SECTION 6

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

This study was prepared to analyze the traffic impacts of the proposed Torrey Hills project, which is to be located east of I-5 and south of SR-56 in Northwestern San Diego. The proposed project is the largest component of the approved Sorrento Hills Community Plan, and would consist of a mixture of residential, commercial, industrial, office, and other land uses. This report evaluated daily street segment and peak hour intersection traffic conditions for long-term future (year 2010) conditions and compared the results to those summarized in the traffic study for the approved community plan (Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., September 29, 1994). In addition to the above analysis, this study provides a project development phasing plan which is based on the trip generation characteristics of the project. The following paragraphs summarize the key findings and conclusions of the foregoing study.

- The project will generate 65,123 cumulative daily trips when fully built out, including 6,374 during the morning peak hour and 7,853 during the afternoon peak hour. The approved Sorrento Hills Community Plan would generate nearly 6,800 more daily trips (including 1,600 more during the morning peak hour alone) than proposed land uses.

- This disparity in approved and proposed trip generation characteristics is due to the mixture of land use types and intensities in the proposed plan. Proposed land uses feature a greater proportion of single-family dwelling units, as compared to multifamily residences, than the approved plan. Because of unconcentrated nature of single-family residential developments, this land use type will generate fewer trips per acre of coverage than multifamily uses. The proposed plan also has much reduced industrial land use intensity than the approved plan; approved industrial land uses will generate 14,000 more trips than proposed industrial uses. The industrial uses in the approved plan are replaced by retail uses in the proposed plan. This land use substitution results in much greater "capture" of project-generated traffic because a high concentration of industrial uses would tend to attract traffic from throughout the region, while retail uses of the type proposed would tend to oriented toward fulfilling shopping needs.

  The proposed project will have a better balance of inbound/outbound peak hour trips than the approved Community Plan. This is particularly true in the afternoon peak hour, where over 36 percent of all trips are inbound (compared to 34 percent in the approved plan). This is due to the mix of proposed land uses. Whereas the approved plan provided for intensive industrial uses which would generate heavy outbound traffic volumes in the afternoon peak hour, proposed land uses would have a mix of land uses which, when combined, would generate a more balanced split on inbound and outbound traffic. This balance will reduce the congestion associated with highly concentrated directional travel.

- The project is located near the Sorrento Valley "Coaster" commuter rail station. This proximity will result in excellent rapid rail commuting opportunities for those living and working in the Sorrento Hills area, particularly if the existing Sorrento Valley shuttle service were expanded to include Sorrento Hills.

- Comparison of forecast year 2010 traffic volumes to daily LOS thresholds on the Sorrento Hills street system indicated that all roadway segments studies would experience good LOS C or better conditions.

- Peak hour intersection analysis indicated that all intersections will be characterized by good LOS C or better conditions during both peak hours analyzed, with the exception of the Carmel Mountain Road/El Camino Real/Carmel Creek Road intersection, which experiences LOS D during both peak hours. Because of key location of this intersection, all four legs will have relatively heavy peak hour volumes.

- Analysis of ramp metering at the I-5/Carmel Mountain Roads (southbound in the morning peak hour and northbound in the afternoon peak hour) indicated that demand will exceed capacity, resulting in queuing and delay during both peak hours.

- Comparison of proposed and approved plan daily street segment LOS indicated generally similar results. Under both plans, all segments would be characterized by good LOS C or better conditions, with two segments under the approved plan having better LOS than the same segments under the proposed plan, and one segment under the proposed plan having better LOS than the corresponding segment under the approved plan.

- Comparison of proposed and approved plan peak hour intersection LOS analysis indicated better operating conditions under the proposed plan than under the approved plan. The results of proposed project intersection capacity analysis using HCS methods were similar to those for the approved project using the unmodified ICU approach, a methodology known to the City of San Diego to yield optimistic results. When the previous ICU methodology was adjusted in accordance with City specifications, approved project intersection LOS worsened considerably. Comparison of proposed project intersection LOS to approved project modified ICU LOS indicated that eight of nine common intersections analyzed had better LOS under the proposed than the approved project during one or both peak hours. Even the one intersection that experienced a worsening of LOS experiences good LOS C conditions under the proposed project.

- Ramp metering analysis comparisons indicated that the proposed project will cause shorter queues than the approved project.

- Eleven of the 16 traffic facility improvements specified in the phasing plan have either been completed or are assured to the satisfaction of the City Engineer. Accordingly, development totalling approximately 26,230 ADT can occur without additional improvements.

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