



June 1, 2018

Mayor Carbone and Members of the Sand City Council
City of Sand City
1 Pendergrass Way
Sand City, CA 93955

Subject: Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for South of Tioga

Dear Mayor Carbone and Members of the Sand City Council:

After careful review of the South of Tioga project, LandWatch urges you to:

1. Approve the condominium and multifamily rental housing component of the project under the conditions that it contain at least 20% permanently affordable housing units and that it be built before any other component of the project.
2. Reject the two hotels and restaurant.

As we previously noted, Sand City General Plan Policy 4.1.1 requires that the City provide affordable housing at this location. Failure to do so would violate the City's General Plan and open the project to legal challenge.

LandWatch also recommends that you deny approval of the two proposed hotels and restaurant. They will generate significant environmental and transportation impacts and a less environmentally damaging alternative exists, that is, the no-hotel alternative.

Section 21002 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) states:

The Legislature finds and declares that it is the policy of the state that public agencies should not approve projects as proposed if there are feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures available which would substantially lessen the significant environmental effects of such projects, and that the procedures required by this division are intended to assist public agencies in systematically identifying both the significant effects of proposed projects and the feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures which will avoid or substantially lessen such significant effects. The Legislature further finds and declares that in the event specific economic, social, or other conditions make infeasible such project alternatives or such mitigation measures, individual projects may be approved in spite of one or more significant effects thereof.

According to the DEIR, significant and unavoidable traffic impacts were identified at the Fremont Boulevard, Del Monte Boulevard, and Military Avenue intersections (DEIR p. 22-3). To reduce

impacts to a less-than-significant level, as required by CEQA, the project would need to be modified to reduce daily trips 63% (1,848 trips). The trip assumptions in the DEIR for residential uses do not account for their proximity to transit and other trip reduction alternatives – one of the many benefits cited in the DEIR for the project. The studies cited below show an average of a 44% to over a 50% trip reduction for Transit Oriented Development (TOD) projects. Assuming a 44% reduction in residential trips and no hotels/restaurant, total trips would be reduced to 1,517. Assuming a more conservative number of 30% for residential total trips would be reduced to 1,896.

Trips for Residential, hotel and restaurants for Tioga South

	Daily Trips (1)	TOD Trip Rates using -44% reduction (2)	TOD Trip Rates using -30% reduction
Low-Rise Apartments - 320	2,128.00	1,191.68	1,489.6
Condos-100	581.00	325.36	406.7
Hotel Rooms – 135 & 81 rooms	1,204.00 722.52		
Quality Restaurant- 4000 sq. ft.	360.00		
Total	4,996.00	1517.04	1,896.3

(1) DEIR, Exhibit 6A

(2) [Trip and parking generation at transit-oriented developments: Five US case studies; Vehicle Trip Reduction Impacts of Transit-Oriented Housing](#)

Eliminating the two hotels and restaurant would substantially lessen the significant environmental impacts of the projects, including the transportation projects and the impacts to the second largest population of a federally endangered plant – the Monterey Gilia or “Sand Gilia”, *Gilia tenuiflora* ssp. *arenaria*, as documented by Professor Fred Watson.

LandWatch further notes that Sand City has already approved two major hotels, Monterey Bay Shores – Ecoresorts (184 hotel rooms; 92 hotel condos; 92 residential condos) and The Collection (139 hotel room; 203 room resort). There is no economic justification for adding an additional 216 hotel rooms, particularly in the context of the existing ~10,000 hotel and inn rooms in Monterey County.

In the absence of compelling economic data to justify the hotels, Sand City cannot meet CEQA’s legal requirements. Should the developer and Sand City somehow generate the data to demonstrate an overriding economic need for the hotels, LandWatch urges the City to require that the project be conditioned to require that the 420 multifamily housing units, including 20% affordable units, be constructed prior to the hotels and restaurant.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the project.

Sincerely,



Michael D. DeLapa
Executive Director