Environmental Scoping Meeting
Overview

US 101/SR 84 (Woodside Road)
Interchange Improvement Project
Project Approval & Environmental Document Phase

February 2015
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The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), City of Redwood City, and San Mateo County Transportation Authority hosted a scoping meeting for the United States Highway 101/State Route 84 (Woodside Road) Interchange Improvement Project (project) on November 20, 2014. The meeting was held at the City Hall Council Chamber and Lobby, 1017 Middlefield Road, Redwood City. This report documents the purpose of the meeting, meeting notification methods, meeting format, materials distributed, and input received.

1.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of the meeting was to solicit community input on the issues to be addressed in the upcoming environmental document. The project team provided a presentation, display boards, a handout, and a self-repeating animation on potential interchange alternatives to help attendees understand the proposed project, the scope of the environmental document, and the environmental effects that are being studied.

All comments were requested to be submitted in writing, either at the meeting or via postal mail or e-mail by December 20, 2014, to Yolanda Rivas, District Branch Chief, Caltrans Office of Environmental Analysis. Comments submitted before November 20, 2014, in response to meeting notices were also included as scoping comments.

Comments received during the scoping period will be summarized in the environmental document and considered in the preliminary design and technical studies.

1.2 CONTEXT

The scoping meeting was the third public meeting to be held for the project. In March 2014, a community meeting was held to get public feedback on interchange area usage and problem identification. In July 2014, a community meeting was held to get public feedback on potential project alternatives and the alternatives screening process. Twelve alternative concepts (including No Build) were presented at the July 2014 meeting.
Public notification of the scoping meeting was issued in the following ways:


- A bilingual Spanish and English flyer mailed to the more than 6,000 addresses within the study area used for the project’s Community Impact Assessment

- A bilingual Spanish and English flyer that was distributed on November 14, 2014, to attendees at previous community meetings, to the City’s project e-mail list, and e-mailed on November 17, 2014, to all stakeholders with whom project team members met

- A Redwood City eNews announcement on November 13, 2014, and November 19, 2014

- A Caltrans press release issued on November 14, 2014
This section provides an overview of the meeting attendees and organizers, and the meeting format.

### 3.1 MEETING ATTENDEES

Approximately 32 people who were not directly affiliated with the project attended the scoping meeting. About sixty percent indicated they had received the city eNews announcement. Fifty percent said they had received a meeting notice flyer. Forty percent received an e-mail notification from another group’s e-mail list (such as the Chamber of Commerce and Seaport Industrial Association). A handful of people learned about the meeting through flyers placed at the library and City Hall or advertisements in the local newspaper.

The Honorable Jeffrey Gee (Mayor of Redwood City), Bill Ekern (Redwood City Assistant City Manager), and Nancy Radcliffe (Redwood City Planning Commission) were present. Jim McKim of the San Mateo County Transportation Authority also attended the meeting.

### 3.2 PROJECT STAFF ATTENDEES

The meeting was coordinated by several project staff members: Redwood City Senior Transportation Coordinator Jessica Manzi; the City’s project manager Paul Krupka (Krupka Consulting); URS project manager Scott Kelsey and his team, including Eileen Goodwin (Apex Strategies Community Outreach Lead), Connie Guerrero (Community Consultants Group Interpreter), Tyson Tano (URS Specialty Services), Jeff Zimmerman (URS Environmental), Lynn McIntyre (URS Environmental), and Sarah Luce (URS Project Coordinator).

Four Caltrans staff members were in attendance:

- Mohammad Suleiman, Caltrans Project Manager
- Gidget Navarro, Caltrans Public Information Officer for San Mateo County
- Yolanda Rivas, District Branch Chief, Caltrans Office of Environmental Analysis
- Leahnora Romaya, Associate Environmental Planner

### 3.3 TITLE VI COMPLIANCE

A public participation survey was conducted in accordance with 23 Code of Federal Regulations 200.9(b)(4) and (b)(10), which requires Caltrans to collect statistical data (i.e. race, color, religion, sex, and national origin) of meeting participants and report this information annually. Caltrans uses a visual tally estimation method. The visual tally survey form is on file with Caltrans District 4.

### 3.4 MEETING FORMAT

The meeting was an open house from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. in the City Hall lobby with a short presentation from approximately 6:45 to 7:15 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chamber.
The presentation was prefaced by an introduction from Eileen Goodwin, who introduced Mayor Gee, Paul Krupka, Jim McKim, Caltrans staff members, and Spanish interpreter Connie Guerrero. One attendee took advantage of the interpretation services during the meeting.

The presentation was screened in the City Hall Council Chamber and provided an overview of the scoping process, the project purpose and need, project alternatives, the environmental process and studies being conducted, and the comment process. URS staff Jeff Zimmerman, Scott Kelsey, and Lynn McIntyre participated in the presentation.

After the presentation, attendees were invited to review the open house exhibits, watch an optional presentation that detailed vehicle movements for the different alternatives, talk with staff members, and provide written comments (either at the meeting or by email or postal mail to Yolanda Rivas by December 20, 2014).

Project details were presented on informational boards located throughout the room. Staff members were available to provide additional information and answer questions. A bilingual Spanish and English Fact Sheet was also provided at the meeting and on the Redwood City project web page. Comment cards were available for the public to fill out and submit.

City Hall lobby, with a sign directing meeting attendees to the Council Chamber for the presentation and some of the informational boards for the open house.
Council Chamber entrance, with welcome table and comment box in the foreground.

Council Chamber, with optional presentation that detailed vehicle movements for the different alternatives.
City Hall lobby, during open house portion of the meeting.

### 3.5 SCOPING COMMENTS

As stated in Section 1.1, comments were requested to be submitted in writing, either at the meeting or via postal mail or e-mail by December 20, 2014, to Yolanda Rivas, District Branch Chief, Caltrans Office of Environmental Analysis.

Thirty-five comments were submitted during the scoping period. The comments are summarized by topic as follows.

**Pedestrian and Bicycle Access**

- Woodside Road should be more accessible to pedestrians and bikes; the current condition is dangerous.

- The project purpose in the IS/EA should include increasing safety for bicyclists and pedestrians crossing US 101 at Woodside Road, in accordance with Redwood City, San Mateo County, and Caltrans plans.

- The relative safety for each mode of travel (motorists, bicyclists, pedestrians, and persons with disabilities) should be evaluated both qualitatively and quantitatively for each alternative. Minimize conflict points between motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians. The number of conflict points for bicycles and pedestrians should be reported for each alternative.

- Consider a new pedestrian/bicycle overpass to serve existing and proposed development and commuters.

- Most cyclists would likely use the proposed Class I facility along Chestnut Street and under US 101 to Seaport Boulevard, and funding for this project component should be
given high priority. The Class I facility should account for current formal and informal bicycle usage as well as the future Inner Harbor development. Although the Class I facility is a key project element, it is also important to have continuous on-street bike lanes and sidewalks from Woodside Road to Seaport Boulevard through the interchange. The Class I facility should be constructed first to provide a safe route for bicyclists and pedestrians during project construction.

- The proposed Class I facility along Chestnut Street should extend farther southwest because the Broadway, Bay, Spring, and Middlefield intersections are dangerous and the El Camino Real overpass has no pedestrian provisions. As an alternative, Caltrans could consider the bike/pedestrian provision along Woodside Road to beyond El Camino Real as a separate project, or the Chestnut Street sidewalk could be used as a mixed use bike/pedestrian path with appropriate striping.

- The project should not include high-speed on- and off-ramps because there is no way for bicycles to safely cross them, and multiple fatalities have occurred at nearby interchanges with such ramps, including one on a ramp similar to the proposed northbound US 101 on-ramp with Alternative 3A.

- The project should implement Pedestrian Enhanced Design in accordance with Redwood City policy.

- Vehicle turns that cross bike paths should be controlled by traffic signals and be as close to 90 degrees as possible. It would be better to provide bike lanes that are at least 6 feet wide with a 2-foot striped buffer plus a sidewalk than narrower bike lanes with a separate Class I facility. Vehicle lanes along Woodside Road under US 101 can be reduced to 10 or 11 feet to make room for bike lanes. Focus on providing a continuously wide bike lane through the entire intersection.

- The IS/EA should consider the impact of adding bike/pedestrian paths—including the proposed Class I facility—in an industrial area with heavy truck traffic, and consider alternative bike/pedestrian access to the San Francisco Bay that avoids the Seaport Boulevard/Blomquist Street intersection.

- Sidewalks should be added on East Bayshore Road adjacent to the mobile home parks, as well as in other locations in Menlo Park, Redwood City, Palo Alto, and the Dumbarton neighborhood where no sidewalks exist.

**Trucks**

- The project should be designed to accommodate the movement of large trucks.

- Emergency vehicles and large trucks with two trailers may not be able to negotiate the roundabout included in Alternative 3A.

- Trucks currently have difficulty traveling between southbound US 101 and Seaport Boulevard.

- Measure (or estimate based on existing data) truck volumes for the project area, because they can vary considerably by day of the week and by season. Truck volumes may have different peak hours than for commuters, and the interactions between trucks and cars should be considered in circulation and safety.
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- Future growth includes a 4 percent average annual increase in cargo at the Port of Redwood City and new office developments expected for both Pacific Shores and the Inner Harbor area. The Port and industrial businesses should be consulted to determine the appropriate increase in truck volumes expected.

- The project will best accommodate heavy truck traffic if it minimizes the need to merge with oncoming traffic at unsignalized stops, minimizes short lane changes between intersections, minimizes interactions between trucks and non-motorized vehicles, provides signal times sufficient to accommodate slow-starting trucks, and allows adequate turning radius for large trucks.

Planned Development and Transit Improvements

- The project should account for development in the area that will increase the number of cars, trucks, and people on the road. Design the project to accommodate a large increase in the number of vehicle trips from planned development at Pacific Shores Center, the proposed Jay Paul development (Harbor View), and the proposed Cargill development of the salt crystallizer beds.

- The project should accommodate proposed streetcars. The best plan is one that emphasizes transit.

- The project should include a new carpool/Park & Ride lot, as the current Park & Ride lot at Whipple Avenue is heavily used and proposed future ferry and streetcar use will increase demand for parking.

Project Design Components

- The northbound US 101 ramp with a split to Seaport Boulevard on the right and a flyover to Veterans Boulevard on the left will require multiple advance notification signs to avoid driver confusion.

- The project should have one lane that exits to the Veterans Road flyover and two lanes to Seaport Boulevard because the bulk of the traffic exits to Seaport Boulevard. A single lane exiting northbound US 101 may not be sufficient with the projected increase in use of Seaport Boulevard from additional development.

- An additional lane on Chestnut Street should be considered because of additional traffic from Veterans Boulevard.

- Caltrans should consider installing another exit on southbound US 101 between Woodside Road and Marsh Road, such as at Second Avenue.

- Woodside Road should be raised over US 101 to and over El Camino in the same way that SR 92 is in San Mateo.

- The current interchange was designed a number of years ago and is now obsolete. The new design should avoid becoming obsolete too quickly.

Environmental Issues

- Project lighting should avoid/reduce light pollution by using lighting that points downward or sideways and does not illuminate the skies. Reducing overlighting also helps drivers respond to street lights, oncoming headlights, and brake lights.
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- Sea level rise should be evaluated as part of the project, particularly for project elements that include a below-grade section that may be at risk for flooding.
- Potential impacts to the freight rail spur to Seaport Boulevard should be analyzed.
- Traffic heading toward North Fair Oaks causes emissions in Redwood City, and some of that traffic should be redirected to other exits. On southbound US 101, a small exit should be added at Second Avenue with a ramp configuration similar to the northbound US 101/Kehoe Avenue junction in San Mateo.
- Northeast of the project area, a drainage canal between the salt crystallizer beds and East Bayshore Road has a history of flooding. During heavy rains in December 2014, flooding from the canal resulted in property damages and losses at two mobile home parks along East Bayshore Road. Numerous commenters requested corrective action (more frequent canal maintenance, a flood wall, and/or a pumping system) from the City of the Redwood City, the property owner, and other jurisdictions including Atherton and Menlo Park.

Alternatives

- Three commenters expressed support for Alternative 8B, the Diverging Diamond Alternative on the basis that it provides for the best traffic flow and will work best for trucks.
- Two commenters expressed support for Alternative 3, the Partial Cloverleaf with Diamond Alternative, on the basis that it has the fewest potential conflicts between bicyclists and vehicles, and because it does not include any high-speed ramps.
- Two commenters expressed support for Alternative 3B on the basis that it provides the best support for transit.
- One commenter notes that roundabouts (included in Alternative 3A) are confusing.
- A commenter asks which alternative will alleviate traffic on East Bayshore Road.

Other Issues

- Law enforcement of speeding vehicles along East Bayshore Road is insufficient.
- More frequent bus service along East Bayshore Road is requested.

Comments received during the scoping period will be summarized in the environmental document and considered in the preliminary design and technical studies.