environmental Impact Report (EIR), at the applicant's costs, for the Marinda Heights Subdivision (aka "Wall property") in an amount not to exceed \$649,000.

DISCUSSION

In July 2019, staff issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for an environmental consulting firm to conduct an EIR for the proposed 10-lot Marinda Heights subdivision of the 100.5-acre site commonly known as the Wall property. While several firms expressed interest in the EIR, three (3) firms submitted proposals. A panel, consisting of staff, the Town Engineer and a county planner, interviewed the 3 firms. While all the firms were qualified, staff believes Ascent Environmental (Ascent) is the best qualified to meet the Town's needs. The decision was not based on costs, but on the firm's proposed scope of work and experience preparing such complex EIR's. Ascent's cost estimate was the highest of the 3 proposals.

The applicant is responsible for the costs of the EIR, but the Town contracts with the EIR firm directly to ensure an independent, objective, and comprehensive analysis of the proposed project and potential alternatives. The Planning Department will be responsible for managing Ascent and overseeing the EIR process. The first step in the process will be the public project scoping meeting which will be widely noticed to maximize public opportunity for comment. Staff anticipates the EIR process will take upwards of 12 months.

Interested residents can sign up to receive updates on the project at www.townoffairfax.org/major-projects.

FISCAL IMPACT

The applicant is obligated to pay for the full costs of the EIR including any additional time and material costs. The process requires the applicant to make an initial deposit and subsequent deposits to ensure adequate funding is available to cover the cost of the EIR.

ATTACHMENTS

Scope of Work and Cost Estimate



August 29, 2019

Ben Berto, Director of Planning and Building Services
Town of Fairfax
142 Bolinas Road
Fairfax, CA 94930

Subject: Scope and Budget Revisions for Preparing the Marinda Heights Subdivision Project Environmental Impact Report

Dear Mr. Berto:

Ascent Environmental appreciates the opportunity to submit scope revisions for preparing the Marinda Heights Subdivision Project Environmental Impact Report (EIR). After discussing our previously submitted scope with you, we have prepared these scope and budget revisions to best meet the Town's needs as we understand them. This letter provides a breakdown of the costs provided to you via email on August 20, 2019. The revised budget reflects the following modifications to the scope:

- ▲ **Task 6: Notice of Preparation (Review Comments).** Our original scope of work provided for review of NOP comments and preparation of a memorandum on environmental issues raised and which topics will be addressed in the EIR for Town input. The revised task would instead involve one conference call (up to 4 hours) to discuss comments of concern to the Town, presuming that the NOP comments have been reviewed by the Town. No memorandum would be prepared. Additionally, this task provided for scoping meeting planning support; pre-meeting support has been reduced to approximately 12 hours total by Curtis Alling and Kristi Black.
- ▲ **Task 13: Notice of Determination.** Preparation of the NOD should use materials that are already prepared; therefore, Ascent proposes that Town staff prepare and submit the NOD to the County Clerk. Ascent has included 1 hour for review of the NOD prepared by the Town.
- ▲ **Subtask 14.2: Meetings with Town Staff.** Four in-person meetings were included in our original scope. The scope has been modified to account for conference calls only, reducing travel costs, for up to a total of 52 hours of meeting time split evenly among Curtis Alling and Kristi Black. This also includes preparation of meeting notes for up to 14 meetings.
- ▲ **Printing.** Consistent with the Request for Proposals, our original proposal assumes a total of 164 hard copies of EIRs will be submitted to the Town. We have found that electronic files are sufficient for most reviewers, or that resource agencies only request a printed copy of the resource section the agency wants to review rather than the whole document. The revised cost provides for 70 copies of the EIR (600 pages, with up to 20 color maps).
- ▲ **Mileage/parking/travel.** This accounts for the elimination of in-person meetings in Subtask 14.2.

- **Contingency.** A contingency has been included to account for unanticipated tasks or additional work on tasks listed in our scope of work.
- **Drone video.** ENGEO, as a subconsultant to Ascent, would conduct photography and survey flights via small Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS or drones). The site visit will comprise up to two manually piloted flights, with a total flight time not to exceed 40 minutes. During these flights, the pilot will capture 20-MP still images in JPEG format, and 1080p 60 fps video in MP4 format. Photography and videography can be taken at the pilot's discretion, or per instructions from a designee on-site. The site visit will also include a downward-looking scan of the site from an altitude of approximately 400 feet above the ground. This data will be used to generate a rough 3D model and orthoimagery of the site.

The scope changes are reflected in the cost estimate, as follows:

Task 6: Notice of Preparation (Review Comments)	\$22,000	\$12,080
Task 13: Notice of Determination	\$1,120	\$165
Subtask 14.2: Meetings with Town Staff	\$20,615	\$16,400
Printing	\$7,000	\$3,000
Contingency	\$0	\$30,000
Mileage/Parking/Travel	\$2,500	\$1,880
ENGEO	\$0	\$3,780
TOTAL	\$634,930	\$649,000

We look forward to working with you on this important project and hope that these scope and budget changes meet your expectations. If you have any questions regarding the enclosed scope of work and cost estimate, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,



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Kristi Black
Project Manager
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Attachment:

A Cost Estimate



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SCOPE OF WORK AND WORK PLAN

2 SCOPE OF WORK AND WORK PLAN

As requested in the RFP, this scope of work provides the Town with a project-level EIR and supporting information under CEQA. The EIR will evaluate environmental impacts, identify mitigation measures for significant impacts, evaluate alternatives, and contain all information necessary for an EIR. The EIR will support all Town approvals for the project.

Task 1: Kickoff Meeting and Review of Available Studies and Documentation

Task 1.1: Kickoff Meeting

Ascent's management team will attend a project kickoff meeting with Town staff to discuss the project history and background, identify and confirm project objectives, discuss areas of controversy and potential strategies, identify potential alternatives to the project or elements thereof, and establish communication and review protocols. We will also discuss the project schedule to confirm its feasibility or make appropriate, mutually agreeable adjustments. Ascent will prepare summary meeting notes to document discussions at the kickoff meeting.

Assumptions

- Ascent's project management team (principal-in-charge, project manager, and forestry/fire task manager) will attend the meeting at Town Hall.
- The meeting would be up to 4 hours.
- Because Ascent's project manager accompanied the Town and the applicant on a site visit during the July 23 project briefing, a site visit is not included in the kickoff meeting. However, site visits by specified technical experts are included in subsequent tasks of this scope of work.

Deliverables

- Summary meeting notes (Word and PDF)

Task 1.2: Review of Available Studies and Documentation

Ascent's technical leads and management team will gather and review available studies and documentation to collect information about the project area resources. We will coordinate with Town staff, County of Marin staff, and other relevant agencies to gather information. Technical information will be reviewed by the appropriate technical team member for adequacy.

Assumptions

- This task involves gathering and review of secondary information. Peer review of applicant studies will be performed in Task 3.

Deliverables

- Memo regarding adequacy of available secondary data and studies (electronic deliverable)

Task 2: Project Description

Ascent will review and format the project description for presentation in the EIR, based on information provided by the applicant and the Town. At the July 23 project briefing, the Town indicated that substantial work has been completed on the project description. Therefore, this task is limited to additional time to incorporate changes that may be made during the CEQA review process as well as to produce a project description and figures in a format consistent with the remainder of the CEQA document. Potential changes that could be needed in the project description include forest management practices proposed in the applicant-prepared Vegetation Management Plans. Ascent will obtain approval of the revised project description from the Director of Planning and Building Services prior to moving forward with environmental analysis. Once approved, the project description will be included in the Administrative Draft Environmental Impact Report (Task 7) for broader Town staff review.

Assumptions

- This task includes up to 20 hours of time to revise and format the project description.

Deliverables

- Revised administrative draft project description (electronic deliverable)

Task 3: Peer Review Applicant-Prepared Studies

Ascent and its subconsultants will peer review applicant-prepared studies and documentation for the project. The Town highly values and CEQA requires independent analysis of the project impacts. Ascent and its subconsultants will conduct a rigorous peer review of applicant-prepared technical studies (as listed in Subtask 1.2) to ensure the use of accurate and complete information in the CEQA process. As part of this peer review, Ascent will also identify any additional data that is needed from the applicant or in the technical studies listed in Task 4. Brief memoranda will be prepared with comments on applicant studies. Ascent and its subconsultants, as noted, will review:

- Vesting Tentative Map plan set and plan sets for residences (Ascent)
- Archaeological Evaluation (Natural Investigations)
- Wildlife and Botanical Biological Site Assessments (Ascent)
- Geotechnical Investigation Report (Herzog Geotechnical)
- Hydrology Study and Drainage Calculations (CSW/Stuber-Stroeh Engineering Group)
- Traffic Impact Study (Parisi Transportation Consulting)
- Vegetation Management Plans (Ascent and Wildland Resource Management)
- Tree Protection/Removal Plans (Ascent)
- Visual Resources Study (2M Associates)
- Planning Application Form (Ascent)
- Initial Study (Ascent)
- Fire Protection Plan (Wildland Resource Management)

Assumptions

- Up to 12 total studies, plan sets, or reports will be reviewed, which are expected to be those listed above.
- Herzog Geotechnical will conduct a geologic reconnaissance site visit; no independent subsurface exploration is included.

Deliverables

- Memoranda regarding adequacy of each item (electronic deliverable)

Task 4: Technical Studies

The following technical analyses will be conducted to support EIR preparation under Task 7.

Task 4.1: Cultural Resources

The applicant's recent archaeological evaluation involved a records search and surveys of home sites. Peer review, as described in Task 3, will be conducted for the report to verify accuracy and completeness. Ascent's subconsultant, Natural Investigations, will prepare a supplemental cultural resources report to augment the applicant's report to cover additional impact areas and to update information:

- Natural Investigations will contact the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) to review the Sacred Lands File to determine if any listed Native American sacred lands are located within or adjacent to the project area.
- Natural Investigations will conduct a paleontological records search at the University of California Museum of Paleontology.
- Natural Investigations will conduct an intensive pedestrian survey of up to 80 acres in areas of the project site that have not been surveyed and that may be subject to disturbance, such as unsurveyed portions of building areas, fuel/fire breaks, water tank site, and trails. Archaeologists will conduct the survey utilizing pedestrian transects spaced at maximum intervals of 15 meters, covering all portions of the project area. Areas which are inaccessible due to dense vegetation, unstable geologic conditions, or other obstructions will be surveyed at a reconnaissance level, typically at 20- to 40-meter transects.

Upon completion of the literature review, UCMP and NAHC search, and pedestrian survey, Natural Investigations will prepare a supplemental cultural resources technical report. The report will document the results of the literature review, UCMP and NAHC search, and field survey, as well as provide management recommendations for resources within or near the project area. The report will meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines and will follow Archaeological Resource Management Reports: Recommended Contents and Format Guidelines.

Assumptions

- The cultural resources survey will be negative for prehistoric and historic resources.
- No testing or excavation will be conducted. Nor will any artifacts, samples, or specimens be collected during the survey.

- The records search conducted by the applicant was conducted recently and covered the whole property and a 1-mile buffer; therefore, an updated records search is not necessary.

Deliverables

- Supplemental cultural resources technical report (electronic deliverable)

Task 4.2: Visual Resources Technical Report

2M Associates, as a subconsultant to Ascent Environmental, will conduct field studies and prepare photo simulations, which will be described and analyzed in a visual resources technical report for the project. 2M Associates will document the baseline visual conditions at the site and surround landscapes and identify key public viewpoints in coordination with the Town. Four of the key viewpoints would be selected for photo simulations depicting the project at completion and after 5 years with mitigation. It is presumed at least one of these key viewpoints would be from Marinda Drive. If the modeling of residential structures provided by the applicant is still accurate, it will be used for the simulations. If updated modeling is needed, Ascent will create updated architectural models using SketchUp. The visual resources technical report will be prepared to describe baseline visual conditions, impact evaluation criteria including related Town policies, impacts with simulations of the project, and mitigation actions that would minimize impacts.

Assumptions

- Visual simulations will be created for four public viewpoints.

Deliverables

- Draft and final visual resources technical report (electronic deliverable)

Task 4.3: Biological Resources

Ascent will prepare a biological resources technical memo to augment and update the applicant-prepared materials. Ascent will obtain current information from statewide databases that contain specific information on previously documented special-status species occurrences on or near the project site and Fairfax, including the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) and the California Native Plant Society's (CNPS) Electronic Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants. This database search will look at a larger surrounding area than the previously prepared biological site assessments to ensure consistency with resource agency guidelines.

Based on review of technical information submitted and information obtained from existing sources, a qualified biologist will conduct a targeted reconnaissance survey of the project site to confirm information presented in applicant-prepared reports is accurate and of sufficient detail to prepare a project-level analysis. For instance, the site reconnaissance survey will be used to confirm whether wetlands or other aquatic resources are absent from the project site as indicated in the biological site assessments. While the assessments conclude there is no aquatic habitat, a letter from the Town of Fairfax Open Space Committee suggests there are springs, seeps, or springs; this should be verified during the reconnaissance survey.

The potential presence of any plant, animal, or habitat considered sensitive, threatened, endangered, or otherwise unique by the Town of Fairfax, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), or California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) will be evaluated. It is understood that the applicant's biologists have conducted protocol-level special-status plant and sensitive natural community surveys, and the results of these surveys will be incorporated into the EIR. Particular consideration will be given

in the impact analysis to the effects of tree removal and loss and fragmentation of woodland habitat. Feasible and practical mitigation measures that would avoid and/or minimize potentially significant impacts on biological resources resulting from project implementation, such as construction management practices, avoidance measures, and/or long-term management strategies, will be identified in the EIR. All mitigation measures will be designed in conformance with resource agency requirements and Town of Fairfax General Plan policies and objectives.

Assumptions

- If potential wetlands are located, additional scope and budget would be needed for a wetland delineation.

Deliverables

- Draft and final biological resources technical memorandum (electronic deliverable)

Task 5: Water Supply Assessment

Ascent does not anticipate that a Water Supply Assessment (WSA) will be required under SB 610. Under California Water Code Section 10912, a WSA is required for residential developments with more than 500 dwelling units or a project that would demand the equivalent amount of water or more water than a project with 500 dwelling units. Additionally, where a public water system that serves the development has fewer than 5,000 service connections or for a project that would increase in 10 percent or more of the connections or increase water demand by an equivalent amount, a WSA is required. The project would not meet either threshold; therefore, a WSA is not anticipated. Nonetheless, CEQA requires evaluation of water supply and whether water supply would be sufficient for the project. A WSA would typically provide this evaluation.

Ascent will prepare a memo (1) documenting that a WSA is not required and (2) analyzing water needs of the project. This memo would support the EIR analysis of adequacy of water supply. To draft the memo, Ascent will review relevant water supply plans and analyze water supply adequacy over the long term in a variety of water years.

Assumptions

- A WSA is not required.

Deliverables

- Draft and final water supply memorandum (electronic deliverable)

Task 6: Notice of Preparation (Review Comments)

Ascent will review comments received in response to the Notice of Preparation (NOP). We understand that, due to the project and contract award schedule, the Town intends to prepare and distribute the NOP prior to contract award. Ascent will review comments received and will prepare a memorandum on environmental issues raised in the comments that should be and may not need to be addressed in the EIR for review by the Town. After receiving Town input, these topics will be distributed to EIR section authors to inform the content of the EIR (Task 7).

Assumptions

- The Town will prepare and distribute the NOP.
- The Town will provide Ascent with all comments received in response to the NOP.

Deliverables

- Draft summary review of NOP comment topics (electronic deliverable); revised version will be included in the Administrative Draft EIR

Task 7: Administrative Draft EIR**Task 7.1: Environmental Constraints Map and Analysis**

Ascent will prepare a map that identifies environmental constraints on the project site. Key sensitive environmental resources will be identified, such as areas with sensitive habitat and known cultural resources. The map will be used for agency (e.g., Ross Valley Fire Department) and applicant consideration, so that agencies can understand constraints and so that the applicant may consider avoidance if the project would impact those constraints. The constraints map will include:

- Existing development
- Proposed development
- Unstable slopes
- Sensitive vegetation communities
- Water features, including wetlands
- Special-status species locations
- Protected areas, such as archaeological features
- Ridgelines
- Topographic contours

The constraints map will use publicly available data (e.g., data from MarinMap or the CNDDDB), as well as project-specific data developed in Tasks 3 and 4.

Assumptions

- The constraints map will be produced in a poster size.

Deliverables

- Draft and final constraints map (electronic draft; electronic deliverable and hard copy final [5 copies])

Task 7.2: Administrative Draft EIR

For purposes of this task, it is assumed that a project-level EIR (CEQA Guidelines Section 15161) will be prepared for CEQA compliance. The EIR will adhere to all CEQA requirements and, while it will address all environmental topics outlined in the CEQA Guidelines, it will focus on resource categories for which significant impacts could occur. The EIR will include the following chapters:

Executive Summary

The executive summary will include an overview of the project, project sponsor, alternatives evaluated (shown in a comparison matrix), the environmentally superior alternative, areas of controversy and issues to be resolved, project impacts and mitigation measures (with an indicator of level of significance before and after mitigation), and monitoring proposed.

Introduction

The introduction will describe the purpose of the EIR and will outline the EIR contents. It is also expected to contain a discussion of public involvement in the CEQA process.

Project Description

The project description will be generated as part of Task 2 and will be included in the Administrative Draft EIR once approved by the Director of Planning and Building Services.

Environmental Setting, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures

Each environmental resource section will include a description of the environmental setting within the resource-specific study area (i.e., the baseline environmental conditions), regulatory setting (i.e., federal, state, and local regulations), criteria used to determine the significance of impacts, analysis methodology and assumptions, and detailed discussion of the potential environmental effects of the project. This will include the individual direct and indirect effects from project implementation as well as any impacts that occur due to mitigation implementation. Technical studies (Tasks 3 and 4) will be summarized in the environmental issue area sections of the EIR in a manner that will be understandable to the public and decision-makers.

An initial list of key issues was provided in the RFP. The EIR would evaluate all necessary topics under CEQA and would also take into consideration comments received during scoping. It is anticipated that, at a minimum, the following environmental issues will be evaluated in greater detail in the EIR because they are key issues:

- **Aesthetics:** Relying mainly on visual simulations produced under Task 4, this section will evaluate changes to public views from key vantage points as to whether the project would substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality. The analysis will consider baseline conditions of visual character and quality and will consider whether the new homes in tandem with vegetation modification may result in an adverse change to visual character and quality. The assessment will also consider whether the proposed homes would result in nighttime lighting and daytime glare impacts from new lighting and new reflective surfaces, respectively. 2M Associates will provide input on the impact analysis.
- **Air Quality:** Ascent will conduct the air quality impact analysis pursuant to guidance in the BAAQMD (2017) CEQA Air Quality Guidelines, which were developed with assistance from Ascent's air quality specialists. Ascent will consult with BAAQMD regarding specific concerns. The EIR analysis will take into account existing sensitive receptors (e.g., the neighborhood of single-family homes adjacent to the project site, Manor Elementary School, Ross Valley Charter School) and air quality. Ascent will use the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod) to estimate construction and operational emissions of criteria air pollutants and precursors. It is anticipated that construction emissions will be heavily influenced by construction phasing and duration, grading intensity, and cut and fill transport. Ascent will also discuss fugitive PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} emissions generated by grading and other ground-disturbing activities. For project buildout, in addition to emissions typical

for residential development (i.e., vehicle trips, indirect emissions from electricity and natural gas use, landscape maintenance activities), the analysis will consider emissions from fire fuel reduction treatment activities such as mechanical and manual vegetation thinning and herbicide application. All modeling results will be compared to BAAQMD-established daily mass emission thresholds. If the modeling results indicate that these daily mass emission thresholds could be exceeded, Ascent will develop project-specific mitigation measures to reduce construction-related emissions.

- **Biological Resources:** Using information from Tasks 3 and 4, Ascent biologists will assess potential direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts on biological resources that could result from proposed development of the project. Biologists will base the analysis on firsthand knowledge of local and regional biological resources issues and thorough review and analysis of previously completed documents that address biological resources on the project site and in the surrounding area, including botanical and wildlife site assessments conducted during 2016 and 2017 on behalf of the applicant, the Marin Countywide Plan, and the Town of Fairfax General Plan. Measures would be formulated to avoid any construction impacts, such as disturbance of nesting birds, as well as long-term impacts due to vegetation management.
- **Cultural Resources:** Relying on the technical reports described in Tasks 3 and 4, this section will evaluate possible impacts to cultural resources. Ascent will also assist the Town with AB 52 consultation, including preparing an initial consultation letter for the Town to distribute to tribes. Ascent will also provide the Town with guidance through consultation, if consultation is requested by a tribe. Potential impacts to paleontological resources will also be evaluated in this section. Natural Investigations will provide input on the analysis.
- **Geology and Hydrology:** Relying on peer-reviewed information described in Task 3 as well as information gathered by Ascent, this EIR section will contain an analysis of geology and hydrology impacts. The site is steeply sloped, with most of the site having over 40 percent slope. The Town has noted anecdotal reports of slides, and an active slide was observed during the site visit. Additionally, as previously discussed, site drainage has been identified as a key environmental concern and likely public concern. It is therefore anticipated that a focus of the impact analysis will be exacerbation of existing geologic hazards, such as slope instability, and changes to drainage patterns that may result in off-site impacts. The analysis will also evaluate sedimentation, stormwater treatment, and the potential for on-site containment of stormwater to minimize off-site runoff. Herzog Geotechnical and CSW/Stuber-Stroeh Engineering Group will provide input on the analysis.
- **Greenhouse Gases:** Ascent will estimate construction- and operation-related greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with the project using CalEEMod. The change in vegetative forms of carbon sequestration will be estimated based on default sequestration rates in CalEEMod and any information provided by the Town or the applicant about the number and types of trees that would be removed from the site. The analysis will evaluate the project's consistency with California's GHG reduction goals and related regulations and policies, and with significance thresholds recommended by BAAQMD and the California Air Resources Board (CARB) for determining whether project-generated GHG emissions would be a cumulatively considerable contribution to the global impact of climate change. Ascent will consult with BAAQMD regarding specific concerns. Ascent will also assess the project's consistency with Plan Bay Area 2040, which is the region's Sustainable Communities Strategy, and with the Town's 2014 Climate Action Plan.

- **Land Use:** The land use section will identify planning and zoning designations of the parcels and the jurisdictional boundaries. The analysis will satisfy CEQA Guidelines Section 15125(d), which requires that an EIR discuss inconsistencies between the proposed project and the applicable general plan. The section will contain an assessment of whether the project is consistent with all relevant Town of Fairfax 2010–2030 General Plan policies. The analysis will also contain a review of the Zoning Ordinance, Fairfax Open Space Committee policies, and Fairfax Tree Committee policies.

Ascent will also evaluate impacts related to land use; from a CEQA perspective and consistent with the updated CEQA Guidelines, impacts related to land use are those that occur as a result of a conflict with a land use plan, policy, or regulation. Therefore, the EIR will contain an evaluation of whether the project would result in any conflicts with the Town of Fairfax 2010–2030 General Plan and, then, whether that conflict would result in any physical impacts. The land use section will also contain an evaluation of compatibility of the project with surrounding land uses and the broader community.

- **Public Services:** The EIR will contain an evaluation of impacts related to public services, including fire protection, that may result from provision of service to new residents of the project or increased hazards risks that result from the project. A social and economic discussion will be included, but it will be limited to concluding there would be no significant fiscal impacts related to providing additional public services.
- **Recreation and Open Space:** Even though the project area is privately owned land, the current configuration of the site has paths and roads that are used by the public for walking, running, and other recreation-type activities. The project would involve three new trail easements that would be open to the public. The EIR will contain an analysis of impacts of the project on use of these facilities over baseline and their physical effects.
- **Traffic and Transportation:** The EIR will contain an evaluation of impacts to service levels of roadways and the consistency of the resulting level of service with the minimum levels of services listed in the Town of Fairfax 2010–2030 General Plan. It is anticipated, due to existing performance of affected intersections, that level of service (LOS) impacts would not be significant. Parisi Transportation Consulting will prepare a vehicle miles traveled (VMT) assessment for the project based on the estimated vehicle trips and use of results from the Transportation Authority of Marin's travel demand model. The project's VMT per capita will be compared with townwide and countywide VMT estimates. The traffic section will analyze the potential change in vehicle miles traveled; significance will be determined against an appropriate threshold determined in coordination with the Town. The EIR will also discuss any potential impacts to emergency access for emergency vehicles. Parisi Transportation Consulting will also provide input on the EIR section.
- **Utilities and Service Systems/Water Supply:** Utility providers may include the Marin Municipal Water District, the Ross Valley Sanitary District, and Pacific Gas & Electric. Supported in part by the information developed in Task 5, the EIR will contain an evaluation of impacts to water supply. The assessment will also evaluate whether water infrastructure would be adequate to support firefighting activities; coordination with the Fire Department will inform this analysis. Capacity of other utilities will also be evaluated for their adequacy to serve the project site, including wastewater. The EIR will evaluate physical impacts of providing these services to the proposed homes. In addition to utility capacity, the EIR will evaluate the potential for construction activities to interrupt utility service to other homes.
- **Wildfire:** The project site is listed as having a very high fire risk and is in a high fire severity zone. Constructing in these areas poses the risk of starting a wildfire and, once built out,

homes often can exacerbate existing fire vulnerability. The project will also involve vegetation management activities aimed in part at reducing fire hazards on-site. With Wildland Resource Management's assistance, the EIR will include an analysis of wildfire hazards taking all these elements into account. Additional vegetation treatment measures may be recommended, as may additional fire protection measures. It is anticipated that significant coordination with the Fire Department will be included in this task so that measures will meet department standards.

The EIR will evaluate the full range of CEQA topics, but the remaining topics are anticipated to require a less detailed analysis than those listed above:

- Agriculture and Forestry Resources: There are no FMMP-designated agricultural lands in the project area, and the site is not used for forestry or timberland. Therefore, the EIR analysis will be limited to providing enough documentation to support a "no impact" conclusion.
- Energy: Construction of the project and initial vegetation management activities would require the one-time use of energy and fuels. Following buildout, the homes and ongoing vegetation management activities would be a new ongoing use of energy. In accordance with the recently revised CEQA Guidelines, the energy section of the EIR will contain an evaluation of energy use by the project. The analysis will consider compliance with building codes as well as measures incorporated into the project by the applicant.
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials: It is not anticipated that any unusual hazardous substances would be used for the project; rather, typical substances such as fuels and oils would be used during construction. Typically, adherence to laws and regulations is sufficient for safety. Queries of EnviroStor and GeoTracker returned no existing hazardous materials sites or facilities. Because of Marin County's geology and a nearby outcrop of serpentinite, it is plausible that excavation may encounter naturally occurring asbestos. Therefore, it is anticipated that this section will focus on standard hazardous materials practices to ensure worker safety during project construction.
- Mineral Resources: The project area is not used for mineral extraction and is zoned for residential use. The EIR evaluation will be limited to providing enough documentation to support a "no impact" conclusion.
- Noise: The EIR will include a discussion of noise fundamentals and descriptors and identification of applicable regulations, including the Town's noise control ordinance and General Plan Noise Element. Existing conditions will be described qualitatively based on review of aerial photographs and environmental documentation. Although Section 8.20.070 of the Fairfax Town Code exempts construction noise from the Town's exterior noise limits, given the topography of the project site and proximity to nearby sensitive receptors, Ascent recommends including a quantitative analysis of the project's construction noise impacts to assess their environmental impact. Ascent will use published reference noise levels for typical construction equipment and standard attenuation rates based on calculation methods recommended by Caltrans and the Federal Transit Administration to estimate project-generated construction noise levels at nearby sensitive receptors. A qualitative analysis will be included that discusses potential amplification due to the hilly nature of the surrounding area.
- Population and Housing: The project would induce growth insofar as it would provide housing for additional people in Fairfax. However, it is not anticipated that the project

would result in other indirect growth that would result in a significant environmental impact beyond those that would be addressed by resource topic.

Alternatives

The following alternatives would be evaluated in the EIR, in addition to one additional alternative:

- No Project Alternative
- Mitigated Project Design Alternative
- Reduced Intensity or Reconfigured Development Alternative
- Different Home Site Location Alternative (up to two different sites)

Alternatives will be developed in coordination with Town staff. CSW/Stuber-Stroeh Engineering Group, as a subconsultant to Ascent, can also help define different home site locations. Alternative impacts will be addressed and quantified in a manner like the project and will be compared to project impacts. The alternatives analysis will have a matrix that compares impacts. An environmentally superior alternative will be identified.

Other CEQA Sections

CEQA has very specific requirements for the contents of an EIR. Ascent will provide the Town with a complete EIR, containing all sections required by CEQA, including the following:

- Significant Environmental Effects Which Cannot Be Avoided. This section will clearly and succinctly summarize significant and unavoidable environmental effects of the proposed project as evaluated in the EIR (pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2[b]).
- Growth-Inducing Impacts of the Proposed Project. This section will qualitatively evaluate the project's potential to induce growth and subsequent environmental impacts that would occur (pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6[d]).
- Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes. This section will identify significant and irreversible environmental changes, such as use of nonrenewable resources (pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2[c]).
- Cumulative Impacts. Ascent will evaluate the impacts of cumulative development and activities on all the resource issues evaluated in the EIR. Ascent will use the Marin County Community Development Agency's PROPDEV 45, supplemented by updated information from the Town and Marin County, to develop a list of projects to use in the cumulative impacts analysis (pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15130).
- References and Persons Consulted and Report Preparers. The EIR will identify agencies, organizations, and individuals consulted during EIR preparation. It will also list those who prepared the EIR (pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15129).

Based on comments from Town staff on the Administrative Draft EIR, Ascent and our technical subconsultants will prepare a second Administrative Draft EIR for Town review in track changes (underline/strikeout). Ascent will also prepare a third Administrative Draft EIR that addresses any Town comments on the second Administrative Draft EIR for Town review in track changes.

Assumptions

- The Town's comments on administrative drafts will not necessarily be compiled or reconciled; the budget includes time for Ascent to compile comments and work with the Town to reconcile any conflicting comments.
- The EIR will contain up to 20 color maps.
- The Town will lead AB 52 consultation, as California Native American tribes often prefer government-to-government consultation rather than working directly with a consultant.
- For air quality, Ascent will qualitatively assess exposure of existing sensitive receptors to project-related toxic air contaminants and odors. No dispersion modeling or calculations will be performed as part of this analysis.
- Ascent will provide materials referenced in the EIR to the Town upon the Town's request; this task does not, however, include preparation of a CEQA administrative record.
- The Town will distribute the administrative and screencheck drafts for review to internal reviewers.
- Town comments relevant to the work of other consultants will be submitted to other consultants to the extent deemed appropriate in coordination with the Town. Ascent will inform the Town of comments that may be relevant to other consultants prior to sharing with other consultants.

Deliverables

- Administrative Draft EIR (10 hard copies with appendices on CD or USB, electronic files)
- Two revised Administrative Draft EIRs (10 hard copies with appendices on CD or USB, electronic files)
- One screencheck Draft EIR (2 hard copies with appendices on CD or USB, electronic files)

Task 8: Public Review Draft EIR

Based on comments from Town staff on the third Administrative Draft EIR, Ascent and our technical subconsultants will prepare a public Draft EIR for the Town to release. This scope of work assumes that comments will not require analysis of new issues or substantially revised analysis of issues already addressed in the third Administrative Draft EIR. We will also prepare the Notice of Availability (NOA) for the Town to distribute and post. Ascent will submit the Draft EIR to the State Clearinghouse with a Notice of Completion (NOC) on behalf of the Town.

Assumptions

- The Town will distribute and publish all notices. Ascent will submit the Draft EIR to the State Clearinghouse.

Deliverables

- Draft EIR (50 hard copies, 10 CDs, electronic files)
- State Clearinghouse delivery package (one NOC, 15 USB drives of full document and summary form, 15 hard copies of summary form)
- NOA (electronic deliverable)

- NOC (electronic deliverable)
- Proof of Delivery to State Clearinghouse (stamped NOC)

Task 9: Administrative Draft Final EIR

Ascent and our technical subconsultants will coordinate with Town staff, who will assemble public and agency comments received on the Draft EIR. Responses to these comments will be prepared and presented in a format to accompany the document.

Assumptions

- The responses are assumed to require only clarification and/or explanation of the conclusions in the Draft EIR without the need to revise or add analysis, elaborate substantially, or add new issues or alternatives.
- The Town's comments on administrative drafts will not necessarily be compiled or reconciled; the budget includes time for Ascent to compile comments and work with the Town to reconcile any conflicting comments.
- No additional color maps or graphics will be needed.
- The Town will distribute the administrative and screencheck drafts for review to internal reviewers.
- Town comments relevant to the work of other consultants will be submitted to other consultants to the extent deemed appropriate in coordination with the Town. Ascent will inform the Town of comments that may be relevant to other consultants prior to sharing with other consultants.

Deliverables

- Administrative draft Final EIR (10 hard copies with appendices on CD or USB, electronic files)
- Two revised administrative draft Final EIRs (10 hard copies with appendices on CD or USB, electronic files)
- One screencheck draft Final EIR (2 hard copies with appendices on CD or USB, electronic files)

Task 10: Final EIR for Publication

Upon receiving comments on the administrative Final EIR from the Town, Ascent will generate the Final EIR for Town distribution.

Deliverables

- Final EIR (50 hard copies, 10 CDs, electronic files)

Task 11: Draft CEQA Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations

Ascent will prepare draft CEQA Findings and, if needed, a statement of overriding considerations, for project approval by the Town. The CEQA Findings will consist of the information required by CEQA, including findings of fact regarding each potentially significant environmental impact, mitigation measures, significance after mitigation, disposition of alternatives, and statements of overriding consideration (if necessary). Upon receiving comments on the draft CEQA Findings, Ascent will generate the final version of the CEQA Findings and, if needed, statement of overriding considerations.

Assumptions

- Ascent will respond to one round of comments on the draft CEQA Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations.

Deliverables

- Draft and Final CEQA Findings and statement of overriding considerations (electronic deliverables)

Task 12: Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

Ascent will prepare a draft and final mitigation monitoring and reporting program (MMRP). The MMRP will include all mitigation measures in the EIR and will identify timing, responsible party, and performance standards. Ascent will prepare a draft MMRP for Town review. Ascent will prepare a final MMR that incorporates any Town comments.

Assumptions

- Ascent will respond to one round of comments on the draft MMRP.

Deliverables

- Draft and final MMRP (electronic deliverables)

Task 13: Notice of Determination

Ascent will prepare a Notice of Determination (NOD) that will be submitted to the County Clerk if and when the project is approved. Ascent will prepare a draft NOD for Town review. Ascent will also prepare a final NOD that incorporates any Town comments for submittal to the Marin County Clerk.

Assumptions

- The Town will submit the NOD to the County Clerk and will pay the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and County Clerk filing fees (\$3,271.00 and \$50.00, respectively, at the time of preparation of this proposal).
- The NOD will use Appendix D of the CEQA Guidelines.

Deliverables

- Draft and final NOD (electronic deliverables)

Task 14: Meeting Attendance

Ascent will attend public meetings and hearings, as well as coordination meetings/conference calls with Town staff.

Subtask 14.1: Public Meetings and Hearings

Ascent will attend up to five public meetings and hearings associated with the project: scoping meeting, Draft EIR public comment meeting, Planning Commission meeting, Town Council meeting. The Town will lead and coordinate the meetings, but Ascent will be available to answer questions and assist with hosting meetings. Ascent will also take meeting notes.

Assumptions

- Five public meetings and hearings are included at up to 4 hours per meeting.
- The Ascent project manager and principal-in-charge will attend each of the public meetings.
- The scope does not include court reporter/transcription of meetings.

Deliverables

- Summary meeting notes (electronic files)

Subtask 14.2: Meetings with Town Staff

Ascent will participate in up to four additional meetings with Town staff at the Town's request. The meetings may also involve the project applicant or others. The meetings will be held as part of the CEQA process (for example, to review comments on administrative draft documents or to prepare for a public meeting). Ascent will prepare summary meeting notes. Ascent will also participate in up to 10 conference calls with Town staff to maintain project coordination.

Assumptions

- Four meetings are included at up to 4 hours per meeting.
- Up to 10 conference calls for coordination with Town staff, 1 hour per call
- The Ascent project manager and one other Ascent staff will attend each meeting or call.

Deliverables

- Summary meeting notes (electronic deliverable)