



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
AGENDA LETTER

**Agenda Number:**

**Clerk of the Board of Supervisors**  
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
(805) 568-2240

**Department Name:** P&D  
**Department No.:** 053  
**For Agenda Of:** November 17, 2020  
**Placement:** Departmental  
**Estimated Time:** 1 hour 5 mins  
**Continued Item:** No  
**If Yes, date from:**  
**Vote Required:** Majority

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**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Department Lisa Plowman, Director, Planning and Development  
Director (805) 568-2086  
Contact Info: Travis Seawards, Deputy Director, Development Review  
(805) 568-2518

**SUBJECT: Hearing to consider the Becker Appeal of the Montecito Planning Commission Approval of the Olive Mill Roundabout project, Case No. 20APL-00000-00025, First Supervisorial District**

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**County Counsel Concurrence**

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: N/A

As to form: Yes

**Auditor-Controller Concurrence**

As to form: N/A

**Recommended Actions:**

Consider the appeal by Thomas Becker of the Montecito Planning Commission's September 16, 2020 approval of the Olive Mill Roundabout project, Case Nos. 19DVP-00000-00024 and 19CDP-00000-00048.

Staff recommends that your Board take the following actions:

- a) Deny the appeal, Case Number 20APL-00000-00025;
- b) Make the required findings for approval of the project specified in Attachment 1, including CEQA findings;
- c) After considering the July 2020 Addendum (Attachment 2) to the previously certified EIR dated August 26, 2014, the Revised EIR dated October 27, 2017, and the EIR Addendum dated June 1, 2018 (available on file with P&D), determine that as reflected in the CEQA findings, no

subsequent Environmental Impact Report or Negative Declaration shall be prepared for this project.

- d) Grant *de novo* approval of the project, Case Nos. 19DVP-00000-00024 and 19CDP-00000-00048, subject to the conditions of approval included as Attachments 3 and 4.

### **Summary Text:**

A timely appeal of the Montecito Planning Commission's September 16, 2020 approval of the Olive Mill Roundabout project (19DVP-00000-00024 and 19CDP-00000-00048) was filed on September 22, 2020. The proposed project is a request for a Development Plan and Coastal Development Permit to reconfigure the intersection at Coast Village Road, North Jameson Lane, Olive Mill Road, and Highway 101 from a stop controlled intersection to a roundabout. The project would include new sidewalks, landscaping, lighting, signage, and drainage facilities. Please refer to the July 28, 2020 Montecito Planning Commission Staff Report (Attachment 6) for further details on the proposed project and for a comprehensive policy consistency analysis.

The Olive Mill Roundabout was identified in the 2017 Highway 101 HOV Project Revised EIR as a mitigation option for intersection impacts that would occur as a result of the Highway 101 HOV project. The Olive Mill Roundabout is expected to reduce traffic delay and improve the overall Level of Service (LOS) at the intersection from LOS F (extreme congestion or considerable delays) to LOS C (minimal delays) (Traffic Operations Analysis Report, Omni Means, November 2019). Implementation of the Olive Mill Roundabout ensures compliance with Coastal Land Use Plan (CLUP) Policy 7-32. CLUP Policy 7-32 was initially adopted by the Board of Supervisors in 2018 and requires that the Olive Mill Roundabout project, among other projects, be completed prior the completion of the adjacent Highway 101 HOV segment located within the Montecito area.

### **Appellant Issues and Staff Responses:**

#### **Appeal Issue 1 (Coastal Policies and VMT):**

The appellant contends that the approval: 1) does not comply with Coastal Act Section 30253[4] (which appears to be a reference to Coastal Act Section 30253[d]); 2) does not comply with Coastal Land Use Plan Section 3.11.1; and, 3) fails to minimize Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMTs). Please refer to page 7 of the appeal application (Attachment 8) for the appellant's full argument.

**Staff Response to Appeal Issue 1:** Both Coastal Act Section 30253[d] and Coastal Land Use Plan (CLUP) Section 3.11.1 indicate that new development should minimize vehicle miles traveled. The project is consistent with this requirement, as it will not measurably increase VMTs and includes improvements that support VMT reduction. The State Office of Planning and Research (OPR) *Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA (Technical Advisory)* establishes that roundabout projects "would not likely lead to a substantial or measurable increase in vehicle travel, and therefore generally should not require an induced travel analysis" (OPR 2018, page 20-21, available at [https://opr.ca.gov/docs/20190122-743\\_Technical\\_Advisory.pdf](https://opr.ca.gov/docs/20190122-743_Technical_Advisory.pdf)). As supported by the Traffic Operations Analysis Report (Omni Means, November 2019) the roundabout will result in more efficient vehicle flow through the intersection, reducing delay and vehicle stops and starts. Beyond improving traffic efficiency for vehicles, the proposed project includes pedestrian and bicycle improvements. These improvements to

non-motorized travel are expected to help reduce VMT. The project would improve the pedestrian and bicycle facilities by: 1) slowing the vehicular traffic approaching the roundabout; 2) reducing conflicts at the intersection; 3) designating right of way to the pedestrians and bicyclists using the crosswalks; 4) providing refuge islands for the crossing pedestrians; and 5) filling in missing sidewalk sections. The County Public Works Department anticipates that these project features, which improve the safety and usability of the intersection for pedestrians and cyclists, thus encouraging active transportation options, will likely reduce VMT. As the roundabout will not generate new VMTs and supports active transportation improvements, it will minimize VMTs consistent with the coastal sections cited by the appellant.

**Appeal Issue 2: (Environmental Review and VMT):** The appellant contends that VMT impacts were not evaluated and that environmentally superior alternatives were not analyzed (please refer to page 7 of the appeal application for the appellant's full argument).

**Staff Response to Appeal Issue 2:** As stated above, roundabout projects generally do not require an induced travel analysis. Furthermore, the project is not expected to lead to a substantial or measurable increase in vehicle travel and includes elements that support active transportation. As discussed in the Montecito Planning Commission staff report (Attachment 6) and incorporated herein by reference, the Addendum prepared for the proposed project provides the appropriate environmental review. There is no requirement for analysis of alternatives under an Addendum. While not required for environmental review, alternatives to the roundabout, including a "no build" alternative and all-way stop control alternative were considered in a Traffic Operations Analysis (Omni Means, November 2019), which found that those alternatives would result in failing service levels at the intersection. A signal alternative was also analyzed in an Intersection Control Evaluation (Kittleston, 2016) and would not provide acceptable operations. Effective July 1, 2020, lead agencies under CEQA are now required to analyze a project's transportation impacts using vehicle miles traveled. However, this requirement does not apply retroactively to an EIR that was previously certified. Accordingly, a VMT analysis was not required under CEQA at the time the 2017 Highway 101 HOV Project Revised EIR was certified, and it is not required now. In summary, the appropriate policy and environmental analyses were completed for the project and a roundabout is the appropriate intersection-improvement option.

**Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:**

Budgeted: Yes

Total costs for processing the appeal are approximately \$8,000.00 (30 hours of staff time). The costs for processing appeals are partially offset by a General Fund subsidy in Planning and Development's adopted budget. Funding for processing this appeal is budgeted in the Planning and Development Department's Permitting Budget Program, as shown on page D-294 of the County of Santa Barbara Fiscal Year (FY) 2020-21 adopted budget.

**Special Instructions:**

A display ad/notice shall be published at least 10 days prior to the hearing on November 17 2020. The display ad/notice shall appear in the Santa Barbara News-Press. Planning and Development shall fulfill noticing requirements. A minute order of the hearing and copy of the notice and proof of publication shall be returned to Planning and Development, attention David Villalobos. A second minute order of the hearing shall be returned to Planning and Development, attention Nicole Lieu.

**Attachments:**

1. Findings for Approval
2. Addendum, dated July 2020
3. Development Plan Conditions of Approval
4. Coastal Development Permit Conditions of Approval
5. Project Plans
6. Montecito Planning Commission Staff Report, dated July 28, 2020
7. Montecito Planning Commission Action Letter, dated September 18, 2020
8. Appeal Application, dated September 22, 2020

**Authored by:**

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Development Review Division, Planning and Development Department