



Memorandum

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council **FROM: Vice Mayor Pat Dando**

SUBJECT: GP04-10-02 and GPT04-10-02

DATE: December 13, 2004

Pat Dando

12/13/04

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council approve the following amendments to the General Plan Land Use/Transportation Diagram:

1. Remove the minor arterial roadway designation on Winfield Boulevard and remove the planned Winfield Boulevard Bridge over Los Alamitos Creek; and
2. Downgrade the roadway designation of McAbee Road from a four-lane major collector to a two-lane major collector between Almaden Expressway & Camden Avenue

DISCUSSION

The General Plan Transportation Land Use Diagram proposes extending Winfield Boulevard over Alamitos Creek to connect to Almaden Expressway and to widen McAbee Road to four lanes between Almaden Expressway & Camden Avenue.

Responding to community concerns, construction of the Winfield Bridge was delayed until the Highway 85/87 interchange was completed to see if traffic circulation patterns changed. The completion of this interchange in 2003 brought much needed traffic relief to neighborhood streets by diverting an estimated 1700 cars per hour onto the highways.

Extending Winfield Boulevard has the potential to cause irreversible damage to our environment, our neighborhoods, and our quality of life. If built, Almaden Lake Park, Los Alamitos Creek, the Los Alamitos Trail, and residential neighborhoods will be severely impacted. Negative implications of the bridge include:

- harmful noise, traffic, aesthetic, and biological impacts to Almaden Lake Park, Almaden Lake, and the surrounding community;
- riparian impacts to Los Alamitos Creek;
- surrounding Almaden Lake Park on all four sides with vehicular traffic;
- unknown implication to the fish and other wildlife in the lake, creek, and park.

This bridge will do little to help siphon traffic off of Almaden Expressway as it will not provide commuters with a quicker or more convenient route to Highways 85 or 87. Additionally, it has been noted that the bridge connection would only generate a savings of 5 seconds from one's commute on Almaden Expressway. The bridge will only put greater pressure on the intersections at Winfield & Coleman and Winfield & Blossom Hill and these impacts will be difficult if not impossible to mitigate in the future.

Rather than pursue this bridge, efforts should focus on projects that will make permanent improvements to traffic, increase the capacity of Almaden Expressway, and not negatively impact the community. The Comprehensive County Expressway Planning Study (CCEPS) recommends the widening of Almaden Expressway to 8 lanes between Coleman & Blossom Hill. Additionally, the study also recommends expanding Almaden Expressway to 6 lanes starting south of Camden to confirm with the current 6-lane segment south of Redmond.

Removing these elements from the General Plan will ensure that additional traffic does not burden Winfield Boulevard and McAbee Road and protects the residential character of the neighborhoods along with the peaceful, natural environment of Almaden Lake.

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