

## **HON'S PROPERTY - PORTUGUESE BEND LANDSLIDE REMEDICATION PROJECT AND DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL**

In January 1990, the Palos Verdes Portuguese Bend Company (Hon) submitted an application for removal of its 427-acre property from the Landslide Moratorium. The property is designated Open Space Hazard and Residential (RS-1). This Moratorium Exclusion application was deemed complete on February 20, 1990. Since that time the property owner (Hon) has revised the project and has explored various development scenarios including the construction of 65 homes and an 18-hole golf course, the construction of 25 homes and a 27-hole golf course, 12 homes and an 18-hole golf course and the present proposal that appears to be no homes and an 18-hole golf course.

During this twelve-year period, the applicant has performed extensive and expensive geologic investigation of the site. Based on the work that has been performed, the Applicant contends that grading and other work can stabilize the landslide, and that this work also would enable the golf course to be constructed.

In 1996, Palos Verdes Portuguese Bend Company contracted with the City to perform an independent Feasibility Study for the Remediation of the Portuguese Bend Landslide. That study was completed at a cost of approximately \$400,000 and was submitted to the City in March 1997. Since 1997, the Palos Verdes Portuguese Bend Company has continued to work on its plan to stabilize the landslide and construct a golf course. During the period between January 1, 1998 and April 15, 2002, they have paid \$161,000 to the City of Rancho Palos Verdes for geologic review of work prepared by their geotechnical firm Leighton & Associates. Leighton & Associates and the City reviewing geologist, Cotton, Shires & Associates, appear to be getting close to agreement that the landslide could be stabilized. All four volumes of the Feasibility Study and the City review letters are located at City Hall and are available for review on request.

Representatives of the Palos Verdes Portuguese Bend Company have repeatedly advised City Staff that the property owner is prepared to pursue the right to develop the property through the courts, if the land is not purchased by the City for open space purposes. The property owner has insisted that the City continue to process the Moratorium Exclusion request, even if the City enters into an agreement to purchase the property, and that the City agree to a specified time frame within which the application would be processed. The owner's representatives have stated that the property owner is more concerned about being able to complete the administrative process and obtain a decision from the City, which is a prerequisite to filing a lawsuit to challenge the Moratorium and any decision on the application, than obtaining approval of the application.

Thus, if this property is not purchased soon for open space, expensive litigation will result that, at the very least, is likely to drive up the cost of the property, and may make it difficult, if not impossible, to purchase the property later.