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Sarah Mayer *Public Comment - Tree Amigos*

**From:** The Tree Amigos of Orcutt <thetreeamigosoforcutt@msn.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 28, 2024 9:33 PM  
**To:** sbcob  
**Subject:** Public Comment for 4/30/2024 Meeting  
**Attachments:** Tree Amigos Addendum.pdf; LOS Synopsis.pdf; Penfield & Smith Tree Amigos pdf.pdf

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Dear Clerk,

Please accept the attached Addendum to the Tree Amigos public comments for the 4/30/24 meeting.

Thank you,  
Ryan and Teri Schwab  
The Tree Amigos of Orcutt

Sent from [Outlook](#)

Staff has recommended in their findings for approval, attachment 2, that the LOS standards should be removed for the housing element. While this would, no doubt, allow all the zoning requests to be approved on paper, in real life it will not make the traffic problem disappear. Key Site 11 is located at the corner of Clark Avenue and Orcutt Road, which is a signaled intersection. There are two more signals just past that intersection to accommodate the exit and entrance for Highway 135. Highway 135 is heavily used for those who work in Lompoc, on the base, or in the other direction in Santa Maria. In addition, there is a middle school, and a high school located in Old Orcutt and the parents of those students all come through the Orcutt/Clark intersection on their way to and from those schools and playing fields.

In 2007 the Tree Amigos opposed a development project on Key Site 11 that proposed mixed uses with 33 housing units. At that time, the Planning Commission was unable to come up with a solution to the traffic impacts. The traffic study submitted by the developer showed LOS grades at Bethany Lane of C/D/F, and Foxenwood Drive of D/C, where you would expect far less impacts than on Clark and Orcutt Road where they did not take samples for unknown reasons<sup>1</sup>. That traffic study was conducted before the Splash N Dash carwash was built next to Key Site 11 and before the Rice Ranch development was completed. Now, that both those events have occurred, the traffic is far worse than it was in 2007. In addition, now the Oasis Senior Center is proposed to be built just past Highway 135 at Foxenwood Road.

The latest developer now suggests that a traffic signal could be installed on Bethany Lane to service his 157 apartments on Key Site 11. On a regular basis the westbound traffic can back up at Clark past Bethany Lane and has been seen backed up past the border of Key Site 11. Introducing a signal at Bethany Lane will cause daily gridlock both in the morning and in the afternoon when school lets out. Yet, not installing a signal there will cause the residents of the 157 apartments to put their lives at risk attempting to turn left across Clark Avenue in order to access Highway 135 or to take their children to school. Former Planning Commissioner Boysen stated that he would never approve a signal at Bethany Lane. To simply set aside traffic considerations in order to accommodate the state's housing requirements puts the lives of everyone in Orcutt in jeopardy every time we set foot outside our homes.

In 2007 the Tree Amigos obtained our own traffic expert who reviewed the traffic study submitted by the 2007 developer<sup>2</sup>. We have attached that traffic study to illustrate the problems 17 years ago that today have been magnified exponentially. It would be irresponsible to set aside the LOS standards for developing Key Site 11 based on the past experiences with those standards and the fact that they could not be met on a development a fraction the size of what is now being proposed.

When you vote for the housing element, please choose Alternative 5, which does not include rezoning of Key Site 11. In the event you ignore this suggestion to pass Alternative 5, in any and all circumstances you must ignore Planning staff and demand LOS standards remain intact for Key Site 11. The Tree Amigos requests you to direct staff to dedicate a permanent open space easement over Key Site 11 as the Orcutt Community Plan currently recommends. Once this site is destroyed by development, it will be gone forever.

Thank you.

Ryan and Teri Schwab

The Tree Amigos of Orcutt

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<sup>1</sup> Tree Amigos' LOS Summary is attached.

<sup>2</sup> Penfield & Smith Report

On Foxenwood Drive, the following samples were taken:

Monday, February 5, 2007, at 9:37 a.m. with a D rating,  
Monday, February 5, 2007, at 9:40 a.m. with a C rating,  
Sunday, February 11, 2007, at 4:59 p.m. with a D rating,  
Sunday, February 11, 2007, at 5:03 p.m. with a C rating,  
Monday, February 5, 2007, at 3:49 p.m. with a C rating,  
Sunday, February 11, 2007, at 5:06 p.m. with a D rating.

Samples were also taken from Bethany Lane as follows:

Monday, February 5, 2007, at 9:38 a.m. with a D rating,  
Monday, February 5, 2007, at 9:41 a.m. with a C rating,  
Sunday, February 11, 2007, at 5:01 p.m. with D and E ratings,  
Sunday, February 11, 2007, at 5:04 p.m. with two D ratings,  
Monday, February 5, 2007, at 3:50 p.m. with a D rating,  
and Sunday, February 11, 2007, at 5:07 p.m. with two E ratings.

Amazingly, there were NO samples provided for Clark Avenue or Orcutt Road, the two streets on which the actual development is located.

All of the samples provided in the report were taken during off-peak hours, on ideal road conditions, and during times when the traffic is at its lightest. There are no calculations for worst case scenario. This is an inadequate traffic study.

To reiterate, the information in the traffic study shows that the traffic levels do not warrant the C rating that is contained in the executive summary. The traffic samplings would more accurately be given a D rating.

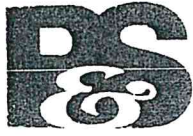
In addition to the lack of recreational open space in Orcutt, and the heavy traffic already existing on Orcutt Road and Clark Avenue, there is the very real concern of additional traffic at that location from the carwash being built at the Chevron site adjacent to Orcutt Key Site 11. A carwash at this location will greatly increase traffic.

Finally I would like to remind the Planning Commission that last year when you last considered this project you directed the developer to scale back the project significantly. The only real changes made have been to the aesthetics of the buildings. None of the changes affect the scope and size of the project, nor do they reduce the impending traffic nightmare.

#### I. Concluding Remarks

In conclusion the Tree Amigos is asking the Planning Commission to deny this project. We have demonstrated that the traffic study instead of supporting the development on Key Site 11 actually shows that the existing traffic prevents this development from being built.

We request that you rezone Orcutt Key Site 11 so that all of it is recreational open space.



## Penfield & Smith

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W.O.

July 20, 2007

The Tree Amigos of Orcutt  
313 Crescent Avenue  
Orcutt, CA 93455

Subject: Orcutt Key Site 11 – Traffic Study

Dear Sarah and Anna Schwab,

Per your request, I have completed a preliminary review of the traffic study completed by Pinnacle Traffic Engineering for the proposed English-Joseph Specific Plan (Key Site 11), located south of Clark Avenue and east of Orcutt Road. The project proposed to construct 30 condominium units and 60,970 square feet of retail space. The following text answers your questions and provides comments on the traffic study.

### Questions

*1) Traffic samples are 2005 samples. Should the engineer be required to add current traffic counts for Clark Avenue and Orcutt Street?*

If the average daily traffic counts were collected in 2005, then these volumes fall within the typically applied two-year life of a count sample. However, the discussion in the traffic study (second paragraph, page 5) indicates that counts were collected for Clark Avenue in 1999, and that counts for Orcutt Road were collected in 2001. These counts can be considered outdated if this is the case. County staff should determine if new counts should be collected.

*2) A new carwash is currently proposed adjacent to the project. Should a new traffic study be conducted on this fact alone?*

The traffic study was probably completed before the carwash applied for a permit. County staff will have to determine if the carwash requires a traffic analysis, depending on its proposed size and access. The traffic study for Key Site 11 would likely not have to be revised based on the carwash alone. If County staff determines that the traffic study needs to be revised based on other reasons, then it is recommended that the carwash be included in the revised analysis.

Preliminary Traffic Study Review

The preliminary review focuses on the project trip generation and level of service analysis. The on-site traffic circulation, site access, speed and accident data, and signal warrants are not reviewed. The comments are listed below.

*Project trip generation* - Project traffic is estimated using trip generation rates contained in the Institute of Transportation Engineers' *Trip Generation* handbook. The project trip generation table (Table 2, page 10) shows that the specialty retail would not generate trips during the AM peak hour, because no rates are given in the *Trip Generation* handbook for the AM peak period. It is reasonable to expect some level of traffic to be attracted to the site in the AM, i.e. employee traffic, service and delivery traffic, in addition to customer traffic associated with a convenience store or market. The AM peak hour rate contained in SANDAG's (San Diego) trip generation guide (3% of the average daily traffic) are commonly used to estimate traffic for this period. Another method is to apply rates for shopping centers, which is similar land use.

*Roadway analysis* - The County requires roadway level of service analysis for each scenario. The cumulative analysis contained in the traffic study does not provide a roadway level of service analysis.

*Intersection analysis* - The intersection levels of service for the signalized intersections is consistent with the results from recent calculations. The delays at the two unsignalized intersections (Clark Ave/Foxenwood Ln and Clark Ave/Bethany Ln) appear to be low compared to recent analysis. A review of the calculation worksheets in the appendix indicate that the listed delays are the sum of delays for all vehicles traveling through the intersections. This method reduces intersection delay significantly, because it includes through traffic and right-turn traffic on Clark Avenue. Per Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) methodology, these movements are excluded from the level of service analysis. The analysis should only incorporate the side streets controlled by a stop sign and the left-turns on Clark Ave.

Initial calculations applying the HCM two-way stop control calculation methodology to the traffic volumes in the traffic study indicates that both Clark Ave/Foxenwood Ln and Clark Ave/Bethany Ln currently operate in the LOS C/D range instead of in the LOS A range. Review of the existing + project delays indicate that the project may exceed the County's project-specific impact threshold criteria. This is also the case for the cumulative + project scenario.

This concludes my preliminary review of the English-Joseph Specific Plan (Key Site 11) traffic study. I hope the information provided above satisfies your request.

Sincerely,

Dennis J. Lammers, PTP  
Associate Transportation Planner

