

BEFORE THE SOUTH PLACER REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

ORIGINAL

PUBLIC HEARING

PARTIALLY REVISED DRAFT TIER 1 EIS/EIR

PLACER PARKWAY CORRIDOR PRESERVATION PROJECT

VETERANS MEMORIAL COMMUNITY BUILDING

1425 VETERANS CIRCLE

YUBA CITY, CALIFORNIA

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2009

6:09 P.M.

REPORTED BY:

KATHRYN SWANK
CSR 13061

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APPEARANCES

HEARING PANEL MEMBERS:

Kirk Uhler, Chairperson, Placer County Board of Supervisors

Jim Gray, City of Roseville

Peter Hill, City of Rocklin

STAFF:

Celia McAdam, AICP, Executive Director

Stan Tidman, Senior Planner

INTERESTED PERSON PROVIDING COMMENT:

Chris Burke

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1 receive comments on the Parkway Corridor Preservation's
2 partially revised draft Tier 1 EIS/EIR.

3 Now, we need folks to know that this is a
4 public hearing. It's an opportunity for SPRTA members
5 to hear from you. It is not a question-and-answer
6 period, and neither the board nor staff will be
7 responding to questions or comments. The sole objective
8 is to listen to comments on the partially revised draft
9 EIS/EIR.

10 It's my pleasure at this time to introduce
11 Sutter County Supervisor from District 5, James
12 Gallagher, who will make some general remarks about the
13 project and Sutter County's role.

14 MR. GALLAGHER: Thank you, Chairman Uhler. And
15 I would just like to start off, first of all, by
16 welcoming the SPRTA Board here to Sutter County in
17 beautiful Yuba City. And we're very happy to have you,
18 and thank you for coming up to our area to allow for
19 some public comment from the people in this area.

20 Sutter County as, you know, recognizes the
21 importance of improving our regional circulation and
22 transit, and Placer Parkway being one of those such
23 projects, and we recognize that it's a high priority
24 regional transportation project which will connect State
25 Route 70 and 99 in south Sutter County through our

1 proposed Sutter Pointe Specific Plan Area, if it is
2 approved -- we're in the process of considering that
3 proposal as we speak -- and connecting that area to
4 State Route 65 in west Placer County.

5 And we also acknowledge the importance of this
6 environmental process as we move forward. As you also
7 know, the Sutter County Board of Supervisors has
8 expressed support for Alternative 5, the Sankey Road
9 alternative, as being the LEDPA. And as I know, your
10 board is also supporting that alternative. But we were
11 also open to comment from the public and as we move
12 forward in this environmental review process.

13 So again, I would just like to thank you for
14 coming up here to Sutter County and we're looking
15 forward to hearing comment from the public.

16 Thank you again for your time.

17 CHAIRPERSON UHLER: Great. Thank you for being
18 here.

19 Again, we want to remind folks that they are
20 encouraged to make comments on any aspect of the
21 partially revised draft Tier 1 EIS/EIR. All comments
22 that are received at public hearings, both this one and
23 one that will be held in Auburn on Wednesday, all
24 comments within these hearings, within the formal
25 comment period, will be recorded and transcribed, hence

1 the young lady typing away furiously over here. And
2 they will become part of the formal record.

3 Following the comment period, staff will review
4 all the information received and prepare responses to be
5 included in the final EIS/EIR.

6 If you are interested in learning about future
7 meetings as a part of this process, you are encouraged
8 to sign in, in the back. For written comments, either
9 use the form provided or provide a letter. You can turn
10 the written comments in today if you are that speedy, or
11 you may mail them in; the address is on the form.
12 Comments are due by March 16th of 2009. And as I
13 mentioned, we do have a court reporter here to record
14 your comments.

15 At this point I would like to introduce our
16 project team, beginning with Celia McAdam and Stan
17 Tidman, both of PCTPA/SPRTA staff. And I will let you
18 introduce some of our support staff and consultants.

19 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR McADAM: Yes. We have
20 Denise Heick, who's the project manager for URS
21 Corporation; and Julie Watson, who is part of the
22 project team as well; and we also have Lisa Wilson here
23 from Sutter County, who's been working with us on the
24 technical side.

25 CHAIRPERSON UHLER: Great. And in just a

1 moment, Stan Tidman is going to provide a brief
2 presentation and then we will begin the testimony.
3 We're going to conduct a hearing in an orderly fashion,
4 make sure that everyone gets a chance to speak.

5 If you would like to provide testimony, we ask
6 that you fill out a speaker card, hand it to Mr. Tidman,
7 who will call people in order. We are asking that you
8 respect a three-minute time limit for speakers. All
9 speakers who have registered will be heard, but you must
10 hand in the card by 7:45. Based on the audience, I
11 don't think that's going to be a problem, and you are
12 only allowed to speak once. The public can submit
13 comments via comment cards, e-mail, or mail; details on
14 how to do this are provided on the comment cards.

15 And so Stan, at this point, I will turn it over
16 to you for our summary.

17 SENIOR PLANNER TIDMAN: I'm going to try to
18 talk without the aid of a microphone. Can you all hear
19 me?

20 CHAIRPERSON UHLER: Does that work for the
21 court reporter?

22 THE REPORTER: I'd prefer that he use the
23 microphone.

24 (An overhead presentation was presented.)

25 SENIOR PLANNER TIDMAN: So here we go. I would

1 like to basically recap the first two points -- a little
2 bit about the Placer Parkway and its background and then
3 briefly do some highlights from the Draft Tier 1 EIS/EIR
4 that was released back in the summer of 2007, give you
5 some highlights on the partially revised draft that's
6 basically the subject of tonight's meeting, and then
7 share with you what we think are going to be some of the
8 next steps to actually finish the project.

9 From a project background, I think most
10 everybody is pretty familiar with the proposed Placer
11 Parkway. It's a high priority long-range regional
12 transportation planning project that's supposed to
13 connect State Route 70 and 99, here in south Sutter
14 County, with State Route 65 in the vicinity of Rocklin
15 and Roseville.

16 The problem, or the need, related for the
17 project is related to growth -- very simply, more
18 people, more jobs, creating more congestion on our
19 highways.

20 The solution or the purpose of the project is
21 to basically preserve a corridor for the future roadway
22 that would basically help to reduce this congestion by
23 improving the regional transportation network as well as
24 advancing economic goals in south Sutter and west
25 Placer. So that's kind of a quick who, what, where,

1 why, when.

2 Tonight we're going to hear an awful lot about
3 access and no-development buffer. These are basically
4 two fundamental underlying objectives of the parkway.
5 They were brought out several years ago in some of the
6 preliminary planning projects for the parkway, and they
7 basically have to do with limiting access or creating
8 new interchanges within a 7-mile segment between
9 Pleasant Grove Road, here in Sutter County, and
10 Fiddymont, on the Placer County side; and the second is
11 actually creating a no-development buffer area along
12 both sides of the roadway to basically enhance -- or
13 limit development and enhance the parkway-like character
14 of the parkway.

15 Both of these particular components are also to
16 help reduce potential growth inducement, and that's
17 something that a lot of folks seem to be interested in,
18 with this project.

19 A little bit about the study area -- and I hope
20 this guy works. On the west, here in Sutter County,
21 this is State Route 70/99. On the east, State Route 65,
22 again, in the Roseville and Rocklin area; general
23 boundaries on the north, Howsley Road here with Sunset
24 Boulevard; west as you move into Placer County; and,
25 again, generally to the south here, we're looking at

1 Riego Road as it changes into Baseline here in Placer
2 County.

3 You will hear us talk a lot about Riego Road,
4 Sankey Road, Pleasant Grove Road, here in north-south,
5 and Fiddymment as we move through the presentation. And
6 I think most everybody will remember that the project
7 area has been divided up into three segments -- the
8 west -- and again, I apologize for this thing not doing
9 what it's supposed to. But here on the west and the
10 east, we're looking at identifying and preserving a
11 corridor that's going to be 500 feet wide. And then in
12 the middle area here, again, from Pleasant Grove Road
13 over to Fiddymment, a thousand-foot-wide corridor area.

14 Now, a little bit about the environmental
15 process itself. First, two general points. First, we
16 are working to complete a document that combines both
17 federal and state environmental regulations. Second,
18 again, you see a lot of the word "tier" on our work. We
19 are using a tiered approach to try to complete this
20 project. The Tier 1 is using basically general
21 information to complete our data collection and
22 analysis. The key to this Tier 1 process is trying to
23 identify and preserve a corridor in the face of a great
24 deal of both planned and proposed development in south
25 Sutter as well as western Placer County.

1 Then moving into the Tier 2 process, that would
2 actually be the construction-level document where we
3 would be analyzing the impacts of various roadway
4 alignments within the selected corridor. Again, the key
5 to this tiering process is streamlining. And hopefully,
6 the work that we're going now in Tier 1 will facilitate
7 later 2 Tier work for the construction process itself.

8 We basically completed these three items. It
9 took us two years through a lot of public outreach and
10 technical reviews to identify the five build
11 alternatives that we'll be talking about here in just a
12 minute.

13 In 2007, I think most of you will remember, we
14 got the draft Tier 1 EIS/EIR out for review, and again,
15 just this last month, we got the partially revised draft
16 out, and, again, that's the subject of tonight's
17 meeting.

18 The last two things that we're proposing to do
19 in the process, once the public comment period closes on
20 March the 16th, for the partially revised draft, we will
21 be completing the final environmental impact statement
22 and impact report. We're anticipating that that will be
23 done by this summer, the summer of 2009. And again,
24 once we've cleared our federal and state clearances and
25 environmental clearances, we can work with local

1 jurisdictions actually to preserve the selected
2 corridor.

3 A little bit now about the actual '07 draft, as
4 it went out in the summer of 2007. Again, this is
5 something that we looked at -- the impacts related to
6 not only the selection and acquisition of a corridor,
7 but also some conceptual impacts as they related to the
8 actual construction of the roadway and its operation.

9 We did this for several different time
10 frames -- an existing time frame, which I believe was
11 2004, and then the years 2020 and 2040. We looked at
12 these from 13 different environmental issue areas, and,
13 again, basically evaluated impacts related to direct,
14 indirect, as well as cumulative impacts.

15 The conclusions that we came up with, from,
16 again, the '07 draft were that the Placer Parkway would
17 result in impacts to 9 of those 13 environmental issue
18 areas.

19 We also did quite a bit of work on growth
20 inducement. Again, I think in past meetings, you've had
21 heard us talk a great deal about the work that we're
22 doing with federal resource agencies on, particularly,
23 aquatic resources, secondary and indirect impacts --
24 growth has been a key concern. One of the primary
25 conclusions of the '07 draft was that the parkway would

1 be growth inducing. Two qualifications to that would be
2 that growth would be very limited, and there's very
3 little difference among the five build alternatives as
4 to that potential growth inducement.

5 As part of the CEQA evaluation of the
6 '07 draft, of the five build alternatives, Alternative
7 No. 4, which is the second northern-most alternative,
8 was basically identified at that time as the least
9 environmentally -- or, excuse me, the environmentally
10 superior alternative.

11 Once again, in August, 2007, we held public
12 hearings in this room and then in the city of Roseville
13 to take comments on the draft. We got, I want to say,
14 50 letters and public comments that we're basically
15 working on, to respond to those comments.

16 And one more map. This is -- thank you, Julie.
17 This is an air photo of the study area, a little bit
18 harder to see, but, again, for orientation purposes, if
19 I can get this guy to work. Again, this is State Route
20 70/99 here on the west; State Route 65 here on the east;
21 Howsley/Sunset to the north -- and again I apologize for
22 this not working -- Riego and Baseline to the south.
23 The three segments, west, central and east. The first
24 three alternatives, or the three southern alternatives
25 all begin here on State Route 70/99 about a half a mile

1 north of Riego. Again, the No. 1, red; No. 2, orange;
2 No. 3, blue; all 15 to 16 miles long. The two northerly
3 alternatives, Alternatives 4 and 5, the yellow and
4 green, about 14 miles in length.

5 All five of the corridors, you can see, have a
6 common alignment in this area, and all terminate at
7 State Route 65, at what will be the future Whitney Ranch
8 Parkway Interchange.

9 And once again, the '07 draft basically looked
10 at up to five -- excuse me, six interchanges; two or
11 three here in the west, none in the central area -- and
12 again, that goes back to that underlying project
13 provision of no new interchanges within this 7-mile
14 segment -- and then three here in the east, the last one
15 linking up here at State Route 65. So that's a bit of a
16 background.

17 Now, the point of tonight's meeting, a little
18 bit about the actual partially revised draft, again,
19 this was done primarily at the direction of the SPRTA
20 Board. I think it was this time last year we held a
21 public workshop in Auburn with the board to go over some
22 of the concerns that we received on the '07 draft. A
23 number of these related to, again, the access and
24 no-development buffer concerns and the fact that the
25 SPRTA board has no land use authority so that the board,

1 as well as the Federal Highway Administration, couldn't
2 be put in a position of actually guaranteeing that there
3 would be no new interchanges or that there might not be
4 adjustments to that no-development buffer area that we
5 just talked about.

6 So back in -- I think it was at the end of the
7 March, the board directed the staff to put together
8 several analyses with hypothetical scenarios that would
9 add additional interchanges into this analysis as well
10 as eliminate the no-development buffer. And again, they
11 asked us to do that, to circulate the draft for public
12 comment, and they did it basically for two reasons:
13 Number 1, they felt it would be the best way to disclose
14 those hypothetical impacts, again, with additional
15 interchanges and the elimination a of no-development
16 buffer; and Number 2, they thought that it would also
17 provide a stronger foundation for the future Tier 2
18 work, again, the construction level document.

19 So the partially revised draft actually
20 consists of two parts: First, kind of an administrative
21 update. There have been some data changes since the
22 release of the '07 draft. And I will talk to that in
23 just a minute. And then the second part of this
24 actually gets into the additional analyses with those
25 hypothetical scenarios.

1 So first, very quickly, the draft, again, one
2 of the key pieces of data that was included in the
3 '07 draft had to do with farmland mapping data, and that
4 mapping data had changed since, again, the release of
5 summer '07, and so the partially revised draft reflects
6 that new information and actually makes a change from
7 one of the conclusions from the '07 draft. The impacts
8 to farmland now -- the least amount of impacts to
9 farmland has moved from Alternative No. 4 to No. 5, so
10 with the updated data, we've basically changed the
11 conclusion that Alternative 5 actually has the fewer
12 impacts to farmland data.

13 Greenhouse gases; this is something, again,
14 that's a big issue with the state here. There have been
15 a number of regulations that have been implemented since
16 the '07 draft was released. The update addresses
17 emissions and their effect on transportation planning.

18 And then finally, again, you will remember in
19 my brief on the '07 draft, the CEQA evaluation in
20 '07 identified of the five build alternatives, that
21 Alternative 4 was the environmentally superior
22 alternative. Again, based on that change in farmland
23 mapping data, the partially released draft reflects that
24 the environmental superior alternative is now
25 Alternative 5 versus 4.

1 The second part, again, of the partially
2 revised draft has to do with the initial analyses that,
3 again, are based on the hypothetical assumptions --
4 again, additional interchanges and eliminating the
5 no-development buffer area.

6 And basically what we did was look at three
7 sets of analyses:

8 The first had to do with reviewing some of the
9 growth work that -- growth inducement work that we had
10 done in the '07 draft, and this actually included a new
11 traffic analysis.

12 The second set of analyses had to do with
13 secondary and indirect impacts, specifically as they
14 related to biological resources and, again, all rolled
15 up in that issue of growth.

16 And then finally we took another look at the
17 cumulative impacts that we have discussed in the
18 '07 draft and, again, with the idea of trying to
19 determine what, if any, differentiation we could make
20 among the alternatives, specifically as they related to
21 wetlands and vernal pools.

22 And before moving from this slide, I would just
23 like to point out two things: First, that these
24 analyses were completed basically to determine whether
25 or not there were any significant differences among the

1 alternatives as they related to secondary and indirect
2 impacts. And No. 2, this set of analysis, they are
3 hypothetical. They are not actually a part of the
4 project description. In fact, we've actually packaged
5 all this up so it's an appendix in the partially revised
6 draft to further emphasize the fact that these are
7 hypothetical and not part of the actual project
8 description.

9 So what did we find with all this work? First,
10 generally, these three separate analyses reinforced the
11 conclusions on growth that were identified in the
12 '07 draft and that basically is, Placer Parkway would be
13 growth inducing. The growth that we would be inducing
14 would be very limited, with very little difference among
15 the five build alternatives. With the actual growth
16 inducement analysis, we determined that Alternative No.
17 5 would have the least amount of potentially developable
18 land around it and, therefore, it would be the least
19 growth inducing of the five alternatives.

20 I mentioned the fact that we had gone through
21 and did another traffic analysis. Again, we wove in at
22 least three to four additional interchanges into the
23 system, and what we found is, is that traffic volumes,
24 like you would think, or interchanges, would increase
25 traffic volumes, but the key for this project is that

1 all five alternatives would still -- or continue to
2 operate at level of service D, or LOS D, or better, and
3 that ensures the project need component of maintaining
4 that free flow, and that's something that's a key to the
5 parkway.

6 Again, from a secondary and indirect biological
7 impacts, and again, this is strictly related to growth,
8 we came to the same conclusion. Again, Alternative 5
9 being the least growth inducing. We also felt that it
10 would be -- have the least effect on fragmenting any
11 biological resources' habitat.

12 And then finally from a cumulative impacts
13 effect, again, reinforce the '07 draft and,
14 specifically, that our contribution, the parkway's
15 contribution, to these cumulative impacts would actually
16 be less than 1 percent among all the alternatives for
17 wetlands and for vernal pool complexes.

18 So that basically was the primary set of
19 conclusions from the revised draft.

20 From a next-steps perspective, again, I
21 mentioned the fact that we would like to have the final
22 Tier 1 EIS/EIR completed by this summer, the summer of
23 '09. To do that, we will be preparing responses to
24 comments to not only the ones that we received in 2007
25 on the original draft, but also the partially revised

1 draft.

2 In that document, we will identify the
3 preferred alternative and, again, as we're doing all
4 this, we are hoping to continue work with our federal
5 partners on resource conservation aspects.

6 Once the final EIS/EIR is completed, we will
7 then work with local jurisdictions, again, through a
8 series of general plan amendments to provide a policy
9 framework to preserve the selected corridor. And once
10 that's done, we will actually begin planning on the Tier
11 2 process.

12 So that in a nutshell is a little bit about the
13 project, the process, and what's in the harshly revised
14 draft. And was mentioned earlier, please remember that
15 were doing a second public hearing Wednesday morning,
16 10:45 a.m. at the Placer County Board of Supervisors
17 Hearing Chambers, "The Domes," at 175 Fulweiler Street.

18 Thank you.

19 CHAIRPERSON UHLER: Thank you. All right.

20 This is the time where we will open up the
21 public hearing for public comment. And again, a
22 reminder that during this process, as much as we may
23 want to, our board is not here to answer questions or
24 respond to comments, but simply to take public
25 testimony. It may be submitted in writing, if you

1 prefer. But we're here to give you the opportunity to
2 present your comments tonight. We do have forms that
3 you can fill out. Really the, purpose of doing is that
4 we do have this information correct for our record. So
5 that's why we are asking you to fill out speaker cards.

6 But if anybody is interested in presenting at
7 this point, this is the time.

8 I see a dozen and a half people, here and
9 nobody wants to make a comment?

10 MEMBER HILL: Come on up.

11 CHAIRPERSON UHLER: If you want to go ahead and
12 make your comment first and then just submit some
13 information, so we have your name for the record and
14 contact information, because we need to be able to
15 respond to the comments that are issued. That's all.

16 So at this point, just give your name and
17 address, that will be good enough for now.

18 MR. BURKE: My name is Chris Burke, 6623 Locust
19 Road, Pleasant Grove.

20 I just came from a meeting about the rezoning
21 in south Sutter County; couldn't hear hardly anything.
22 But did I hear you say that your conclusion is that
23 Route 5 or No. 5 is the better route, or Route 4?

24 CHAIRPERSON UHLER: Do you want to go ahead and
25 answer the question, since it's not an opinion? It's

1 simply restating. Because you heard both. You heard
2 the 2007 analysis that had Alternative 4, and then the
3 revised analysis shows Alternative 5.

4 SENIOR PLANNER TIDMAN: And that's correct.
5 And again, if you can't hear me, please let me know. Is
6 that on now? Can you hear that?

7 MR. BURKE: Yeah.

8 SENIOR PLANNER TIDMAN: And again, it's
9 something that we've talked about from the parkway's
10 perspective, for a number of years. But we can't, or
11 will not, be making a firm recommendation or actually
12 identifying a preferred alternative until the
13 environmental work is complete.

14 So again, when the final environmental impact
15 statement and report is done, we will actually identify
16 which of the corridor alternatives is that preferred
17 alternative.

18 As Supervisor Uhler just mentioned, in the
19 earlier draft -- and again, I apologize for the
20 complication here, but we're looking at federal as well
21 as state regulations. From the state's regulations,
22 we're required to identify an environmentally superior
23 alternative. In 2007, we identified that as Alternative
24 No. 4. That's the second most northerly one of the five
25 build alternatives. Based on the partially revised

1 draft that we just talked about tonight, because of the
2 change in farmland mapping, we have changed that
3 conclusion to be Alternative No. 5, which is the
4 northern-most of the five build alternatives. But once
5 again, that's the state-related part of this thing.

6 The final environmental document will actually
7 call out that preferred alternative specifically.

8 Does that kind of answer your question?

9 MR. BURKE: It kind of does.

10 But I was just at a board of supervisors
11 meeting in Sutter County. And I couldn't hear very
12 well, but I was understanding that they were assuming 4
13 was the route.

14 SENIOR PLANNER TIDMAN: And up until this
15 partially revised draft, they were right in step with
16 the '07 draft, but, once again, the newer mapping
17 information has changed that conclusion to No. 5. But
18 again, officially, that won't be decided upon until the
19 final environmental document is completed.

20 MR. BURKE: And that will be?

21 SENIOR PLANNER TIDMAN: We're hoping this
22 summer, summer of 2009.

23 CHAIRPERSON UHLER: Sir, did you have any other
24 comments?

25 MR. BURKE: Oh. Well, it just -- well, I was

1 just trying to track down here who's thinking -- Sutter
2 County and Placer County and whatever it is, because
3 it's been going on forever, you know. And it's getting
4 down to the same meeting, talking about the same thing,
5 over and over and over again.

6 And that's -- I guess until this summer, I
7 guess we won't know. Okay. Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON UHLER: Thank you very much.
9 Anyone else have any comments? Going once, twice.

10 And at this point, members have any comments to
11 add?

12 Then we will go ahead and close the public
13 hearing. Thank you for your participation this evening.

14 And a reminder that we will -- the comment
15 period is open until the close of business on Monday,
16 the 16th of March. So comments that you might not
17 wanted to have made here publicly, you can certainly
18 submit in writing to our staff. All information on how
19 to do so is in back. Thank you very much for being here
20 this evening.

21 (The public hearing adjourned at 6:41 p.m.)

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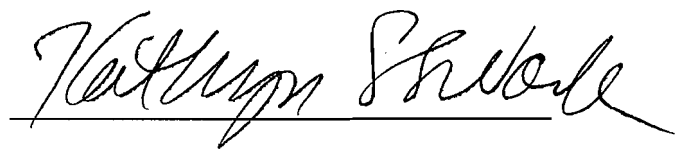
CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

I, KATHRYN S. SWANK, a Certified Shorthand Reporter of the State of California, do hereby certify:

That I am a disinterested person herein; that the foregoing public hearing was reported in shorthand by me, Kathryn S. Swank, a Certified Shorthand Reporter of the State of California, and thereafter transcribed into typewriting.

I further certify that I am not of counsel or attorney for any of the parties to said meeting nor in any way interested in the outcome of said meeting.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 2nd day of March, 2009.



KATHRYN S. SWANK, CSR, RPR
Certified Shorthand Reporter
License No. 13061