



DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT VOLUME 1 OF 2

North Coast Highway 101 Streetscape Improvement Project
Case No. : 10-035 DR/CDP/EIR and 10-036 GPA/SPA/LCPA
State Clearinghouse (SCH) No. 2015091084

Lead Agency/Project Applicant:

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Preparer:

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San Diego, California 92124**

December 2016

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VOLUME 1: DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

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- Appendix B. Project Chronology
- Appendix C. Documentation of Agency Coordination/Consultation
- Appendix D. 30% Design Plans
- Appendix E. City of Encinitas General Plan/North Highway 101 Specific Plan: Roadway Cross-Sections
- Appendix F. Drainage Study and Storm Water Quality Management Plan
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- Appendix I. North Coast Highway Improvements – Right of Way Map

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The proposed Project is the North Coast Highway 101 Streetscape Improvements for the 2.5-mile segment of North Highway 101 in the northwest section of the City of Encinitas (“City”), between La Costa Avenue at the north end and A Street at the south end (“Project corridor”), in the City’s community of Leucadia. A public outreach program for the Project was initiated in 2008 involving preparation of conceptual plans, alternative design plans, cross-sections, and traffic analyses. All of this information was made available for the public to review throughout the public outreach program on the City’s website and during normal business hours in the City Planning & Building Department and at City Hall. Themes, traffic calming concepts, and traffic analyses for up to six design alternatives were presented at these forums, and public surveys were disseminated and received, documenting community feedback. The results were presented to Planning Commission and City Council in 2008, 2009, and 2010. From these efforts, the City developed the following Project objectives with community input:

- Increase walkability through expanded sidewalks, pedestrian facilities, and safe pedestrian crossings;
- Increase the bicycle facilities available along the corridor with added and enhanced bike lanes and shared vehicle/bicycle lanes;
- Preserve and restore the tree canopy by replacing trees posing a safety hazard with new trees, adding hundreds of new trees, and focusing on a native and drought-tolerant landscape palette;
- Provide street beautification measures with enhanced pavement treatments, street furniture, and opportunities for public art;
- Respect and enhance the community character along the corridor;
- Construct appropriate traffic controls and traffic calming measures, such as roundabouts or a full signal at North Highway 101/La Costa Avenue intersection;
- Implement road diet measures by decreasing travel lane number/width;
- Reduce traffic speeds to 30 miles per hour;
- Minimize cut-through traffic on North Coast Highway 101;
- Implement measures to improve vehicular, bike, and pedestrian safety at side street intersections;
- Provide additional parking spaces, including more efficient reverse angle on-street parking and parking at designated improved areas in the North County Transit District (NCTD) right-of-way (ROW) along the east side of the corridor;
- Provide for appropriately-located and accessibly-designed bus stops and bus pull-outs to maximize ridership;
- Improve existing drainage and storm water quality by implementing low-impact design measures and sustainable Green Streets concepts including infiltration, biofiltration, and water storage areas;
- Relocate selected existing utility lines to improve connections and services; and

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- Encourage greater business opportunities for shopping and entertainment and provide more gathering destinations for local residents.

Construction of the proposed Project would be phased into the “segments” listed below to better schedule construction disturbances and necessary funding. However, these segments need not be constructed in any particular order, nor must they necessarily be constructed individually. Multiple segments could be bid and constructed as one project at the same time, if desired in the future.

- Segment A A Street to Basil Street
- Segment B North of Basil Street to Jupiter Street
- Segment C North of Jupiter Street to La Costa Avenue
- Segment D La Costa Avenue intersection improvements

The overall timeframe for construction of the proposed Project is expected to be three years, with Segment A anticipated to occur in the first year. Subsequent segments are not currently funded; therefore, a construction schedule has not been identified for improvements beyond Segment A.

The California Coastal Commission (CCC), North County Transit District (NCTD), and Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) are Responsible Agencies under CEQA; no Trustee Agencies are involved with the Project. The Project’s discretionary actions include City Council approval of a General Plan Amendment (GPA), North Highway 101 Specific Plan (N101SP) Amendment, Design Review Permit, Coastal Development Permit (CDP), Construction Permit, and Storm Water Management Plan; CCC approval of a Local Coastal Program (LCP) Amendment; NCTD approval of the proposed parking pockets within their railroad ROW; and Regional Water Quality Board approval of a General Construction Storm Water Permit.

Coordination between the City and CCC has been ongoing since March 15, 2010 when the City filed the required GPA, N101SP Amendment, LCP Amendment, Design Review Permit and CDP applications to this agency for their review. Based on coordination between the City and NCTD, this agency has indicated that encroachments up to 15 feet into their railroad ROW may be acceptable for construction of the proposed roundabouts to minimize encroachments into private properties on the west side of the roundabouts, including significant effects on existing businesses. In addition, NCTD has agreed to the removal of some bus stops and relocation of others along the corridor, and to provide parking pockets within their ROW to increase the overall parking supply within the corridor.

Regional access to the Project corridor is via Interstate 5 (I-5) to westbound (WB) La Costa Avenue from the north and I-5 to WB Encinitas Boulevard from the south. North Coast Highway 101 within the Project corridor is designated as a 4-lane Major Arterial in the City General Plan Circulation Element; has a posted speed limit of 40 mph; is a four-lane roadway between A Street and Leucadia Boulevard; provides one “through” vehicle lane and a bike lane in the NB direction between Leucadia Boulevard and La Costa Avenue; and provides a “through” vehicle lane and a shared vehicle/bicycle lane in the SB direction. The corridor is a portion of one of the most heavily bicycled routes in San Diego County.

Signalized intersections occur at Leucadia Boulevard at approximately the midpoint of the Project corridor and at La Costa Avenue at the north end of the corridor; these are the only two streets that intersect with North Coast Highway 101 from areas east of the corridor. All remaining side streets intersecting the corridor are stop controlled. In addition, there are 11 bus stops along the corridor.

The majority of the east side of the Project corridor is unimproved, with an asphalt path along limited sections in the south portion and dirt trails along other sections which are frequently used by joggers, dog walkers, and pedestrians. The majority of on-street parking is along the west side of the corridor; parallel parking is permitted in areas where no red painted curb exists. On-street parking occurs in an ad-hoc manner in extended sections without curbs, creating safety problems with vehicular sight distances and obstructed visibility for motorists from side streets. In addition, vehicles encroach into the NCTD railroad ROW and those parked in the public ROW on both sides of the street sometimes impede pedestrian and bicycle circulation.

Drainage problems persist in areas within the Project corridor due to topography and lack of storm water conveyance systems. Water collects and ponds in low spots along the roadway edges even during small rain events. This problem is exacerbated by the lack of curbs, gutters, and storm drains in these areas.

The north portion of the Project corridor is complemented by a strong presence of mature trees which surround and provide enclosure over the streets and walkways. There is a center median that provides a landscaped buffer, primarily eucalyptus trees, extending between Cadmus Street and La Costa Avenue. Many of the trees date back to the early settlers of the region, are over 100 years old, and provide an important role in defining the unique Community Character along the corridor. On the west side of the Leucadia Boulevard intersection, at approximately the midpoint of the corridor, Leucadia Roadside Park consists of a lawn and trees, and it provides a small open space area but no pedestrian improvements.

Most development is on the west side of the Project corridor, with mainly one- and two-story businesses, restaurants, and hotels (dating back to the mid-1900’s) in the south and middle portions of the corridor; and a combination of beach cottage-style residential neighborhoods (dating back to the late 1800’s) and newer commercial buildings forming an eclectic blend of architecture that is distinctively “Leucadia” in the north portion of the corridor. All properties along the side streets to the west of the corridor support residential land uses. Land uses paralleling the east side of the corridor, east of the NCTD railroad ROW, are primarily residential along Vulcan Avenue, a two-lane Collector Street, with a few businesses in the vicinity of the Leucadia Boulevard intersection. Although outside the corridor, Vulcan Avenue is important for its effects on pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular circulation in the vicinity.

Table S-1 summarizes the Project’s potential environmental impacts and the proposed mitigation measures for significant impacts which are evaluated in detail in this EIR.

TABLE S-1 SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION

Environmental Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
Aesthetics			
Issue 1: Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista	Less than significant impact	No mitigation required	Less than significant impact
Issue 2: Substantially degrade the existing visual quality or character of the site or its surroundings	Less than significant impact	No mitigation required	Less than significant impact

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TABLE S-1, CONTINUED

Environmental Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
Aesthetics (continued)			
Issue 3: Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State Scenic Highway	Less than significant impact	No mitigation required	Less than significant impact
Issue 4: Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area	Less than significant impact	No mitigation required	Less than significant impact
Issue 5: Have aesthetic impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable?	Less than significant impact	No mitigation required	Less than significant impact
Hydrology and Water Quality			
Issue 1: Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements.	Less than significant impact	No mitigation required	Less than significant impact
Issue 2: Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level.	Less than significant impact	No mitigation required	Less than significant impact
Issue 3: Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the area in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on or offsite.	Less than significant impact	No mitigation required	Less than significant impact
Issue 4: Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the area, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff, in a manner which would result in flooding on or offsite.	Less than significant impact	No mitigation required	Less than significant impact
Issue 5: Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff.	Less than significant impact	No mitigation required	Less than significant impact
Issue 6: Otherwise substantially degrade water quality.	Less than significant impact	No mitigation required	Less than significant impact
Issue 7: Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or FIRM or other flood hazard delineation map.	This issue is not applicable to the proposed Project.	No mitigation required	This issue is not applicable to the proposed Project.

TABLE S-1, CONTINUED

Environmental Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
Hydrology and Water Quality (continued)			
Issue 8: Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows.	This issue is not applicable to the proposed Project.	No mitigation required	This issue is not applicable to the proposed Project.
Issue 9: Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam.	This issue is not applicable to the proposed Project.	No mitigation required	This issue is not applicable to the proposed Project.
Issue 10: Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow.	No impact	No mitigation required	No impact
Issue 11: Result in hydrology and water quality impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable.	Less than significant impact	No mitigation required	Less than significant impact
Land Use and Planning			
Issue 1: Physically divide an established community.	Less than significant impact	No mitigation required	Less than significant impact
Issue 2: Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the Project that is adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.	Less than significant impact	No mitigation required	Less than significant impact
Issue 3: Result in land use impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable.	Less than significant impact	No mitigation required	Less than significant impact
Public Services and Facilities			
Issue 1a: Fire Protection Issue 1b: Police Protection	Significant	No other feasible mitigation measures or design alternatives are available, in addition to Project design features intended to reduce impacts to emergency response	Unavoidable ¹
Issue 1c: Schools	This issue is not applicable to the proposed Project.	No mitigation required	This issue is not applicable to the proposed Project.
Issue 1d: Parks	Less than significant impact	No mitigation required	Less than significant impact

¹ Nevertheless, the Project's significant unavoidable traffic impacts would be offset by proposed enhancements in travel for vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian travel modes within the Project corridor.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TABLE S-1, CONTINUED

Environmental Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
Public Services and Facilities (continued)			
Issue 1e: Other Public Facilities (such as libraries)	This issue is not applicable to the proposed Project.	No mitigation required	This issue is not applicable to the proposed Project.
Issue 2: Have public services/facilities impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable?	Significant	No other feasible mitigation measures or design alternatives are available, in addition to Project design features intended to reduce impacts to emergency response	Unavoidable ¹
Transportation			
<p>Issue 1: Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections).</p> <p>Issue 2: Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways.</p> <p>Issue 7: Cumulative Traffic and Transportation Impacts</p>	Significant	<p>The proposed Project would result in significant unavoidable cumulative impacts at the southbound North Highway 101 segment between Leucadia Boulevard and El Portal Street (during Year 2035 Alternative 1 Plus SMUP AM peak hours); and the southbound I-5 onramp from Leucadia Boulevard (during the Year 2035 Plus Project AM peak hours for both Alternatives 1 and 2 scenarios). The only way to avoid the Project impact along the North Highway 101 segment would be to add another southbound lane in this segment by Year 2035; however, this solution is infeasible due to insufficient right-of-way. Project impacts at the I-5 onramps could be mitigated if the discharge rates from the metering at these ramps could be adjusted slightly higher (i.e., to an average discharge rate of 2 vehicles/hour/lane) resulting in less delay and queuing; however, there is no guarantee that such adjustments of these ramp meters can occur since they are controlled by another agency (Caltrans) and not the City.</p>	Unavoidable ¹
Issue 3: Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks.	This issue is not applicable to the proposed Project.	No mitigation required	This issue is not applicable to the proposed Project.
Issue 4: Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment).	Less than significant impact	No mitigation required	Less than significant impact
Issue 5: Result in inadequate emergency access.	Less than significant impact	No mitigation required	Less than significant impact

TABLE S-1, CONTINUED

Environmental Impacts	Level of Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
Transportation (continued)			
Issue 6: Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks).	Less than significant impact	No mitigation required	Less than significant impact

Table S-2 compares the potential environmental impacts between the proposed Project and alternatives.

TABLE S-2 COMPARISON OF IMPACTS OF PROPOSED PROJECT AND ALTERNATIVES

Environmental Impacts	Proposed Project	Alternative 1 (No Project)	Alternative 2 (No Roundabouts)	Alternative 3 (Four-Lane Corridor)
Aesthetics				
Issue 1: Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista	Less than significant impact	Same	Same	Same
Issue 2: Substantially degrade the existing visual quality or character of the site or its surroundings	Less than significant impact	Greater	Same	Same
Issue 3: Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State Scenic Highway	Less than significant impact	Same	Same	Same
Issue 4: Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area	Less than significant impact	Same	Same	Same
Issue 5: Have aesthetic impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable?	Less than significant impact	Same	Same	Same
Hydrology and Water Quality				
Issue 1: Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements.	Less than significant impact	Greater	Same	Same
Issue 2: Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level.	Less than significant impact	Same	Same	Same
Issue 3: Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on or offsite.	Less than significant impact	Greater	Same	Same

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TABLE S-2, CONTINUED

Environmental Impacts	Proposed Project	Alternative 1 (No Project)	Alternative 2 (No Roundabouts)	Alternative 3 (Four-Lane Corridor)
Hydrology and Water Quality (continued)				
Issue 4: Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on or offsite.	Less than significant impact	Greater	Same	Same
Issue 5: Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff.	Less than significant impact	Greater	Same	Same
Issue 6: Otherwise substantially degrade water quality.	Less than significant impact	Greater	Same	Same
Issue 11: Result in hydrology and water quality impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable.	Less than significant impact	Greater	Same	Same
Land Use and Planning				
Issue 1: Physically divide an established community.	Less than significant impact	Greater	Same	Same
Issue 2: Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.	Less than significant impact	Greater	Same	Same
Issue 3: Result in land use impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable.	Less than significant impact	Greater	Same	Same
Public Services and Facilities				
Issue 1a: Fire Protection Issue 1b: Police Protection	Significant	Lesser	Lesser ² Greater ³	Lesser
Issue 5: Have public services/facilities impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable?	Significant	Lesser	See above	Lesser

² With respect to emergency response.

³ The use of parallel parking instead of reverse-angle parking (proposed Project) would increase the existing sight-distance problems and vehicular conflicts with bicyclists.

TABLE S-2, CONTINUED

Environmental Impacts	Proposed Project	Alternative 1 (No Project)	Alternative 2 (No Roundabouts)	Alternative 3 (Four-Lane Corridor)
Transportation				
Issue 1: Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections). Issue 2: Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways. Issue 7: Cumulative Traffic and Transportation Impacts	Significant	Lesser	Same	Lesser
Issue 4: Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment).	Less than significant impact	Greater ⁴	Greater	Lesser
Issue 5: Result in inadequate emergency access.	Less than significant impact	Lesser	Lesser	Lesser
Issue 6: Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks).	Less than significant impact	Greater	Greater	Lesser

⁴ The lack of removal of aged eucalyptus trees in the median which pose a potentially hazardous condition (i.e., falling limbs) that occasionally results in damage to vehicles, and to injuries to pedestrians and cyclists, would result in continued and future need for emergency services to respond to an increased number of incidents.

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