

Dear Yucaipa Neighbor,

We need your help in preserving the rural zoning of the North Bench. Once again, the 52-acre **Serrano Estates development between Ivy Avenue and Yucaipa Ridge Road** is subject of a hearing before the **Planning Commission on Wednesday, March 15 at 6:30 pm**. The project ignores the requirements for the current zoning of Rural Living, one dwelling unit per one-acre (RL-1) and the custom home overlay for this area, with lot sizes just over 12,000 square feet (~quarter acre). If approved, this will open the door to higher density tract housing on the North Bench and the rural culture of the beautiful North Bench will be gone forever.

Please attend the Planning Commission meeting, Wednesday, March 15, at 6:30 pm and help preserve the rural culture, as designated in Yucaipa's certified General Plan. We need neighborhood speakers but supportive presence is very helpful.

TALKING POINTS: Here are a few talking points that may be helpful (always be respectful and courteous in your expressions). You may also visit, <https://friendsofthenorthbench.org/>. **Items 1-3 should be mentioned by everyone.**

1. Yucaipa's General Plan, which guides development of the City, is certified by the state. We are less than 7 years into the 20-year development vision of the General Plan.
2. The development does not comply with **General Plan zoning of RL-1 (Rural Living-one acre minimum)**. The current development plan calls for 51 homes on 24 acres. Not all 52 acres is developable due to hillside construction constraints, earthquake fault zones, and drainages. The developer believes that they can still build 51 homes on the 52 acres because over the entire 52 acres the average is about one dwelling per *gross* acre. The truth is,
 - a. Yucaipa City Ordinance 84.0320 defines rural living and clarifies the designation of the Rural Living (RL) district. The city ordinance specifically states a **maximum housing density of one dwelling unit per acre**.
 - b. The General Plan also states, "It should be noted that not all parcels can accommodate the maximum density or intensity allowed due to environmental constraints, development standards, and project design aspects."
3. 41 lots are restricted for **Senior housing**: The parcel is located in the **highest wildfire zone** (which has been proven by recent wildfires in the area)—this is not the place for seniors especially when escape from this area is limited. Most homeowners in this area have had their fire insurance canceled since the El Dorado Fire. Also, there are no senior amenities in the rural North Bench (busing, etc.)
4. **Other development considerations for homes on minimum one acre lots:**
 - a. **Slopes** on the properties are unconventionally steep (2:1) and high (up to 50+ feet). These are nearly impossible to maintain, especially for seniors.
 - b. Development needs to include **trail access** for the rural equestrian community from Yucaipa Ridge Road to the horse trails.
 - c. Development should include dark sky lighting to minimize **light pollution**.
 - d. Development should include **Energy Independence** to reduce potential for additional rolling backouts.
 - e. **Water conservation** issues related to planned grape vineyards—water pressure is a current problem and concern.
 - f. **Flood:** Stormwater control elements need to consider a denuded (stripped of vegetation) drainage basin caused by wildfires. Surface water flows are much higher than previously experienced.
 - g. Home density should allow for off sets for large animal raising and those offsets designated by City ordinance for Rural Living .
 - h. Consistent with the Custom Home Overlay designation, homes should be custom, single story and use the natural slopes of the land similar to the homes along Yucaipa Ridge and Ivy Avenue.