



March 5, 2008

Mr. Tom Cole  
Highland Development Company  
80 South Lake Avenue, Suite 660  
Pasadena, CA 91101

***SUBJECT:    The Plaza @ Calle Tampico in La Quinta - Village Use Permit 2006-035  
Traffic Impact Study - Response to Comments***

Dear Mr. Cole;

Endo Engineering has reviewed the comments on *The Plaza @ Calle Tampico - Village Use Permit 2006-035 Draft Traffic Impact Analysis* (Endo Engineering; December 16, 2007) that were prepared by the City of La Quinta Department of Public Works on February 14, 2008 and faxed to us on February 20, 2008. To facilitate your review, we have reiterated each comment below, followed by the corresponding response.

**Comment 1:** The Proposed Parking section makes reference to a shared parking arrangement with the adjacent office use. To determine if the shared parking arrangement will work, the parking accumulation analysis for the existing offices and proposed commercial uses referred to in this section should be provided.

**Response 1:** As noted on pages 1-3 and 1-4 of the "Project Description" section, the City of La Quinta required, as a condition of approval on The Village Use Permit 2006-035, a reciprocal parking license agreement between the existing two office buildings in Parcel 1 of The Village at La Quinta and the developer of the proposed commercial uses in The Plaza @ Calle Tampico. An evaluation of the adequacy of the shared parking was conducted by City staff and included in the Planning Commission Staff Report for Village Use Permit 2006-035 (dated October 9, 2007). That evaluation concluded that "Upon completion, the two combined projects will have a total of 314 parking spaces and be in compliance with the Parking Ordinance." The staff report is cited throughout the traffic study and available in its entirety on the City of La Quinta web page. The portion of the staff report addressing the adequacy of the combined parking is included as Attachment A to this letter.

**Comment 2:** As noted in the report, signal timing at Washington/Calle Tampico can not realistically be adjusted to allow more time for Calle Tampico. The report identifies deficiencies in left turn storage for both eastbound and westbound Calle Tampico in both existing and project opening conditions. A "fair share" calculation should be included in the report for contributing to the extension of these pockets.

**Response 2:** The traffic study evaluated the back-of-queue at the intersection of Washington Street and Calle Tampico and found that both the eastbound and westbound left-turning traffic volumes can exceed the available queue storage space during the peak hours in the peak season. The westbound left-turn bay is currently striped back-to-back with an eastbound left-turn pocket at Calle Obispo, and therefore cannot be extended without closing the median opening and eliminating the eastbound left-turn bay on Calle Tampico at Calle Obispo.

The eastbound left-turn bay at the intersection of Washington Street and Calle Tampico is part of a raised landscaped median that extends in front of the City offices. If the landscaping in the median is eliminated, the eastbound left-turn bay at the intersection of Washington Street and Calle Tampico can be lengthened. At the west end of the landscaped median, a westbound left-turn bay serves the visitor parking area and limits the extent to which the eastbound left-turn bay can be extended.

The project’s “fair share” percentage of the cost of improvements is commonly defined as the number of project-related evening peak hour trips through an intersection divided by the total increase in evening peak hour trips. The formula utilized to determine the percentage contribution is shown below.

$$\text{Site Contribution To Future Growth (\%)} = \frac{\text{Site Traffic (Volumes in Figure 4-6)} \times 100}{\text{Year 2020 Total Traffic - Existing Traffic (Figure 3-3)}}$$

To determine the year 2020 total traffic peak hour volumes (upon Citywide buildout) the existing evening peak hour count data was proportionately expanded by the ratio of year 2020 General Plan buildout daily traffic volumes to existing daily traffic volumes. The year 2020 ambient daily traffic projections evaluated herein assumed, at a minimum, a 10 percent growth in all current peak season turning movement volumes at the intersection. Since Calle Tampico, east of Washington Street, is a collector street and was not included in the 2002 General Plan Update traffic model, a 10 percent growth was assumed for this roadway segment.

The traffic study assumed that 45 percent of the project-related trips would travel through the Washington Street/Calle Tampico intersection. During the evening peak hour, the project would contribute 91 vehicles to the volumes passing through this intersection. Based upon the projected growth in General Plan buildout traffic volumes, the intersection of Washington Street and Calle Tampico will ultimately experience an increase of 1,258 evening peak hour trips (3,626 year 2020 evening peak hour trips minus 2,366 existing evening peak hour trips). The proposed site contribution to future growth would be 7.24 percent (91 divided by 1,258).

**Comment 3:** The trip distribution for this project should clearly state whether existing ADTs on Washington, Calle Tampico, Eisenhower Dr. and other surrounding streets were taken into consideration in determining the trip distribution for the project.

**Response 3:** The trip distribution for this project was primarily based upon the peak hour traffic counts at the two key intersections, Desert Club Drive at Calle Tampico and Washington Street at Calle Tampico. As discussed in the traffic study on page 4-5,

“From Figure 3-3 it can be seen that the current directional split of the 641 vehicles (in the morning and evening peak hour combined) currently using Desert Club Drive, immediately north of Calle Tampico, is currently: 27 percent to/from the west, 28 percent to/from the south, and 45 percent to/from the east.”

“Figure 4-1 illustrates the primary trip distribution (i.e., the percentage of the project-related primary trips along the roadways throughout the study area and at each site access point). As shown therein, 45 percent of the site traffic was distributed to the east on Calle Tampico. Twenty-five percent of the site traffic was distributed to the west and to the south. The remaining 5 percent was distributed to/from the north on Desert Club Drive.”

Similarly, the project-related trip distribution at the intersection of Washington Street and Calle Tampico was based upon the peak hour turning movement counts at this intersection. When combined, the southbound right-turn volume and eastbound left-turn volume counted during the morning and evening peak hours represented 73.6 percent of the total morning and evening peak hour volume on Calle Tampico, west of Washington Street. Therefore, the site traffic distribution to Washington Street (north of Calle Tampico) was 73.6 percent of the 45 percent assigned to Calle Tampico (or 33 percent of the project-related traffic). Of the remaining 12 percent of the project-related traffic, 10 percent was assigned to Washington Street (south of Calle Tampico) and 2 percent was assigned to Calle Tampico (east of Washington Street).

**Comment 4:** Study shows that Peak AM left turns out of southbound Desert Club on to Calle Tampico is 237 vehicles. This exceeds the City's threshold for dual left turn lanes. The study should explore the operational benefits of allowing both southbound lanes to turn left at this intersection (i.e. split phase).

**Response 4:** Engineering Bulletin #06-13 states on page 5, “Traffic study recommendations for dual left turn lanes should be based on a threshold of 250 vehicles per hour peak hour volumes.” Since the highest projected left-turn volume is 237 vehicles per hour (which does not exceed the 250 vehicle/hour threshold criteria) dual left-turn lanes were not recommended.

The actual traffic count data included only 130 southbound vehicles making this left turn during the highest volume hour in the morning on Desert Club Drive. The 15 percent seasonal adjustment applied increased the left-turn volume to 150 VPH (even though the applicability of a seasonal increase in peak hour traffic is arguable at this location and hour). The application of an 8 percent per annum traffic growth rate further increased the volume to 174 VPH. Finally, 63 vehicles were added from the proposed project to reach 237 VPH. The site traffic volume added was unrealistically high, since it reflects traffic in the morning peak hour of the commercial generators on-site (11:00 AM-12:00 PM) whereas the ambient traffic volume reflects conditions during the morning peak hour of adjacent street traffic (between 7:00 AM and 9:00 AM) when nearly all of the commercial development on-site will be closed.

Furthermore, the high southbound left-turn volume on Desert Club Drive at Calle Tampico is related to the opening and closing of the existing school located north of the site. Left-turn volumes of this magnitude occur only twice each day (when the school day begins and ends) and these volumes are not representative of typical left-turn volumes throughout the day. Allowing both southbound lanes to turn left would require a split phase signal, which would reduce the intersection capacity by increasing the yellow/red loss time and increase the overall average intersection delay.

**Comment 5:** The third paragraph of section 7.6 states that changing the signal timing at Washington and Tampico would have a localized effect on traffic. As there is a large amount of traffic that uses this intersection to access the "Cove" area of the City, changing the timing would have a more regional effect.

**Response 5:** Washington Street is an important commuter route whose traffic signal cycles have been coordinated to reduce the overall delay. A poorly synchronized intersection in the middle of a series of coordinated signals could substantially reduce the capacity of the corridor. In this case, however, the change in signal timing would have a more localized effect, because the intersection of Washington Street and Calle Tampico is located near the southern terminus of the Washington Street corridor with signal coordination (one-quarter mile north of Avenue 52). Although Washington Street is clearly an important commuter route south of Calle Tampico, the daily volume served in this area is less than one-half of the daily volume served by Washington Street further to the north.

We trust that the information provided herein will adequately respond to the City's concerns. Should additional questions or comments arise regarding the findings and recommendations with this study, please do not hesitate to contact our offices by telephone, facsimile or electronic mail at [endo@endoengineering.com](mailto:endo@endoengineering.com).

Sincerely,  
ENDO ENGINEERING

Gregory Endo,  
Principal

Attachment

**Attachment A**

Excerpt From City of La Quinta Planning Commission  
Staff Report For Village Use Permit 2006-035  
(Dated October 9, 2007)

## Stormwater Management

The applicants have proposed connecting their on-site drainage into the existing storm sewer system, however the existing system may not have adequate reserve capacity to handle additional stormwater flows from the proposed project. Two studies, one of which is currently being conducted for the City by a consultant and the applicant's preliminary hydrology report, will determine the applicant's final course of action. As a result, Public Works has recommended three scenarios in the conditions of approval for handling on-site drainage. The final drainage retention scenario will be based on the results of those studies.

## Parking

The applicants are providing 165 on-site parking spaces and have a shared parking agreement with the adjacent office building which has 188 parking spaces, 39 of which are currently located on this adjacent parcel proposed for development. These 39 spaces were originally constructed to serve the uncompleted phase 2 of the existing office complex. Upon completion, the two combined projects will have a total of 314 parking spaces and be in compliance with the Parking Ordinance.

Staff conducted a parking analysis of the project site, including the two existing office buildings:

Building	Square Feet	Required Spaces	Parking Spaces
Existing Building B	20,648	1 per 150 (medical)	188 existing spaces
Existing Building E	20,857	1 per 250 (office)	39 to be removed
Major 1	13,969	1 per 200, for general retail less than 50,000 SF; 160 req. spaces	165 total parking spaces provided
Shops 1	6,275		
Shops 2	12,025		
Total:	32,269		
Overall:	188 – 39 + 165 =	314 total parking spaces provided (1:235)	

36 of the 39 parking spaces are currently underneath a carport trellis. For those to be removed, the applicants have proposed to construct a new carport over 13 spaces located at the northeast corner of the proposed project site, adjacent to the west side of existing "Building E." Although 23 spaces will no longer be covered, the buildings will still meet the 30% carport coverage required for office uses.

Parcel Map 27109 has an existing parking and access easement which permits the adjacent office building to park within the proposed site. Because the existing office

buildings are closed in the evening and on weekends, the applicants have proposed a day-night parking arrangement with the adjacent property. A shared parking agreement has been included in the recommended conditions of approval. Staff believes this arrangement will be sufficient to provide adequate parking for both projects. Similar projects, such as the recently approved Eisenhower Medical Building, require one parking space per 250 square feet. With all building square footage and parking capacity combined, the parking ratio will for this project will be in compliance with the Parking Ordinance at 1 parking space per 235 square feet.

## **Traffic**

The proposed tenant of Major 1, *Fresh and Easy*, has stated that they will be receiving deliveries from an Inland Empire distribution center between 8:30pm and 10:30pm. Delivery vehicles entering the loading dock will be full sized 2007-2008 EPA-compliant semi trucks with 53 foot trailers. Public Works has identified a concern with the applicant's proposed truck turning template (Attachment 1, Sheet 2 of 8) due to the three-car width of the Desert Club driveway. A condition of approval has been included for this to be revised, which may result in a minor reconfiguration of the Desert Club driveway and a potential loss or relocation of up to two parking spaces.

Concerns have also been raised with street light timing in conjunction with the volume of trips entering and exiting the project site. Desert Club Drive north of Calle Tampico is a cul-de-sac leading to the Adams Elementary school that has historically experienced minimal traffic. As a result, a condition has been added requiring the applicant to prepare a traffic report focusing on the timing of the traffic signals at the intersections of Desert Club Drive and Washington Street along Calle Tampico.

## **Architecture and Site Plan**

Staff has been working with the project architect over the past year in order to bring the site plan and architecture more in line with the Village Design Guidelines. As a result, parking has been moved to the interior of the project site and the buildings have been placed along Calle Tampico. Upon the ALRC's recommendation, the applicants have further refined the project proposal by providing additional depth to the elevations, enhancing cornices and parapets with a stepped design, extending trellis coverage, and modifying the landscaping plans with drought-resistant landscaping.

Although staff is supportive of the Spanish Contemporary architecture, there are a few outstanding concerns with some elements. Staff and the Architecture and Landscaping Review Committee both recommended that the tower entry feature on Major 1 be reduced to 28 feet from 30 feet due to massing concerns. This entry feature extends approximately 5 feet above the general roofline of the building resulting in an appearance of disproportionate massing.