



Legislation Text

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**AGENDA REPORT
REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION**

DATE: 10/17/2018

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Public Works Department

SUBJECT:

City Council consideration to adopt Resolution No. 2018-112, documenting approval of an existing traffic barrier gate prohibiting entry to and exit from San Ramon Drive and authorizing it to remain in place pursuant to California Vehicle Code Section 21101(f).

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the City Council adopt Resolution No. 2018-112, documenting approval of an existing traffic barrier gate prohibiting entry to and exit from San Ramon Drive and authorizing it to remain in place pursuant to California Vehicle Code Section 21101(f).

ANALYSIS:

In 1990, residents of the Montenero Community sent several complaints to the City concerning speeding and traffic volumes cutting through their neighborhood to access Green River Road from Dominguez Ranch Road. The complaints were reviewed and discussed at the March 21, 1990, City Council meeting. During that meeting, staff illustrated the problems expressed in the complaints and several residents communicated their specific traffic safety concerns to the City Council. The City Council directed the item be brought back for action at the April 4, 1990, City Council meeting. Subsequently, City Council approved the installation of a traffic barrier on San Ramon Drive due to health and safety concerns related to traffic and instructed staff to realign San Ramon Drive with a double cul-de-sac and appropriate no more than \$10,000 towards the construction of an automatic gate.

After this action, staff worked with the developer, Pacer Homes, to design and construct a modified double cul-de-sac with an automatic sliding gate for emergency vehicle access purposes on San Ramon Drive. Partial funding for the San Ramon gate project was ratified by City Council on November 18, 1992, when \$10,000.00 was authorized to be transferred from the Traffic Signal Installation and Modification fund to reimburse Pacer Homes for the City's share of the San Ramon gate construction. However, final completion of the San Ramon gate was not immediately finished as

staff was not able to accept the final product. It appears the developer never resolved all of the issues related to satisfactorily complete the construction of the gate so, in October of 1993, documents indicate that staff completed the work themselves and disbursed only \$5,000 to reimburse Pacer Homes for the portion of the work the developer completed and used the remaining \$5,000 to pay for the time and material to satisfactorily complete installation of the gate.

Almost twenty-two years later, the San Ramon gate experienced mechanical problems in May 2015, so the Fire Department locked the gate in the open position for approximately eight months until the automated gate was repaired and closed again. During the period of time the gate was open, residents in the Sierra Peak Community on the east side of the gate became accustomed to the optional route and filed a petition with the Fire Department on April 20, 2016, requesting the removal of the gate.

On May 4, 2016, Public Works informed the Infrastructure Committee of receipt of the petition. Members of the Montenero community also attended the meeting stating their opposition to the removal of the gate. Action on this issue was postponed until the completion of the SR-91 Corridor Improvement Project and the Foothill Westerly Extension Project. As directed by the Infrastructure Committee, a traffic study was conducted upon completion of both projects and that traffic study, dated October 10, 2018, is attached to this report.

The attached traffic study concluded that during free flow conditions, the travel time on Green River Road from Canyon Crest Drive to Rancho Dominguez Road is actually less than the travel time from Canyon Crest Drive to the intersection of Green River Road and Rancho Dominguez Road using the San Ramon Drive route (assuming that the San Ramon gate is removed). However, as traffic flow on Green River Road is backed up at Nicolas Place, Palisades Drive, Ridgeline Drive or Canyon Crest, the travel time along Green River increases exponentially (from 3 minutes, 48 seconds to 19 minutes, 56 seconds at Canyon Crest). The increased travel time caused by added traffic leads to the conclusion that as travel time along Green River Road increases, the inclination of a driver to pursue other available alternative routes that may reduce the driver's travel time, such as the San Ramon Drive to Dominguez Ranch Road route, will likewise, increase exponentially.

The attached traffic study also concluded that the intersection of Dominguez Ranch Road and Green River Road is currently at or near capacity for left-turn movements from Dominguez Ranch Road to Green River Road during the am peak period. This finding indicates that the removal of the San Ramon gate and the anticipated resultant cut-through traffic volume would result in the intersection of Dominguez Ranch Road and Green River Road being impacted beyond the capacity for which it was designed. Moreover, the removal of the San Ramon gate may result in San Ramon Road and Dominguez Ranch Road, which are classified as local residential streets, bearing a traffic volume more characteristic of a higher classification street, such as a collector or arterial street, which would be contrary to the health and safety of the residents on San Ramon Road, Dominguez Rancho Road and the entire Montenero community.

The attached traffic study determined that the removal of the San Ramon gate would likely result in the traffic that is currently traveling on Green River Road simply being diverted through the San Ramon Road and Dominguez Ranch Road neighborhood and would not result in any reduction in traffic flow or an improvement in the overall traffic conditions in the area.

California Vehicle Code Section 21101(f) authorizes the City Council, by resolution, to adopt rules

and regulations prohibiting entry to, or exit from, or both, from any street by means of islands, curbs, traffic barriers, or other roadway design features to implement the circulation element of the general plan. The circulation element of the City's general plan provides that local streets should be designed to discourage their use as through traffic routes and that neighborhood traffic control techniques should be utilized to mitigate cut-through traffic impacts on residential streets. As indicated above, prior to the installation of the San Ramon gate, San Ramon Road and Dominguez Ranch Road, which are local residential streets, were being utilized as through traffic routes to avoid the traffic congestion on Green River Road, which resulted in a negative impact on the residents in the Montenero community. The San Ramon gate was installed as a traffic control technique to mitigate the cut-through traffic impacts on San Ramon Road and Dominguez Ranch Road. Allowing the San Ramon gate to remain would implement these policies of the circulation element.

Overall, the conclusion of the traffic study illustrates how the conditions that caused San Ramon Drive to be used as a cut-through route to by-pass congestion on Green River Road have not changed since the initial installation of the San Ramon gate. Thus, staff is recommending approval of the attached resolution documenting the approval of the San Ramon gate and authorizing it to remain in place pursuant to the authority provided by Vehicle Code Section 21101(f).

COMMITTEE ACTION:

Not applicable.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

This item supports the City's Strategic Plan Goal 5: Improve Circulation and Reduce Traffic. The decision to make San Ramon gate permanent will ensure that the traffic circulation in the residential community of Montenero and adjacent communities will remain safe from substantial cut-through traffic.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no financial impact as the San Ramon gate is already constructed and costs to maintain the gate are already accounted for in the City's budget.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

This action has no impact on the environment and is considered a categorical exemption pursuant to Section 15301(c) of the Guidelines for the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Section 15301(c) states that a project which consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting or minor alteration of existing public structures, including existing highways, streets, sidewalks, gutters, bicycle and pedestrian trails, and similar features, involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond the existing use does not have a significant impact on the environment, and is therefore exempt from CEQA. This action will permit the existing San Ramon gate located on San Ramon Drive to remain in its existing condition and there will be no expansion of use beyond the existing use. Therefore, no environmental analysis is required, and City staff will file a Notice of Exemption with the County of Riverside.

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REVIEWED BY: KERRY D. EDEN, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER/ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIRECTOR

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SUBMITTED BY: DARRELL TALBERT, CITY MANAGER

Attachment: Traffic Study