

Silva Valley Parkway Interchange Supplemental Environmental Impact Report

Supplemental Staff Report.

This supplemental staff report has been prepared to bring to the Board's attention several important issues raised during the public review period. The following staff report is not a comprehensive summary of each and every public comment, but is a commentary on several important issues. For the complete California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) discussion and response to each public comment please refer to the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (Final SEIR).

Issues Raised by Public:

The following is a general overview of issues expressed during the review of this document. For the official CEQA response to each public comment, please refer to the Final SEIR.

Traffic Related Noise:

Multiple commentors expressed concern that the Project did not adequately address noise created by the Project. LSA Associates, the consultant who prepared the environmental document, performed an analysis of existing and anticipated noise impacts resulting from the Project. The study was performed in accordance with the 2006 Caltrans Noise Analysis Protocol and the Harris C.M. 1998 Handbook of Acoustical Measurements and Noise Control guidelines. The analysis concludes that traffic noise levels along all portions of the Project alignment would not result in a significant increase (greater than 3 dBA) in traffic noise levels over those that would be experienced without the Project at any of the modeled receptor locations within 500 feet of the Project alignment. Based upon the analysis conducted the document concludes that a significant impact would not occur and no mitigation measures would be required.

Nighttime Construction Noise:

The Draft SEIR noise section initially circulated for public review included a mitigation measure which precluded nighttime construction. However, Caltrans rules and County safety procedure dictated that some construction activities must occur at night. The mitigation measure was revised to reflect that change; the noise section of the Draft SEIR was recirculated to ensure the public had adequate time to comment on the revised mitigation measure.

Certain elements of construction will require full or partial closures of US 50 and Silva Valley Parkway. These activities generally include rock blasting, placement of bridge falsework over traffic lanes, and work immediately adjacent to existing traffic lanes. As traffic volumes are very high in these areas, full or partial closure of these roadways during daytime hours would create severe safety and congestion issues.

The El Dorado County General plan establishes noise volume thresholds. Nighttime work on the interchange is anticipated to occasionally exceed those thresholds resulting in two noise related impacts being considered significant and unavoidable as they can not be mitigated to less than significant levels. These impacts include

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NOI-2a (*Would the project result in exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?*) and NOI-4a (*Would the project result in a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above or groundborne noise levels?*).

NOI-2a - Rock blasting will be required on this Project. While groundborne vibration and noise caused by blasting will likely be attenuated by distance from the blasting source to neighboring homes, such activity will occur during nighttime and early morning hours while residents are sleeping. As there is no feasible mitigation to offset this potential impact, the impact is considered to be significant and unavoidable.

NOI-4a - Similarly, other nighttime construction will also be required. Nighttime construction is expected to occasionally exceed the General Plan threshold of 45 dbl eq. The County will mitigate to the best extent possible this impact by limiting construction to the hours of 7:00 am to 7:00 pm, except when the County determines that work must be performed at night to mitigate traffic congestion and safety hazards. As this and other mitigation measures will not mitigate the impact to a less than significant level, the impact is considered to be significant and unavoidable.

Traffic Impacts

The primary function of the Project is to facilitate safe and efficient transportation for the residents and businesses in the adjacent region. In total the proposed Project will substantially improve traffic circulation and levels of service to Silva Valley Parkway, White Rock Road, Serrano Parkway, El Dorado Hills Blvd and US Highway 50. The Project does not; however, relieve all of the projected traffic congestion issues in the region. The Project traffic study identifies a traffic related impact that can not be mitigated to a less than significant level.

Impact TRAF-2 (*Would the project conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the County congestion management agency for designated roads or highway?*)

Impact TRAF-2 is divided into 23 identified traffic locations and periods. One of these relates to the projected 2030 PM peak hour period traffic condition at the eastbound slip/diagonal on-ramp from Silva Valley Parkway to US Highway 50. Traffic is projected to have a level of service F at this location in year 2030. The traffic study concluded this anticipated condition is primarily a function of eastbound mainline US 50 congestion impacting the ability for on-ramp traffic to merge into thru traffic. No feasible alternative was identified to relieve this condition. For this reason the document concludes Impact TRAF -2m to be significant and unavoidable.

Silva Valley Parkway Traffic Circulation/Congestion in Proximity to Oak Meadow Elementary School:

School officials and other commentors expressed concern about traffic circulation around Oak Meadow Elementary School. The proposed Silva Valley Parkway Interchange Project will provide a 4-lane roadway adjacent to the school consistent with the El Dorado County General Plan, El Dorado Hills Specific Plan, Oak Meadow Elementary School Improvement plans, and County Roadway Design Manuals. The

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elements of the Silva Valley Parkway Interchange meet all currently adopted plans and guidelines for circulation and safety. It should be noted that the planning for the proposed Silva Valley Interchange and 4 lane Silva Valley Parkway predates the placement and construction of Oak Meadow Elementary School.

DOT is however, very aware of traffic issues related to the school and plans to address the circulation and safety concerns raised by commentors under separate projects. The "Silva Valley Parkway – 2 to 4 lanes" project has awarded a construction contract for 2011 that will add two lanes to Silva Valley Parkway adjacent to the school and modifying its northerly driveway. The future Country Club Drive connection project is anticipated to add a traffic signal on Silva Valley Parkway adjacent to the Oak Meadow School and will take into consideration school access and circulation.

Commentors also expressed concern about high speeds in front of the school as a result of the interchanges ramp configurations. The westbound US Highway 50 off ramp is approximately one half mile from Oak Meadow Elementary School. While traffic speed in school zones is a very important concern, the proximity of the interchange to the school is not anticipated to be a factor in prevailing travel speed. The 4 lane roadway configuration is considered to be the determining travel speed factor. The Project meets appropriate local and state vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian safety standards and Silva Valley Parkway adjacent to the school will continue to have a posted speed reduction zone of 25 mph when children are present.

Tong Road Realignment and Access:

Concern was expressed regarding access to Tong Road. Due to the construction of the proposed westbound off-ramp, existing Tong Road will be relocated to the north. All of the parcels which have access from the existing Tong Road will continue to receive access from the relocated Tong Road.

The relocated intersection of Tong Road and Silva Valley Parkway will fall within the 500 feet of the Caltrans access controlled area north of the westbound ramps. In this access control area, Caltrans dictates allowable intersection configurations. Caltrans has determined that Tong Road will be restricted to right in/right-out only for safety reasons. This restriction will necessitate some out of direction travel for specific turning movements.

A future project is proposed to construct the Country Club Drive extension, improving regional circulation. It is anticipated that Tong Road will be incorporated into the Country Club Drive alignment, replacing the Tong Road connection with a fully signalized intersection.

Pedestrian Access:

Multiple commentors questioned the adequacy of pedestrian access. Pedestrians access has been included as part of this Project with the installation of sidewalk on the west side of Old Silva Valley Parkway. This new sidewalk connects both sides (north and south) of the freeway and will provide access to the existing and future pedestrian facilities in the area. Future development will complete a continuous pedestrian corridor in the area.

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For safety and access reasons it was determined that sidewalks not be included over the new Interchange. The Interchange will have multiple freeway ramps and high traffic volumes which may cause conflict with pedestrians. The Old Silva Valley Parkway provides a safer and more direct pedestrian access alternative to surrounding facilities.

Bicycle Access:

Multiple commentors questioned the adequacy of bicycle access. Consistent with the El Dorado County Bicycle Master Plan, Class II bike lanes (in both north and south directions) are included in the Silva Valley Parkway Interchange Project on both Old Silva Valley Parkway and the new overcrossing. In addition to the Class II striping and signing, bicycle detector loops are included at all signalized intersections.

The proposed Class II bike lanes will link to existing Class II and Class III lanes already located in the Project vicinity. A future separate project will widen White Rock Road to the southwest and add Class II bicycle facility providing a continuous Class II route from Serrano Parkway to the El Dorado Hills Town Center.

Park and Ride Lot & Bus Stops:

A commentor expressed concern that the Project did not consider carpooling through use of a park-and-ride lot, or a bus stop for commuter busses. A bus stop and park and ride were not included as part of this Project because the land adjacent to the interchange is primarily undeveloped. The County recognizes a need for additional park and ride spaces and bus stops in the west end of the County. As adjacent commercial property is developed, bus stops will be included providing multi-modal transportation access to those facilities. In addition, as commercial sites are improved, the El Dorado County Transit Authority, Planning Department and DOT will work together to identify locations and funding for park and ride facilities.

Conclusion:

Staff has reviewed the comments made by the public and other agencies, and believes all comments provided are adequately addressed in the Draft SEIR, Revised Draft SEIR or Final SEIR. For the complete CEQA discussion and response to each public comment please refer to the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (Final SEIR).