

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** SCCRTC **DATE:** August 20, 2007

**FROM:** Nolte Associates, Inc. **PROJ #:** Route 1 HOV Lane  
Widening (SJ0086001)  
and Soquel/Morrissey  
(SJ0086002)

**SUBJECT:** Commission Status Report for Period:  
April 2007 through July 2007

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1) **PROJECT STATUS UPDATE (HOV Project)**

- a) Environmental
  - i) Technical Studies
  - ii) Other Environmental Issues
  - iii) Environmental Document (EIR/EA)
- b) Engineering
  - i) Geometric Development
  - ii) Traffic Modeling / Analysis
  - iii) Project Report and Attachments
- c) Public Outreach
  - i) Newsletter
  - ii) 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 – NOVEMBER, 2007**

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

## i) Technical Studies

The team has completed gathering data for the technical studies to be addressed in the EIR/EA. These studies include:

- noise
- air quality
- biology
- geology/seismic
- energy
- community impact/land use
- visual, hazardous waste
- cultural resources
- hydrology/water quality

Data analysis approaches have been confirmed with Caltrans. These data have been compiled into administrative draft reports. The individual reports, as of the end of this reporting period, are in various states of development and review between the specialists and the lead environmental team.

## ii) Other Environmental Issues

## (1) Global Warming

The California Air Resources Board (CARB) has not yet issued methodology for evaluating greenhouse gases at a project level. In conformance to the Caltrans' guidance, the project addresses this issue by taking a relatively high-level, qualitative analytical approach. The project is designed to reduce congestion and provide increased incentive for people to carpool or use transit.

## (2) Growth Inducement:

The consultants conducted a teleconference and follow up interviews with public and private transportation and land use planners, and local developers to discuss growth trends and issues for the Highway 1 corridor. The group also defined factors influencing residential and commercial growth in the corridor. The results of the consultant's analysis and comments from these interviews will be available in the draft environmental document.

## iii) Environmental Document (EIR/EA)

The environmental document, as of the end of this reporting period, was being written/compiled into an Administrative Draft for review by RTC/Caltrans. This document summarizes the results of the technical studies performed. The Administrative Draft EIR/EA was scheduled for delivery to Nolte, for final review, in July, and anticipated submittal to RTC/Caltrans in August, 2007.

**b) Engineering**

## i) Geometric Development

a.) The Nolte team has been actively coordinating the development of the Alternatives with RTC, Caltrans and the County. The Alternatives under development 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, meeting standards where possible, but also pursuing design exceptions where appropriate to reduce impacts to right of way, bridges, utilities and infrastructure, wetlands, habitat areas, and other environmental elements.. This HOV Build Alternative was resubmitted to Caltrans in February, 2007 with requests for design exceptions of the most critical elements (primarily shoulder widths). A meeting was held at Caltrans District 5 (San Luis Obispo) where initial agreement was reached relative to the proposed median width at a corridor level. A re-submittal of the request for design exception, incorporating further detail and information discussed at the meeting, is being prepared.

Formal “approval” of additional design exceptions dealing with specific ramp geometry and similar items will occur with full “Geometric Approval Drawings” after selection of a preferred alternative (anticipated in the summer of 2008).

b.) Soquel Interchange:

Multiple geometric configurations for Soquel Interchange were presented to the County and Caltrans. The current proposal provides access to the Commercial Way from the State Route 1 northbound off-ramp. Access from Commercial Way to Soquel Drive is via Commercial Crossing.

ii) Traffic Modeling Analysis

a. Traffic Model – Collaboration between RTC, AMBAG, Caltrans and the Consultant team (Nolte and Wilbur Smith) continues. 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 of the mainline for the HOV and TSM alternatives is complete.

b. Transit Market Analysis – A presentation on the initial findings of this study was presented to the Commission in June, 2007. Preliminary analysis indicates an increase in ridership of up to 40% by the project design year is possible with 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) Project Report and Attachments

- a. Project Report (PR)- An Administrative Draft PR has been outlined and is being prepared in parallel with the Environmental Document. The PR summarizes the engineering design development and process issues for the project. This report acts as the formal transmittal document for the Environmental Document.
- b. Storm Water Data Report (SWDR) – the draft SWDR has been submitted to Caltrans for review. This document incorporates information from previous discussions with Caltrans related to potential treatment BMPs (Best Management Practices), approach to address the project impacts and requirements of the clean water requirements by the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB).
- c. Structural – Conceptual Bridge Plans or Advance Planning Studies (APS) are being 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) Newsletter - Through this period, an updated newsletter was created with contributions from Caltrans, RTC and the consultant team. A final draft of the newsletter was submitted to RTC in early August 2007 for printing and distribution in both English and Spanish. .
- ii) Next Steps – Future public outreach efforts have been discussed at the PDT. In preparation for the release of the draft environmental documents, the PDT has recommended an outreach program to provide broad based information on the project as well as focused discussion on specific issues and community interests. The RTC staff, and consultants when appropriate, will be available to provide presentations to stakeholder groups within the community, in conjunction with the distribution of the newsletter. It is anticipated these presentations will occur throughout the Fall and Winter, in preparation of the release of the environmental document in Spring 2008.

d) **Schedule/Budget (HOV)**

The following are major milestones in the current schedule. The schedule is very similar to that presented for the last year. The anticipated completion is still 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	[Analysis Complete]
➤ Admin Draft EA/EIR	June/July '07	[Draft to CT in August]
➤ Public Circulation	Spring '08	
➤ Select Preferred Alternative	Summer '08	
➤ Archaeological Subsurface Work	Fall/Winter '09	
○ Potential Begin “Design at Speed”	January, 2009	
➤ SHPO concurrence	Winter, '09	
➤ Final EA/EIR submittal to FHWA	Fall '09	
➤ Approval of Final Environmental Document and Project Report	Winter/Spring 2010	
➤ <i>Potential First Construction Contract</i>	2011	

Additional budget will be required to complete the Environmental Document for the HOV project. Current estimates are that the remaining budget would 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, nor will it allow for further development of a preferred alternative. The Consultant Team and RTC staff are currently reviewing appropriate scope amendments and funding needs for presentation to the RTC in the Fall.



- Public Circulation Summer '08 [CMIA schedule = July '08]
- Final ED submittal to FHWA February '09
- Approval of Final Environmental Document and Project Report May/June 2009 [CMIA schedule = June '09]
- Final Design [Allow 27 months, begin design to begin construction]
- Begin Final Design\* October '07
- Begin Construction\*\* January '10

\* Initial Activity = Aerial Mapping. Long lead item.

\*\* Assumes 3 months from completion of PS&E to begin construction.