

MEMORANDUM

TO: SCCRTC **DATE:** February 14, 2006

FROM: Nolte Associates, Inc. **PROJ #:** Route 1 HOV Lane
Widening (SJ0086001)

SUBJECT: Commission Status Report for Period:
January, 2007 through March, 2007

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) September, 2006 Open House Events
 - ii) Newsletters
 - iii) Next Steps
- d) Schedule/Budget

2) **PROJECT STATUS UPDATE (Soquel/Morrissey Auxiliary Lanes)**

- a) Environmental Studies
- b) Engineering Development
- c) Public Outreach
- d) Schedule

3) **NEXT UPDATE – AUGUST 2007**

1. PROJECT STATUS UPDATE (HOV Project)**a) Environmental**

The environmental technical studies are in progress. The Area of Potential Effects (APE) maps are being revised and submitted to Caltrans in February for their review. The APE maps incorporated the project extension beyond the Morrissey interchange; addition of auxiliary lanes; and refinement of preliminary design, especially related to interchanges and impacts to frontage roads.

Some areas remain that require Phase I surveys, due to the above mentioned geometric refinements. Studies for these additional areas have been initiated.

- i) Cultural Resources – Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (federal compliance)
 - a. Architectural [unchanged] – responses to the Caltrans comments on the Historic Resource Evaluation Report (HRER) were submitted to Caltrans for review. 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 updated this document.
 - b. Archaeological: [unchanged] 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 and submitted to Caltrans for review. Update of the report will be submitted to Caltrans after Caltrans completes its review of the APE maps.
- ii) Biological / Wetlands Resources
 - a. 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. Current design development is actively looking for opportunities to reduce impacts in these areas. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has concurred on inferred presence for California red legged frog in the wetland resources within the project site.

A meeting with the California Coastal Commission (CCC) was held in mid January to begin discussions related to impacts to CCC wetlands. CCC would like to review the stream crossing design with project biologists and water quality design staff. Next coordination meeting with CCC will be held in the Spring of 2007, after completion of environmental technical studies and prior to circulation of the Draft Environmental Document.
 - 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) Other Technical Studies

The team has completed gathering noise measurement 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 analysis approach has been confirmed with Caltrans. Modeling of the future noise level is in progress and is based on the input from traffic operations and preliminary geometric plans for the alternative.

b) Engineering

i) Geometric Development

a.) The Nolte team has completed refinement of the Alternatives currently under development. The Alternatives are:

- No- Build Alternative
- Ramp Metering and Auxiliary Lane or Transportation Systems Management (TSM)
- HOV Lane Alternative

The HOV Build Alternative combines the “best” aspects of the previous standard and reduced width 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 was resubmitted to Caltrans in February, 2007 with initial requests for design exceptions of the most critical elements (primarily shoulder widths). 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, the Transit Market Analysis, the HOV Report, and the Park and Ride Study. 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 HOV alternative and TSM alternatives is complete for the mainline.

Transit Market Analysis – A draft initial findings memo was prepared by the specialists working on this study and presented to the PDT. The specialists have met with Metro to further discuss the data analysis evaluate latent demand and possible increase in the demand due to the project. A preliminary analysis indicates a demand increase of up to 40% in ridership by the project design year as a result of the addition of the HOV lane, ramp metering (which would provide preferential HOV by-pass lanes for buses and improve the flow of traffic on the freeway mainlines), Park & Ride lot facilities, and additional operational enhancements that would improve bus service dependability and average speed.

iii) Supplemental Elements

a. Storm Water Data Report (SWDR) – the consultant specialist for the SWDR met with Caltrans to discuss potential treatment BMPs and to get Caltrans buyoff on the approach

used to address the project impacts and requirements of the clean water requirements by the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). In developing the current project elements, opportunities to meet requirements/opportunities for incorporation of Best Management Practices (BMP's) were 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 HOV Geometry as the most conservative approach for assessing more detailed issues, and establishing costs.
- c) **Public Outreach Activities (HOV Project)**
- i) A draft summary report of the meetings held in September, 2006, was presented to the PDT in early December. Comments on the draft reports were received and the report was resubmitted in February, 2007. An Executive Summary of the public comments received at the meeting will be posted on the RTC's Highway 1 website.
 - ii) An initial outline for the next newsletter was discussed at the February PDT meeting. Currently, the next newsletter is being targeted for distribution in the Spring/Summer 2007 timeframe.
 - iii) Next public outreach items have been discussed at the PDT. Some outreach is anticipated later this year, likely offering update meetings/presentations with smaller stakeholder groups along the corridor and within the community.
- d) **Schedule/Budget (HOV)**

[unchanged] 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	June/July '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. The Consultant Team and RTC staff are currently reviewing appropriate scope amendments and funding needs for consideration in the Call for Projects to amend RTC's 2006 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP).

2. SOQUEL / MORRISSEY AUXILIARY LANES

The Consultant Team received Notice to Proceed in January, 2007.

a) Environmental

Environmental Studies are being initiated to the extent that information is available and the work can be dovetailed with HOV efforts.

b) Engineering

Initial efforts are focused on refinement of previous geometric development, and presentation of information in a stand alone format.

c) Public Outreach Activities (Soquel Morrissey Project)

No efforts initiated at this point.

d) Schedule

A detailed schedule is being developed for this project. This schedule will be available to RTC and PDT members for review and comment by the end of March, 2007.

3. NEXT UPDATE:

RTC Update planned in August 2007.