



Colony Olivenhain



423 Rancho Santa Fe Road, Encinitas, CA 92024

www.olivenhain.org

August 8, 2022

Dear City Leaders,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the most recent (July 21) draft Mobility Element update. We have three key recommendations:

1. Efficiently convey out-of-town vehicle commuter traffic from inland communities to the northeast of the City to I-5 south via prime arterials to avoid clogging residential streets with through commuter traffic
 - a. Designate Olivenhain Blvd and Leucadia Blvd east of the I-5 as Prime Connectors
 - b. Use technology to dynamically adjust signal timing to facilitate commuter traffic during rush hours
 - c. Add a second right turn lane from northbound El Camino Real at Olivenhain Blvd and a pedestrian island
2. Changes to accommodate the rural context, which is distinct from the suburban one
 - a. Introduce a rural connector street typology for Rancho Santa Fe Road, El Camino del Norte, and Manchester Ave (east of El Camino Real) – see below for more detail
 - b. Identify and accommodate rural characteristics such as: equestrian crossings, urban-wildland interface/wildfire evacuation, narrow right of way, numerous residential driveways
3. Promote the Olivenhain trail network as not just a recreational amenity, but as the primary active mobility conduit in the community
 - a. Fill dangerous gaps in the trail system by building the long-delayed trail 82
 - b. Accommodate e-bike and long-distance cyclists for whom the trail system is not suitable, with appropriate bike lanes and sharrows as appropriate
 - c. Accommodate for horse traffic on the trails, e.g., with appropriate signage, non-slip surfaces, and split rail fencing to discourage bolting into the street¹

Efficiently convey out-of-town vehicle commuter traffic

A large volume of commuter traffic from eastern Carlsbad, San Marcos, and beyond travel south on Rancho Santa Fe Road (RSF Rd). This traffic currently diverges with a large proportion turning left to continue south on RSF Rd, a phenomenon that has been compounded by Waze and similar technology navigation aids. This high volume of through traffic builds on saturated local commuters and school drop-off/pick-up traffic to congest RSF Rd through Olivenhain causing transit time for the 1 mile stretch to frequently exceed 30 minutes.

Now with the renovations at Manchester and I-5 widening throughout Encinitas, these commuters should be encouraged to continue west on Olivenhain Blvd to I-5 either via El Camino Real/Manchester or via Leucadia Blvd. Olivenhain Blvd and Leucadia Blvd (east of I-5) should be designated Prime Connector along with El Camino Real/Manchester. These prime arterials should efficiently move vehicle traffic, especially during commuting hours, with a minimum of disruptions and maximized capacity.

¹ The Encinitas Trails Network and San Dieguito Riders are excellent resources for additional equestrian accommodations. Please let us know if you would like introductions.



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Technology should be employed to dynamically optimize signal timing to facilitate the asymmetric flow of traffic.

Recognize rural context

The Olivenhain community has rural characteristics that are distinct from the suburban character of the neighborhoods to our west. Specifically, we are at very high wildfire risk and comprise an urban-wildland interface, we have a lower density and travel longer distances to points-of-interest, we grow agriculture and livestock and use horses for transportation. RSF Rd serves as our main street through the heart of Olivenhain connecting several neighborhoods to the historic Meeting Hall or social community center. Both RSF Rd and Manchester Ave have substantial residential character with numerous driveways. The roads currently are generally two lanes, with occasional left turn pockets or intermittent left turn medians and are generally without sidewalks or bike lanes. These roads are also generally part of the County highway system connecting towns and cities across the region; therefore, they also carry a significant quantity of longer distance cyclists and vehicle traffic. The large rural lots generally accommodate parking off-street and there is minimal on street parking throughout the community.

RSF Rd, El Camino del Norte, and Manchester Ave (east of El Camino Real) are designated suburban collectors in the proposed typology map. The example suburban connectors do not appear to accommodate equestrian use or our developed and planned trail network segments, and generally seem to develop a right-of-way width that is much wider than the widths currently in use. Emergency uses, both for daily response times and for emergency evacuations should be accommodated, as should uncontrolled left turn access to residences and small businesses. These roads should be designated as Rural Collectors and solutions designed to accommodate the unique needs of our rural context.

Promote the Olivenhain trail network

In budget discussions, the Olivenhain trail network tends to be seen as an amenity overseen by the Parks & Recreation department, and as a result critical mobility elements like Trail 82 have been delayed by years (decades?). There is no safe way for pedestrians, joggers/runners, equestrians, or recreational or youth cyclists to travel between Encinitas Blvd and the Meeting Hall. As the City seeks to promote active mobility as an alternative to automobile transportation, it is critical for the City to recognize the trail network for its central role in the active mobility of the Encinitas community.

The trail network has long accommodated mountain bicycles and school age riders, however it is unsuitable for the long distance (often pack) riders and the increasingly common e-bikes. Our rural roads do not generally have any bike lanes, tend to be narrow, and the edges are often cluttered with debris and garbage cans. The result is dangerous for riders, and difficult for drivers to safely pass. The riders also tend to ignore stop signs and due to the number along RSF Rd, this often means drivers have to pass the same cyclists several times in relatively quick succession.

Thank you for your work on the Mobility Element, and we hope our local perspective and insights are useful.

Yours in Community,



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