



NOTICE OF PREPARATION

June 27, 2025

To: Agencies, Organizations, and Interested Parties

Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Belcaro at Sand Canyon Project (Master Case 24-093)

Lead Agency:

Agency Name: City of Santa Clarita
Street Address: 23920 Valencia Boulevard,
Suite 302

City/State/Zip: Santa Clarita, CA 91355
Contact: Andy Olson, AICP
Associate Planner

Consulting Firm:

Firm Name: SWCA Environmental Consultants
Street Address: 320 N Halstead Street,
Suite 120

City/State/Zip: Pasadena, CA 91107
Contact: Jessica Cleavenger
Project Manager

The City of Santa Clarita (City) is notifying agencies, organizations, and interested parties of the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Belcaro at Sand Canyon Project (“project”). The EIR will be prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as set forth in the Public Resources Code and the CEQA Guidelines. Under CEQA, the purpose of the EIR is to identify potentially significant effects of a project on the environment, alternatives to the proposed project, and how identified significant environmental effects can be mitigated or avoided (Public Resources Code Section 21002.1(a)).

A description of the project and a listing of the environmental topics that will be analyzed in the EIR is provided in this Notice of Preparation (NOP). The City seeks input regarding the scope and content of the EIR.

SCOPING MEETING: Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21083.9 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15083, a Scoping Meeting will be held for the general public and public agencies. The purpose of the Scoping Meeting is for interested parties to learn about the proposed project, review the anticipated scope of the EIR, and assist the City in identifying the range of actions, alternatives, mitigation measures, and potentially significant effects to be analyzed in the EIR. Below, the date, time, and location of the Scoping Meeting are provided.

Scoping Meeting Date

July 7, 2025

Scoping Meeting Time

6:00 P.M.

Scoping Meeting Location

Oak Room, The Centre
20880 Centre Pointe Pkwy,
Santa Clarita, CA 91350

PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT PERIOD: A 30-day public review period for submitting comments on the NOP is:

Starting Date: June 27, 2025

Ending Date: July 28, 2025

All comments need to be mailed or submitted no later than 5:30 p.m. on July 28, 2025. Please send your response, including your name, address, and concerns, to:

Andy Olson, Associate Planner
City of Santa Clarita
Community Development Department, Planning Division
23920 Valencia Boulevard, Suite 302
Santa Clarita, CA 91355
Or via email to: aolson@santaclarita.gov

A copy of the NOP is also available at the following locations:

- Canyon Country Branch of Santa Clarita Public Library, 18601 Soledad Canyon Road, Santa Clarita, California 91351
- City of Santa Clarita Clerk's Office, 23920 Valencia Boulevard, Suite 120, Santa Clarita, California 91355
- The City's website: <https://santaclarita.gov/planning/environmental-impact-reports-under-review/>

PROJECT TITLE: Belcaro at Sand Canyon Project (Master Case 24-093)

PROJECT APPLICANT: NUWI-Sand Canyon, LLC, 2001 Wilshire Blvd, Suite 401, Santa Monica, CA 90403

PROJECT LOCATION: The parcels proposed for development, which are generally described as the project site (Assessor Parcel Numbers [APNs] 2840-001-118, 2840-015-025, -031, -032, -033, -034, -035, -045, and -047) consist of approximately 193.8 acres of land in the City of Santa Clarita in the easternmost portion of the City. The project site is separated into two parts by the Union Pacific Railroad tracks, which run east-west through the project site.

The project site is located approximately 26 miles north of downtown Los Angeles and is locally accessible via Lost Canyon Road and Oak Spring Canyon Road. Regionally, the project site is accessible from State Route 14 (SR-14) via Sand Canyon Road, west of the project site. The project site is found on the Mint Canyon US Geologic Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute quadrangle, Township 4N, Range 15W, Sections 13, 14, 23, and 24.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The Applicant proposes a development with 341 detached single-family senior housing units, private recreational amenities, private and public streets, and private and public open space. The proposed development would include a 20 percent density bonus under California law. The project would include the following within the parcels proposed for development:

- 341 lots with age-restricted, detached single-family homes on approximately 58.7 acres
- One (1) recreational lot containing the 3.1-acre recreation center
- 23 private street lots on approximately 22.4 acres
- 55 open space lots on approximately 106.6 acres
- Public streets on approximately 3.0 acres

Table 1, provided below, provides a breakdown of the uses proposed with the development of the project.

TABLE 1
SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSED BELCARO AT SAND CANYON PROJECT

Proposed Development	Land Use and Lots	Key Attributes		Acres
Single-family (detached) age-restricted units	Residential Lots 1-341	Maximum building height	27’ 10”	58.7
		Parking	682 fully enclosed garage parking spaces 537 unenclosed street parking spaces	
Recreation area and clubhouse	Recreational Lot 342	Maximum building height	27’ 2”	3.1
		Parking	10 spaces	
Private streets and access				22.4
Open space				106.6
Public streets (on-site portion of Lost Canyon Road extension)				3.0
PROJECT PARCELS TOTAL				193.8
The project boundary and impact area that will be analyzed in the EIR will include the parcels proposed for development, which are generally described as the project site (193.8 acres), in addition to off-site improvements. Examples of off-site improvements include the proposed railroad undercrossing, the “J” Street connection, improvements to Lost Canyon and Sand Canyon Roads, and off-site trails.				

Access to the project site would be via Lost Canyon Road, connecting Sand Canyon Road to the proposed "A" Street on-site. The existing Lost Canyon Road would be improved and extended to connect to the development with a proposed railroad undercrossing. The project would also improve the existing intersection of Sand Canyon Road and Lost Canyon Road with a roundabout. Additional access would be provided via "J" Street, which is proposed to the south of the project parcels and would connect the development to Robinson Ranch Road; the extension of "J" Street to the south of the project parcels will also require consideration in the CEQA evaluation and is in addition to the development area covered by the project parcels.

The project would also include the construction of an approximately 0.6-mile off-site trail along the northern side of Lost Canyon Road. This new trail would connect to the project's proposed on-site trail to Sand Canyon Road. An additional 0.3-mile trail would also be constructed on the west side of the proposed "J" Street, which would connect the project's proposed trail network to the off-site trails within Robinson Ranch to the southern portion of the project site. Similar to the extension of "J" Street, these features are in addition to the 193.8-acre parcels. Figure 1 shows the project location and the project boundaries that will be examined in the EIR, including several of the features that are beyond the boundaries of the 193.8-acre parcels (e.g., "J" Street). The project boundaries shown in Figures 1 and 2 total approximately 208 acres. Figure 2 shows the conceptual development plan for the project parcels. Both of these figures are located at the end of this NOP.

The project would require approximately 1,100,000 cubic yards of grading, including 800,000 cubic yards of cut and 300,000 cubic yards of fill. Grading is currently anticipated to be balanced on-site, including over-excavation and shrinkage, although minor export and import may be required to provide for proper engineering.

The project is anticipated to be constructed over a five-year period. The projected start date for construction and anticipated timeframe will be confirmed, disclosed, and analyzed in the EIR.

EXISTING CONDITIONS: The project site is located near existing developed and undeveloped residential land. The project site varies in elevation and sits at an average elevation of 1,640 feet above mean sea level. A City-designated significant ridgeline intersects the project's southeasternmost boundary. The site is located within the City's Significant Ecological Area (SEA) Overlay Zone and includes biological resources, including trees, that are protected under the City's Municipal Code Section 17.38.080 (SEA – Significant Ecological Area Overlay Zone). Additionally, the Santa Clara River runs along the northern edge of the project site, and Oak Spring Canyon Creek runs in a northwest direction through portions of the project site. Ruderal vegetation, grass, brush, and trees (including oak trees) cover much of the project site. Unpaved portions of Oak Spring Canyon Road parallel the project's southern boundary.

As identified in the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment¹ prepared for the project site, according to historical aerial photographs and topographic maps, an east-west trending old railroad grade ran through the center of the southern portion of the project site until circa 1950, when a new, currently operating railroad track was constructed that separates the northern and southern portions of the project site.

The project site is located at the mouth of Oak Spring Canyon Creek, which drains a relatively large area of the western end of the San Gabriel Mountains. The geologic units anticipated at the site, from youngest to oldest, include artificial fill, flood plain deposits, recent alluvium, terrace deposits (elevated flood plain deposits), and bedrock assigned to the Mint Canyon Formation. According to the Soil Management Plan² prepared for the project, groundwater was encountered on-site at depths ranging from 25- to 38-feet below the existing grades. Additionally, surface water was observed in the Oak Spring stream channel in the southwestern corner of the project site at Oak Spring Canyon Road. The water is seasonal and intermittent, but due to the relatively flat nature of the site, overland flow from Oak Spring Canyon Creek could occur on the western third of the project site during periods of heavy rainfall. Federal Emergency Management Area Flood Zones are located on the northern, southwestern, and eastern portions of the project site.

The project site is located within the eastern portion of the Santa Clara sub-basin, Hydrologic Unit Code 18070102. The Santa Clara subbasin includes approximately 1,626 square miles and spans across northeastern Los Angeles County and much of northern Ventura County. The primary geographic and surface hydrologic feature of the watershed is the Santa Clara River, which flows west for approximately 50 miles until it reaches the Pacific Ocean near the city of Ventura. As an interrupted perennial watercourse, the Santa Clara River exhibits both intermittent and perennial flows along various reaches. The Santa Clara River borders the northernmost portion of the project site. Oak Spring Canyon Creek, a drainage located in the southern and western extent of the review area, is a direct tributary to the Santa Clara River. Oak Spring Canyon Creek traverses the southwestern portion of the project site in a generally northwesterly direction, entering the project site from the off-site golf course located to the south, through culverts under Oak Spring Canyon Road and exiting directly west of the project site via an open, natural channel that drains directly into the Santa Clara River.

¹ Stantec. 2025. *APNs 2840-001-118, 2840-015-025, -031, -032, -033, -034, -035, -045, and -047, Phase I Environmental Site Assessment*. Prepared for NUWI – Sand Canyon LLC, Santa Monica, California. March

² Stantec. 2025. *APNs 2840-001-118, 2840-015-025, -031, -032, -033, -034, -035, -045, and -047, Soil Management Plan*. Prepared for NUWI Prepared for NUWI – Sand Canyon LLC, Santa Monica, California. April.

The project site is located within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. The project site is not located on a list of hazardous waste sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 (i.e., the Cortese List). However, further analysis of hazardous materials will occur to support the EIR.

PROJECT APPROVALS: The proposed project requires the following permits and discretionary approvals by the City of Santa Clarita:

- **Tentative Map 24-001:** A Tentative Map is required to subdivide the existing parcels into the 420 proposed lots.
- **Oak Tree Permit 24-001:** An Oak Tree Permit (Class IV) is required to remove four or more oak trees.
- **Hillside Development Review 24-002:** A Hillside Development Review is required for development on a property with an average cross slope above 15 percent.
- **Minor Use Permit 24-012:** A Minor Use Permit is required for dirt hauling between 10,000 and 100,000 cubic yards.
- **Architectural Design Review 24-011:** An Architectural Design Review is required for all new development projects.
- **Conditional Use Permit 24-008:** A Conditional Use Permit is required for gating more than five single-family residences.
- **Development Review 24-006:** A Development Review is required for all new development projects.
- **Environmental Impact Report 24-001:** As noted in this NOP, an EIR is required under CEQA to analyze project impacts that have the potential for significant environmental impacts.

PROBABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF THE PROJECT: Based on a preliminary review of the proposed project and consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15060(d) (14 Cal. Code of Regs. § 15000, *et seq.*), the City has determined that a comprehensive EIR will be prepared for the project. Therefore, all the topics identified in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines (the initial study checklist) will undergo study in the EIR. These topics are listed below.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| • Aesthetics | • Land Use and Planning |
| • Agricultural and Forestry Resources | • Mineral Resources |
| • Air Quality | • Noise |
| • Biological Resources | • Population and Housing |
| • Cultural Resources | • Public Services |
| • Energy | • Recreation |
| • Geology and Soils | • Transportation |
| • Greenhouse Gas Emissions | • Tribal Cultural Resources |
| • Hazards and Hazardous Materials | • Utilities and Service Systems |
| • Hydrology and Water Quality | • Wildfire |

The EIR will also include analysis of Growth-Inducing Effects, Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes, and Alternatives to the proposed project.

EIR PROCESS: The Draft EIR will consider input received at the Scoping Meeting and comments submitted on the NOP. The Draft EIR is intended to be used by the City of Santa Clarita, the lead agency, to analyze and disclose the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project and identify mitigation measures and alternatives that would reduce or avoid significant impacts. The Draft EIR will be available to public agencies and members of the public for review and comment during a public review period. Comments received on the Draft EIR will be reviewed and addressed within the Final EIR, which will consist of the Draft EIR, responses to comments, and all additional technical reports or follow-up documentation that are needed. The City's Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on the Final EIR and make its own determination on certification of the Final EIR for the proposed project and associated entitlements.

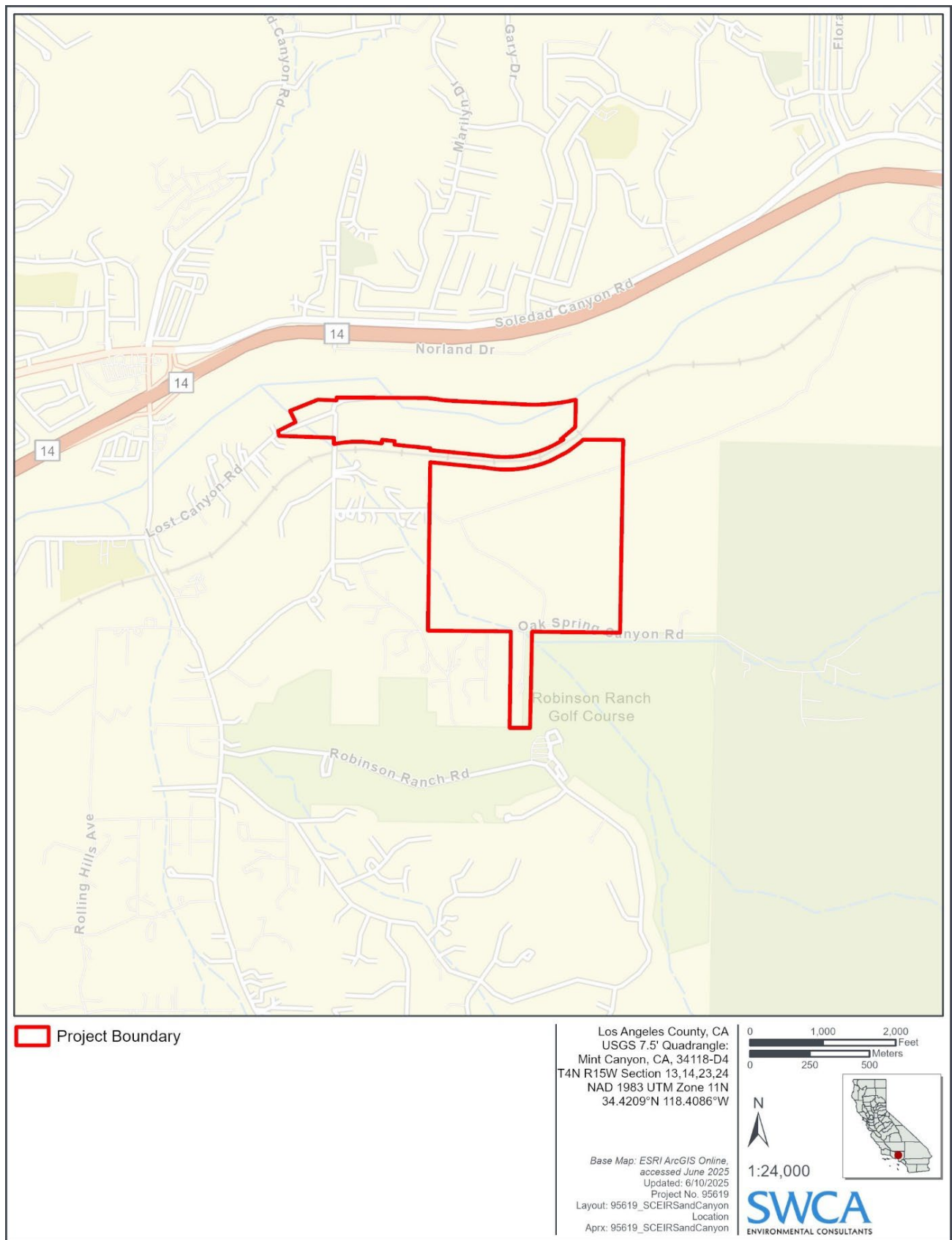


Figure 1. Project Location and Boundaries.

