



Agenda Item

Planning Commission

Item #: 5.1.

4/20/2026

File #: 26-0214

TO: Chair and Members of the Planning Commission

THRU: Hayden Beckman, Planning Manager

FROM: Hayden Beckman, Planning Manager

1. SUBJECT

Public Hearing to consider a request to establish a Planned Unit Development (PUD) and subdivide a 2.02-acre parcel into 11 single-family homes at 647 N. Rancho Santiago Boulevard and finding of CEQA Exemption (Zone Change No. 1318, Tentative Tract Map No. 0052, Conditional Use Permit No. 3203, Design Review No. 5119, and Major Site Plan Review No. 1137).

2. SUMMARY

The proposed project would establish a Planned Unit Development (PUD) and subdivide a 2.02-acre parcel into 14 lots: 11 numbered lots, each with a separate single-family home, and three lettered lots for front yard setback areas, a private road, and common open space area. The project will result in the construction of 11 new two-story single-family homes and shared common space. As part of this proposal, a zone change is requested from the existing zoning designation of Single Family Residential 10,000 sq. ft. (R1-10) to Single Family Residential 10,000 sq. ft. (R1-10 [PUD 3203]).

3. RECOMMENDED ACTION

1. Conduct and close the Public Hearing.

2. Adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 11-26 entitled a Resolution of the Planning Commission of the City of Orange recommending City Council approval of Zone Change No. 1318, Tentative Tract Map No. 0052, Conditional Use Permit No. 3203, Design Review No. 5119, and Major Site Plan Review No. 1137, rezoning the property located at 647 N. Rancho Santiago Boulevard to Single Family Residential 10,000 square feet - PUD No. 3203 (R1-10 [PUD 3203]) to establish an 11-unit planned unit development.

3. Find the request categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in accordance with Section 15183 of the State CEQA Guidelines (Projects consistent with a Community Plan, General Plan, or Zoning).

4. PROJECT BACKGROUND

Property Information

Applicant	George Keith Mitchell, III, Rancho Ridge, LLC
Property Owner	George Keith Mitchell, III, Rancho Ridge, LLC
Property Location	647 N. Rancho Santiago Boulevard
Existing General Plan Land Use Element Designation	Low Density Residential (LDR)
Existing Zoning Classification	Single-Family Residential-10 (R1-10)
Old Towne	No
Specific Plan/PC	N/A
Site Size	1.91 Acres
Circulation	The existing site includes an existing paved driveway on Rancho Santiago Blvd.
Existing Conditions	The site is currently vacant and undeveloped with a driveway.
Surrounding Land Uses and Zoning	North: Single-Family Residential-10 (R1-10); Presbyterian Church
	South: Single-Family Residential-10 (R1-10); residence
	East: Single-Family Residential-6 (R1-6); Single family residences
	West: Single-Family Residential-7 (R1-7) (Across Rancho Santiago Blvd.) Single family residences
Previous Applications/Entitlements	N/A

5. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project includes the following components:

Subdivision:

The project proposes subdividing the existing site into 14 new lots; 11 numbered lots for new residences and three letter lots for access, open space, and landscaping. The numbered lots will have an average lot area of 4,489 square feet and will be accessible by a private road that connects to Rancho Santiago Boulevard. The proposed lettered lots will be composed of the front yard setback areas, the private road, and common open space area. Gated access is not proposed.

Residential Homes and Private Road:

Each numbered lot will have a new 2-story single-family home with an attached 2-car garage and a private backyard. The buildings each maintain a 10-foot setback from the private road and 5-foot side yard setbacks. The homes will have the option of three conceptual floor plans with three bedrooms each and the ability to convert the den into a fourth bedroom. In addition to the required two parking spaces per unit, 17 guest spaces are provided through one space on the driveway for each property and 6 spots in the common open space area in the rear of the lot.

Landscaping and Common Space Area

The project also offers a shared common space with benches, a covered structure, and a grass field at the rear of the property. The common space will have pedestrian access through a walkway along the private road. The private road and common space comply with applicable development requirements, and the overall project site will be adequately maintained with shrubs and trees to enhance the visual impact of their intended use.

6. PROJECT ANALYSIS

Staff believe that the proposed infill residential development will be compatible with the scale, massing, orientation, and articulation of the surrounding neighborhood. The subdivision layout including proposed drive aisle, driveway, and garage orientations are similar to surrounding residential areas. Each unit meets required off-street parking requirements, maintains 5-foot side yard setbacks for building separation, and the project's common open space area is located in the rear of the property to enhance privacy from the street.

Planned Unit Development (PUD)

The current parcel is an irregular lot measuring approximately 133 feet of street frontage along N Rancho Santiago and 626 feet in depth, currently designated R1-10. Under current zoning requirements, existing conditions would allow two single family units, as the street frontage would be the limiting factor. As such, the applicant proposes establishing a PUD designation, which would allow for the subdivision and construction of 11 units, enabling a creative way to maximize the usage of the land. The proposal of 11 units is also consistent with the density allowed under the General Plan designation of Low Density Residential. The new private road would allow each property to have street frontage and unobstructed access.

Development Standards

The development standards for a PUD remain consistent with the development standards of the R1-10 zoning code standards and are applied to the overall site and not each individual subdivision. A PUD also implements additional development standards such as setbacks to interior streets, building separation, landscaping, open space amenities, pedestrian paths, and private streets. Staff have reviewed and worked with the applicant to reach code compliance with the PUD development standards applicable to the proposed project.

Project Design

The project design has been reviewed under the findings required by the Administrative Design Review findings set forth in the Municipal code and the Infill Design Guidelines. The surrounding neighborhood does not have any specific architectural style nor specific design guidelines. The proposed units will have a Mediterranean architectural style that includes stucco walls, tile roofs, wrought iron, and an asymmetrical layout. Three color plans are proposed, and all units will face the private drive. The project design upholds community aesthetics through the use of a consistent architectural design theme.

7. AUTHORIZING GUIDELINES

Orange Municipal Code (OMC) Table 17.08.020 and Sections 17.10.030.D and 17.16.020 authorize the Planning Commission to review and recommend action to the City Council on a request for a Planned Unit Development (PUD) to allow alternative to standard residential development wherein

the existing general plan densities are preserved. OMC Section 17.08.020 also notes that when more than one type of application is filed for a single project, the application requiring the highest level of approval shall dictate the review process for the entire group of applications. Therefore, the Planning Commission is authorized to recommend action on the associated applications.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The proposed project is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per State CEQA Guidelines Section 15183 (Projects Consistent with a Community Plan, General Plan, or Zoning) because the project is consistent with the existing General Plan density and zoning. An initial study was provided in justification to verify consistency with the existing certified General Plan EIR (Attachment 4). There is no environmental public review or notice required for this exemption.

9. ADVISORY BOARD ACTION

Staff Review Committee:

On September 4, 2024, and December 4, 2024, the City's interdepartmental Staff Review Committee (SRC) reviewed the proposed plans and supplemental documents. On March 3, 2025, the SRC found the plans code compliant and recommended approval of the project.

Design Review Committee:

On April 16, 2025, a public meeting was held for the Design Review Committee (DRC) to review the plans. The DRC recommended approval of the project to the Planning Commission with additional conditions regarding the proposed landscaping on the site.

10. ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 Planning Commission Resolution No. PC 11-26
- Attachment 2 Project Plans (Architectural, Landscaping, Preliminary Civil, and Renderings)
- Attachment 3 Vicinity Map
- Attachment 4 California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Initial Study
- Attachment 5 Existing and Proposed Zoning Map