



Yana Garcia
Secretary for
Environmental Protection



Department of Toxic Substances Control

Katherine M. Butler, MPH, Director
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Sacramento, California 95826-3200
dtsc.ca.gov



Gavin Newsom
Governor

SENT VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

January 13, 2026

Taven Kinison Brown
Community Development Director
City of Gonzales
147 Fourth Street
P.O. Box 647
Gonzales, CA 93926
TKinisonBrown@ci.gonzales.ca.us

RE: NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
FOR THE PUENTE DEL MONTE SPECIFIC PLAN DATED JANUARY 9, 2026, STATE
CLEARINGHOUSE NUMBER [2020039055](#)

Dear Taven Kinison Brown,

The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) reviewed the Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Puente Del Monte Specific Plan (Project). The applicant submitted an application to the City of Gonzales requesting specific plan adoption (general plan amendment), annexation, and pre-zoning approvals for the approximately 501-acre project site. The proposed specific plan would allow for the following development: - 2,492 homes (ranging from low density to high density housing products) on 311.4 acres, approximately 6.6 acres for mixed-uses; 8.5 acres for Light industrial (business park) development, 61.6 acres of Open Space /agricultural buffers and 54.6 acres of parks and trails. The Plan also includes Civic Space - 21.2 acres for public facilities (two elementary schools); and 43.8 acres of circulation improvements. The existing on-site structures would be demolished. The specific plan is proposed to be developed in seven phases over a currently

undetermined period of time. DTSC recommends and requests consideration of the following comments:

1. When agricultural crops and/or land uses are proposed or rezoned for residential use, several contaminants of concern (COCs) can be present. The Lead Agency shall identify the amounts of Pesticides and Organochlorine Pesticides (OCPs) historically used on the property. If present, OCPs requiring further analysis are dichloro-diphenyl-trichloroethane, toxaphene, and dieldrin. Additionally, any level of arsenic present would require further analysis and sampling and must meet approved local area baselines or thresholds. If they do not, remedial action must take place to mitigate them below those thresholds. Additional COCs may be found in mixing/loading/storage areas, drainage ditches, farmhouses, or any other outbuildings and should be sampled and analyzed. If smudge pots had been routinely utilized, additional sampling for Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons and/or Total Petroleum Hydrocarbons may be required. These recommendations should be adhered to and become part of the environmental document. Please refer to the [DTSC's Human and Ecological Risk Office \(HERO\) webpage](#) for the most recent guidance and screening levels.
2. If buildings or other structures are to be demolished on any Project sites included in the proposed Project, surveys should be conducted for the presence of lead-based paints or products, mercury, asbestos containing materials, and polychlorinated biphenyl caulk. Removal, demolition, and disposal of any of the above-mentioned chemicals should be conducted in compliance with California environmental regulations and policies. In addition, sampling near current and/or former buildings should be conducted in accordance with [DTSC's Preliminary Endangerment Assessment \(PEA\) Guidance Manual](#)
3. DTSC recommends all imported soil/fill material be tested to ensure all COCs meet screening levels as outlined in [DTSC's PEA Guidance Manual](#). Furthermore, DTSC advises referencing the [DTSC Information Advisory Clean Imported Fill Material Fact Sheet](#) if importing fill is necessary. To minimize the

possibility of introducing contaminated soil/fill material there should be documentation of the origins of the soil/fill material and, if applicable, sampling be conducted to ensure that the imported soil/fill material are suitable for the intended land use. The soil sampling should include analysis based on the source of the soil/fill and knowledge of prior land use.

4. The City of Gonzales should consider soil testing as mentioned in comment #1. If, in the event any COC results are above DTSC residential screening levels, DTSC recommends the City of Gonzales address the contaminations within the Project area through an Environmental Site Assessment and/or receive oversight from a [self-certified local agency](#), DTSC or Regional Water Quality Control Board. If entering into one of DTSC's voluntary agreements, please note that DTSC uses a single standard Request for Lead Agency Oversight Application for all agreement types. Please apply for DTSC oversight using this link: [Request for Agency Oversight Application](#). Submittal of the online application includes an agreement to pay costs incurred during agreement preparation. If you have any questions about the application portal, please contact the relevant [Regional Brownfield Coordinator](#) for your Project

DTSC would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment on the NOP of a DEIR for the Puente Del Monte Specific Plan Thank you for your assistance in protecting California's people and environment from the harmful effects of toxic substances. If you have any questions or would like clarification on DTSC's comments, please respond to this letter or via our [CEQA Review email](#) for additional guidance.

Taven Kinison Brown
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Sincerely,

Tamara Purvis

Tamara Purvis
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cc: (via email)

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