

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: Highway 101 Widening Update

MEETING DATE: February 3, 2010 **AGENDA ITEM:** 8

STAFF CONTACT: Fred Luna, Gregg Hart

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive a report on the status of the Highway 101 Widening Projects including the South Coast Highway 101 HOV Lanes Widening Project.

SUMMARY:

SBCAG has identified a four phase strategy for widening Highway 101 along the South Coast of Santa Barbara County. Currently, Phase 1 of that strategy, the Milpas to Hot Springs project, is well into its second year of construction and is slated for completion in 2012. Phase 2 is the Carpinteria to Mussel Shoals (Ventura County) project that will add (High-Occupancy Vehicle) HOV lanes on Highway 101 for six miles. Phase 3 includes the reconstruction of the Linden Avenue and Casitas Pass Interchanges in Carpinteria and making improvements at Carpinteria Creek Bridge on Highway 101. The *South Coast 101 HOV Lanes Project*, funded by Measure A, is the fourth and final phase of the corridor improvements. This phase proposes to add an HOV lane for ten miles from Sycamore Creek in Santa Barbara to Carpinteria Creek. SBCAG programmed funding for project development to have Caltrans District 5 initiate environmental and design work in 2008. SBCAG is the primary project sponsor. The project is currently estimated to cost \$425 million. The Measure A Investment Plan has allocated \$140 million for this project. Remaining funding is intended to come from the statewide competitive pot of STIP interregional funding, SBCAG's discretionary federal RSTP and regional STIP funds, or federal earmarks.

Since that time, Caltrans has completed nearly all of the environmental technical studies such as biological, archeological, noise, and traffic impact assessments in conjunction with its project partners which include the City of Santa Barbara, County of Santa Barbara, City of Carpinteria, along with SBCAG.

Staff has asked that Caltrans District 5 give a presentation to the subregional committee on the status of the projects in the corridor. Scott Eades, South Coast 101 HOV project manager from Caltrans, will give a presentation and be available to answer questions.

DISCUSSION:

Highway 101 Widening: 4 Phases

Increasing the capacity of Highway 101 south of Santa Barbara by adding an additional lane in each direction is perhaps the flagship project in the 101 in Motion multi-modal package of improvements. Without capacity improvements, LOS F conditions on Highway 101 are forecast

to exceed ten hours a day in each direction by 2030 which is a significant degradation in operations from the current one to four hours per day.

Subsequent to 101 in Motion, opportunities to fund some of the segments of the Highway 101 widening presented themselves at various points. Proposition 1B, passed in November 2006 by the voters of California, is providing all the funding for the construction of the \$116 million (estimated) Phase 2 segment from Carpinteria to Mussel Shoals. Proposition 1B also gave SBCAG the opportunity to program approximately \$20 million for environmental and design work for the Phase 4. This funding has been used by Caltrans to date to prepare technical studies assessing the potential environmental impacts of the project. Finally, Measure A, passed by the voters of Santa Barbara County in November 2008 allocated \$140 million toward Phase 4, the *South Coast 101 HOV Lanes Project*.

Figure 1 below is a representation of each of the four projects that are currently in various stages of development.

Figure 1
Highway 101 Corridor Projects
Mussel Shoals to City of Santa Barbara



Phase 1: Milpas to Cabrillo-Hot Springs Project

The first phase of the Highway 101 widening is the Milpas St. to Cabrillo-Hot Springs project, which has been under construction since summer 2008. The Montecito Roundabout was completed in November 2009. Sound walls near the tennis courts have been completed. Work continues on the highway bridges over Milpas Street and Sycamore Creek to accommodate additional highway lanes. Work has been initiated on the Cacique street undercrossing. Construction is still anticipated to be complete in 2012.

Phase 2: Santa Barbara to Ventura HOV Lanes

This \$116 million construction project is funded through Proposition 1B approved by the voters of California in November 2006. The project is being sponsored through a collaborative effort of Caltrans (District 7 and District 5), SBCAG and the Ventura County Transportation Commission. Caltrans District 7 is the lead agency for the project. The project environmental document was approved at the end of 2008 and an addendum to the environmental document was released in January 2010. Detailed design has been underway for a year and is nearing completion.

Construction plans are scheduled to be submitted for quality assurance review in May 2010 and construction would begin in early 2011.

The project requires Coastal Development Permits (CDPs) from 3 agencies (County of Santa Barbara, City of Carpinteria and County of Ventura) as well as consent by the California Coastal Commission. The CDPs from the City of Carpinteria and County of Santa Barbara have been approved.

Phase 3: Linden Avenue and Casitas Pass Interchanges

The Linden Avenue and Casitas Pass Interchanges in the City of Carpinteria will replace the overcrossing structures at both locations to allow for six-lane widening of Highway 101, raise the profile of Highway 101 as it passes over Carpinteria Creek to allow for 100 year flood flows, extend Via Real to improve local circulation, and improve bicycle and pedestrian access among other improvements. It is anticipated that the Final EIR for the project will be certified by June 2010. Funding for the project development work is programmed through grandfathered STIP dollars, and construction and right-of-way, currently estimated to cost \$82 million is funded by regional STIP funds. A shortfall of approximately \$40 million is expected to be closed with future STIP programming and RSTP funding. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2014 pending availability of STIP dollars.

Phase 4: 101 South Coast HOV Lanes Project

The South Coast HOV Lanes project is intended to reduce congestion and delay, provide capacity for future travel demand, encourage modal shift to transit and carpooling, and improve travel time on U.S. 101 between Santa Barbara and Carpinteria Creek in Carpinteria. This project will facilitate the flow of goods and services through the corridor and minimize diversion of freeway trips onto the local road system.



Through the development of its initial Measure A Strategic Plan, SBCAG and its consultant team have outlined a plan for completing the 101 South Coast HOV project in 5 individual segments. The scope of these is yet to be determined though the cost has been approximated at \$80 million per segment. Measure A would fund 33% of the project cost. The draft cash flow for the Measure A Strategic Plan also identified contributions from SBCAG's discretionary regional STIP and STP funds and from STIP Interregional Improvement Program (IIP) funds over which Caltrans has discretion.

Work on the 101 South Coast HOV project has been underway for nearly two years. Significant progress has been made to date. Technical studies have been completed and a finite set of project alternatives have been developed. These alternatives were presented at public scoping meetings in July 2009 to inform the public that work on the Environmental Impact Report had been initiated.

Over the next year, Caltrans and the project development team will continue to work on the EIR that is scheduled for release in the summer 2011. The backbone of this work is founded on several key technical studies that have been underway for some time and will be finalized during 2010. Table 1 below provides a list of the technical studies and their current status. Other key activities that Caltrans and the project team will be working on during 2010 are:

- Continue to refine project alternatives with input from local project partners
- Complete environmental technical studies (see Table 1 below)

- Initiate public outreach efforts related to noise abatement
- Present project information at concept review meetings for each of the local permitting agencies
- Develop alternative specific recommendations for auxiliary lanes
- Evaluate Hot Springs Cabrillo interchange configurations

RECOMMEN DATION

This is an information item to update the committee on the status of the four phases of improvements that are underway to increase the capacity of the Highway by adding HOV lanes. Mr. Scott Eades, South Coast 101 HOV project manager from Caltrans, will be available to answer questions.

**Table 1
Phase 4: Hwy 101 South Coast HOV Lanes Technical Studies
Status as of February 2010**

Study	Status
Noise	The noise report is complete and locations for considering sound walls have been identified. Caltrans will continue to work on screening process which includes cost-benefit analysis for each wall and acoustic feasibility, for alternate wall locations.
Air Quality	Will be finalized based on final traffic information in Spring 2010.
Water Quality	Underway and to be completed by Summer 2010.
Biology	Field work done and delineation of wetlands complete. Natural Environment Study underway and subsequent steps will include ongoing consultation with permitting agencies USFWS and NMFS.
Visual	Initial field work completed. Visual simulations to be prepared during Summer/Fall 2010.
Archeology and Architectural History	Underway. A majority of the field work is complete. Draft Historic Property Survey Report (HPSR) and Draft Historic Resource Evaluation Report (HRER) will be revised and have negative findings (no impacts) and consultation is ongoing. Consultation process to continue.
Traffic	Underway. Existing Conditions Report completed. Forecast Operations Report for 101 Mainline, and local intersection was completed in January 2010. Draft HOV report due February 2010.
Hydrology	Field work on bridges and culverts has been initiated. Additional hydrologic studies for fish passage. Floodplain report also underway.
Geotechnical	Preliminary report underway.
Hazardous Waste	Record search, ISA completed in July 2009. Preliminary Site Investigation (PSI) report is underway which will determine areas for additional testing.