Del Rio Road Commercial Area Specific Plan  
Council Briefing: US 101 / Del Rio Road Interchange Improvements

RECOMMENDATION:

Council authorize staff to begin discussions with Walmart Inc. and The Rottman Group regarding the phasing and funding of improvements for the US 101 / Del Rio Road freeway interchange.

DISCUSSION:

Background: The City has been processing the Del Rio Road Commercial Area Specific Plan since the project application was revised and submitted in April 2010. The EIR consultant has completed the Draft EIR and is currently preparing the response to public comments as part of the Final EIR. City staff is currently working on the staff report and Conditions of Approval for the Planning Commission and City Council hearings.

Recently, Walmart Inc. and The Rottman Group have notified the City that they have been unable to establish an agreement regarding the funding of the interchange improvements that are identified in the Draft EIR (refer to following section). At this point, the EIR and entitlement process cannot move forward until the interchange improvements are resolved. Furthermore, it does not appear this issue will be resolved without direct City involvement in the discussion of phasing and funding options for the interchange.

Summary: The purpose of this report is to brief the Council on this issue and request authorization for staff to participate in discussions regarding phasing and funding options for the interchange improvements.

The Draft EIR identified traffic circulation impacts to the US 101 / Del Rio Road interchange as a significant and unavoidable impact. The Draft EIR determined that the interchange currently operates at a Level of Service (LOS) A at the peak hour (pg. 3.11-
15). After construction of the project (Walmart and Annex), the interchange LOS will drop to a LOS D and F at the Saturday midday peak (pg. 3.11-57). The City’s minimum level of service for an intersection operation is LOS C.

In order to mitigate this impact, the Draft EIR identified the following mitigation measures to improve the traffic capacity of the interchange. The mitigation measures require the existing ramp head signals to be replaced with modern roundabouts prior to completion of the first phase (Walmart store). Once the roundabouts are installed, the interchange will operate a LOS B at the Saturday midday peak (pg. 3.11-57).

**Draft EIR mitigation measures (pg. 3.11-70)**

**MM TRANS-1c** Prior to issuance of the final certificate of occupancy for Walmart, the project applicant shall convert the intersection of Del Rio Road/US 101 Northbound Ramps to a single-lane modern roundabout with a 150-foot-long right-turn bypass lane on the westbound approach. The City of Atascadero shall determine the financial obligation of the applicant for the cost of the improvement and the applicant shall be eligible for reimbursement for costs outside its fair share.

**MM TRANS-1d** Prior to issuance of the final certificate of occupancy for Walmart, the project applicant shall construct a five-legged, single-lane modern roundabout at the intersection of Del Rio Road/US 101 Southbound Ramps that incorporates Ramona Road as the fifth approach. The City of Atascadero shall determine the financial obligation of the applicant for the cost of the improvement and the applicant shall be eligible for reimbursement for costs outside its fair share.

The applicant’s engineers are estimating the interchange mitigation to cost between $3 million and $4.5 million. In addition to the interchange, the project will be responsible for other traffic mitigation improvements. These improvements will be located both on the project frontages and off-site. The costs of these additional improvements are not known at this time.
FISCAL IMPACT:

Potential cost to the City is unknown.

ATTACHMENTS: none