

January 6, 1987

REPORT TO THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND LAND USE  
REGARDING EL CAMINO REAL (ITEM 7 OF NOVEMBER 10, 1986 AGENDA)

At the T&LU committee meeting of November 10, 1986, the City Manager recommended that the acquisition agreement with Watt Industries of San Diego, which required Watt to realign portions of El Camino Real, be rescinded. Your committee requested that this office review the legal aspects of not proceeding with the realignment. We will presume that this request involves our evaluation of potential liability problems associated with the "hair pin" turn on El Camino Real.

The proposed realignment was required to provide safe access to a Watt development project. The Developers proposed to use El Camino Real as a collector street for the new development as well as continuing to serve existing development. A key to the problem is a definition of the types of streets. Council Policy 600-4 defines a collector street as:

A street whose purpose is not only to provide for local traffic movement and access to abutting property, but also for movement between local and arterial streets. Usually it is a two-lane facility but it may on occasion be four-lane.

Collector street design standards are higher (i.e. 500 feet minimum radius of turn and 60 feet minimum right of way width). The sharp turn on El Camino Real does not meet this standard and the road is therefore inadequate as a collector street. Because of changes in circumstances, the right of way for the existing El Camino Real will no longer be used to serve the Watt development. Under this change, a new El Camino Real will be established and the existing right of way will only serve as an artery for local traffic movement and direct access to abutting property.

Under Council Policy 600-4 a local street is defined as:

A street whose primary purpose is to provide for local traffic movement and direct access to abutting property. Usually it is a two-lane facility.

The North City West Unit 7 Precise Plan indicates that projected traffic volumes on the street will be low (1700 ADT). The surrounding area is currently very low density residential with some agricultural. Based on these factors, the old right of

way could properly be classified as a local street. As a local street, the minimum radius of curve can be as low as 100 feet. Old El Camino Real does not currently meet these minimum standards, however, if it were subject to minor reconstruction it may meet these local street standards. The City Manager and Watt Industry representatives should meet to discuss how to achieve these minor objectives prior to relieving Watt of its obligations.

When the roadway meets City standards for its use, the absence of the higher level of improvements required of Watt Industries under the agreement would not pose a significant liability problem.

Therefore, if the roadway is improved we believe that the proposal to retain the right of way as a local street would be a proper exercise of your legislative discretion.

Respectfully submitted,  
JOHN W. WITT  
City Attorney

JKR:mrh:011.2.3(x043.1)  
RC-87-2