TO: HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL
FROM: CITY MANAGER
DEPARTMENT: PLANNING AND COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT
DATE: JANUARY 23, 2006
CMR: 125:06

SUBJECT: RECOMMENDATION TO AUTHORIZE MAYOR TO TRANSMIT TO CITY OF MOUNTAIN VIEW COMMENTS ON TRAFFIC MITIGATION MEASURES FOR 100 MAYFIELD PROJECT DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (DEIR)

RECOMMENDATION
Staff recommends that the City Council authorize the Mayor to transmit the attached letter to the City of Mountain View summarizing concerns regarding retention of the existing underpass underneath San Antonio Road as a condition of the 100 Mayfield project.

BACKGROUND
The City of Mountain View is processing an application by the Toll Brothers for a General Plan revision and Precise Plan change to allow redevelopment of the Mayfield Mall/Hewlett Packard site with housing and possibly limited commercial development. The entire project site is 24 acres and located at the corner of Central Expressway and San Antonio Road. 4.2 acres of the project site is located within Palo Alto and will undergo development review in Palo Alto. The Toll Brothers have submitted an application for preliminary Architectural Review Board review for 48 units of housing on the Palo Alto portion of the site.

The City of Mountain View, acting as the lead agency on the project, circulated a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) on December 15, 2005 that addresses the environmental impacts from the entire project. During the preparation of the EIR, Palo Alto staff was allowed to review and comment on two administrative drafts of the EIR. The circulation period for the DEIR ends on January 31, 2006; a public hearing on the DEIR was held in Mountain View on January 18, 2006. A second public hearing on the DEIR is scheduled for January 25. The EIR will be providing environmental review for the Palo Alto portion of the project; however, no public hearings on the EIR will be held in Palo Alto since Palo Alto is not the lead agency.

DISCUSSION
Redevelopment of the Mayfield site is a significant project with potential impact to south Palo Alto. Given its size and location, residents adjacent to the project have expressed concerns
particularly regarding potential impacts from project circulation and additional congestion in the area, including along the Charleston Arastradero Corridor. Attached to this report are the comments on the DEIR prepared by staff that are recommended to be transmitted to the City of Mountain View prior to the January 31st deadline (see Attachment B).

Of particular concern to Palo Alto area residents, specifically in the Greenmeadow neighborhood, is the potential for cut-through traffic from one of the mitigation measures identified in the EIR. The EIR traffic analysis assumed that the existing underpass providing access to and from the southbound lanes of San Antonio Road would remain open; however, it also identified alternative mitigation in the event that the underpass could not be incorporated in the project since its ownership is not under control of the applicant and its structural integrity has not been assessed. The alternative mitigation measure would provide an outbound left turn access to San Antonio Road from Nita Avenue. Since this alternative proposal has the potential to generate cut-through traffic on local Palo Alto streets such as Briarwood Way and Nelson Drive, the residents in the project vicinity strongly believe the underpass must be retained. Staff also recommends retention of the underpass. Staff has concerns regarding the feasibility of the left turn access from Nita Avenue since it may adversely impact traffic operations on San Antonio Road as well as generate cut-through traffic on local City streets. Even if the EIR is adequate in its analysis that this alternative is a feasible mitigation measure, staff believes the City should take a position that the underpass should be included as a condition of the project.

The attached letter to the City of Mountain View emphasizes the need for retention of the underpass. The City Council will also have the opportunity to comment on the Mayfield Mall development and reiterate its position regarding the underpass prior to the project hearing by the Mountain View City Council later this year.

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ATTACHMENTS
Attachment A: Draft letter to Mountain View
Attachment B: Staff comments on 100 Mayfield Project DEIR

COURTESY COPIES
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Penny Ellson, Greenmeadows Civic Affairs Committee
Sally Hamilton, Greenmeadows Civic Affairs Committee