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Farhad Mansourian, RCE
Director

June 15, 2010

Board of Supervisors
County of Marin
3501 Civic Center Drive
San Rafael, California, 94903

Subject: Public Hearing on the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Proposed Rehabilitation of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard (SFDB) between Shafter Bridge and Platform Bridge Road

Dear Board Members,

RECOMMENDATION: 1) Conduct the public hearing, and 2) Instruct the staff to prepare a Final EIR including written responses to all the oral and written comments received during the public hearing, and all of the written comments received during the public scoping period.

BACKGROUND: Project Planning for the Rehabilitation of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard (SFDB) from Shafter Bridge to Platform Bridge Road was initiated several years ago. We held two community meetings: one in West Marin and the other in Woodacre to discuss the need to rehabilitate SFDB and presented various options for rehabilitating the roadway. In addition, we conducted three bus tours of the project area with representatives from various public agencies including the State Park Service, Regional Water Quality Control Board, Marin Municipal Water District; and representatives from the Sierra Club and the San Geronimo Valley Planning Group. The objective of these bus tours was to point out the condition of the roadway and the environmental constraints in the project area and to present the proposed roadway rehabilitation project and potential options, focusing on tree removal, landslide repair and pullout closures.

DRAFT EIR PROCESS: A Notice of Preparation (NOP) of the Draft EIR for the SFDB Rehabilitation Project was published on October 27, 2008 and a public scoping meeting seeking comments on the environmental issues to be addressed in the Draft EIR was held at the Woodacre Improvement Club on Saturday November 15, 2008. County Staff also had a meeting with a representative of the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria to discuss issues of concern to Native Americans. A total of 53 comment letters were submitted to the County in response to the NOP. A copy of the NOP, a transcript of the public scoping meeting, and a copy of all written letters submitted in response to the NOP can be found in Appendix B of the Draft EIR. In addition Appendix A contains a summary table listing all the comments received during the public scoping period, and references where the issue raised in the comment is discussed in the Draft EIR.

PROJECT SUMMARY: The Draft EIR evaluates the environmental impacts of the proposed rehabilitation of a 5.2 mile section of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard between Shafter Bridge and Platform Bridge Road. Project components include repaving the roadway surface, incremental shoulder widening where feasible, replacing existing culverts, installation of retaining walls less than 3 feet in height in order to enhance bicycle/pedestrian safety, repairing an existing landslide at

Station 270+25, improvement of a limited number of formal pullouts, and closing a series of existing areas used as pullouts along the edge of the roadway above the stream channel. Landslide repair at Station 270+25 would require the removal of 8 native trees otherwise no other trees would be removed. Under Option A, the roadway would be widened at selected locations to provide additional shoulder width and improved sight distance. Option 'A" would result in the removal of an additional 9 native trees.

DRAFT EIR SUMMARY: The following is a summary of the major conclusions set forth in the environmental analysis:

- The EIR identifies a total of 29 project impacts as significant or potentially significant. Feasible mitigation measures are available to reduce all 29 of these impacts to a less-than-significant level.
- Project implementation could result in direct and indirect impacts to federal and/or state listed salmonid species – Central California Coastal Coho salmon, Central California Coast steelhead, and California Coastal Chinook salmon. Mitigation measures are recommended in Section 4.3 of the EIR to protect water quality in Lagunitas Creek and minimize loss of salmonid individuals and their habitat. Measures include preparation and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Protection Plan (SWPPP) and Storm Water Management Plan (SWMP), temporary construction fencing to protect riparian trees, and provision of suitable cuttings from the tree removal work for use as woody debris and in bio-engineered structures along Lagunitas Creek in order to enhance salmonid habitat. These mitigation measures would reduce potential impacts to salmonids to less-than-significant levels.
- Project implementation would result in the removal of 8 trees for landslide repair at Station 270+25. Option 'A' if implemented would result in the removal of 9 additional trees at various locations along the roadway. All trees that would be removed under the Proposed Project and Option 'A' are protected under the Marin County Tree Protection Ordinance. Mitigation measures include replanting of native trees at a 3:1 replacement ratio, financial contribution to the MMWD for support of habitat enhancement along Lagunitas Creek, and provision of suitable cuttings from tree removal work for use as woody debris and in bio-engineered structures along Lagunitas Creek. These mitigation measures would reduce the impact of tree loss to a less-than-significant level.
- Construction activities such as excavation and grading could affect a cultural resource, including an archaeological or paleontological resource, or human remains. Mitigation measures would reduce potential impacts to a less-than-significant level
- Implementation of the proposed project would alter some of the engineering features, physical design characteristics, and natural setting of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, a historical resource. Mitigation measures would reduce the impact of proposed roadway improvements on the historic features of the portion of SFDB in the project area to a less-than-significant level.

- Portions of the site are underlain by colluvium and residual soils that may be subject to heave and settlement in response to changing seasonal moisture conditions. The proposed project could be subject to significant impacts related to strong seismic ground shaking, seismic-related ground failure and/or seismically induced landslides. Mitigation measures identified in the Draft EIR would reduce potential impacts to a less-than-significant level.
- Construction activities, including placement of road material, grading, saw cutting, asphalt grinding, replacement of culverts, excavation, and tree removal, could result in discharge of sediment (and pollutants bound to sediment), asphalt materials, concrete, fuels, oils, paints, and solvents into Lagunitas Creek. Upon completion, the project would result in an increase in impervious area that would increase the surface area on which roadway pollutants could be deposited, come into contact with stormwater runoff, and discharge into Lagunitas Creek. Mitigation measures identified in the Draft EIR would reduce potential impacts to a less-than-significant level.
- Road construction activities would include the use of hazardous materials such as fuels, oils, lubricants, asphalt products, other petroleum products, and solvents. In addition, shallow soils disturbed during project construction could be affects by Aerially Deposited Lead (ADL), which could post a health risk to construction workers. Mitigation measures identified in the Draft EIR would reduce potential impacts to a less-than-significant level.
- Construction of the project would require temporary closure of one travel lane at a time, resulting in a temporary hazard to vehicles and bicycles, further pavement damage and disruption of Marin Transit service during the construction period. Mitigation measures identified in the Draft EIR would reduce potential impacts to a less-than-significant level.
- Temporary, localized emissions of particulate matter$_{10}$ (PM_{10}) during construction have the potential to exceed ambient air quality standards and contribute to regional violations of the ambient air quality standards. This potential impact would be reduced to a less-than-significant level through mitigation.
- Construction-period noise could be perceived as a nuisance to adjacent land uses, including open space/wildlife habitat, one residential unit, and recreational uses. Mitigation identified in the Draft EIR would reduce potential impacts to a less-than-significant level.
- Heavy equipment used during project construction could generate significant greenhouse gas emissions. Mitigation identified recommended in the Draft EIR would reduce potential impacts to a less-than-significant level.

COUNTY PLAN CONSISTENCY: The Draft EIR finds that the Proposed Project, with the incorporation of mitigation measures specified in this Draft EIR, is consistent with all relevant policies of the Countywide Plan 2007 and County Development Code requirements.

SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES: The following alternatives to the proposed project are considered in the Draft EIR:

- The **No Project Alternative** assumes that the proposed roadway improvements would not be implemented. Existing traffic and roadway conditions would persist. The County would continue to maintain and repair the roadway on an as needed and ad hoc basis. The roadway design life would not be extended and safety would not be enhanced. Although some impacts associated with construction would be reduced or avoided by the smaller scale repairs of the roadway under the No Project Alternative, the environmental benefits of the project, such as slope stabilization measures to reduce erosion and slope failures and the drainage improvements to reduce the volume of sediments and pollutants entering Lagunitas Creek, would not be recognized. In general, the No Project Alternative would not achieve the project objectives.
- The **Resurface Roadway Alternative** assumes that the roadway would be restored using the same pavement rehabilitation techniques described for the proposed project. The existing base course would be crushed, replaced and overlaid with two layers of asphalt concrete. The roadway would not be expanded to accommodate wider lanes or shoulders. No new formal pullouts or retaining walls would be constructed, existing locations along the roadway used as informal pullouts would not be closed, culverts would not be replaced, and slide repair would not be conducted under this alternative. The Resurface Roadway Alternative would partly achieve the project objectives. Under the Resurface Roadway Alternative, one of the environmental benefits of the Proposed Project – slope stabilization measures to reduce erosion and slope failures and the drainage improvements to reduce the volume of sediments and pollutants entering Lagunitas Creek – would not be achieved. The alternative would partially fulfill 'extend life of road' objective. It would extend the design life of the roadway to 20 years but would not provide the additional 30-year design life of the project.
- The **Mitigated Roadway Alternative** assumes that the roadway design would be modified to minimize impacts to site resources. The roadway would be rehabilitated and some sections of the alignment would be widened to accommodate wider vehicle lanes and/or shoulders. Under the Mitigated Roadway Alternative, Option 'A' would be eliminated to minimize the number of trees to be removed. The Mitigated Roadway Alternative would achieve all objectives of the proposed project.

  The Mitigated Roadway Alternative would avoid the short-term visual impacts and water quality impact of the proposed retaining walls by removing most of the retaining walls from the project. However, the potential water quality impacts of the proposed retaining wall design can be mitigated to a less-than-significant level by using concrete rather then treated wood to construct the walls. Because Option 'A' is removed in the Mitigated Roadway Alternative, nine fewer trees would be removed under this alternative, thereby reducing the tree impacts of the project and the need to replant mitigation trees in the watershed. The Mitigated Roadway Alternative would achieve all of the basic project objectives of the proposed project but would result in less paved road width in areas constrained by topography. Even though the proposed project does not result in any significant environmental impacts that cannot be mitigated, the Mitigated Roadway

Alternative avoids the short-term visual impact of retaining wall construction, avoids need for retaining wall redesign, and reduces the number of trees to be removed and associated mitigation by eliminating Option A. As a result, the Mitigated Roadway Alternative is considered the environmentally superior alternative.

COMMENTS RECEIVED: Comment letters received prior to the packet distribution date for the Board hearing on the Draft EIR are attached to the staff report (Attachment #1). Any additional written comments received after that time will be forwarded to the Board at, or prior to, the hearing date.

PUBLIC HEARING: The purpose of the public hearing is for your Board to receive oral and written comments on the adequacy of the Draft EIR. Following the public hearing and the close of the public review and comment period on June 25, 2010, the EIR consultant will compile written responses to all comments, which, along with the Draft EIR and any resulting changes to the Draft, will represent the Final EIR. The Final EIR will then be circulated to commenters for further review for a minimum ten-day period, limited to the adequacy of the response to comments, prior to consideration of the Final EIR for certification by the Board.

REVIEWED BY:	[ ]	Auditor/Controller	[X] N/A
	[ ]	County Counsel	[X] N/A
	[ ]	Human Resources	[X] N/A

Respectfully submitted,

Ernest Klock
Principal Civil Engineer

C: Robert Beaumont

Attachments: Letters of comment on the SFDB Rehabilitation Project Draft EIR