

Published in Coronado Eagle & Journal October 19, 2016

Eagle Journal Candidate Questions

Mike Donovan Response

No. 4 – Should the city pursue relinquishment of State Route 282 (Third and Fourth Streets from the San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge to NAS North Island) and State Route 75 (Orange Avenue) from Second Street until it reaches the area controlled by the U.S. Navy? If yes, how should the concept of relinquishment be approached

Donovan Response:

At this point we do not have enough information to make a decision as to whether or not relinquishment of SR 75 and 282 from the state of California to the City of Coronado would be the correct decision for Coronado. There are certainly pros and cons to taking over responsibility for these roads but we need to fully evaluate the costs and the benefits before making this important decision. Before providing some detail on the considerations involved, first some background on relinquishment.

The state routes involved are SR 75 and SR 282. SR 75 is Third and Fourth Streets from the bridge entry into Coronado to Orange Avenue and proceeding south along Orange Avenue and down the strand to the Imperial Beach boundary. SR 282 is Third and Fourth Streets from Orange Avenue to the boundary with North Island Naval Air Station.

In January 2016, Caltrans completed a Relinquishment Assessment Report (RAR) for SR 75 in the City of Coronado, which was approved by Caltrans management on March 2, 2016. The RAR is considered by Caltrans to be an internal document for planning purposes. The report indicates the state of California would approve relinquishment of certain parts of SR 75 to Coronado but will not proceed without written request from the jurisdiction in which the route lies. So, the City of Coronado would need to request further action for Caltrans to proceed. The portions of SR 75 referenced in the report are from just north of Glorietta Blvd by the toll booth area to Orange Avenue and south to Avenida Lunar, at the boundary of where Navy property begins, so does not include the higher-speed section of the strand from the Amphibious Base to Imperial Beach.

In February 2016 the California Assembly introduced Assembly Bill AB-2075 to authorize relinquishment of SR 75 within the boundaries of San Diego, Imperial Beach, and Coronado once an agreement has been established between Caltrans and the local jurisdiction. So, it does not appear the state would unilaterally force Coronado to take ownership of the state highways within the city limits. In May, this bill was held in committee and went no further, killing it. Then AB-1500 came along which contains virtually the same verbiage but only references San

Diego and Imperial Beach, removing Coronado from the bill. AB-1500 was passed and signed by Governor Brown last month on September 21, 2016. So, it appears pursuing relinquishment continues to be at Coronado's request.

The upside of Coronado taking control of these streets is we would have more local control and could take actions to improve the streets without having to rely on Caltrans. The downside includes the direct costs of maintenance and liabilities that will come from ownership. There will also be indirect costs. Caltrans is a large organization and has in place a staff of highway engineers, safety engineers, and lawyers, which Coronado does not currently have in place. We would have some additional costs to fill these voids. Additionally, even though we would own the streets, we most likely would not be able to do anything we wanted to do with them. For example, the Coastal Commission, SANDAG, and the Navy will have some input, either directly or indirectly.

My view is we should get a detailed report from Caltrans on the condition of the roads, maintenance and liability costs (including indirect costs), a definition of the boundaries proposed, and an indication of what kind of "signing bonus" they would start with in negotiations. I also think we should enlist the help of an outside consultant to get an independent analysis of these same things, as well as feedback on what limitations we would face with changes we might want to make on the roads.

Once we have this information available, we can make a data-based decision on whether or not relinquishment of SR 75 and SR 282 is the right thing for Coronado.