

MEMORANDUM

TO: SCCRTC **DATE:** December 18, 2006
FROM: Nolte Associates, Inc. **PROJ #:** Route 1 HOV Lane
Widening (SJ0086001)
SUBJECT: Commission Status Report for Period:
September, 2006 through December, 2006

- 1) PROJECT STATUS UPDATE (HOV Project)
 - a) Environmental
 - i) Cultural Resources
 - ii) Biological / Wetland Resources
 - iii) Other Technical Studies
 - b) Engineering
 - i) Geometric Development
 - ii) Traffic Modeling / Analysis
 - c) Public Outreach
 - i) Newsletters
 - ii) Open House
 - d) Schedule/Budget

- 2) PROJECT STATUS UPDATE (Soquel/Morrissey Auxiliary Lanes)
 - a) Supplemental Project Study Report
 - b) Environmental Studies
 - c) Engineering Development
 - d) Public Involvement

- 3) NEXT UPDATE – MARCH, 2007

1. PROJECT STATUS UPDATE (HOV Project)

a) Environmental

The project study area has been altered as agreed upon with Caltrans and the project team over the last quarter, incorporating modifications identified earlier. Those changes, previously presented, included extending the project limits north to Branciforte to continue the Northbound HOV lane beyond the Morrissey interchange; adding new segments of auxiliary lanes over those originally identified; refinement of preliminary design, especially related to interchanges and impacts on frontage roads, and adjacent cul-de-sacs. Some of these additional areas require new surveys and or evaluation.

i) Cultural Resources – Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (federal compliance)

Some areas remain that require Phase I surveys, due to the above mentioned geometric refinements.

- a. Architectural [unchanged] – Historic Resource Evaluation Report (HRER) was submitted to Caltrans for review. Caltrans comments were received in June. The consultant team has coordinated with Caltrans on the revisions proposed, and, in conjunction with the revision of the Area of Potential Effects (APE) maps, has initiated the updates to this document.
- b. Archaeological: Draft Archaeological Survey Report (ASR) has been prepared. Minor updates are anticipated. Additional research efforts are underway, to be followed by an update to the ASR.
- c. State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and FHWA procedures prevent invasive work in areas that would not be affected by the project. Therefore, subsurface explorations will occur after the preferred alternative is selected. The Draft Historic Properties Survey Report (HPSR) was submitted to Caltrans for review April 2006. This report transmits the ASR & HRER also. Comments were received from Caltrans near the end of June. Comments have been evaluated and a response prepared. Update of the report has been initiated to coincide with progress on other technical studies.

ii) Biological / Wetlands Resources

- a. The Draft Wetland Report was submitted to Caltrans in February, 2005. Comments have been received and noted. A Wetlands Impact memo was prepared in early 2006 summarizing impacts to the identified areas due to the various alternatives, and quantifying the impact areas by alternative. This memo has been updated to reflect the modifications to alternatives resulting from the output from Traffic Modeling efforts. Current design development is actively looking for opportunities to reduce impacts in these areas. Design exceptions, and additional retaining walls are typical approaches to limiting impacts in these areas.
- b. [unchanged] Draft Location Hydraulics Study has been prepared to evaluate flood impacts of the alternatives. Final report will reflect alternatives.
- c. [unchanged] All biological / wetlands resource issues have been delineated on CADD for engineers' use in developing the alternatives.

iii) [Unchanged] The team has completed gathering noise data along with land use, socioeconomic, neighborhood, and community facilities information for corridor communities, including General Plan, Specific Plan and other relevant planning documents from Santa Cruz County and local communities. Data have been analyzed and tabulated and Affected Environment (setting) portion completed; report has been tabled pending completion of engineering for impacts assessment. (Stopped since Fall '04.)

- iv) A meeting with the California Coastal Commission (CCC) is scheduled for mid January to begin discussions related to impacts to CCC wetlands.

b. Engineering

i) Geometric Development

a.) The Nolte team has completed refinement of the three Alternatives under development since January 2005. The Alternatives developed to this point are:

- Ramp Metering and Auxiliary Lane or Transportation Systems Management (TSM)
- HOV Lane Widening with Standard Geometry (following Caltrans PSR Geometry)
- HOV Lane with Reduced Geometry (incorporates interchange type modifications at Morrissey and Soquel, and diamond configurations with one way couplet connectors at 41st/Bay/Porter). This alternative seeks to reduce the project footprint to the maximum extent possible.

An initial geometric review meeting was held in December, 2005 at Caltrans' District 5 offices in San Luis Obispo. A follow-up meeting was held in late March. Initial comments from Caltrans on the geometrics were received from Caltrans. Traffic modeling was evaluated in May, resulting in added auxiliary lanes (discussed in section ii, Traffic Modeling Analysis). Updated plans, incorporating Caltrans comments and reflecting traffic modeling efforts, were reviewed with Caltrans, RTC staff, Nolte and environmental team members in June, 2006. Adjustments based on this meeting were completed in August. Nolte presented the updated alternatives to Caltrans in October 2006.

As a result of the meeting with Caltrans in October, and subsequent discussions, the PDT has agreed that Nolte will prepare one HOV Build Alternative that combines the "best" aspects of the two alternatives, attempting to meet standards where possible, but also reduce impacts to Right of Way, Wetlands, other environmental elements, and bridges. This HOV Build Alternative will be resubmitted to Caltrans in early 2007 with formal requests for design exceptions.

Formal "approval" will occur with full "Geometric Approval Drawings" upon selection of a preferred alternative.

ii) Traffic Modeling Analysis

a. Traffic Model – Collaboration between RTC, AMBAG, Caltrans and the Consultant team (Nolte and Wilbur Smith) continues. Monthly conference call meetings are continuing, currently focusing on the operations analysis of the interchanges. All but Soquel and Morrissey interchanges have been agreed upon by the design team and sent to Caltrans for review. Specific milestones/decisions reached and/or being implemented:

- Freeway operations calibration was complete in October, 2005.
- Horizon year (design year) has been set at 2035.
- Initial traffic projections have been generated using AMBAG's Travel Demand Model and agreed upon methodology to meet the planning horizon year of 2035. The projections include travel demand on the Highway 1 corridor under the Build (widening the highway to provide HOV Lanes in each direction) and the No-Build conditions for both the freeway and on adjacent parallel arterials. These projections were validated using data for existing conditions, reviewed and approved by Caltrans and local agencies.

- Operations Analysis for the Standard Geometry, Reduced Geometry and Ramp Metering Alternatives is complete for the mainline.
- The focus of the operational analysis for the mainline was the incorporation of two lane off ramps and/or auxiliary lanes between interchange on/off ramps. A recommended scenario for the HOV build condition was agreed to by the PDT in June. The project elements, approved based on maximizing operational performance while balancing project costs, include the following:

(Note- An Auxiliary lane is a lane that starts at an on-ramp, and ends at the next exit ramp immediately following the on-ramp. Auxiliary lanes improve operations by facilitating traffic merging on and off the freeway.)

 - Northbound: Auxiliary lanes are recommended in 7 of the 9 reaches between interchanges as follows:
 - a. Freedom to Rio Del Mar
 - b. Rio Del Mar to State Park
 - c. Park to Bay/Porter
 - d. Bay/Porter to Soquel (either Collector Distributor, or one way couplet)
 - e. 41st to Soquel
 - f. Soquel to Morrissey
 - g. Morrissey to Emeline
 - Southbound: Auxiliary Lanes are recommended in 7 of the 8 reaches between interchanges recommended above (a - through - f). In addition, a southbound auxiliary lane is recommended from Park to State Park.
- [unchanged] Compared to the no-build condition, these improvements are projected to result in operational improvements as follows:
 - Average speeds would improve from less than 30 mph to over 40 mph for the entire 12 hour window of peak period demand considered (6-12 a.m. northbound; 2-8 p.m. southbound)
 - A 70-80% reduction in delay would be realized during the peak hour traffic (AM in Northbound, PM in Southbound)
- Bike / Pedestrian Crossings – [unchanged] The Pedestrian/Bike Crossings recommended for this project at Mar Vista, Chanticleer and Trevathan have been incorporated into the Build alternatives (the HOV lane and the ramp metering/auxiliary lane alternative (i.e. the transportation systems management (TSM) alternative). Preliminary geometry has been developed to establish a footprint and right of way needs)
- b. Transit Market Analysis – A draft initial findings memo was prepared by the specialists working on this study and presented to Nolte. The specialists have met with Metro after assembling initial available data. Upon receipt of additional information requested from Metro, the draft memo will be updated to include additional study results, and presented to the PDT in early 2007

iii) Supplemental Elements

- a. Storm Water Data Report – This report, addressing treatment of storm runoff from the project, was submitted to Caltrans in draft format to initiate discussions. Current focus is on the new HOV Build Geometry. In developing the current project elements, opportunities to meet requirements/opportunities for incorporation of Best Management Practices (BMP's) will be identified.
- b. Structural – [unchanged] Conceptual Bridge Plans, or Advance Planning Studies (APS) will be prepared for the structures requiring modification. Work has begun using the Standard Geometry as the most conservative approach for assessing more detailed issues, and establishing costs.

c. Public Outreach Activities (HOV Project)

- i) A series of Community Workshops were held in September to update the community on the HOV project's progress and receive input on issues to consider in anticipation of the preparation of the draft environmental document. Presentation material was similar to the quarterly update presented in September to the commission.
- ii) A draft summary report of the meetings was presented to the PDT on November 30th. RTC and Caltrans will work to finalize the summary report.

d. Schedule/Budget (HOV)

The following are some major milestones per the current schedule. The following schedule is very similar to that presented at the last update. The anticipated completion is now scheduled for late Fall, 2009, or early 2010. Overall phasing/development schemes to expedite construction, should funding become available, are beginning to be discussed.

➤ Traffic Modeling / Analysis	Aug '05 – January '07
➤ Admin Draft EA/EIR	Spring '07
➤ Public Circulation	Spring '08
➤ Select Preferred Alternative	Summer '08
➤ Archaeological Subsurface Work	Fall/Winter '09
○ Potential Begin "Design at Speed"	Fall, 2008
➤ SHPO concurrence	Winter, '09
➤ Final EA/EIR submittal to FHWA	Fall '09
➤ Approval of Final Environmental Document and Project Report	Winter/Spring 2010
○ Potential First Construction Contract	Summer 2010

Additional budget will be required to complete the Environmental Document for the HOV project. Current estimates are that the remaining budget will likely allow the Nolte team to complete and circulate the Draft Environmental Document, but will not allow for review of or response to comments following circulation.

2. SOQUEL / MORRISSEY AUXILIARY LANES

- a.) [unchanged] The Supplemental Project Study Report has been approved by Caltrans. This document is required to place the project in the RTIP and program necessary project funds.

- b.) Environmental Studies and Engineering development will begin in early 2007 pending finalization of a Caltrans Pre-award audit, and contract authorization.

3. NEXT UPDATE:

RTC Update planned in March, 2007.

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