



City of Arts & Innovation

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

THURSDAY, JUNE 6, 2013, 6 P.M.
ART PICK COUNCIL CHAMBER, CITY HALL
3900 MAIN STREET

Chair Wade reconvened the meeting at 6:00 p.m., all members present except Commissioners Parker, Riggle, Stockton and Zaki.

Chair Wade announced the availability of speaker cards for item six on the agenda. He asked anyone wishing to speak on this item to fill one out.

6. **PLANNING CASES P11-0050 (EIR) and P12-0220 (GP):** Proposal of the City of Riverside, to consider an environmental review for the removal of gates on Crystal View Terrace and Green Orchard Place pursuant to Tract Map 29515 and Tract Map 29628 as mitigation measures and conditions of approval and as required by the General Plan 2025 (that includes four scenarios, each of which represents an alternative set of actions) intended to help resolve potential vehicular circulation issues associated with the required vehicular gates; to address the connection of Overlook Parkway easterly to Alessandro Boulevard; and to potentially provide for a future connection to State Route 91 (SR-91). The DEIR fully analyzes all four circulation scenarios that are described in detail in Section 2.6.

Diane Jenkins, Principal Planner, presented the staff report. Following her presentation, Ms. Jenkins introduced the EIR Team. She introduced the environmental consultants, RECON, Lisa Lind and her team; the traffic consultants, Iteris, Janet Harvey and her team; Tom Boyd, Public Works Director and Steve Libring, Traffic Engineer; Deputy Chief Esparza from the Fire Department; Lieutenant Eric Charrette and Captain Ed Blevins from the Police Department; Erin Gettis, Historic Preservation Officer/Principal Planner and inside and outside Legal Counsel Supervising Deputy City Attorney, Kristi Smith and Michelle Ouellette from Best Best & Krieger.

Chair Wade opened the meeting to public comment. He stated he would announce the names based on the order of the speaker cards submitted and everyone would have 3 minutes to speak.

Andy Wilson, resides in the Riverside Greenbelt on Dufferin near the Gage Canal office, spoke against the EIR and stated he was not focused on the four scenarios. The crucial vote tonight is whether or not the Commission approved the EIR. The EIR fixes the future route of "C" Street. The route that has been selected puts it through one of the City's original orange groves and then routes an avalanche of traffic down through the heart of Casa Blanca down Madison Street. No matter which scenario is chosen, the EIR sets that as the route of "C" Street. His family farms the orange grove at the corner of Washington and Victoria and a lot of the trees there are the original trees. These are fantastic trees and have very high sugar level and they have a lower acid level in the fruit. It is a unique flavor you can't get with any other tree. The EIR said that blowing the road through there would not be a significant impact on agriculture. He could not

understand how anyone would think or agree with this. He looked through the EIR for the justification to put it through Casa Blanca and noticed that the effects on the intersections with a lot of foot traffic were not analyzed. He tried to figure out why and in the appendix, it says that the City decided what intersections to look at. Essentially it sounds like they ordered the traffic consultants not to look at anything else. He did not feel that enough intersections were reviewed. These are the intersections where people cross the street to get to the church, grocery store or library. They have assumed that through all the scenarios and the traffic analysis that Madison Street is at build out, 4 lanes, which is absurd to make that assumption when you are trying to evaluate what the effect of the traffic will be. A lot of people in this town care deeply about not hurting the citrus and they care deeply about not hurting the folks in Casa Blanca. The people will think that a vote against the EIR will indicate the commission shares that belief but if the commission votes in favor, the people will think the commission doesn't share those concerns.

Pati Weir, 2223 Grace Street, stated she serves on the Boards of Victoria Avenue Forever and California Citrus State Historic Park. The commission may prefer not to hear the emotional side of an issue and prefer the technical side but if they really want to seek out the best decision for the City, the Commission needs to hear all sides. She has lived her entire life in Riverside in the greenbelt on the same street in two homes. The majority of her neighbors have known her over 60 years. She has not left her street because they have one of the most unique neighborhoods that the City of Riverside has. They look out for each other daily. To open the flood gates, per se with thousands of cars racing through their streets, dumping trash, running over their wildlife and domestic animals, risking their children's life while playing because they do not have sidewalks, and people just not caring about their neighborhood, is what will happen to their peaceful street if Overlook is opened. They have to stop driving a wedge between different neighborhoods and the citizens of all neighborhoods need to unite. There is absolutely no reason to destroy one neighborhood in order to help another neighborhood. The Greenbelt is protected under Prop R and Measure C. This is not abiding by the initiative that the citizens of Riverside put in place in 1979. Infrastructure is still the solution and not cutting through established neighborhoods. Please vote no on opening Overlook so that they can continue to protect the cultural heritage landmark Victoria Avenue and the Citrus Greenbelt.

Lugena Wahlquist stated that she and her husband have lived on Tiger Tail Drive for 35 years as of today. She was speaking for both her husband and herself this evening in opposition of the Overlook extension. Many, if not most, of their neighbors hold similar views and came together to hire Johnson & Sedleck, attorneys who specialize in environmental law to review the DEIR. She stated the attorney's feedback should be included in the staff report. It outlines the numerous problems with DEIR in a 25 page letter. They live in a unique area that makes this community different from so many. As part of a bigger picture, they believe it deserves to be preserved. They grew up in Los Angeles and know what it looks like when this does not happen. They noted for the Commission that the General Plan clearly states that the residential areas are not to be sacrificed to accommodate regional traffic. Beyond personal concerns regarding the

preservation and integrity of the arroyo, air quality, noise and cut through traffic, there is no effective place to put this volume of traffic through without major disruption to the RC Zone, Victoria Avenue and most importantly, Casa Blanca. To impose this level of disruption in terms of air quality, noise, traffic, and road widening through the middle of this community is unacceptable. This does not address the issue of the train traffic that blocks Madison on regular basis. They do not believe that this DEIR should be accepted, more importantly they are asking that the proposed Overlook extension be removed from the General Plan. Everyone heard the long history tonight but the time has past for this to be a functional plan for the City.

Bob Garcia, 7450 Emerald Street, Chairman of the Casa Blanca Community Action Group, stated that back in 1994 when this was proposed the community was united and stated no, they did not agree with this. It was brought to their attention again in December at the Community Action Group meeting and again, the community said, "no". This project to bring it down Madison is, as stated before, dividing the community. The community has already been divided in the past with other projects, including education. He is currently looking at proposing another elementary school into the community that was lost 50 years ago. He is looking for private funding to do this. If something like this comes down Madison, they will lose again, not only their people but the unification of the community. They see this as a project that is trying to eliminate the community. They have been there 106 years, why does the City want to remove this community. He asked that the Commission to disagree with the City's EIR and vote against it.

Morris Mendoza, native of Riverside, stated that everyone loves their neighborhoods. He has deep roots in the Casa Blanca neighborhood, his family's roots go back to his grandfathers who lived there in 1918. Since the 1970s, he along with others, have been involved with trying to make their neighborhood a better place to live. He has been in various committees: Alliance for Inter-Police Community Relations, Community Action Group, Project Area Committee and others. His reason for being here is to protect the interest of the community from the harmful effects of an Overlook connection. He does not know how many meetings he has attended on this issue but even more than ever, they are opposed to any Overlook connection and the EIR. They have more trains than ever now and there is no underpass planned, either at Madison, Adams or Washington. They accepted the trains when there weren't so many but now there are so many that it is too much of a noise issue. The Mother's Day incident is another example of why they are opposed to the Overlook connection. Also, he is also a member of the Victoria Avenue Forever, Proposition Air supporter and a past member of the Measure C Committee, which if still active, would have been opposed to this. Please do not destroy the progress they have made for the betterment of the neighborhood and vote no on the Overlook connection.

Anthony Bellanca thanked the Commission for the opportunity to discuss this matter. He is opposed to extending the Overlook Parkway. He believed it will have a dramatic and significant impact on Flemington Road which is where he resides and very near to the intersection of Alessandro Boulevard and Overlook Parkway. He referenced the

map he provided to the commission and noted that as you make your way along Alessandro Boulevard from the right side of the map going down Alessandro Boulevard to the intersection of Overlook Parkway and Alessandro Boulevard, you will come upon a street, Cannon Road. What he believes will happen is that, as the traffic approaches Cannon Road, it will make a left hand turn there rather than go to the intersection of Alessandro Boulevard and Overlook Parkway, saving the time it would otherwise take to get through a very congested intersection. From Cannon Road, they will make their way down through the neighborhood streets onto Flemington Road and then ultimately out onto Overlook Parkway and down to the 91 Freeway making Overlook Parkway the shortcut to the 91 Freeway. This will make Flemington Road and its neighborhood streets the shortcut to the shortcut. This will have a significant impact as we think what the amount of the traffic will be in the morning going through there. In the evening, that process will be the very same, it will just play out in reverse. As the situation unfolds, some of the more particulars about that which compound the problem more are that the streets, Flemington Road and other surrounding neighborhood streets, are only 31' wide instead of the regular 36". It will be very difficult, in his opinion, to have two cars that are parked on opposite sides of the road and have two cars that are trying to transition past each other in opposite directions to make it safely. He can hardly imagine the traffic condition that the residents within this neighborhood will have to contend with as they make their way in and out of the neighborhood. He stated he was opposed to the extension of Overlook Parkway and encouraged the Commission to allow them to continue with a peaceful, quiet and most importantly, safe use of the neighborhood streets. Do not extend Overlook Parkway.

Christa Aspittle stated that she had not planned to speak tonight and was not prepared. Looking over the brochures left at the door, she was very angry when it referred to the impact it would have on existing properties, particularly in the Greenbelt area. She has been a resident of the Greenbelt area for the past 47 years. She has a 5 acre parcel that borders on Madison, directly on Madison with almost 400' of frontage. You cannot tell her that any widening of Madison Street would not have a significant impact on her property. In addition, she has numerous friends in the Casa Blanca area with families living on both sides of Madison. She cannot imagine their fear of what will happen to their children crossing from one house to another. There have been accidents that have happened with people being run over but with the volume that would be expected if Overlook extension went through, it is unimaginable. The comment that referred to any impact of any street leading through the existing Proposition C and R areas would be insignificant, made her very angry. She urged the Commission not to allow the Overlook extension to go through as it would affect everyone that lives in the area. They purchased their properties to live the rural life. Her property is zoned RA and is why she purchased it. She wanted to keep her animals and few trees that she has. Right now, every two days she walks Madison with a trash can to pick up trash discarded by cars. Any additional traffic would just make this impossible.

Donna Richards submitted a speaker card but indicated she did not need to speak as the presentation addressed her concerns.

Omid Hamzeinejad stated he did not have a prepared statement. He lives off of Overlook and wanted to just give his personal opinion. When his family decided to move to Overlook, the primary goal was to move some where that was quiet and safe for the family. He was willing to pay any cost for the real estate to get that and Overlook provided that. Everyone knows that any increase in traffic will increase crime. Criminals want to get in and out so that to give access to Overlook will increase crime. These are homes that are the highest income levels, highest real estate values. The last thing you want to do is decrease that. Right now, most of the crime that is happening is closer to Washington and that is because they can get in and get out. Why do we want to increase this across the entire Overlook residential area. Once the freeway improvements are fixed, he did not think people will want to go through a residential area to get from the 215 to the 91. All this issue about traffic should be eliminated once the freeway improvements and expansions are taken care of. The only thought he has is that if the goal is to increase crime, decrease value in the properties around Overlook than vote yes. If this is not the goal, then take this off the measures and completely take Overlook extension off of future plans.

Steve Jones stated he has lived in Riverside for over 60 years. He wanted to speak to what makes a city a good place to live. A good community to live in and raise a family is not about traffic flow. What makes a city great is its neighborhoods. Three of Riverside's very special neighborhoods will be considerably less desirable places to call home if an Overlook connection bridge between Alessandro and Washington is built. This would cause an onslaught of traffic, noise, air pollution, crime, litter and congestion. The neighborhoods that would be severely negatively impacted by such a thoroughfare are Alessandro Heights, the Greenbelt and Casa Blanca. The Alessandro Heights homeowners along each side of Overlook Parkway purchased and built their homes under City Zoning requirements, requiring expensive large lots. The homeowners in Riverside's Greenbelt neighborhood have even larger lots and larger acreage with the expectation of agriculture and a rural lifestyle. The citizens of Casa Blanca have modified Madison Street so that it is a single lane in each direction which is a way of eliminating the noise and congestion in their neighborhoods. What also makes the Overlook Parkway unacceptable is that all three of these neighborhoods should have the reasonable expectation that the City of Riverside would honor the conditions of citizens initiatives Proposition R and Measure C. However, to the contrary the issue of sending more traffic, more congestion and more noise into these neighborhoods with an Alessandro to Washington thoroughfare comes up time and time again. The citizens of Riverside have spoken loud and clear when they approved Proposition R and Measure C and any Overlook connection should have already been removed from the General Plan once and for all. Surely the City of Riverside understands that it should put the expectation's of its City citizens living in these specially unique neighborhoods ahead of those living in Moreno Valley and Orange County looking for a more convenient way to avoid the 215/91/60 interchanges. Great cities understand the importance of great neighborhoods and put quality of life ahead of providing more convenient ways for outsiders to avoid crowded freeways. The City of Riverside needs to do everything possible to once and for all absolutely assure a connection bridge from Overlook

Parkway never happens and ensure that Alessandro Heights, Greenbelt and Casa Blanca remain good communities to live in and raise a family.

Mary Humboldt stated that a completed Overlook Parkway cuts two miles off of the existing mileage from the 91 Freeway at Madison to the 215 Freeway at Alessandro Boulevard. Regional traffic is quick to notice such major mileage and time savings and will be drawn to use this route at all hours. The City itself has acknowledged the problems that regional growth can cause existing City arterials by filing suit against the County for approving an 11,000 unit housing project in the Lake View area. With the City of Moreno Valley considering thousands of acres of warehousing without the interchange or freeway capacity to handle the trucks, the City of Riverside should not be providing a new freeway to freeway connection from its eastern border. The draft EIR also contends that the Overlook Parkway traffic will not break down the Greenbelt or lead to the conversion of farmland to higher urban density uses. The pressure of thousands of new vehicles piercing through the corner of the Greenbelt, clogging Victoria Avenue and severing the Casa Blanca community inevitably erodes the ability of surrounding property owners to farm and live. This will lead to calls to repeal or modify Prop R and Measure C to allow more growth. This also sets a damaging precedent around the entire periphery of the Greenbelt and the protected La Sierra lands. The draft EIR's dismissal of such effects from major new roads and traffic flies in the face of long time experience and state policies protecting good farm land from heavy new roads and other growth causing infrastructure. The draft EIR claims its scenarios 3 and 4 merely redistribute car trips and do not attract significant cut through traffic, this conflicts with experience. Major new roads can alter existing driving paths and the existence of a new arterial route adds to the pressure to increase density and change zoning to allow commercial and office use. She stated that native American artifacts are found in the neighborhood. She also added that the Chinese settlers who built the Gage Canal lived in a camp on a hill abutting Madison Street. It has also yet to be investigated archeologically. Even though the EIR says the Overlook bridge will only be two lanes, it can be widened to four or six lanes at any time, making it a freeway between the 91 and the 215. She stated that she believed that when staff says things such as that they have a regional responsibility to take traffic from other areas that is just folly.

Tom Hunt stated he lived in the area for 26 years. For 24 ½ years he lived on Tiger Tail and now he lives at a house at the corner of Gainesborough and Westminster, 2141 Westminster. Overlook is essentially, on a trial basis, already open. Crystal View was allowed to open and traffic in his neighborhood has increased 262%. He commended Bill Wilkman for an excellent job, very thorough, professional and objective review of the EIR. Mr. Wilkman finds as he does that the draft EIR is completely deficient. The people that are cutting through there, 90% of them do not live in the 40 homes there. Crime has gone up in his area and it is a shame. To think that Overlook could go through is a planning folly. It is a political decision to somehow erase the calming traffic that has been done to Casa Blanca and to some how erase Prop R and Measure C. This has been put off too long and kicked down the road. He referred to a memorandum that Mr. Wilkman included in his letter dated May 14, 1985 signed by then Bob Wales.

He says they have received a petition from folks in his area and they have a concern about possible future traffic problems in the area. "While we recognize the neighborhood concerns, we do not believe these concerns will come to fruition". Well Mr. Wales is no longer with the City but the concerns are and they are dramatic and dangerous. He would invite the Commission to sit on his lawn and they would be amazed at people who cannot see a stop sign. Why should they, they do not live there. Unscientific but he sat there last night and counted 40 cars and in a short of amount of time only three of them stopped, less than 10%. Not only should Overlook not be opened, not only should the EIR be rejected because it is deficient but if the Commission is going to allow Crystal Ridge to stay open, please have some mitigation for their neighborhoods off of Rosco and Westminster. It is terrible and very dangerous. He stated he hoped the commission rejected this EIR and if need be start again. Let's all recognize that Overlook will not go through, it cannot. The decisions made as a community which he supports for the open greenbelt are important and are not reversible.

Dennis Garcia stated he was a resident of Casa Blanca. He is the Vice-Chair of the Casa Blanca Community Acton Group. They have an environmental issue here. They have sources of toxic emissions from the 91 Freeway, the railroad and E&R Carpenter. Stopped traffic while waiting for the railroad trains to go by is another source of emissions. This should be looked at that. First, they had the biggest emitter of methionine chloride in the county, second in the state until it was outlawed in the Southcoast Air Quality Management District. Now they have the biggest emitter of toluenedicyanide. They have done a lot of work trying to calm the traffic down Madison for pedestrian traffic. He lost a relative in the '70s who was hit by a bread truck going over the grade change. Staff says that there are no hazardous waste sites in the project area, well there are two. E & R Carpenter is looking for super funds to clean up the mess they have there that has gone into the ground water. The old Topham and Sons yard, that is the biggest pesticide hazardous waste site in the County. What needs to be done is, do the right thing. If this goes through, the quality of life for the people who live in the general area will be impacted big time. What he would like this Commission to do is, do the right thing and say no to this project.

Chair Wade announced that the next speaker, Christina Duran had to leave. She did put her comments on the speaker card. He stated these cards would go into the record and all comments will be addressed.

Chris Blasnek, 14182 Crystal View Terrace, stated that he has been here since the beginning of this controversy. This is definitely a quality of life issue for them. When this first began, they did not want the gates on Crystal View to be open at all because he knew what was going to happen. He has attended the meetings before with other neighbors. He respects the residents in his area and what was decided. He had to get used to the gate being open. He works in Los Angeles County and has worked that way for 30 years. The one thing he can tell the Commission is when he gets home to his home on Crystal View and to his area off of Overlook and into the surrounding areas of Alessandro Heights is, thank god he does not live in LA. Why would anyone want to

turn this neighborhood into a busy traffic congested area. He asked that if the gates are going to be opened on Crystal View, it is ok to say no. Keep Riverside's quality of life in that area. They need it, love it and do not want to lose it. He thanked Lt. Eric Charrette and his officers because they have done an outstanding job in helping them mitigate the traffic problems in the area. He sees them often and it is nice to have them out there. The cut through traffic is incredible. The residents that don't live there, don't care. He asked that if the gates are to remain open, please do not open Overlook to the cut through traffic.

Deloo Hockman stated that one thing they have not heard about is the cost. The campaigning for Measure A said that the loss of six million dollars would significantly reduce the quality of life for all of Riverside. This cost of acquisition of land and construction of the highways, Overlook Parkway and the bridge will exceed six million dollars for a long time. He did not know how the maintenance could be paid for without significantly reducing the quality of life in Riverside for all the wards, not just the borders between 3 and 4. He hoped the Commission would reject this scenario for that reason plus other reasons he did not have time to address.

Ed Urban stated he was opposed to Overlook Parkway going through. He lives on Crystal View Terrace. He would hate to put down Councilmembers and everybody else but they would not be here tonight if everybody stood up at the very first and shut the gates. He isn't talking about three years but five years ago. It was supposed to be shut from the first when the builder built out there. They were supposed to stay shut but they opened up and they made thousands of calls all the time. If they were shut from the get go no one would be here tonight and the City would not have had to spend the money for the EIR. This is how he feels. Leave the gates open, they will still have traffic through their neighborhood, it is a small neighborhood. If you shut the gates, it will eliminate everything being discussed without spending the money for Overlook Parkway. Shut the gates, you're done. You will have to put up with people crying and whining, everyone wants a short cut. The freeways will be done shortly. He takes Alessandro everyday and he loves Alessandro now. They walk their dogs every night, every day, everyone does. There is a lot of people running and walking. There aren't any sidewalks there so this is something that the City will have to approach if the gates are planned to be left open or closed. There are no sidewalks, nothing. You are walking on the streets, cars parked on both sides of the streets, there isn't any room there and it is something that might have to be done if you go in that direction. His view is to shut the gates again and nobody has any problem.

Darlene DeMason, Vice President of Victoria Avenue Forever (VAF), a public benefit 501C3 corporation dedicated to the preservation of Victoria Avenue in Riverside. Victoria Avenue is a linear park of historic significance. We have heard a history of the Overlook Parkway project and she wanted to give the Commission a new history, the history of Victoria Avenue. It was designed in 1892 in the Victorian style by the pioneer landscaper designer Frank Hosp. In 1902, Victoria Avenue was dedicated to the City of Riverside with the stipulation that the trees be maintained and protected. In 1969 Victoria Avenue was declared a Cultural Heritage Landmark and in 2000 it was added

to the National Park Service register of Historic Places. Over the years, it has become a year round attraction for bicyclists, joggers, walkers and Sunday drive enthusiasts. Today, Victoria Avenue has over 6,000 trees including 1,000 orange trees, 10,000 ragged robin roses and 9 miles of walking and bicycling trails, four pocket parks named for prominent citizens and various flowering shrubs and ground covers along this lane. Victoria Avenue is there for a valuable asset to the City of Riverside and enjoyed by its citizens across the city. All four scenarios of this draft EIR have effects on Victoria Avenue especially 2-4 which are all very detrimental effects. She asked that people seriously consider joining them at VAF in saving the iconic resources the City has in Victoria Avenue.

Don Wells, 7297 Boice Lane, stated that as more and more traffic comes through the Overlook Parkway, certainly that brings carbon monoxide poisoning and everyone knows what those effects are. There are a number of studies that talk about the detrimental health impacts of carbon monoxide on the elderly, the young and pregnant women. This will certainly create a health hazard for them. Crime has already been mentioned and a proliferation of crime can already be seen. He showed pictures of graffiti in the area. They are seeing more and more of this and as more people come through from other places there will be more. Gang activity and violence will also be seen more. Talked about Madison Street, you can go down that street any day and see a memorial for someone that was run over by a car. When he came to City Hall today, he saw a banner for the intelligent community of 2012 on display but if Overlook Parkway is extended, he is unable to find any intelligence in that at all. His position is to take the extension of the Overlook pathway off of the General Plan permanently.

Paul Chavez stated he was born here in Riverside and remembers when this area could be walked and you could smell the orange tree blossoms. When the new homes came in, it took away a lot of the trees which is why people are trying to preserve them. As the Commission has seen and heard from the different cultures that live in this community from the freeway to Alessandro, we have a very versatile culture in our community in the City of Riverside and a lot of them are here. If you do anything other than the residents are saying to do, you are really going against the community at large. Talking about diverting traffic, if the gates are opened you say only two lanes. Look at what happened to Alessandro, it started in that manner only a couple of lanes but people live and houses that are being built and multiplied to 100,000 times and that is what will happen to these residents who have paid for having privacy. In his area they are concerned. They have been fighting this problem with the residents for over 100 years. The City has been trying to open that up for a long time, just take it out of the books and leave the residents alone. He asked the Commission that they do the right thing and just take it out of the book, those other scenarios are nothing but problems in the long run.

Tammy Blackmore stated she resided on Berry Street between Victoria and Frances Avenue. She has lived here for 31 years and is a lifetime Riverside resident. She has been to this podium for more than 20 years regarding traffic issues in her neighborhood. In the early 90s she requested an EIR for her neighborhood because of the traffic on

Mary Street. At that time she was trying to get the speed limit reduced from 55 to 35 but it was not considered residential. People call it the Mary Street freeway, unaffectionately. At that time more than 5,000 cars a day came down Mary Street and 90% of that traffic came from across Overlook Parkway. The residents already handle the burden on her street for people that aren't from their neighborhood. As it is now, Washington Avenue backs up in the morning during the heavy traffic and during school time and the vehicles come down Mary Street because there is no where else to go. If more traffic is brought into their neighborhood, there is no way it can be handled. They will find their way through every way they possibly can. Eight schools are accessed within a one mile radius of that area. Five accidents have occurred in her front yard because of crazy drivers that are not from her neighborhood. One of them nearly missing her and her son when he was little. The City made the right decision 20+ years ago to reduce the speed limit on Mary Street from 55 to 35. She respectfully requested that the Commission take Overlook Parkway off of the agenda and vote no on the EIR.

Vinod Desai, 7257 Boice Ln, stated he has lived here for 11 years now. One of the reasons they moved into this area was for the quality of the neighborhood. They have enjoyed this over the years. Opening the gates off of Green Orchard has really helped them because they own several businesses up in the Orangecrest area. This has helped their business because a lot of people visit the businesses up in Orangecrest. He is also a realtor and his wife is a dentist. They both have their businesses there. He felt it was wise to keep those gates open so that there was a good flow of traffic. He did not see any reason to keep talking about opening Overlook because that was counterproductive. It is the residents that use the services in Orangecrest, not the general public from Moreno Valley or other parts of Riverside. His suggestion was to keep the gates open, forget about opening up Overlook and extending it out, keeping their neighborhoods safe. It is good to have some kind of emergency transportation coming off of Orange Terrace and over the gates, having the gates closed makes them go all the way around on Washington or off of Arlington. This reduces the amount of response time that the neighbors deserve out there. It is critical to keep those gates open for emergency transportation. Again, forget about Overlook going through, keep the gates open and let's move on.

Mil Panse stated he recently moved into the area approximately 2 years ago. They had not realized that Riverside is a very peculiar community in the whole United States. It has a big time heritage that can only be comparable to San Agustin, Florida. Riverside has the Mission Inn here and little community of varied personalities. People live in communities and it is not their primary responsibility to feed to the freeways and be industrialized. He did not understand the need to continue with Overlook Parkway at all. The gates are already opened which is ok for the local transportation. There is no need for Overlook to continue and it should be off the General Plan. The City should be beautifying the City instead of feeding to the general freeway system.

Bill Wilkman, 6779 Hawarden Drive, stated that he worked with the City Planning Department from 1974 to 2003. He has actually had staff involvement in every single decision made about Overlook Parkway and is intimately familiar with the situation. He

did not think that the EIR can be certified. There are serious flaws in the EIR in reference to the traffic aspects of the EIR. In order to solve the problem, you have to first define a problem properly. In the case of this EIR, they are proceeding as though the history of this began with the Crystal View gates which occurred a little after the year 2000. In fact, Overlook Parkway's history goes back 40 years or more. He can say that many of the people here at this hearing today have literally been coming to hearings for 40 years trying to explain what the problems are, what the issues are and what they are dealing with. It is disappointing to have to come back once again and make the same statements. In order for this EIR to do its job, it needs to define the problem in relation to a 40 year history, the decisions made over the course of that history and the impacts those decisions have on traffic circulation. This EIR simply doesn't do that. In regard to his neighborhood in the area of Hawarden Drive and Overlook Parkway, there is a serious cut through traffic problem in the neighborhood. It is caused by the fact that a decision was made a long time ago to take a couple of arterials off the General Plan and what was left were local streets. The EIR basically doesn't even recognize that. It doesn't acknowledge that there is a problem in the neighborhood and doesn't properly document the issues in the neighborhood. His recommendation would be that the Planning Commission recommend that the EIR not be certified and that a new RFP be issued for a different consultant, one that doesn't have a dog in the race in regard to this particular issue, to go back and restudy the situation to properly document the history and to properly deal with each of the issues that history reveals. Right now that simply isn't the case and this is just too important an issue to leave to a poorly done EIR.

There was no one else waiting to speak, Chair Wade asked the commission if they had any comments or questions.

Commissioner Kain inquired if, in one of these scenarios, Overlook Parkway was removed from the General Plan. What are the possibilities or process of bringing it back on the General Plan?

Kristi Smith, Supervising Deputy City Attorney, stated that as with any decision the Council ultimately chooses to do, the Council can choose to take the Overlook Parkway off the General Plan. In doing so they would need to look at the entirety of the Circulation Element. It is always possible that a new Council could think Overlook needed to be put back on the General Plan. It would not be a simple action, studies need to be done, full environmental documents, public hearings, the works, similar to what has been done for this project today.

Commissioner Manning asked what the impact was to the regional partners regarding the AQMD mitigation, regional traffic flow problems in regards to the neighbors to the east. Are there any funding impacts that would occur? Would it result in a reduction to funding from the state regarding traffic if they were to remove this item from the General Plan?

Tom Boyd, Public Works Director, responded that they would first need to understand that the Overlook Parkway extension, studies show it really serves local circulation in

the neighborhood and does not serve regional traffic. With this, if the ultimate decision was made to remove it from the General Plan or just not build it, he did not believe there would be any ramifications in terms of funding. The Congestion Management Plan that has been around for 20 years in the County really only requires preparation of a mitigation plan if one of the City's arterials is found to go to a level of service lower than is allowed in the Congestion Management Plan. Would that happen, he did not know.

Commissioner Manning noted that there was no comment made regarding any future grade separations involving Washington or Madison. He asked whether those were on the radar at all?

Mr. Boyd explained that the City Council has not approved any grade separations at either Madison or Adams. There was a conceptual project at Mary Street that did not get State funding in the last round, approximately five years ago and that project has been on hold since. He added that in 2005-2006, staff looked at grade separations between Adams, Mary and Washington. The ultimate recommendation was Mary Street but that is the project that has not moved forward.

Commissioner Stosel noted that there were issues raised about sidewalks or lack of sidewalks on Crystal Ridge. If that were opened, what is the plan for dealing with that? Another issue heard tonight is the safety of pedestrians crossing Madison Street. Has anyone taken a look at whether or not paseos or an overpass bridge would work out there as part of this to ameliorate any safety or street crossing issues.

Mr. Boyd stated that at this time there were no plans for the sidewalks. Staff would need to take that question back and do some research. Regarding the pedestrian overcrossings, these have not been considered mainly due to the expense. Any structure such as that would require an elevator in order to meet the ADA requirements and the cost of the operation and maintenance of that is not practical.

The Commission took a 10 minute recess at 7:40 pm and reconvened the meeting at 7:54 p.m., all members present except Commissioners Parker, Riggle, Stockton and Zaki.

Ms. Jenkins stated that there were a lot of comments tonight and staff will be addressing those comments in the Final EIR that will be going before the City Council. She went over the four scenarios and noted that staff did not make a recommendation, however the Commission has the option to do so. The various recommendations can be: Scenario 1 to leave the gates in place, gates closed. There would be no other action necessary under this scenario. Scenario 2 would be to remove the gates. This would require the Commission's recommendation for approval of a General Plan Amendment case to modify Policy CCM-4.4 and an Implementation Tool 14. There are also other necessary text amendments that would have to be done to the General Plan to correspond with these changes. Also the project conditions and mitigation measures for TM-29515 and 29628 which required these gates in the first place, would have to be modified. Scenario 3 is just building Overlook and removing the gates but does not take

the westerly connection. The Commission would need to recommend approval of a General Plan Amendment to modify some objectives and policies and also some text to make this work. As well as the Circulation Master Plan of Roadways to remove the "C" Street connection which is on the Circulation Plan. Scenario 4 would also need some General Plan amendments because this will actually fulfill some of the policies such as leaving the gates on Crystal View in place. These are the four choices. Staff also heard comments from the Commissioners regarding the possibility that they may be contemplating a recommendation of removing Overlook Parkway altogether. She noted that this is a recommendation that the Commission can make to the City Council. She wanted the Commission to understand that this EIR did not analyze that. The Commission can make that recommendation to Council but that would take a different EIR to analyze the traffic impacts on the entire City and actually be a comprehensive update of the General Plan's Circulation Element and possibly changes to other elements of the General Plan.

Commissioner Manning asked if the Commission were to consider the last scenario regarding the removal of Overlook, would the Commission need to reject this EIR and recommend the removal of Overlook from the Plan requiring a new EIR?

Ms. Jenkins replied affirmatively. That would be one way to do it. None of the proposed scenarios would work for the scenario Commissioner Manning proposed. The recommendation could be that they not certify the EIR, rather recommend a different option which would be removing Overlook Parkway from the General Plan.

Ms. Smith clarified that it could be a combination. As explained by Ms. Jenkins, this EIR does not study the entirety of the City in connection with the removal of Overlook. The Commission could select Scenario 2 but modify it by removing the gates and remove Overlook Parkway. Such a recommendation would keep the DEIR and focus strictly on the removal of Overlook via a supplement to the DEIR. The Commission would not have to totally reject the EIR, it could be used and then go from there.

Commissioner Manning stated that the EIR seemed like it wasn't comprehensive so that it did not provide what was requested. There are several issues regarding this EIR that appear to be the middle of the pie but not the rest of it such as his questions regarding the grade separations, a lot of traffic flow questions as well as these two choke points, Washington and Madison. These issues were left out by someone's direction. He assumed that the experts hired were given parameters to operate under based on the physical map that was presented early as to the study area. He wondered if it is a traffic flow concern, why wouldn't they have an entire flow from the initiation area to the terminus of the freeway. The DEIR doesn't appear to be comprehensive enough so that he would not want to accept it.

Ms. Smith stated that this was an option within the prerogative of the Commission. She reminded everyone what the project was. The question that came before the Council was, "should we open the gates at Crystal View Terrace and Green Orchard?" Because of the mitigation measures for the closing of the gates were: 1 on the General Plan until

Overlook was built and 2 on an EIR and mitigated Negative Declaration, the gates couldn't just be opened. The question wasn't about removing Overlook from the General Plan. The question was strictly, can we open the gates leaving everything basically as is or do we have to open the gates and put in Overlook. This is the reason staff did not go to the extent of leaving Overlook on or not. The narrow issue was opening those gates.

Commissioner Manning stated that he respectfully disagreed because the traffic issues on Madison and Washington have existed for years. He understood the issue brought to the City Council. Council may be different now and there may be questions that other or newer council members will have that will address the neighborhood of Casa Blanca or the neighborhood along Washington. To just address this one narrow sliver of a question, should we open the gates or not and extend or not Overlook doesn't appear to address the overarching issue. He realized that staff is operating within the parameters of the Council direction. As a Commission, they are appointed to represent the best interest of the people and need to raise this question.

Ms. Smith stated that it was well within their purview. If the Commission believes that at this point in time before a real decision can be made Overlook needs to be studied completely, you would have to look at the entirety of the Circulation Element of the City because it all flows. The Commission can make that recommendation to the City Council.

Chair Wade stated he did not see a scenario that said open the gates and leave everything alone. He heard the public say they like the gates open and that's all but there isn't such a scenario. Scenario 2 has other things with it, how about just open the gates and walk away.

Ms. Jenkins explained that would be Scenario 2. This scenario leaves Overlook on the General Plan but it removes the policy that says we can't open the gates until Overlook has been built. The General Plan has to be amended to remove that policy.

Chair Wade commented that listening to the public, he heard a few people say they like the gates open so does that mean that they are leaning toward scenario 2 and does this scenario include something they do not want?

Commissioner Stosel stated he would like to come a resolution to this. His concern, personally, he would like to do further research. There was a comment that the DEIR does not consider the history that got us here and another comment was the history is important. He actually would tend to side on going back and looking over everything that has brought us to this point. This would include looking at actions that have been taken in the past and trying to delve into the logic that was involved at the time they came to those decisions. He felt that previous folks have kicked this down the road to the Commission and he did not want to sit here and do the same thing to their future successors. He would like to look into this and research the issues raised tonight to see if collectively they could come up with some questions, mitigations, etc. It was not his

intent to disappoint anyone in the audience but he would like to do something and do it right and not necessarily take the easy way out. He would like a little more time to contemplate this and do a little further research into some of the issues raised tonight.

Chair Wade liked Commissioner Stosel's comments because the speaker card for the woman that had to leave, her last comment was, "I don't care what you do, just do something". This is the attitude that a lot of people are getting, this is just going on and on. He appreciated Commissioner Stosel's comments and would like to at least do something.

Commissioner Kain stated he did like Scenario 2. He liked the idea that the EIR is gone but it is still on the General Plan. His question is if it came back, could they or some future entity call for the true logical analysis of all traffic flow. It is illogical to have this tiny little window and stick their heads in the sand and not look at the Madison and Washington connections and the end result of these decisions. As long as the next time this comes up, lets make a holistic study of Overlook and either one time say no or yes. He felt that their hands were tied, they have half the information and it is being forced on neighborhoods like Casa Blanca but the Commission does not have the ammunition to say yes or no. He would be inclined to, through some mechanism, perhaps Scenario 2 – open the gates and allow appropriate circulation for vehicular traffic in that area but have the ability to leave it on the General Plan so it can be attacked in a holistic way in the future. This way it would not have to start all over by putting it back in the General Plan in the future.

Commissioner Tavaglione stated that he felt somewhat challenged in that the four Scenarios have been presented but he wasn't sure whether the City was intending to complete all four scenarios going from Alessandro to the freeway. Is this something that is going to happen, or is this something that is going to go as far as Washington and stop and then worry about it from there on to the freeway? He is challenged as to where they are going and how far they are going to go and are the funds available?

Mr. Boyd replied that as the General Plan currently states, the extension of Overlook Parkway across the arroyo is still on it. It talks about not opening the gates and looking at a connection from Washington and Overlook to the 91 and that is what that DEIR did. The DEIR looked at an extension to Overlook Parkway to the 91 via Madison Street. Madison is still on the General Plan as a 4 lane arterial highway. The bulb outs and medians put in there a little over 10 years ago were described as temporary at that time until such time the traffic volumes were such that it needed to go back to a 4 lane arterial. The ultimate decision, how far do we go with this rests with the City Council. It would be his recommendation to them that staff move forward whether this plan or some other plan. The City has progressed for decades allowing development in that area on the assumption that Overlook Parkway would be there for local circulation. The traffic studies done in the last General Plan and the traffic studies done for this EIR all show that the connection of Overlook Parkway really feeds local circulation to and from Indiana up to Alessandro and Trautwein. It draws very little traffic in from outside the City. With that said, it would be up the City Council how far we go. Is there money for

such a thing, the relative expense to complete the bridge and do the extension? Staff estimated around 10 million dollars. As you know on arterial highways like this, the City can make funding available through its transportation funds or we could be looking at the regional development impact fees (TUMF). Overlook is on that program and Washington is on that program for possible regional type funding. So could the funding be made available, yes.

Commissioner Tavaglione inquired if staff would proceed with this project in increments.

Mr. Boyd responded that this was the issue what do we do in the long term if the area at Washington/Victoria is not fixed. No matter what action is taken, the City Council will ultimately still have to deal with the traffic coming down Washington and getting that traffic across and keeping it out of the greenbelt. He noted Scenario 4 achieves a lot of the General Plan, Measure C and Prop R objectives for keeping traffic out of the greenbelt and protecting Victoria Avenue. Currently you see traffic come down Washington and peeling off into the greenbelt down Dufferin and Bradley because it cannot get across Victoria in a reasonable manner at Washington. No matter what action is taken on the DEIR, we still have that problem. The comment about trying to make a decision is an excellent one because we will just be back here some time in the future wondering what we are going to do at Washington and Victoria. We need to get even today's traffic across Victoria somehow. He noted that ideally it should be done in one move but that would be a decision that needs to be discussed with the City Council. If the project is staged and stops at Washington, we have not addressed the entirety of the problem.

Commissioner Tavaglione asked if staff had all the information they needed to go from Alessandro to the Freeway?

Mr. Boyd stated the DEIR covers that. The question raised by Commissioner Manning regarding the operational aspects at the railroad crossings, the traffic models used for the DEIR and the General Plan are not sensitive enough to take into account something like a railroad crossing. The General Plan arterial highway system has numerous railroad crossings and they are not considered at a General Plan level traffic model. It is an operation issue that staff deals with later on. The General Plan modeling that exists doesn't contemplate a grade separation because they are just not sensitive enough to do it.

Commissioner Manning stated that this begs the question, why aren't they? His concern is if trying to be representative of the neighborhoods there, last count there was 98 trains going through the City on various lines. Several of those go through this area.

Mr. Boyd stated he would have to speak to the modelers. Based on their comment and some others received, staff would intend to go back and do an operational analysis for the grade crossing. Staff can do an operation analysis of that for the Final EIR.

Commissioner Manning noted that the issues east are mitigated then there is this choke point and Casa Blanca or the Washington/Victoria area suffers. This did not, as he said earlier to the City Attorney, this doesn't appear to be as comprehensive as needed.

Mr. Boyd noted that the bridge is modeled over the Alessandro Arroyo as one lane in each direction. This is really throttling the traffic back there so that the impacts would not be as large as some might expect. It does not mean you won't have some but if that were opened up to four lanes, you may have a different scenario there.

Commissioner Manning stated he did not disagree with that except that at the western extension of Overlook, it becomes four lanes somewhere around Whitegate. He drove it yesterday and as he recalled the closer it gets to Washington it becomes four lanes. This will increase volume and have people heading northerly, it is just incomplete in his estimation.

Mr. Boyd stated that could be addressed in the Final EIR, in the operation analysis at the railroad crossing.

MOTION by Commissioner Kain, **SECONDED** by Commissioner Manning, **TO RECOMMEND** Scenario 2 as stated in the staff report. With an added recommendation that Overlook Parkway not be built until a more comprehensive EIR is prepared.

Ms. Smith asked if Commissioner Kain meant the choke points in connection with the development of Overlook or the choke points in connection with opening up the gates?

Commissioner Kain stated that the entire overall flow from freeway to freeway embodied in building Overlook in the future. That that future EIR embrace that entire flow from A to B but short term, that scenario 2 would be the recommendation.

Commissioner Stosel stated he still had concerns dealing with the sidewalk issue on Crystal Ridge that was raised and still felt that it would be good to get the information on the railroad crossings and the mitigation on that before moving forward. This has been kicked around for 40 years. He didn't know how long it would take to get that information together to return to the Commission.

Mr. Boyd explained that it would not take long to do the operational analysis at the railroad crossing and address that first. Scenario 2 is pretty much the status quo condition today. If the ultimate decision was to adopt scenario 2 there would be no changes from the way it is today because the City Council approved the gates to remain open during the preparation of the DEIR. There would not be any changes at the railroad crossing or anywhere else along Madison Street. Regarding the question about the sidewalk that would be another question they could answer and get back to the Commission fairly quickly with.

Commissioner Tavaglione asked why the Commission is being asked to approve this if the gates are open now and going to stay open?

Commissioner Kain noted that since the gates would be permanently open there would be a certain amount of flow through those residential streets. If that is the case and the Commission is acknowledging that will continue, the enhancement of adding sidewalks would make the flow they are accepting a better condition. The streets should be safe and maybe adding the sidewalks is for another time.

Ms. Smith stated that what Mr. Boyd was trying to say is that he could bring that back to you for your information at a later Planning Commission meeting. She noted that there may be issues in putting sidewalks in the RC Zone as well as right-of-way issues. Safety is an issue but taking this one step further: 1. Is there right of way to put the sidewalks in? and 2. Because this is in the RC Zone, RC properties do not have sidewalks and that was intentional. Staff would have to look into those issues.

Commissioner Tavaglione inquired about bike lanes.

Mr. Boyd stated that there would be a class 2 bike lane that is already in place on Overlook.

Ms. Jenkins stated that staff needs more clarification with regard to sidewalks and exactly what street is being discussed. Is it Crystal View Terrace? There was one person who made comments regarding sidewalks but it was in regards to Grace Street out in the greenbelt area. She stated that they definitely don't do sidewalks in the greenbelt area. Staff will go through the minutes and try to find out if there was another location regarding sidewalks.

Ms. Jenkins reiterated that the motion is to recommend Scenario 2 but at the time, because Overlook is remaining on the General Plan, at the time the City should move forward with Overlook at any time in the future the Commission wants a new EIR that is definitely more comprehensive in its scope and detail.

Ms. Smith also clarified that the Commission is also at this point, forwarding the DEIR with Scenario 2 to the City Council.

The first and second to the motion agreed.

MOTION CARRIED by a vote of 6 ayes to 1 noes and 0 disqualified and 0 abstentions.

AYES:	Kain, Manning, Rossouw, Tavaglione, Wade
NOES:	Stosel
DISQUALIFIED:	None
ABSTAINED:	None
ABSENT:	Parker, Riggle, Stockton, Zaki

Chair Wade addressed the audience and indicated that the Commission tried to address what they could and hoped at least, that the audience saw the effort on the

Commission's part. He stated the Commission appreciated the citizen's efforts to come out tonight. The Commission has made a recommendation and it is not going to please everyone but hopefully it is something they can see the Commission tried to work within what they can and address the concerns discussed. Chair Wade thanked everyone for coming and for their participation.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:31 p.m. to the meeting of June 20, 2013 at 9:00 a.m. in the Art Pick Council Chambers.

Minutes approved as presented at the June 20, 2013 meeting.