

Appendix A  
**Notice of Preparation**

**COUNTY OF MONTEREY**

**RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY  
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT  
168 W. ALISAL ST. 2<sup>nd</sup> FLOOR, SALINAS, CA 93901**



<http://www.co.monterey.ca.us/pbi/>

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**NOTICE OF PREPARATION (NOP)  
of a Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) for the  
Carmel Valley Master Plan  
Proposed by the Monterey County Resource Management Agency  
Department of Public Works  
County Planning File Number: PLN050133**

The County of Monterey will be the Lead Agency and will prepare a Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) for the Carmel Valley Master Plan (County Planning File Number: PLN050133) proposed by Monterey County Resource Management Agency Public Works Department. The following is a summary of the project's primary components:

Policy 39.3.2.1 of the Carmel Valley Master Plan (CVMP) requires monitoring and reporting of traffic conditions in Carmel Valley to determine whether traffic thresholds are being reached. In 1988, the Monterey County Board of Supervisors found that traffic volumes on Carmel Valley Road were approaching the threshold levels of Policy 39.3.2.1. Due to the fact that traffic threshold conditions were being approached in certain areas, the Board directed staff to proceed with the preparation of an EIR to address traffic impacts and mitigations on Carmel Valley Road. This EIR was certified and adopted by the Board in December, 1991.

Since then, many of the growth forecasts and mitigation projects have not materialized. For example, the Hatton Canyon Freeway Project and most of the recommended improvement projects identified in Policy 39.3.1.1 of the CVMP have not been constructed and are not expected to be constructed in the near future. The proposed EIR will evaluate the traffic impacts of the CVMP and refine the traffic analysis contained in the December, 1991 CVMP EIR. The EIR shall also integrate the environmental effects of the CVMP circulation and land use elements, so the transportation impacts of growth can be presented in both descriptive and economic terms.

### **Background and History**

Planning for Carmel Valley has been the focus of intense and enduring public interest for several decades. The chief planning goals in the Valley have been the retention of the rural character including scenic resources and open space. One of the more obvious manifestations of conflict between environmental preservation and growth is traffic, which is thought by many to threaten the rural quality of the Valley. To address this problem, growth limitation and traffic "trigger mechanisms" were established as mitigation measures in the 1984 CVMP EIR. These mitigations were adopted as policies of the current Carmel Valley Master Plan.

In 1986 the growth limit for Carmel Valley was set at 1,310 residential lots, which included 572 existing and vacant lots of record, and 425 visitor-accommodating units (hotel or motel rooms). There is no limit on commercial development such as office or retail space.

The CVMP also recommends periodic monitoring of traffic conditions in the Valley to determine whether the traffic threshold identified in the trigger policy is being reached, and if so, in what locations. The on-going counts and analyses conducted by the County Department of Public Works have determined that the following thresholds were exceeded: Segment 6, Schulte Road to Robinson Canyon Road, was exceeded in 1991, Segment 3, Laureles Grade to Ford Road, and Segment 7, Rancho San Carlos to Schulte Road in 2001. Because a traffic trigger mechanism has the potential to suspend growth and development in the Valley, accurate and reliable measures of traffic conditions must be reported to decision-makers with the authority to approve development in the Valley.

An outcome of the December, 1991 CVMP EIR was the creation of a traffic fee program for construction of road projects in the Valley. The fee program was adopted by the Board of Supervisors in 1995. Traffic fees are assessed on residential and commercial developments and vary depending on the land use and whether the lot legally existed, prior to December, 1991. Fees are based on road improvement costs in the Valley to meet the needs of expected land use and traffic growth forecasts. The December, 1991 EIR assumed full build-out of the 1310 residential lots and 394,000 square feet of new commercial space by 2006. The EIR also assumed that the following road improvements would be constructed by 2006:

- Hatton Canyon Freeway
- Rio Road Extension
- Rio Road/Highway One Grade Separation
- Widening to four lanes of Segments 6 and 7
- Left-turn pockets on Segment 3 and 5
- Laureles Grade/Carmel Valley Road Grade Separation

Although the growth forecasts and improvement implementation assumptions were based on available growth trends and traffic modeling, these assumptions have been proven overly ambitious. In addition, most improvement projects have not been constructed. Since 1991, the following improvements have occurred in the Valley:

- Traffic signal at Carmel Valley Road/Rancho San Carlos Road
- Traffic signal at Carmel Valley Road/Via Mallorca
- Construction of a two-way left-turn and shoulder widening on Segment 6 and 7
- Construction of dual right-turn lanes from eastbound Carmel Valley Road to northbound Highway One
- Construction of a climbing lane on Highway One from Carmel Valley Road to Ocean Avenue

**A primary goal of the proposed EIR will be to evaluate baseline conditions and update land use and traffic forecasts.**

### **Objective of the Carmel Valley Master Plan Subsequent EIR**

The objectives of this EIR are to present an independent analysis and comprehensive review of the existing and projected traffic conditions in the Carmel Valley area, as well as to provide recommendations for traffic improvements that result in the desired level of service while maintaining rural quality. The EIR should address them by:

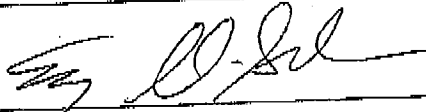
- Updating and refining the existing CVMP traffic analysis to reflect recent land use proposals and public comments;
- Providing a basis to approve any future development which reflects traffic thresholds and environmental values;
- Explaining the methods of traffic analysis commonly used today, and their applicability to the Carmel Valley;
- Explaining the relationship between current traffic counts, projected increases, and growth in background traffic levels;
- Balancing growth with transportation improvements that are physically and economically feasible; and
- Providing a circulation improvement program, which includes cost allocation principles.

The County of Monterey requests you written comments regarding the scope and content of the environmental information to be addressed in the EIR for the Rancho Canada Village Subdivision project. In accordance with CEQA and County procedures, your agency is requested to provide a written response to this NOP within the 30-day NOP review period between **August 30, 2006** and **September 29, 2006**. The County will incorporate relevant issues and information into the Draft EIR as identified in the NOP and NOP responses throughout the EIR process.

*Please identify a contact person for your agency and send your written response to:*

County of Monterey  
Resource Management Agency  
Public Works Department  
168 W. Alisal, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Salinas, CA 93901  
Attn: Enrique Saavedra, P.E.

Other contact information: (831) 755-8970 (direct line with voicemail) or (831) 755-4800 (department phone number), saavedream@co.monterey.ca.us (email) or (831) 755-4958 (department facsimile)

  
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Enrique Saavedra, P.E.  
Senior Civil Engineer

8-28-2006  
Date: August 28, 2006