

June 2007

newsletter

What YOU Can Do About Sepulveda, the 405 and Caltrans

**Ask Caltrans to
Downsize the 405
widening.**

**Attend the public
hearing.**

**June 11, 2007
5 PM to 9 PM.
at the
Skirball Cultural
Center
2701 N. Sepulveda
Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA
90049**

**Mail written
comments to**

**Ronald J.
Kosinski
Division of
Environmental
Planning
Dept. of
Transportation
District 7
100 S. Main St.
Los Angeles, CA
90012**

**We asked: Sorry,
Caltrans won't include
emailed comments in
the Final Environmental
Impact Report**

SPECIAL EDITION: UPDATE 405 WIDENING PLAN

Caltrans has released a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) on the I-405 Sepulveda Pass Widening project.

Homeowners have an opportunity to comment on the project at a public hearing on June 11, 2007 or in writing by July 11, 2007. The Project covers a 12-mile stretch of freeway between National Blvd. in LA and Greenleaf St. in Sherman Oaks. Elements of the project that will affect Westwood Hills include:

- **Closure of the Montana Avenue off-ramp to provide right-of-way for the wider freeway.**
- **Realignment of Sepulveda Blvd. east of the existing roadway to make up for land lost on the west side to freeway widening.**
- **Acquisition of subsurface property and/or temporary construction easements from up to 20 private homes on Dalkeith and Thurston**
- **Acquisition of property from multi-family buildings on Sepulveda and Bronwood and destruction of a duplex and commercial buildings on Sepulveda**
- **Destruction of 30 homes and apartment buildings on Church Lane, as well as destruction of the Village Church. (Alternative 3 only).**
- **Widening of northbound on- and off-ramps at Sunset and improvements to all Wilshire Blvd. ramps.**

Caltrans presents three options:

- #1 No project**
- #2 Widen Northbound lanes only**
- #3 Widen of northbound and southbound lanes.**

The primary purpose of the project is to increase capacity through the Sepulveda Pass by adding a 12-foot high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane. In addition to the northbound HOV lane, the "supersized" project proposed by Caltrans also includes on each side a 12-foot half median, a four-foot HOV buffer, a ten-foot shoulder, and 12-foot lanes instead of the the existing 11-foot lanes.

WHPOA's Board of Directors believes that Caltrans should downsize the project to avoid the need to move Sepulveda. Downsizing the project would allow it to be completed faster, cheaper, and with less disruption to community services and neighborhoods.

SEPULVEDA PASS PROJECT DEIR—FAQs

Where can I see the Caltrans DEIR?

The full text of the Caltrans draft Environmental Impact Report on the I-405 Sepulveda Pass project is available at the Westwood Branch Library on Glendon Ave.

and on line at <http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist07/travel/projects/move405>.

What does Caltrans do with my comments?

By law, Caltrans must respond to all comments received by mail or at the public hearing in a Final EIR. The Final EIR is the basis for a decision to approve or disapprove a project. Both State and Federal approval are required for this project.

Q: According to the DEIR, what is the purpose of the project?

Caltrans says the primary purpose of the proposed project is to reduce existing and forecast traffic congestion on I-405 between I-10 to US-101 by adding a northbound carpool lane and improving intersections and access ramps. A secondary goal is “to improve both existing and future mobility and enhance safety throughout the corridor, while minimizing environmental and economic impacts...” by widening existing 11-foot lanes to standard 12-foot widths., and adding buffers and medians.

Q: Why is Caltrans widening the freeway by 29 feet?

Supersizing the project beyond the 12 feet required for a traffic lane is required so that the project will be eligible for Federal funds. Caltrans would need a waiver from the Federal Highway Administration to downsize the project.

Q: Does Caltrans ever provide less than the “standard” freeway configuration?

According to the DEIR, some portions of the freeway at the southern end of the project will be built to less than Federal standards. Caltrans has obtained waivers from Federal standards for HOV projects in other areas of Los Angeles.

Q: Why does Caltrans need to move Sepulveda Blvd?

Caltrans doesn't have enough right-of-way to widen northbound 405 by 29 feet and needs to take property from the west side of Sepulveda Blvd. Roadway taken from the west side would be reconstructed on the east side.

Q: How many feet east would Sepulveda Blvd. be moved between Montana and Sunset?

The DEIR has a graphic that shows the new roadway but it doesn't say how far east the new roadway extends. Ask this question at the public hearing.

Q: Would private property be taken for the new roadway?

The DEIR includes a list of properties that would be affected by the project either by full acquisition or acquisition of some part of the property. Except for one duplex on Sepulveda, affected properties in our area are listed as partial. Partial takings could include temporary easements and subsurface rights .

Q: Would moving Sepulveda have other impacts on the environment?

The DEIR says realignment of Sepulveda Blvd. could affect utility poles, natural gas pipelines, fuel oil pipelines, water pipelines, sewers, manholes, aerial and underground transmission lines and fire hydrants, but it doesn't say which ones need to be relocated, how long it would take, if the relocation would be hazardous, how much it would cost, what traffic congestion would result. These impacts could add to the cost and duration of the project. Ask these questions at the hearing or in your comments.

Q: What would be impact on neighborhood streets of the closure of the Montana off-ramp?

The DEIR says that Montana operates at about half of its capacity at present and that closing it would reduce traffic on neighborhood streets. The report assigns trips dislocated from Montana to improved Wilshire and Sunset off-ramps. Caltrans doesn't propose mitigations for added traffic on City and neighborhood streets.

Q: How would Brentwood Glen be impacted?

The widening proposed by Alternative 3 would have devastating effects on our neighbors in Brentwood Glen. The DEIR states that Alternative 3 would disrupt and alter the Westside community of Brentwood Glen. The DEIR describes Brentwood Glen as "an isolated area and a close-knit community. There is a justifiable perception in the Brentwood Glen neighborhood that if Alternative 3 were selected, the acquisition of approximately 30 properties, including a church along Church Lane, would have an adverse impact on community cohesion. The potential removal of the Village Church further contributes to the potential impact on this community's character and cohesion."

Q: What is the WHPOA Board's position on the project?

The WHPOA Board joins the Brentwood Glen Association and the Bel-Air Association in opposing Caltrans Alternative 3, which would widen the southbound freeway lanes, as it would irreparably harm the community of Brentwood Glen and in so doing would diminish our community as well. We believe that Alternative 3 should be excluded from further consideration immediately. WHPOA further believes that Caltrans should take whatever steps are necessary, including seeking waivers of standard freeway design to reduce the taking of private property in connection with the project and eliminate the need to move Sepulveda.

Q: How much will the Project Cost?

Alternative 2 costs \$647 million in 2006 dollars and Alternative 3 costs \$914 million in 2006 dollars

Will Caltrans build a soundwall?

Caltrans will provide a soundwall on the shoulder of the freeway. The wall would begin south of Cashmere Avenue and extend north to Sunset. The DEIR says that the project will be constructed in two phases. Construction of soundwalls would be completed during the first phase.

Why is there such a large median being proposed

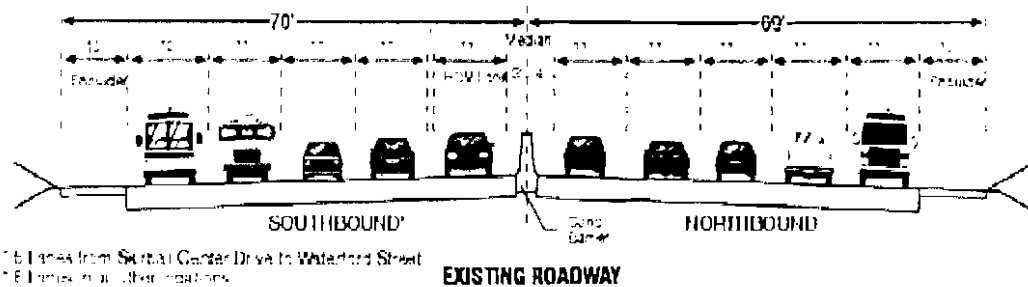
The DEIR doesn't answer this question except to indicate that the freeway is designed to meet Federal Highway Administration standards.

Is rapid transit planned for the median?

The DEIR doesn't discuss future plans.

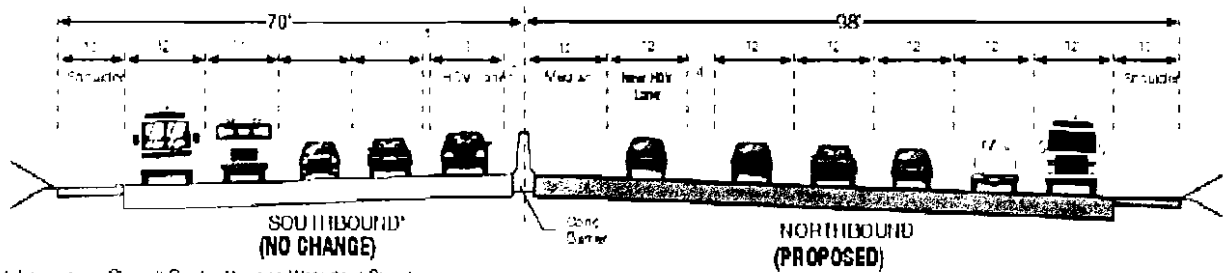
INTERSTATE ROUTE 405 - SEPULVEDA PASS HOV PROJECT

Typical Cross Sections



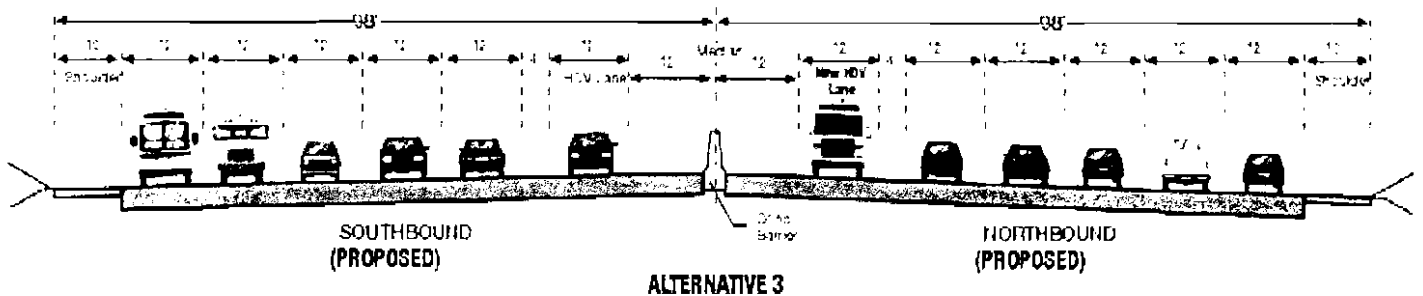
10 Lanes from Skidall Center Drive to Waterford Street
16 Lanes in all other locations

EXISTING ROADWAY



10 Lanes from Skidall Center Drive to Waterford Street
16 Lanes in all other locations

ALTERNATIVE 2



September 2004

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