



Irish Hills Plaza

Commercial Retail in San Luis Obispo

Situation

Madonna Enterprises contacted Oasis Associates, Inc. in 2004 for guidance to entitle and construct the Irish Hills Plaza project located in the City of San Luis Obispo. This attractive and uniquely designed regional shopping center includes $\pm 138,000$ square feet of local and regional stores and is located adjacent to a tributary of San Luis Creek. Oasis Associates, Inc. represented Madonna Enterprises at the Architectural Review Commission, and in coordination efforts with the Army Corps of Engineers and the California Department of Fish and Game.

Challenges

The Irish Hills Plaza is located within a flood zone, which required coordination with the City Public Works Department regarding the retail center's stormwater management plans and strategies. Additional coordination was also required with the California Department of Fish and Game ("CDFG") and the Army Corps of Engineers ("ACOE") due to the presence of a riparian corridor onsite. Coordination and collaboration between the City Public Works Department and Caltrans was also necessary in order to accomplish the required interim improvements to Los Osos Valley Road at Highway 101 South and permanent improvements to LOVR along the projects' frontage. The project generated air quality impacts also required mitigation. Due to the fact that the project was located adjacent to residential units, mitigation of noise and pedestrian linkage to the site were incredibly important.

Solutions

In order to satisfy the objectives of both the client and the City, we established weekly meetings with the design team and the project's contractor. Various key players (e.g., Community Development Department staff, Caltrans, etc.) were invited to these meetings to discuss, negotiate, and establish solutions to the above-mentioned challenges. Our thirty years of planning experience and extensive knowledge of the various agencies and disciplines involved ensure that all communication is appropriately tailored to address any expectations and concerns of the projects' key players.

Many of the projects' environmental impacts were mitigated in ways that would provide the greatest benefit to the community. For example, air emission impacts resulting from the project's construction were mitigated by means of funding the planning, design, and construction for a Class I bicycle path (noted as a proposed path in the City's Bicycle

Transportation Plan). This bicycle path will travel parallel to Highway 101, along the outskirts of the existing Madonna Inn parking lot and up to the intersection of Madonna Road and the Madonna Inn entrance, where it will meet existing facilities.

Results

With the guidance from our firm, the Irish Hills Plaza regional shopping center obtained all necessary entitlements and completed construction in 2008. The Irish Hills bicycle path is expected to complete construction in late 2010.