CITY OF PALO ALTO
Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL
FROM: CITY MANAGER DEPARTMENT: PLANNING AND COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT
DATE: JUNE 21, 2004 CMR: 311:04
SUBJECT: 4219 EL CAMINO REAL [99-EIA-9]: RECOMMENDATION TO CERTIFY THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (FEIR) AND APPROVE THE MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM (MMRP) PREPARED FOR THE PROPOSED HYATT RICKEY’S DEVELOPMENT PROJECT.

The City Manager’s Report (CMR 311:04) for the Hyatt Rickey’s Development Project Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) was previously distributed to the City Council on June 10, 2004. Since the publication and distribution of this CMR, several issues have surfaced, which require response. These issues are discussed and summarized as follows:

1. Edits to Draft Resolution Recommending FEIR Certification
   Revisions and minor edits have been included in the draft resolution, which recommends certification of the FEIR (attached). These revisions and edits are recommended to address the following:

   a. To confirm that certification of the FEIR is for the revised project (May 2004) only. A third paragraph is recommended under Section 1A (page 1-1) to address this issue. The purpose of this additional paragraph is to make it clear that: 1) at this time, the City is taking action to certify the FEIR only, no action is being taken on merits of the revised project; and 2) FEIR certification is for the revised project (May 2004) only. Two letters have been submitted from attorneys representing the project sponsor (attached). These letters are intended to inform the City that the project sponsor understands that action on the FEIR is for the revised project only, and that this action can be taken separate from action on the pending planning applications for this revised project.

   b. To incorporate the findings of the recent TIRE Index Assessment completed for the revised project (May 2004). Revisions to the text describing Impact 8-
4A (page 1-7) are recommended to summarize the conclusions of this assessment.

c. There have been concerns raised that the FEIR did not adequately describe Wilkie Way as being a Class III designated bicycle route. However, the status of Wilkie Way and the Class III bicycle route designation is described on page 8-5 (Volume 1) of the FEIR. The text on this page notes that Wilkie Way is a signed Class III bicycle route with a sign at the Charleston Road intersection indicating 'bike route to Mountain View.' Therefore, no further revisions are necessary to acknowledge this issue in the FEIR.

2. Further Clarification Regarding TIRE Assessment Prepared for Revised Project (May 2004)

Page 2-150 of the FEIR (Volume 2) discusses the use of a more stringent (lower) threshold for evaluating the potential local street traffic impacts on Wilkie Way. The method used to evaluate the potential impacts is called the Traffic Infusion on Residential Environment Index (TIRE Index). The DEIR (Volume 1) correctly used a threshold of 0.2 to determine a significant impact because it was the standard in place when the Notice of Preparation was prepared for this project EIR (November 1999) and was the standard used in the Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan EIR. The City of Palo Alto has not officially changed this standard, although the possibility of this change has been discussed and a lower threshold of 0.1 was used in the preparation of EIRs for two other recent projects.

As concluded in the FEIR, use of a TIRE index threshold of 0.2 for the revised project (May 2004) would not cause a significant local street traffic impact on Wilkie Way. For comparative purposes, an alternative mode of analysis of 0.1 was also used. Application of the more stringent TIRE index threshold of 0.1 for the revised project (May 2004) does not show a significant impact on Wilkie Way. A TIRE index assessment for the revised project (May 2004) using a threshold of 0.1 was completed by Hexagon Transportation Consultants, Inc. on June 16, 2004. This assessment is attached. The assessment concludes that projected traffic from the revised project would be distributed between the main project access at El Camino Real and the Wilkie Way driveway. This distribution would produce up to 450 average daily trips at the Wilkie Way driveway (using a 40 and 44% distribution of the total daily trips). However, the driveway currently experiences approximately 200 average daily trips from the hotel use. Therefore, the net daily vehicle trip increase at this driveway would be 250 trips. This net increase would be below the 0.1 threshold, which is 380 trips.

The TIRE index assessment prepared by Hexagon Transportation Consultants, Inc. has been reviewed by the City Transportation Division staff and while the conclusion remains that the net number of new trips is below the 0.1 threshold, the number arrived at by the Transportation Division is closer to the 380 threshold.
The Transportation Division staff estimates that 1,147 average daily trips will be generated by the revised project (May 2004). This number is derived using the most recent edition (7th) of the Institute of Transportation Engineers Trip Generation Manual. Applying a trip distribution percentage of 44% of the total number of trips using Wilkie Way results in 505 daily trips using the Wilkie Way entrance. When the 200 daily trips that currently use the Wilkie Way driveway are subtracted from the 505 daily trips, the number of new trips equals 305, which is below the 0.1 threshold of 380.

The conclusion resulting from the updated TIRE index assessments has been incorporated into the draft resolution recommending FEIR certification.

ATTACHMENTS
Attachment A: Revised Draft Resolution
Attachment B: Letter from Hexagon Transportation Consultants, Inc. addressing TIRE Index Assessment for Revised Project; June 16, 2004.