

Resolution for Approving/Denying Permits

(R-XXXXXX)

RESOLUTION NUMBER R-XXXXXX

ADOPTED ON

WHEREAS, SAN DIEGUITO RIVER PARK JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY, Permittee, filed an application with the City of San Diego for a Site Development Permit No. 193075 to construct a 990-foot long pedestrian/bicycle bridge and related trail connections across Lake Hodges linking the Lake Hodges North Shore Trail with the Bernardo Bay trail staging area and Piedras Pintadas Trail known as the Lake Hodges Pedestrian/Bicycle Bridge project, located at Lake Hodges Reservoir, west of Interstate 15, south of Via Rancho Parkway, and northwest of West Bernardo Drive, and legally described as the East half (E 1/2) of the Northeast quarter (NE 1/4) of Section Seven (7); the East half (E 1/2) of the Southeast quarter (SE 1/4) of Section Seven (7); the West half (W 1/2) of the Northwest quarter (NW 1/4) and the West half (W 1/2) of the Southwest quarter (SW 1/4) of Section Eight (8); the Northeast quarter (NE 1/4) of the Northeast quarter (NE 1/4) of Section Eighteen (18), all in Township Thirteen (13) South, Range Two (2) West, S.B.M., except that portion thereof lying above an elevation of three hundred thirty (330) feet above sea level according to the United States Geological Survey datum, in the Rancho Bernardo and San Pasqual Community Plan areas, in the AR-1-1 zone; and

WHEREAS, on June 9, 2005, the Planning Commission of the City of San Diego considered SDP No193075, and pursuant to Resolution No. 3786-PC voted to approve the permit; and

WHEREAS, San Pasqual/Lake Hodges Community Planning Group appealed the Planning Commission decision to the Council of the City of San Diego; and

WHEREAS, the matter was set for public hearing on September 20, 2005, testimony having been heard, evidence having been submitted, and the City Council having fully considered the matter and being fully advised concerning the same; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Council of the City of San Diego, that it adopts the following findings with respect to SDP No. 193075:

Site Development Permit - Section 126.0504

A. Findings for all Site Development Permits

1. The proposed development will not adversely affect the applicable land use plan.

The adopted San Pasqual Valley Plan's Park and Recreation Element envisioned the future establishment of a pedestrian/bicycle bridge across Lake Hodges (page 57) as well as providing a continuous multi-use trail corridor extending east/west through the valley. The adopted Rancho Bernardo Community Plan and San Dieguito River Regional Plans also provides for multi-use trails to create pedestrian access from the adjacent residential areas to the recreational areas such as Lake Hodges. Furthermore, the bridge is also identified as a "top priority" Class I bicycle transportation facility in the City's Bicycle Transportation Plan (2001). Therefore, the proposed pedestrian/bicycle bridge and associated trail connections are consistent with the applicable land use plans.

2. The proposed development will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, and welfare.

The proposed project has been designed and would be constructed to meet all applicable development, environmental, and building codes in accordance with all federal, state, and municipal codes and regulations. The project has been reviewed in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, whereby an Environmental Initial Study determined that the project could have significant effect on the environment. Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program has been prepared and would be implemented which would reduce any potential impacts identified within the environmental review process to below a level of significance. Therefore, the proposed development will not be detrimental to the public health, safety and welfare.

3. The proposed development will comply with the applicable regulations of the Land Development Code.

The proposed project will comply with the regulations of the Land Development Code and in particular the standards contained within the AR-1-1 Zone.

Deviations are requested for unavoidable impacts to the wetlands associated with the bridge spanning across the lake. However, the project as proposed has minimized the environmental impacts to achieve the least damaging practical alternative of this type of development. Furthermore, the permit prepared includes various conditions and exhibits of approval relevant to achieving compliance with the regulations of the Land Development Code.

B. Supplemental Findings--Environmentally Sensitive Lands

1. The site is physically suitable for the design and siting of the proposed development and the development will result in minimum disturbance to environmentally sensitive lands.

Several alternative alignments were evaluated and a detailed visual assessment was conducted to evaluate the impact of the project on the surrounding area. No alternative alignments would completely have avoided impacts to wetlands. The proposed project would impact 0.77 acre of wetlands, 0.05 acre of permanent impact and 0.72 acre of temporary impact. These wetland communities include southern willow scrub and reservoir (southern willow scrub/disturbed wetland). The majority of wetland impacts are temporary (from the temporary construction access road in the lakebed) and impacts were kept to a minimum through avoidance of wetland habitat wherever possible.

The proposed “stress-ribbon” bridge design allows a thin bridge profile (approximately 1 foot-4 inches) and minimizes the number of piers in the lake to two. The thin bridge profile and narrow width (outside dimension of 14 feet) and bridge “sag” create a concrete ribbon across the lake that resembles a trail. The bridge would also have a low profile above the water. The bridge height above the lake level would vary across each segment of the structure (from 10 feet to 17.9 feet) above the lake spillway elevation (315 feet). The concrete would be colored an earthtone shade to match the surrounding landscape to minimize glare. On the south side a cantilever (or viaduct) is used instead of a large retaining wall that would have appeared massive and greatly contrasted with the surrounding landscape. To augment native willows that exist along the slope, new willow trees will be planted to partially obscure the cantilever piers.

Other project features to minimize the effects on the adjacent environmentally sensitive lands include:

- Steel railings that will be nearly invisible in the distance. This railing type was designed to provide a light transparent look so that the railings do not dominate the bridge design and to allow views through to the lake from the bridge sides. Bridge users will be able to see the lake and surroundings through the railings and likewise viewers of the bridge will not see a heavy solid structure.
- Use of shielded lights that are directed onto the bridge surface only.

- On the south side of the project for the trail along the lakeshore a cantilever will be used for the bike path/trail instead of a large retaining wall. Cantilever piers will be screened with native willow vegetation to blend with the surrounding habitat.
- Use of a hardened soil surface (instead of concrete or asphalt) for the bike path along West Bernardo Drive. This surface will blend with the adjacent slopes.
- Retention of existing native soil surface on the Hodges North Shore Trail.
- Use of rustic materials, such as rock and wood, and “warm-colored” earthtone concrete for the interpretive viewing areas.
- Revegetate all areas disturbed by construction activities with native species to blend with the surrounding landscape.

The project as proposed will result in minimum disturbance to environmentally sensitive lands.

2. The proposed development will minimize the alteration of natural land forms and will not result in undue risk from geologic and erosional forces, flood hazards, or fire hazards.

The development does not propose the alteration of natural land forms. The bridge would be approximately 990 feet long with two support piers situated in the lake. Each pier would rest on a 19-foot by 24-foot footing supported by 20 drilled, pre-cast, pre-stressed concrete piles that would be fabricated off-site and positioned in the lake by a crane. The piles and footings would be buried below the existing grade of the lakebed bottom. The proposed bridge type, called a “stress ribbon” design, would consist of a series of precast concrete panels strung along cables extended across the lake. The cables would be anchored into each abutment using rock anchors and "stressed" with tension at each abutment to create a rigid, continuous bridge platform.

The north abutment would be a below-grade concrete structure approximately 31-by 36-feet in size. Permanent below-grade rock anchors would be installed to secure the abutment and bridge cables structurally. Riprap would be placed down slope of the abutment at the toe of the lakeshore to provide scour protection. The southern bridge abutment would be below-grade and would be approximately 26 feet long by 31 feet wide and about 10 feet deep. A total of four 9-foot diameter shafts would be drilled into the soil below grade to structurally support the abutment and cables. The bridge abutment would connect to the proposed Class I bike path to be constructed along West Bernardo Drive. Riprap would be installed down slope of the abutment at the toe of the lakeshore to protect the structure from scour.

A Class I bike path consisting of an 8-foot wide bicycle path with 2-foot wide shoulders on each side would be constructed from the southern bridge abutment southwestward, along the northwest shoulder of West Bernardo Drive,

connecting to the Bernardo Bay staging area and terminating at the construction staging area, approximately 900 feet north of the Rancho Bernardo Community Park entrance, for a total distance of 1790 linear feet. The first 690 linear feet of the bike path along the lakeshore would be placed on a concrete slab cantilevered over the lakeshore and supported by a series of 18-inch diameter pre-cast concrete piles at 15 feet on center (i.e., approximately 48 piles total). The cantilevered structure or viaduct would extend approximately six feet beyond the lakeshore, partially hiding the piles from view and providing seating opportunities for trail users. The existing slope along the lakeshore would be planted with native willows in front of the concrete piles to further screen them from view. The existing slope along the lake side of West Bernardo Drive is made of engineered fill that was placed there when West Bernardo Drive was constructed. The existing slope is unstable and will be stabilized prior to the cantilevered bike path being installed.

A geologic site-specific investigation was performed on the subject property. It was determined that proper engineering design of all new structures would ensure that the potential for geologic impacts from regional hazards would not be significant.

Erosion and sedimentation potential would be generally low in most developed portions of the project site, due to the stabilizing effects of proposed paving, habitat restoration and landscaping. No long-term erosion and sedimentation impacts are anticipated. The project design includes the use of riprap armoring around exposed portions of the abutments. These measures would minimize associated potential long-term erosion impacts.

The proposed bridge design includes portions of two support piers located within the lakebed. The abutments, piers and related facilities (i.e., pier footings and riprap armor) would produce some effects related to the displacement of water and an associated increase in lake/river flood elevations, as well as the redirection/deflection of flows at the abutment and pier structures. These effects are not expected to result in any notable changes to surface water/floodplain elevations or flow directions/velocities.

The development will not cause any condition that would expose the area to fire hazards.

3. The proposed development will be sited and designed to prevent adverse impacts on any adjacent environmentally sensitive lands.

The proposed development will not impact adjacent environmentally sensitive lands. The project will be constructed during the non-breeding season for sensitive birds and biological monitoring will be required during all phases of construction.

4. The proposed development will be consistent with the City of San Diego's Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) Subarea Plan.

The proposed project is within the boundaries of the MSCP Subarea Plan and is subject to the policies and directives of the plan. The directives that apply and the projects' conformance are as follows:

- Contain active recreational uses in areas determined appropriate in the San Dieguito River Park Concept Plan and by the City. The project is consistent with the San Dieguito River Park Concept Plan, which includes the Lake Hodges Bridge project as a park proposal. The project trails follow existing trail routes (e.g., the North Shore Trail) and/or follow West Bernardo Drive to direct trail users away from sensitive species. The project will control off-trail activities through trail design, trail patrol, fencing, and/or signage as necessary.
- Restrict public use of steep slopes. Any trail system developed on the south side of the reservoir should use the existing utility road and minimize impacts on sensitive resources. Provide signage identifying appropriate trails, and take necessary measures to protect habitat and direct access to approved use areas. The project aligns the trails within existing dirt roads and trails to the extent feasible (e.g., North Shore Trail). The project will control off-trail activities through trail design, fencing, and/or signage as necessary.
- Minimize trail widths to reduce impacts to critical resources. For the most part, do not locate trails wider than 4 feet in core areas and wildlife corridors. The project trails follow existing trail routes (e.g., North Shore Trail) and/or follow West Bernardo Drive to direct trail users away from sensitive species. The trails will be 8 feet wide in order to accommodate bicycles and pedestrians.
- Manage public use of mitigation lands on the slopes north of the reservoir in a manner consistent with the habitat function and mitigation requirements. Split rail or wire fencing may be constructed adjacent to the roadside or public areas to accommodate wildlife movement. The project will control off-trail activities through trail design, fencing, and/or signage as necessary.
- Direct public access to authorized trails with signage and barriers. The project will control off-trail activities through trail design, fencing, and/or signage as necessary.

- Regularly monitor and maintain the shores and uplands of Lake Hodges for litter and invasive non-native plant species and off-trail use including motorized vehicle activity. Remove and dispose of litter and invasive non-native plants as soon as possible. The Joint Powers Authority (JPA) monitors and maintains the San Dieguito River Park trail system including litter control and off trail use. The JPA also conducts regular exotic species control and trail closures when appropriate. All litter encountered during construction and all invasive non-native plants removed during project mitigation will be removed from the site and disposed of in a safe and legal manner.
- Utilize the existing fire maintenance road along the north shore of the reservoir as the trail system and avoid cutting new trails through native habitats, especially between the marina and I-15. The project trails follow existing trail routes (e.g., North Shore Trail) and/or follows West Bernardo Drive to avoid cutting new trails through native habitats.
- Use non-impactive erosion control methods to repair areas experiencing erosion. Re-seed and restore these areas as soon as possible. The project will use Best Management Practices during construction (e.g., fiber rolls) to control erosion and will revegetate disturbed areas with native vegetation post-construction.

The development as proposed is consistent with the City of San Diego's Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) Subarea Plan.

5. The proposed development will not contribute to the erosion of public beaches or adversely impact local shoreline sand supply.

The project is not located in the coastal area. The project site is located just west of Interstate 15, north of West Bernardo Drive, and at least 10 miles east of Interstate 5. Therefore, the proposed development will not contribute to the erosion of public beaches or impact local shoreline sand supply.

6. The nature and extent of mitigation required as a condition of the permit is reasonably related to, and calculated to alleviate, negative impacts created by the proposed development.

The impacts that have been identified to sensitive habitat would be mitigated through measures and ratios which have been established within the City's Biological Guidelines. These impacts would be mitigated through the combination of on-site monitoring and restoration, off-site habitat creation and enhancement within Multi-Habitat Preservation Area lands, and payment into the City's Habitat Acquisition Fund in conformance with these Biological Guidelines. The JPA would be required to provide this mitigation as a condition of the site Development Permit.

C. Supplemental Findings--Environmentally Sensitive Lands Deviations

1. There are no feasible measures that can further minimize the potential adverse effects on environmentally sensitive lands.

The proposed bridge over Lake Hodges will impact wetlands habitat. No alternative alignments would completely have avoided impacts to wetlands. The proposed project would impact 0.77 acre of wetlands, 0.05 acre of permanent impact and 0.72 acre of temporary impact. These wetland communities include southern willow scrub and reservoir (southern willow scrub/disturbed wetland). The majority of wetland impacts are temporary (from the temporary construction access road in the lakebed) and impacts were kept to a minimum through avoidance of wetland habitat wherever possible. The project design has incorporated all feasible measures to minimize impacts to environmentally sensitive lands and there are no other feasible measures that can further minimize the potential adverse effects to sensitive resources.

2. The proposed deviation is the minimum necessary to afford relief from special circumstances or conditions of the land, not of the applicant's making.

The lakebed area is considered wetlands and the project cannot avoid some impact to wetlands. Impacts to the reservoir deserve special consideration because the actual vegetation impacted depends on the amount of water in the reservoir at the time the project is constructed. The project area would be inundated at least temporarily depending upon rainfall. However, it is expected that the project would be constructed when the reservoir is dry.

The City of San Diego has a "no-net loss" policy regarding wetlands. A mitigation plan for wetland impacts was developed in cooperation with the City of San Diego for this project and is intended to mitigate wetland impacts through a program of on-site and off-site wetland habitat enhancement and restoration. The wetland restoration plan is contained in the Biology Technical Report (July 2004).

The above findings are supported by the minutes, maps and exhibits, all of which are herein incorporated by reference.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the appeal of San Pasqual/Lake Hodges Community Planning Group is denied; the decision of the Planning Commission is sustained and Site Development Permit No. 193075 is granted to San Dieguito River Park Joint Powers

Authority, Permittee, under the terms and conditions set forth in the permit attached hereto and made a part hereof.

APPROVED: MICHAEL AGURRIE, City Attorney

By _____
NAME
Deputy City Attorney

ATTY/SEC. INITIALS
DATE
Or.Dept:Clerk
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Reviewed by Tim Daly