

DATE ISSUED: June 2, 2006 **REPORT NO. PC-06-166**

ATTENTION: **Planning Commission, Agenda of June 8, 2006**

SUBJECT: CARROLL CANYON ROAD EXTENSION- PROJECT NO. 16138
PROCESS 4

**OWNER/
APPLICANT:** City of San Diego/Engineering and Capital Improvements Department

SUMMARY

Issue(s): Should the Planning Commission approve a Site Development Permit and Coastal Development Permit to construct a 0.55-mile extension of Carroll Canyon Road, between Scranton Road and Sorrento Valley Road.

Staff Recommendation:

1. CERTIFY Mitigated Negative Declaration 16138, and ADOPT the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program; and
2. APPROVE Site Development Permit No. 35090 and Coastal Development Permit No. 35089.

Community Planning Groups Recommendations: The Torrey Pines Community Planning Board voted unanimously to recommend approval of the proposed project on February 10 2005, with no recommendations (Attachments 7).

The Mira Mesa Community Planning Group voted 16-0-0 to recommend approval of the proposed project on April 18, 2005, with one recommendation detailed within this report (Attachments 7).

Environmental Review: A Mitigated Negative Declaration No. 16138 has been prepared in accordance with State of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines. A Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program has been prepared and will be implemented and reduce, to a level of insignificance, any potential impacts identified

in the environmental review process.

Fiscal Impact Statement: All cost associated with the processing of this project are recovered by a deposit account maintained by the applicant.

Code Enforcement Impact: None with this action.

Housing Impact Statement: None with this action.

DISCUSSION

Background:

The City of San Diego proposes to extend a portion of Carroll Canyon Road, between Scranton Road, east of Interstate 805 (I-805) and Sorrento Valley Road, west of I-805. Currently, Carroll Canyon Road is a two-lane collector roadway with a two-way left turn lane, which terminates at an L intersection at Scranton Road east of Interstate 805 (Attachment 1). The proposed extension of Carroll Canyon is a Capital Improvement Project (CIP NO.:52-392.0) designed in accordance with City of San Diego Street Design Standards (City of San Diego 2002) for a modified four-lane Collector Street with Class II bike lanes.

A portion of the project is located within both the Mira Mesa Community Plan (MMCP) area and the Torrey Pines Community Plan (TPCP) area (Attachment 2). The proposed project is consistent with the adopted Transportation Element of the MMCP, which calls for the construction and re-classification of Carroll Canyon Road between Sorrento Valley Road and Scranton Road, from a four-lane major to a four-lane collector. The project is also consistent with the Transportation Element of the TPCP, which describes the project as a four-lane collector from its westerly terminus at Scranton Road, beneath I-805, to Sorrento Valley Road.

Land uses within the proposed project area include industrial, commercial, open space, and public facilities. The nearest residential area is located approximately 0.5 mile to the northeast of the proposed project site.

Carroll Canyon Road carries approximately 12,100 average daily trips east of Scranton Road and is not constructed west of Scranton Road. The area east of Scranton Road currently has a level of service of D. After completion, the same section will carry 29,900 average daily trips. After completion of the proposed construction, the flow of traffic would be improved to an acceptable level of service of C. The improved four-lane modified collector would be able to accommodate more than 27,000 average daily trips.

Provision of direct access between Carroll Canyon Road and Sorrento Valley Road will facilitate the flow of traffic between the east and west sides of Interstate 805, relieving traffic congestion on Mira Mesa Boulevard and Sorrento Valley Road to the north (Attachment 3).

A portion of the roadway is within the Torrey Pines Community Plan area and within the non-appealable area of the California Coastal Commission, and in accordance with LDC section

126.0702 a Coastal Development issued by the City of San Diego is required.

DISCUSSION

Community Plan Analysis

The proposed project site is located within the Torrey Pines and Mira Mesa Community Plan areas. The Carroll Canyon Road project is described in the Transportation Element of the Torrey Pines Community Plan as a four lane collector from its westerly terminus at Scranton Road, beneath I-805, to Sorrento Valley Road. The Mira Mesa Community Plan calls for reclassifying Carroll Canyon Road between Sorrento Valley Road and Scranton Road from a four-lane major to a four-lane collector street. Land uses surrounding the proposed project area include industrial, commercial, and open space.

The proposed project site is located within a portion of Carroll Canyon. The Torrey Pines Community Plan recommends that the design of Carroll Canyon Road minimize impacts to the adjacent Carroll Canyon Creek corridor, and both community plans identify mitigation and recommendations for avoidance of impacts. Mitigation recommended for construction of the proposed roadway includes a buffer area width of no less than 100 feet, revegetation of disturbed areas with native species, rehabilitation, revegetation and/or preservation of native wetland habitats, benches/viewing areas provided along the corridor where appropriate, and a pedestrian/bicycle path along the length of the corridor.

The proposed project does not directly impact any jurisdictional wetlands or channels associated with Carroll Canyon Creek. However, due to the design and physical limitations of the site (i.e. the Interstate 805 bridge columns), the proposed project would encroach into the 100-foot buffer (per the community plans and the requirements of projects within the coastal zone) which is intended to protect the functions and values of wetlands. Therefore, the recommendation for a 100 foot buffer for wetlands would not be met along the entire roadway of the new alignment. The Torrey Pines Community Plan allows for a smaller buffer width as long as it is demonstrated that a smaller buffer will protect the resources of the wetland based on site-specific information. The Mira Mesa Community Plan also allows for a reduced buffer width to accommodate the construction of Carroll Canyon Road. The proposed project has been designed and modified to minimize encroachment into the 100-foot buffer to the extent feasible, by shifting the roadway as far north as possible. It is not anticipated that the absence of the 100-foot buffer in some areas would result in further deterioration of wetland habitat on site. The proposed project provides a wetland buffer ranging from approximately 40 to 100 feet from the eastern terminus until just east of Interstate-805. As the proposed project crosses beneath the Mira Mesa Boulevard off-ramp, the buffer is reduced to zero feet, widening to approximately 90 feet directly beneath the Interstate-805 bridge. From the western edge of the Interstate-805 bridge west to the existing business park, the project buffer varies from approximately 75 to 100 feet, with the majority meeting the 100-foot wide criteria. Mitigation for impacts to the wetland buffer will be compensated for by removing an equal area of exotic plant species from Carroll Canyon Creek. A total of 0.84-acre of wetland buffer is impacted by the current project design. Mitigation will include removal of giant reed and pampas grass from the creek bed and applying a native seed mix, which will improve the overall functions and values of Carroll Canyon Creek.

The proposed project would provide a Class II bike lane on both the east and westbound sides of the new roadway segment, and a non-contiguous sidewalk on the south side of the road. Viewing areas have been included along the alignment. These design features implement the design recommendations for the proposed roadway in both the Torrey Pines and Mira Mesa Community Plans.

Project Description:

The project proposes the extension of Carroll Canyon Road, between Scranton Road, east of Interstate 805 (I-805) and Sorrento Valley Road, west of I-805. The approximately 0.55-mile extension is a modified four-lane collector street with limited access and a design speed of 45 mph. The project would include: a loop connector; improvements to the I-805 on/off-ramps at Sorrento Valley Road; the portion east of Scranton Road will be re-striped to a modified four lane collector; bridgework; access improvements; utility relocations; and construction of a four-foot median. No on-street parking would be permitted (Attachment 4).

The Carroll Canyon Road extension will complete a segment in the planned roadway network and has been designed to carry the forecasted amount of traffic at buildout. The project will also provide for non-vehicular circulation through the provision of bicycle lanes and pedestrian access via a sidewalk on the south side.

Eastern Extension:

The eastern segment of the alignment, approximately 1,648 feet in length, would have a four-foot wide center median, in order to minimize the impacts to the I-805 bridge columns and to Carroll Canyon Creek located to the south. Portions of the proposed alignment would require retaining walls on the south side of the roadway to minimize impacts to Carroll Canyon Creek. In addition, at the eastern limits of the alignment, a retaining wall on the north side of the street would be required to minimize impacts to the existing embankment.

Loop Connector:

A grade-separated, two-lane access road, connecting the new roadway with the existing businesses along the south side of Sorrento Valley Road would be constructed along the north side of the western portion of the alignment, looping underneath the new roadway. This loop connector would have a minimum radius of 125 feet and a maximum speed of 20 mph. The existing access road for the businesses to the south of the proposed alignment would be reconstructed. This reconstructed roadway, located just to the south of the Carroll Canyon Road alignment, would serve as the new access road for the existing businesses.

Bridges, Access, and Overlook:

Other features of the proposed project would include: the construction of a bridge spanning the new access roadway to the businesses located to the west of I-805 another bridge spanning the underground utilities located to the east of I-805 the addition of a dedicated right turn lane along westbound Carroll Canyon Road in front of the existing fire station; and the addition of a small

overlook along the south side of the new roadway to the west of I-805. A sidewalk would be constructed along the southern side of Carroll Canyon Road from Sorrento Valley Road to Scranton Road. In addition, a viewing platform would be installed along the south side of the roadway to the west of I-805.

I-805 OnOff -Ramps and Sorrento Valley Road Improvements

As part of the proposed project improvements, the southbound on-and off-ramps for the I-805 interchange at Sorrento Valley Road would need to be modified. The southbound off-ramp would be widened by one lane width and re-stripped. The reconfigured ramp would consist of: dual left turn lanes onto eastbound Sorrento Valley Road; a through/right-turn lane; and a dedicated right-turn lane onto westbound Sorrento Valley Road. The southbound I-805 on-ramp from eastbound Sorrento Valley Road would be re-stripped as a three-lane on-ramp (currently a two lane on-ramp) to accommodate two multi-purpose lanes and a single high occupancy vehicle lane. Eastbound Sorrento Valley Road between the Sorrento Valley Road/Carroll Canyon Road intersection and the southbound I-805 on-ramp would be widened and re-stripped to accommodate two dedicated right-turn lanes onto the I-805 on-ramp. Improvements to the intersection of Sorrento Valley Road would be required to accommodate two dedicated eastbound-to-southbound lanes to the on-ramp. A right hand turn pocket containing a dedicated right-turn lane from eastbound Sorrento Valley Road to Carroll Canyon Road and a through lane would be constructed. The proposed project would require a Caltrans encroachment permit for proposed construction the under I-805 and the freeway ramps.

Utility Relocations:

The San Diego Gas & Electric Company (SDG&E) has several natural gas and electric utilities that would be relocated or adjusted as part of the proposed project. There are two primary areas of utility conflicts, which are the transmission and distribution electric and transmission gas facilities east of I-805 and the gas and electric lines west of I-805.

To the east of I-805 there is currently a 200-foot wide utility easement owned by SDG&E. To accommodate the proposed roadway improvements, the two existing 69 kilovolt (kV) transmission lines would be raised to provide adequate clearances by installing two new 100-foot-tall wood transmission poles approximately 200 feet to the south of the proposed roadway alignment and by adding additional wire to the existing poles that are located within Carroll Canyon Creek. The two 12kV distribution lines would be relocated by crossing the proposed road improvements underground and the existing gas blow-off valve would be relocated south of the new roadway. For the two 12kV lines, SDG&E would install two new cable poles approximately 25-30 feet south of the new transmission poles. The lines would be undergrounded at the new cable poles where they would enter a trench and run through a conduit to the pole locations to the north of Carroll Canyon Road, and then be reconnected to the existing above-ground facilities.

The existing utilities west of I-805 are gas and electric distribution facilities that provide service to the surrounding businesses. As part of the proposed project, the existing overhead electric distribution power lines and a 2-inch gas line would be relocated within a 15-foot-wide utility

easement that would be created adjacent to the proposed Carroll Canyon Road improvements and within the right-of-way required as part of the business access frontage road. In addition, a power pole, fuse cabinet, and transformers would be relocated to the south of their current location as a result of the Sorrento Valley Road widening improvements. An agreement with SDG&E would be established in order to construct the proposed bridge in the SDG&E easement. Previous discussions with SDG&E indicate they are in concurrence.

Grading Plan:

The proposed project would grade to a depth of 16 feet with approximately 8,815 cubic yards of excavation (Attachment 5). Project grading will result in manufactured cut and fill slopes and the use of retaining walls. These slopes and walls will exceed 10 feet. Sensitive grading techniques typically encouraged by the City, such as variable slope ratios, are limited in application for this project because they would further expand the footprint of the required grading, increasing impacts to sensitive biological resources, including increasing the encroachment into the 100-foot wetland buffer area between the proposed project and Carroll Canyon Creek (Attachment 6).

Landscaping:

The project proposes to include landscaping to meet City regulations and improve the appearance of the roadway along the parkway only and not within the median. All proposed plant material would be native species appropriate to the environment and require little maintenance once established. The proposed landscaping has been reviewed by City staff and would comply with all applicable landscape regulations and standards. The Landscape Development Plan indicates two major categories of focus: streetscape and retaining wall plantings. (Attachment 7). The streetscape along Carroll Canyon Road would be composed of a consistent contiguous sidewalk system overlooking open space vistas of native species consisting of a riparian setting.

The retaining walls would be screened with *Adolphia californica*, *Artemisia californica*, *Eriogonum fasciculatum*, *Eriophyllum confertiflorum*, *Hemizonia fasciculata*, *Isocoma menziesii*, *Isomeris arborea*, *Lasthenia californica*, *Lupinus succulentus*, *Malosma laurina*, *Mimulus aurantiacus*, *Nassella pulchra*, *Opuntia littoralis*, *Opuntia prolifera*, *Rhus integrifolia*, *Salvia apiana*, *Salvia millifera*, *Sisyrinchium bellum*.

Environmental Analysis:

The environmental review process for the proposed project included an evaluation of several areas of interest, including but not limited to, Biological Resources/Multiple Species Conservation Program, (MSCP), Transportation/Circulation, Archaeological Resources, Paleontological Resources, Human Health and Public Safety, and Aesthetics/Neighborhood Character (Visual Quality). These areas of interest were evaluated by City staff and have been documented in the Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) No. 16138.

Project-specific impacts to sensitive biological resources, including encroachment into 0.84-acre of a 100-foot wetland buffer between the proposed roadway and Carroll Canyon Creek, have

been mitigated to below a level of significant through implementation of Biological Resources Mitigation Measures. Specifically, the mitigation requires that an area of giant reed (*Arundo donax*) equal to seven times the canopy area of a western sycamore tree be removed from Carroll Canyon Creek and that a native seed mix is applied to these areas to provide erosion control. The area of giant reed to be removed will equal 23,660-square-feet (0.54-acre) and is to compensate for the removal of seven western sycamore trees. In addition, 0.84-acre of invasive pampas grass will be removed from Carroll Canyon Creek. This is to compensate for 0.84-acre of encroachment into the 100-foot wetland buffer between the proposed roadway and Carroll Canyon Creek. Impacts to 0.16-acre of non-native grassland and 2.88-acres of Diegan coastal sage scrub will require 2.96-acres of off-site mitigation in conformance with the Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) in the form of habitat preservation.

The proposed project, including its mitigation requirements, is not expected to have a negative effect on long-term conservation of regional or local biological resources. Habitat impacts as described in the Mitigated Negative Declaration No. 16138, are significant in some cases, but shall be mitigated to a level below significance through implementation of the required Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program.

Proposed mitigation would offset habitat loss both locally, through the removal of invasive arundo, and regionally through payment into the City's Habitat Acquisition Fund for direct upland impacts. There are no direct wetland impacts requiring mitigation. All impacts shall be mitigated through the habitat-based and species-based mitigation as described in Section V of the Mitigated Negative Declaration.

Consistent with the State Water Quality Control Board requirements the applicant will utilize best management practices during and after construction.

The design of the project has been revised several times by the applicant to reduce impacts to biological resources and to create a grading concept which is compatible with the existing topographic character of the site. The draft permit includes conditions which address the City's requirements for the proposed project. City staff has determined the proposed project is consistent with the purpose and intent of the MMCP and TPCP.

CONCLUSION

Carroll Canyon Road is identified in the transportation element of both the MMCP and TPCP to be a modified-four lane road. The widening and improvement of Carroll Canyon Road would be consistent with the City's Street Design Manual and the City of San Diego's Progress Guide and General Plan. All issues identified as a result of the staff review of the project have been resolved in a manner consistent with the regulations and policies of the City of San Diego. The project as currently proposed complies with all applicable regulations of the Land Development Code and policies of the City of San Diego. Based upon the review of the proposed project and all applicable regulations, staff recommends approval of the Carroll Canyon Road Extension project. Draft conditions of approval have been prepared for the project (Attachment 5). Findings required to approve the project are included in the draft resolution (Attachment 6).

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachments:

1. Aerial Photograph
2. Community Plan Land Use Maps
3. Project Location Map
4. Project Site Plan(s)
5. Draft Permit with Conditions
6. Draft Resolution with Finding
7. Community Planning Group Recommendations
8. Photo Simulations
9. Retaining Wall Section and Elevation