

Memorandum

To: Stephanie Strelow
From: Ron Marquez
Date: 7/18/2011
Re: Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds Traffic Analysis

The Purpose of this memorandum is to document the findings and conclusions of a traffic analysis for the Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds. The objective of this analysis is to estimate the effect of the Watsonville Certified Farmers Market operation on Sundays at the Fairgrounds, particularly at the intersection of State Route 152 and Holohan Road/ College Road. This intersection was recently observed to be operating at unacceptable levels of service in the Atkinson Lane Specific Plan EIR prepared for the County of Santa Cruz in 2008.

Access to the fairgrounds is from State Route 152. There are two access points but the southernmost access is the primary access. The second access is relegated to large vehicles and horse trailers. For purposes of this analysis 90% of the trips associated with the fairgrounds are distributed to and from points south along State Route 152.

Trip Generation

Trip generation to the Fairgrounds site was based on 24 hour volumes counted for 8 days in May 2011 at the main entrance to the site.

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Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds		
24 hour Volumes Main Entrance		
		In & Out Total
May 20 2011	Friday	1047
May 21 2011	Saturday	1500
May 22 2011	Sunday	3257
May 23 2011	Monday	662
May 24 2011	Tuesday	701
May 25 2011	Wednesday	397
May 26 2011	Thursday	629
May 27 2011	Friday	871

The counts made indicate substantial variation in traffic volume during a week's period. Peak volumes were noted on Sunday when the Farmers Market is open. For this analysis the total volume counted on Sunday was used as the trip generation estimate for the Farmers Market operation. This is conservative because there was a horse show scheduled during the Sunday counted. The counts provided hourly counts in and out of the site. This information provided the peak hour volumes in the morning and afternoon for Sunday operation. The hours in the morning with the highest volumes (am peak hours) fell between 10 am and 12 noon and the pm peak hours fell between 1 pm and 3 pm. Similar peak hours were noted for Sunday on Route 152 based on counts received from Caltrans. During these peak hour the fairgrounds site generates 232 trips during the morning peak (152 in and 80 out) and 588 trips during the afternoon peak (261 in and 327 out).

Study Intersection

The study intersection at State Route 152 and Holohan Road and College Road is a signalized intersection. Split phasing on the Holohan Road and College Road approaches reduce the level of service to D for both the am and pm peak hour periods. Caltrans is responsible for the operation of this intersection. The cost is shared equally with the County and the State.

Standards of Significance

The standard for Caltrans level of service is the LOS C/D threshold in which LOS C is acceptable in all cases and LOS D is acceptable on a case-by-case basis. The Caltrans Guide for the Preparation of Traffic Impact Studies (Caltrans, 2002) states that if an existing State Highway facility is operating at less than the target LOS, the existing LOS should be maintained.

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The County of Santa Cruz LOS standard is C, but LOS D as a minimum acceptable standard where costs, right-of way requirements, or environmental impacts of maintaining LOS under this policy are excessive and where such capacity enhancements may be considered infeasible.

Trip Distribution

As indicated earlier 90% of the traffic to and from the fairgrounds is directed to the study intersection. Distribution at the intersection is proportional to the existing distribution of turning movements.

LOS Analysis

The level of service for the study intersection was calculated using "Synchro" software and the Highway Capacity Manual methodology.

The following are the results during weekdays and on Sunday. The weekday analysis is based on counts made for the Atkinson Lane Specific Plan EIR. The Sunday analysis is based on counts made on July 10, 2011.

Level of Service for Study Intersection

Intersection	Delay (sec)	LOS
Route 152 and Holohan Rd/ College Rd		
AM weekday peak hour	42.8	D
PM weekday peak hour	46.9	D
AM Sunday peak hour	30.1	C
PM Sunday peak hour	43.1	D

The levels of service during the peak hours on Sunday with the operation of the Farmers Market are better than those of the weekday peaks. However the pm peak operation still remains at an unacceptable level for State standards although the existing level of service is maintained with the project.

ATTACHMENT A

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The County has initiated a project study report for this intersection and identified an improvement that would better the level of service at this intersection to an acceptable standard. The project primarily involves widening the Holohan Road approach to the intersection and modifying the signal design accordingly.

The definition of level of service and allowable delays for each level are reflected in the attached exhibit.

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Exhibit A

Level of Service for Signalized Intersections

The signalized intersection level of service (LOS) methodology addresses the capacity, LOS, and other performance measures for lane groups and intersection approaches and the LOS for the intersection as a whole. Capacity is evaluated in terms of the ratio of demand flow rate to capacity (v/c ratio), whereas LOS is evaluated on the basis of control delay per vehicle (in seconds per vehicle). Control delay is the portion of the total delay attributed to traffic signal operation for signalized intersections. Control delay includes initial deceleration delay, queue move-up time, stopped delay, and final acceleration delay. The average control delay per vehicle is estimated for each lane group and aggregated for each approach and for the intersection as a whole. LOS is directly related to the control delay value. The criteria are listed in the following table.

LOS CRITERIA FOR SIGNALIZED INTERSECTIONS

LOS	LOS Control Delay per Vehicle (s/veh)
A	≤ 10
B	> 10-20
C	> 20-35
D	> 35-55
E	> 55-80
F	> 80

14th District Agricultural Association, Santa Cruz County Fair
INITIAL STUDY
Watsonville Certified Farmers Market
REVISIONS TO INITIAL STUDY

I. Changes/Revisions to Initial Study

As a result of the public review process and comments received during that time, the Initial Study dated July 19, 2011 is hereby revised as follows. A summary of comments received on the Negative Declaration / Initial Study is provided below with responses to significant environmental issues.

Page 2: Add the following to the end of the first paragraph:

In response to comments received on the Initial Study regarding noise impacts and objections to amplified music at the proposed Farmers Market, the operator has agreed to discontinue amplified music. This will become one of the terms and conditions of the contract between the operator and Fairgrounds.

Page 27-29: Change references to temporary noise increases to indicate that potential noise would be from a regular, weekly event held on Sundays.

Page 29: Table 2 – Revise last line as follows:
SOURCE: Estimated from onsite measurements by Magic Sound taken on Sunday, August 29, 2010.

Page 30: Add the following to the end of the Noise section:

In response to comment received on the Initial Study regarding noise impacts and objections to amplified music at the proposed Farmers Market, the operator has agreed to discontinue amplified music. This will become one of the terms and conditions of the contract between the operator and Fairgrounds. If amplified music is reconsidered in the future, additional on- and off-site sound measurements and analyses would be required, including appropriate environmental review as required under CEQA.

Page 33: Revise the last portion of the Utilities and Service Systems section as follows:

However, The proposed event was proposed to will be served by portable toilets provided and maintained by the market operator. However, during the public review period, it was determined that onsite restrooms would be made available, consistent with regulations of the Salsipuedes Sanitary District. There will be no

increased wastewater flows to the existing sanitary sewer system. The use of onsite restrooms will increase daily water use and wastewater generation at the Fairgrounds. The sewer line serving the Fairgrounds was designed to accommodate peak daily flows at the annual event with an estimated attendance of 15,000.¹ The proposed Farmers Market and other events held on the same day would not reach this level of attendance. The sewer system has capacity to support increased flows from the Farmers Market.

Similarly, the Fairgrounds two wells have adequate capacity to serve peak day annual Fair demand, and would be adequate to serve the proposed Farmers Market. Thus, the use of onsite restrooms instead of portable toilets with attendant water use and wastewater generation would not result in significant impacts to public utilities. There will be no other additional potable water demand or pumping of Fairgrounds' wells as drinking water is not provided at the event. Water, drinks and other food and refreshments will be available for purchase at the event.

The operator also will be responsible for offsite hauling of trash. No drainage improvements are planned.

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Revise subsection 18 (b) and (c) to indicate that amplified music will be prohibited at the proposed Farmers Market, thus eliminating, potential cumulative noise impacts related to other events held at the Fairgrounds, i.e. Friday night auto races, as well as issues raised regarding adverse effects on human beings due to increased levels both onsite and offsite.

¹ Local Agency Formation Commission of Santa Cruz County. August 1987. "Salsipuedes Sanitary District Sphere of Influence Study and Proposed Fairgrounds Annexation Final Environmental Impact Report," including Draft EIR volume (May 1987).

**14th District Agricultural Association, Santa Cruz County Fair
INITIAL STUDY**

**Watsonville Certified Farmers Market
SUMMARY OF COMMENTS AND RESPONSES**

I. Background

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and State CEQA Guidelines, an Initial Study was prepared for the Watsonville Certified Farmers Market project, held on Sundays at the Santa Cruz Fairgrounds. The Initial Study did not identify any significant impacts. A Negative Declaration and Initial Study (ND/IS) were circulated for a 30-day public review period between July 20 and August 18, 2011. At the request of the Community Alliance for Fairgrounds Accountability, the public review period was subsequently extended for a 30-day period on three occasions, with the current public review period ending on November 18, 2011. As of November 29th, 13 written letters or emails have been received, consisting of two agencies, one organization and 10 individuals. Additionally, oral comments were received at two Fairgrounds Board of Directors meetings (July 26 and August 23, 2011).

Comments were received from the following agencies, organizations and individuals. The comment letters and Board meeting minutes will be provided to the Board of Directors as a separate attachment and are on file at the Fairgrounds office, located at 2601 East Lake Avenue, Watsonville, CA.

1. Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District
2. Salsipuedes Sanitary District
3. Community Alliance For Fairgrounds Accountability (CAFA), Max Kelley (July 25, September 27, and November 7, 2011 letters)
4. Paula Cathey
5. Pat Davidson
6. Judy Gill
7. Allen & Janice Harryman
8. Kathy (No Last Name Provided)
9. Linda Aron & Tom May
10. Pamela Raabe (July 24, August 19 and October 25, 2011)
11. James & Melinda Rambo
12. Dennis Reader
13. Jeff Rosendale

Pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines section 15074, the decision-making body of the lead agency shall consider the proposed negative declaration together with any comments received during the public review process. The decision-making body shall adopt the proposed negative declaration only if it finds

on the basis of the whole record before it (including the initial study and any comments received), that there is no substantial evidence that the project will have a significant effect on the environment and that the negative declaration reflects the lead agency's independent judgment and analysis.

There are no requirements under CEQA to prepare written responses to comments on a negative declaration. However, the major environmental comments are summarized below and provided general responses in subsection II. Changes to the Initial Study text as a result of comments and responses are included in subsection III.

II. Summary of Comments on Initial Study & Responses

A. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. Farmers Market is Not Temporary. The Initial Study analyses indicated that temporary vendor booths would be set up on Sundays, and as proposed, there would be intermittent noise levels associated with amplified music. The event would only be held on Sundays, and thus, was considered temporary as it would not occur on a daily basis. However, the Initial Study is hereby corrected to clarify that the event is planned as a permanent, regular weekly event (held on Sundays) in contrast to a one-time special event. With regards to noise from amplified music, which is further addressed below, noise levels would be of varying frequency and duration, and thus, intermittent throughout the day, but would occur on a regular weekly basis.
2. Market Attendance. Based on entry fees, Fairgrounds staff has indicated that the Farmers Market attracts approximately 1,000 cars per Sunday. Staff has indicated that this equates to an attendance level of approximately 1,400 to 2,000 visitors per day, which is approximately 1.5 to 2 people per car.
3. Relationship to Master Plan. Some comments suggested that a Fairgrounds Master Plan be completed before increasing uses or events at the facility. The Fairgrounds is in the process of updating the Fairgrounds' 1984 Master Plan that addresses facility improvements and uses. The proposed Farmers Market is one event held at the Fairgrounds. Regular events have historically been held at the Fairgrounds, including a flea market that was held on weekends from 1993 through 1996. The proposed Farmers Market is within the uses and capacities envisioned in the existing Master Plan. While an updated Master Plan will provide further definition of Fairgrounds uses and improvements, its completion and adoption is not necessary for the proposed project nor is the project dependent on its completion.

Section 15126 of the State CEQA Guidelines require that all phases of a project be considered when evaluating its impact on the environment, including, planning,

acquisition, development, and operation. Section 15165 further indicates that where individual projects are, or a phased project is, to be undertaken and where the total undertaking comprises a project with significant environmental effect, the Lead Agency shall prepare a single program EIR. Where an individual project is a necessary precedent for action on a larger project, or commits the Lead Agency to a larger project, with significant environmental effect, an EIR must address itself to the scope of the larger project. Where one project is one of several similar projects of a public agency, but is not deemed a part of a larger undertaking or a larger project, the agency may prepare one EIR for all projects, or one for each project, but shall in either case comment upon the cumulative effect.

In the present case, the proposed project is not part of a larger phased project nor would its approval be a necessary precedent for action on a larger project. Thus, the Board of Directors consideration of the proposed Farmers Market would not be considered "piecemealing" actions in the absence of an adopted Master Plan as was suggested by several comments.

B. AIR QUALITY

1. Air Emissions. Comments from the Air District indicate that actual traffic counts should be used for the vehicle emissions calculations. The traffic counts were held on a day that there were two events at the Fairgrounds. Based on entrance fees to the Farmers Market, 917 vehicles entered the market on the day that the traffic counts were taken. This is less than the 1,000 vehicles estimated for the air quality analysis. Even with a slightly higher level of vehicles, no significant increase in emissions would be expected or violations of District thresholds as the estimated project emissions were quite low in comparison to District standards. The comment also states that the PM₁₀ estimates should include entrained road dust created by vehicles traveling on the unpaved parking areas. However, the parking areas consist of permeable asphalt-concrete grinds and are not expected to result in significant generation of particulates.

C. NOISE

1. Noise Impacts. Comments state that there will be increased noise levels due to amplified music with exposure of offsite residents to sound levels in excess of acceptable standards, and exposure of onsite market attendees that could create health problems. The referenced County noise standards are based on guidelines developed by the State of California to help jurisdictions with siting of new development to ensure compatibility of new development with ambient noise levels. These guidelines were cited in some comments, but are not typically used to assess impacts from a single-event as the measurements are based on a 24-hour

average and are used to guide siting and design of specific types of uses depending on the ambient noise levels in effect. Neither the County of Santa Cruz nor the City of Watsonville has noise guidelines for specific types of outdoor events. These jurisdictions, as well as many others, do have prohibitions against loud or offensive noise between 10PM and 7AM. Nonetheless, the majority of comments took issue with the actual effects of increased ambient noise levels to both offsite residents and onsite attendees. During the public review period, discussions between Fairgrounds staff and the current market operator led to an agreement to ban amplified music at the market, as further discussed below, which would eliminate this issue from further consideration. In the absence of such a ban on amplified music, additional sound measurements and technical review would be recommended to accurately determine offsite sound levels and potential impacts and respond to specific comments that were raised.

2. Recommendation for No Amplified Sound. Numerous commenters indicated that they do not support amplified music at the market, and recommended that a restriction be enacted to prohibit amplified music. During the public review period, discussions between Fairgrounds staff and the current market operator led to an agreement to ban amplified music at the market. This will become one of the terms and conditions of the contract between the operator and Fairgrounds. If amplified music is reconsidered in the future, additional on- and off-site sound measurements and analyses would be required, including appropriate environmental review as required under CEQA.

D. TRAFFIC

1. Traffic Impacts at the Holohan-College/Highway 152 Intersection. The analysis of impacts at the Holohan Road/Highway 152 intersection was based on traffic volumes that included two simultaneous activities at the Fairgrounds. As indicated in the Initial Study, simultaneous events held at the Fairgrounds typically do not have the same peak hour for traffic. Since the traffic counts were taken when two events were held at the Fairgrounds, they represent cumulative events at the Fairgrounds.

The County of Santa Cruz is planning improvements to the intersection that would improve operations to an acceptable level of service. The project is expected to be constructed in 2012. As indicated in the Initial Study, the levels of service during Sunday peak hours with the operation of the Farmers Market are better than those experienced during the weekday peak hour. The project would not substantially worsen the existing level of service at this intersection, and mitigation was not deemed to be necessary. Furthermore, the intersection already is planned for improvement, which will improve level of service during both weekday and

weekend conditions.

2. Fairgrounds Entrance Improvements. A dedicated left-turn lane and acceleration lane already exist at the entrance, and there are no traffic concerns at this location. Because there is no delay imposed on the State Highway at this intersection, the LOS for the state route would be A., well within the acceptable operation criteria.

E. PUBLIC SERVICES & UTILITIES

1. Wastewater Disposal. The Salsipuedes Sanitary District's Ordinance 82, adopted in 2004 allows portable toilets for temporary events, but the comment states that the proposed Farmers Market would be a regular event. As such, the Fairgrounds staff has indicated that restrooms will be open and available for use during the Farmers Market. The use of onsite restrooms will increase daily water use and wastewater generation at the Fairgrounds, but would not result in significant impacts to public utilities as discussed in subsection III below.

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