



# CITY OF OCEANSIDE

## FIRE DEPARTMENT

**DAVID PARSONS**  
FIRE CHIEF

June 20, 2023

Johanna Crooker, Director of Entitlements  
Meritage Homes  
5 Peters Canyon Rd., Suite 310, Irvine, CA 92606

Delivered via Email

Reference: GPA22-00001 Pacifica Housing

Ms. Crooker,

The following is provided in response to conversations over the past couple of months solely relating to evacuation concerns involving your proposed project.

- Does the fire department have any concerns regarding the evacuation of the project in the event that the neighborhood needs to be evacuated due to a nearby fire?

The Oceanside Fire Department (OFD) has no specific concerns relating your project in the event of an evacuation due to a nearby wildfire. In the event of a wildfire or other emergency resulting in the need for evacuation of the area encompassing your project the City will notify residents and visitors via a wide variety of sources, ranging from apps for cell tower alerting (e.g. all cell phones in a set distance from the tower) to reverse 911 systems for landline phones. Our initial assessment does not see any issues raised by your project that are different than any affecting the surrounding area. Additionally, there are mitigating factors that reduce the risk of wildfire impacts in the project area such as wide firebreaks on Camp Pendleton's perimeter to vegetation management in the riparian area along Pilgrim Creek. The last major wildfires to directly impact the surrounding area included the Julliett Fire in October 2008 and the Douglas Fire in June 2017. In the case of the Julliett Fire (which occurred in a Santa Ana wind event), the fire was successfully stopped on Camp Pendleton by the firebreaks before it spread into the adjacent neighborhoods. In the case of the Douglas Fire, the wind blew the fire along the edge of the Pilgrim Creek riparian area, but it did not travel very far east and instead traveled towards Camp Pendleton.

- Are there any emergency response or evacuation plans/procedures/policies in place for such an event?

The Lilac Fire of 2017 is often cited as an example of a problematic evacuation for the area encompassing the proposed project. The OFD recognizes there were issues involved with

the Lilac evacuation, including the call to evacuate a far larger area than was needed. Additionally, conflicting information was provided by Cal Fire and the City of Oceanside as to the areas to evacuate. However, since that incident steps have been taken by many parties, including the City of Oceanside, to reduce or eliminate these issues in subsequent incidents. For example, the previous evacuation process involved the use of major thoroughfares and large geographic areas to designate evacuation zones. Subsequent to the Lilac Fire, all law and fire agencies in the County of San Diego switched evacuations to a new and more focused process. This process involves detailed maps carried by all emergency response agencies so that evacuation zones can be more precisely identified and communicated. This would have significantly reduced the number of residents evacuated, ensuring a more orderly and timely movement of vehicles out of the area. Notifications have also been improved and a new evacuation mapping and notification system (Zonehaven) is currently being rolled out Countywide to aid dispatch centers in managing the process.

Altogether, the City of Oceanside is prepared to evacuate the appropriate areas of the City, including your project, in the event any type of emergency necessitates such action. However, we do not feel that your specific project will impact those decisions or the evacuation process based on our current evaluation of the scope of work.

As identified in the initial paragraph, this letter is providing information solely relating to evacuation issues concerning your specific project. It does not address any zoning, building code, fire code or service delivery issues relating to this or any other project within the City. Should you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Randy Hill, Assistant Fire Marshal for the Oceanside Fire Department at [RHill@oceansideca.org](mailto:RHill@oceansideca.org) or me at [PLawrence@Oceansideca.org](mailto:PLawrence@Oceansideca.org).

Respectfully,



Peter H. Lawrence  
Deputy Fire Chief