

4.6 PARDALL ROAD STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS: PROJECT SPECIFIC IMPACT ANALYSIS

4.6.1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

Project Location

Pardall Road serves as Isla Vista's main street through the business district. The road is also a key gateway connecting the community to the UCSB campus. On a daily basis, thousands of bicyclists and pedestrians use the Pardall Road corridor as their main thoroughfare. The road extends from the western edge of the UCSB Main Campus to Camino Pescadero. Streetscape improvements will be implemented throughout all three blocks of Pardall Road, with special emphasis on the segment of Pardall Road located within the Embarcadero Loop.

Project Description

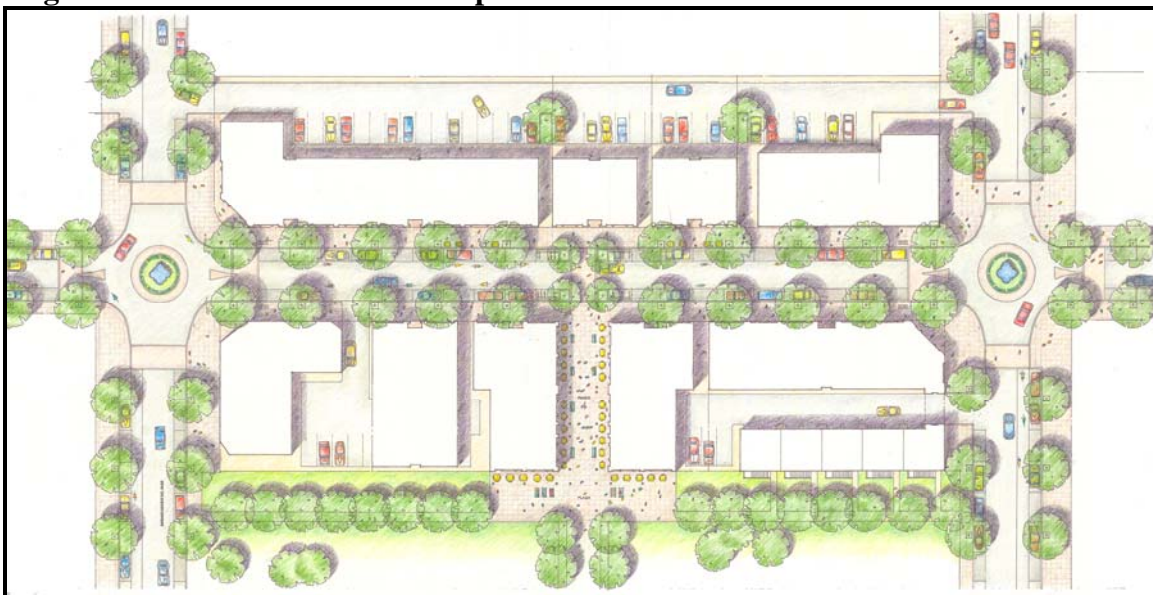
Project Components

The Pardall Road concept plan is intended to encourage public use, improve safety, and enhance business conditions. Specific improvements to the roadway include:

- Widening sidewalks
- Installing street trees and landscaping
- Improving intersections with Embarcadero Del Mar/Norte Roadway with mini-roundabouts
- Traffic calming and pedestrian enhancements
- Paseo connecting Pardall Road to Anisq'Oyo Park
- Street furniture including benches, pedestrian oriented lighting, and trash receptacles

Specific project components are illustrated in Figure 4.6-1.

Figure 4.6-1: Pardall Road Concept Plan



Pedestrian Paseo

Intended to draw pedestrian activity from Pardall Road into the park, the paseo will also become an active public space. The paseo provides commercial opportunities for downtown businesses and will include fountains, public art and landscaping. In addition, the paseo will have pedestrian-oriented design and lighting, directional signage and seating.

Traffic Calming Measures

Small traffic circles, or mini-roundabouts, are proposed at the Pardall Road/Embarcadero Loop intersections. The mini-roundabouts are intended to improve the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists and automobiles, to reduce intersection delays and to enhance the visual character of the intersection. At the center of each mini-roundabout will be an opportunity to display public art, or install low landscaping designed to maintain vehicle line-of-sight. These mini-roundabouts have been recommended to mitigate circulation conflicts caused by the large numbers of bicyclists. These mini-roundabouts require that automobiles and bicyclists yield to one another in the roundabout while providing a gateway into the downtown area.

The Master Plan proposes elevating Pardall Road at the Embarcadero Loop intersections and using stained concrete for both the street and sidewalks. Closing the road to automobile traffic for special events would be facilitated by the placement of temporary bollards at the intersections. Narrowing Pardall Road and widening the existing sidewalks is also included in the concept plan. Additionally, the installation of street trees and landscaping along Pardall Road will serve as a traffic calming measure.

Streetscape Amenities

Pardall Road streetscape improvements will include the installation of a variety of streetscape amenities, including benches, bus shelters, litter receptacles, plant containers, tree grates and guards, pedestrian-oriented lighting fixtures, bicycle racks, bollards, kiosks and fountains. The purpose of these improvements is to create a visually cohesive downtown that encourages pedestrian usage. During special events, mechanisms could be available to close the road to establish a pedestrian-only plaza.

Landscaping

The Master Plan includes a recommended street tree list for the downtown. The selected street tree for areas within the Embarcadero Loop is the Chinese Flame tree, a native tree which is consistent with County Public Works street tree list. Outside of the Loop, the Pistacia tree will be planted along Pardall Road. Each tree species has vibrantly colored flowers which bloom during the summer and early fall. Additional landscaping will be planted in the public right-of-way and at the time individual properties redevelop.

4.6.2 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Project-specific and/or programmatic impacts to the following resources were identified during environmental review of the proposed project. Please refer to individual resource sections, located in Section 3, for comprehensive information regarding environmental setting, regulatory framework, and thresholds of significance.

Aesthetics and Visual Resources

Setting

The Downtown area currently consists mainly of one-story structures and some 2 story structures, with building heights ranging from about 20 to 35 feet tall. Exterior surfaces are painted mostly in earth tones, primarily with stucco wall finishes; the use of exposed wooden beams is widespread. Rooflines and materials vary considerably, the combination of which contributes to the visually disparate character of development. Limited landscaping and streetscape amenities contribute to an overall lower visual quality of the built environment. Views along Pardall Road at the intersection with Embarcadero Del Mar are characteristic of the urban core (see Figure 4.6-2, Existing View). The buildings on the north side of the street are generally setback at a distance from the street, allowing for open sidewalk and/or patio use. Structure architectural style, exterior materials, colors, roof design, and signage vary considerably. Development throughout the downtown area lacks a cohesive, uniform design, as, with contrasting exterior colors ranging from bright primaries to muted earth tones. The lack of streetscape amenities and landscaping is notable.

Figure 4.6-2: Looking East along Pardall Road at the Intersection of Embarcadero Del Mar.



Existing View



Project Simulation

Figure 4.6-3: Looking Northwest at Pardall Road from the Isla Vista Bookstore Parking Lot.



Existing View



Project Simulation

Figure 4.6-4: Proposed Views with Winter Shadows.



Location 1 Project Simulation Winter View



Location 4 Project Simulation Winter View

Impacts

Program Impacts: Impacts **AES-2:** Implementation of the proposed project, including the installation of street trees, will improve the quality and character of residential buildings in Isla Vista, **AES-3:** Project development, including new parking lot lighting, streetlights, structural exterior illumination, and window treatments would introduce new sources of light and glare that could substantially degrade existing nighttime visual conditions, and **AES-4:** The proposed project would potentially result in improper disposal of refuse or waste construction materials during construction that could be objectionable or inconsistent with the character of the project site, listed in Section 3.2, are anticipated to result from development of this catalyst project.

The following **project-specific** impacts are also anticipated:

Impact PARK-AES-2: Proposed downtown catalyst project improvements would improve the visual relationship and connection between the urban and recreational environments, and provide for a more integrated architectural character, listed in section 4.5 - Downtown Park Improvements, would apply to this catalyst project.

Impact PARDALL-AES-1: Landscaping of proposed structures in the downtown area with deciduous trees along Pardall Road and the Embarcadero Loop could result in ineffective accenting or partial screening of proposed structures during winter months.

Street trees would be planted at evenly spaced locations along Pardall Road and the Embarcadero Loop. The proposed trees could achieve heights of up to 40 feet, and are intended to partially screen the proposed maximum structural height of 35 feet. These trees would potentially provide some screening of views of the proposed two and three-story buildings (see Figures 4.6-3 and 4.6-4, Proposed View) during the late spring and summer months. Many of the trees proposed (Chinese Flame and Pistacia), however, are deciduous (the presumption is that the proposed Draft Downtown Design Guidelines refer to *Pistacia atlantica*, a screen tree achieving a height of 45-60 feet, rather than the evergreen *Pistacia lentiscus* that grows to 25 feet, but is used as a ornamental around patios, etc) and lose their leaves in the winter (Gilman and Watson 1993; Arizona Board of Regents 2004). Therefore, for approximately 3 months of the year during winter, the trees would not fully accent project development (see Figure 4.6-5). During this time, tree trunks, limbs, and branches would provide some level of screening from public viewing points, but substantial portions of the new larger buildings would be visible and would create a view that could be considered objectionable. This would be a *potentially significant* impact on visual resources during the winter months.

Mitigation Measure PARDALL-AES-1: In order to increase the year-round accent of proposed development along Pardall Road and the Embarcadero Loop, the IVMP and Downtown Design Guidelines shall be revised to augment the proposed exterior deciduous accent plantings with an increased distribution of evergreen accent trees, such as Evergreen Pistache, (*Pistacia lentiscus*), Brisbane Box (*Tristania Conferta*), Firewheel Tree (*Stenocarpus sinuata*), Cape Chestnut (*Calodendron capense*), Holly Oak (*Quercus ilex*), Evergreen Pear (*Pyrus kawakamii*), or Bottle Tree (*Brachychiton populneus*). Such trees shall be planted

intermittently in groups along Pardall Road and the Embarcadero Loop to maintain some accent of the proposed buildings during the winter months when proposed deciduous species would be barren.

Residual Impact: Mitigation Measure PARDALL-AES-1 requires introduction of evergreen trees that would minimize potential ineffective accent of proposed two- and three- story structures during winter months resulting in impacts to views that are mitigated to *less than significant levels (Class II)*.

Agricultural Resources

There are no program or project specific impacts to agricultural resources given that there are no agricultural resources in the Isla Vista community.

Air Quality

Program Impacts: Impacts **AIR-1:** Short-term PM10 construction emissions and **AIR-2:** Short-term construction related ozone precursor emissions, listed in Section 4.3, are anticipated to result from development of this catalyst project.

There are no project specific impacts anticipated for this resource area.

Biological Resources

No biological resource impacts are anticipated to occur.

Cultural/Historic Resources

No impacts to cultural/historic resources are anticipated to occur.

Geologic Hazards

No impacts due to geologic hazards are anticipated to occur.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

No impacts due to hazards/hazardous materials are anticipated to occur.

Hydrology and Water Quality

Program Impacts: Impacts **HYD-1:** Construction-related water quality impacts; and **HYD-2:** Water quality may be impacted by occupancy-generated storm water runoff pollution, listed in Section 3.9, are anticipated to result from development of this catalyst project.

There are no project specific impacts anticipated for this resource area.

Land Use and Population/Housing

No land use/population and housing impacts are anticipated to occur.

Noise

Program Impacts: Impact **NSE-1:** Temporary construction-related noise could impact surrounding noise sensitive land uses, listed in Section 3.10, are anticipated to result from development of this catalyst project.

There are no project specific impacts anticipated for this resource area.

Parks, Open Space and Recreation

No impacts to parks, open space, and recreation are anticipated to occur.

Public Services

Cumulative IVMP public service impacts (program impacts) are discussed in section 3.12

Fire Services

Setting

The IVMP proposes the use of roundabouts and mini-roundabouts in both the downtown area and on El Colegio Road. This provides improved access to fire personnel through usually congested areas of Isla Vista.

Impacts

Program Impacts: Impact **Fire-2:** Fire Department access to Isla Vista, listed in section 3.12, is anticipated to occur with development of this catalyst project.

Traffic and Circulation

This is a design project and would not generate traffic and thus would not generate traffic impacts. Nonetheless, a short summary of this project has been provided in this section.

The IVMP includes a project to construct mini-roundabouts at the Pardall Road intersections with Embarcadero Del Mar and Embarcadero Del Norte. The mini-roundabouts would measure 35 feet in diameter and would include raised splitter islands on each approach to divert traffic around the roundabout.

Roundabout design standards have been developed by the Federal Highway Administration and are contained in their Roundabout Guide.¹ Due to physical constraints at the Pardall Road/Embarcadero Del Mar and Pardall Road/Embarcadero Del Norte intersections, these locations would most likely need to be designed as mini-roundabouts. Table 4.6-1 shows the basic design characteristics of a mini-roundabout according to the Roundabout Guide.

**Table 4.6-1
Basic Design Characteristics of a Mini-Roundabout**

Design Element	Characteristics
Recommended maximum entry design speed	15 mph
Maximum number of entering lanes per approach	1 lane
Typical inscribed circle diameter	45 feet to 80 feet
Minimum circle island diameter	13 feet
Splitter island treatment	Raised if possible, crosswalk cut if raised
Typical daily service volume (veh/day)	10,000 ADT

The mini-roundabouts will be designed to accommodate large delivery trucks, buses and emergency vehicles. Two options would provide LOS C or better at the intersection: 1) installation of traffic signal control or 2) installation of a mini-roundabout configuration. The traffic signals could be installed without roadway widening. It is unknown if widening and/or additional right-of-way would be required to reconfigure the intersection for a roundabout. It is recommended that the County first develop preliminary engineering plans to determine the configuration of the roundabout and the amount of widening/right-of-way required. If the roundabout is the desired option, it is recommended that it be tested using semi-permanent materials prior to installation of the permanent configuration.

ATE reviewed different intersection control options at the Pardall Road intersections at Embarcadero Del Mar and Embarcadero Del Norte. Table 4.6-2 summarizes the pros and cons of various intersection controls at these locations.

¹ Roundabouts: An Informational Guide, U.S. Department of Transportation-Federal Highway Administration, June 2000.

**Table 4.6-2
Summary of Advantages/Disadvantages of Various Intersection Controls for the
Pardall Road/Embarcadero Loop Intersections**

Intersection Configuration	Effects on Operations	Effects for Pedestrians	Effects for Bicyclists	Effects for Auto Vehicles	Effects for Emergency/ Large Vehicles	Physical Constraints
Two-way stop (existing configuration)	LOS F under Baseline+ IVMP scenario	Lower delays with stop signs	Lower delays	Increased delays with future traffic and current and future ped and bike volumes	Can accommodate	None
Mini-roundabout	LOS C or better	Safe if ped crossings located outside of circle diameter.	Bicyclists required to share road with motorists.	Significant reductions in delay for vehicles.	Additional right-of-way may be required to accommodate.	Additional right-of-way may need to be acquired.
4-Way stop	LOS F	Lower delays with stop signs.	All bicyclists required to stop, may result in some ignoring stop signs.	Increased vehicle delays, higher than a two-way stop.	Can accommodate	None
Traffic Signal	LOS C or better	<u>Pro</u> : Assigns green time to peds. <u>Con</u> : Increased delays for peds, resulting in the potential for ped crossings on red lights.	Similar to ped effects	<u>Pro</u> : Will reduce delays for existing stop-sign approaches (NB & SB). <u>Con</u> : Will increase delays for existing free movement approaches (EB & WB).	Can accommodate	Possible constraints for locating signal box and poles.

In addition to the mini-roundabouts outlined above, the IVMP is proposing to redevelop Pardall Road with a plaza design. This includes elevating the roadway slightly at the Embarcadero loop intersections and using stained concrete and pavers within the parking lane. The plaza design improvement outlined in the IVMP is largely cosmetic and would not significantly alter the roadway level of service. The Pardall Road improvements will be designed according to County Public Works standards.

The mini roundabouts are not anticipated to generate any environmental impacts. Given the low vehicular traffic coupled with high pedestrian and bike volumes these intersections are unique on the South Coast of Santa Barbara. The table above outlines the pros and cons of various traffic control devices for these intersections.

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