

STAFF REPORT

As part of the Community Plan Update process for the Brentwood-Pacific Palisades Community Plan, which culminated in the adoption of an amended Community Plan in June, 1998, Councilwoman Cindy Miscikowski of the Eleventh Council District requested that Canyonback Road be redesignated from a Secondary Highway to a Local Street. In March, 2003, Councilwoman Miscikowski again requested the Department of Transportation to determine that Canyonback Road should be redesignated to a Local Street.

In October, 1997, and May, 2003, the Department of Transportation reviewed the traffic circulation and future traffic demand on Canyonback Road between Mulholland Drive and Sepulveda Boulevard. Presently, only a small portion of future Canyonback Road has been constructed. The paved portion along this stretch is approximately 0.80 miles in length and serves the residential neighborhoods in the immediate hillside area. It currently dead-ends north and south of Mountaingate Drive and does not connect to Mulholland Drive to the north nor to Sepulveda Boulevard to the south, as is currently shown on the Community Plan. The existing land use on both sides is residential with a mix of single family homes and multifamily dwelling units.

Canyonback Road is approximately 60 feet wide within an existing right-of-way of 72 feet. The street is striped for one lane of traffic in each direction and there are no parking restrictions on either side. In terms of emergency access for Canyonback residents, the only way in and out is via Mountaingate Drive to Sepulveda Boulevard.

In 1997, Canyonback Road carried approximately 24 vehicles (both directions) in the morning peak hour, 20 vehicles (both directions) in the evening peak hour and 209 vehicles during a 24-hour period (Average Daily Traffic). Traffic levels have not changed significantly since that time. In looking at the vehicle demand on Canyonback Road, DOT concluded that the Secondary Highway designation was not appropriate for the level of low traffic demand. For example, the Transportation Element of the General Plan cites 1400 vehicles per hour in each direction during the peak hour (or 2800 vehicles for both directions) as one of the performance criteria in designating a street as a Secondary Highway. The levels of traffic demand in 1997 were less than one percent of that criterion during either peak hour.

In May, 2003, the Department of Transportation noted that the remaining planned portions of Canyonback Road, north to Mulholland Drive and south to Sepulveda Boulevard, have not been publicly dedicated and that much of the land which would be needed to further extend Canyonback Road northerly to Mulholland Drive is owned or controlled by the County Sanitation District and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. Given the open space designation of the area, it would be highly unlikely that a public roadway would be permitted allowing the completion of the street northerly. Further, land to the south is privately owned by Castle & Cook, with an intent to reduce a previous application for 117 new dwellings to 29 dwellings. Key areas within the revised tentative tract map have been designated as open space and would preclude the possibility of extending Canyonback Road beyond its present terminus south of Mountaingate Drive. It is highly unlikely that a public roadway would ever be completed in that direction.

DOT has further concluded that further extensions of Canyonback Road were originally planned with the anticipation that additional significant residential developments would occur in the area and that additional roadway connections would be needed to accommodate new dwellings. The development trend in the area is clearly headed in the direction of very limited residential density, consistent with the desires of the community. Given this trend, the redesignation of Canyonback Road to a Local Street would be consistent with and appropriate for the reduced planned land use densities. The existing traffic volumes on Canyonback Road are very low and generally limited to local traffic, the street provides sufficient access to a limited number of dwellings and this pattern is anticipated to continue. The amendment therefore brings the designation of Canyonback Road into conformity with the level of service which is necessary to accommodate