



A Summary for Wine Country Neighbors

The main concern: The proposal could turn an equestrian property into a much larger commercial sports and event destination without fully measuring—or firmly limiting—the effects on nearby residents, horses, rural roads, and public safety. Neighbors believe this is far more intensive than an equestrian facility with occasional events.

What is being proposed?

The Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) reviewed Galway Downs' request for expanded sports fields and tournaments, amplified events, larger gatherings, lodging, and RV-related uses.

Save TED sent Riverside County a 54-page legal comment letter that raises serious allegations about Galway Downs' Draft EIR. This is not simply a request to continue equestrian activities—it could permanently transform the Temecula Valley Wine Country Equestrian District.

Why are neighbors concerned?

- **This may be far bigger than Galway Downs.** The proposed zoning changes could affect the entire Wine Country–Equestrian zone, potentially opening the door to sports fields, RV parks, lodging, short-term rentals, and other intensified commercial uses throughout the district.
- **Is the County being asked to legalize years of unauthorized activity?** There are repeated County notices, cease-and-desist demands, code-enforcement proceedings, and findings that certain activities were unauthorized and adversely affected the surrounding community.
- **The draft EIR may be hiding the project's true size and reach.** The draft EIR document repeatedly focuses on the 241-acre Galway Downs property while failing to clearly show every property that could be affected by the district-wide zoning changes.
- **The environmental baseline may be fundamentally misleading.** Years of large-scale, unauthorized events are being treated as "normal" existing conditions. That could make future traffic, noise, pollution, and infrastructure impacts appear far smaller than they really are.
- **Thousands of vehicle trips are being normalized.** Instead of measuring the project against the property's historically permitted equestrian activities, the DEIR reportedly compares it with recent high-intensity operations—including major sporting events already generating enormous traffic volumes.
- **Galway Downs may be escaping responsibility for road improvements identified 15 years ago.** The County and Caltrans reportedly identified serious traffic problems and

required improvements at Los Caballos Road and Highway 79 in 2011. Those improvements were never completed, even though the sporting activities moved forward.

- **Could the public be forced to pay for impacts created by a private operation?** Galway Downs' "fair share" is being calculated using an artificially inflated traffic baseline—potentially shifting millions of dollars in road, infrastructure, and mitigation costs away from the applicant and onto taxpayers or other property owners.
- **The noise analysis may have used the wrong legal standard.** The DEIR applied a higher allowable daytime noise limit than the County's ordinance permits for Rural Residential property. If true, noise affecting homes, families, riders, and horses may have been seriously understated.
- **What happens during a wildfire when thousands of people try to leave at once?** The property is in or near a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. The DEIR fails to provide meaningful evacuation-time and roadway-capacity modeling. In an emergency, that omission could have life-or-death consequences.
- **The project could further endanger the community's equestrian trails.** Residents describe heavy event traffic, amplified sound, whistles, dust, and congestion that can frighten horses and make roadside trails unsafe or unusable.
- **Previously required protections may be disappearing.** Mitigation measures approved in 2011—including traffic improvements and equestrian trail requirements—have been modified, ignored, or removed without adequate explanation.
- **Major environmental questions remain unanswered.** The letter challenges the DEIR's treatment of traffic, air pollution, greenhouse gases, wildfire evacuation, water supply, biological resources, noise, trails, and cumulative development throughout the Equestrian District.
- **What happened to the fines and penalties?** Galway Downs owed at least \$220,000 in County enforcement costs and civil penalties as of 2018 and questions whether additional penalties remain outstanding. Forgiving legitimate public debts or development obligations could amount to an unlawful public subsidy.
- **The special 200-acre rule may have been designed specifically for Galway Downs.** Undefined "operational parcel" standard could grant Galway Downs valuable development rights unavailable to surrounding property owners—raising serious concerns about preferential or illegal spot zoning.
- **The public may not have received adequate notice.** Because the proposed changes could affect the entire WC-E zone, all affected landowners—not merely Galway Downs' immediate neighbors—must receive notice of every future hearing.

What should the County do before approving anything?

Save TED is asking Riverside County to stop the approval process, disclose the project's complete history and true geographic reach, correct the environmental baseline, require Galway Downs to pay its full share of mitigation and infrastructure costs, conduct credible wildfire and traffic studies, and recirculate a substantially revised Draft EIR for another full round of public review.