



Butte County Association
of Governments

Final Environmental Impact Report

State Route 99 Auxiliary Lane Project Between State Route 32 and East 1st Avenue

SCH# 2002112002

Prepared by:

 Jones & Stokes

Sacramento,
California



December 2003



**Final
Environmental Impact Report for the
State Route 99 Auxiliary Lane Project
between State Route 32 and
East 1st Avenue**

SCH #: 2002112002

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Chapter 1 Introduction

This final environmental impact report (EIR) for the State Route (SR) 99 auxiliary lane project between SR 332 and East 1st Avenue has been prepared by the Butte County Association of Governments (BCAG) in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines (14 California Code of Regulations, Section 14000 et seq.).

Section 15132 of the CEQA Guidelines requires that a final EIR consist of the following:

- draft EIR or revision to the draft EIR;
- comments and recommendations received on the draft EIR, either verbatim or in summary;
- a list of persons, organizations, and public agencies commenting on the draft EIR;
- the responses of the lead agency to significant environmental concerns raised in the review and consultation process; and
- any other information added by the lead agency.

1.1 Organization of the Final Environmental Impact Report

This final EIR comprises four chapters:

- **Chapter 1** describes the purpose of the report, outlines the organization of the report, and summarizes the public review process.
- **Chapter 2** contains a transcript of the public testimony received at the November 20, 2003 draft EIR public hearing held at the City of Chico Council Chambers and a copy of all written comments received on the draft EIR during the 45-day public review period (October 1, 2003 through November 20, 2003). BCAG accepted comments through November 24, 2003 since the City of Chico Parks Commission requested that its action on the proposed project, taken on November 24, 2003, be included in the final EIR (see the City of Chico Parks Department of letter, dated December 8, 2003, in the section of Appendix A that includes letters received since the close of the public review period). BCAG has reviewed each comment and prepared a response to each comment related to the adequacy of the draft EIR. CEQA requires that the lead agency respond to all environmental comments at a level of detail appropriate to the comment (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088). Comments that do not directly relate to the adequacy of the draft EIR have not been given specific responses.
- **Chapter 3** contains revisions to the draft EIR based on comments received on this report.
- **Chapter 4** contains the project's mitigation monitoring program.
- **Chapter 5** contains references cited in Chapter 2.

- **Appendix A** contains copies of all of the comments received during the May 29, 2002 public scoping meeting; the March 12, 2003 public meeting; and since the close of the draft EIR public review period.

1.2 Public Review Process

Copies of the report were made available for review at the following locations:

- BCAG offices, 965 Fir Street, Chico, CA 95928
- City of Chico Development Services, 411 Main Street, 2nd floor, Chico, CA 95928
- Butte County Library 464-A Street, Biggs, CA 95917
- Butte County Library, 1108 Sherman Avenue, Chico, CA 95928
- Butte County Library, 2545 Durham Dayton Highway, Durham, CA 95938
- Butte County Library, 299 Spruce Street, Gridley, CA 95948
- Butte County Library, 1820 Mitchell Avenue, Oroville, CA 95965
- Butte County Library, 5922 Clark Road, Paradise, CA 96969

Copies of the draft EIR were mailed directly to numerous public agencies. Notices of availability of the draft EIR were also sent to nearby residents and businesses.

Chapter 2 Comments and Responses to Comments

This chapter presents BCAG’s responses to all oral and written comments received on the draft EIR during the public review period between October 1, 2003 and November 20, 2003 (BCAG accepted comments through November 24, 2003 since the City of Chico Parks Commission requested that its action on the proposed project, taken on November 24, 2003, be included in the final EIR). The November 20, 2003 draft EIR public hearing transcript appears first in this chapter, followed by written letters, electronic mail sent to BCAG, and comments registered on BCAG’s website. Each comment is numbered in the right margin and is followed by a corresponding numbered response. Table 2-1 is a list of the capital letter assigned to the hearing comments and each letter, the comments received by date of receipt, and the date of each letter.

Table 2-1. List of Comments Received on the September 2003 Draft EIR for the SR 99 Auxiliary Lane Project between SR 32 and East 1st Avenue

Assigned Letter Designation	Comments Received from	Date of Comment
A	Draft EIR hearing held at the BCAG Board of Directors meeting on November 20, 2003	Oral testimony, November 20, 2003
B	Alan G. Gair	Electronic mail, October 8, 2003
C	Stewart O'Marah	Electronic mail, October 16, 2003
D	Jennifer Meadows	Electronic mail, October 27, 2003
E	Steve Lucas	Telephone message, October 28, 2003
F	Russell S. Mills	Electronic mail, October 28, 2003
G	Jennifer Meadows	Electronic mail, October 29, 2003
H	Gail Williams, Air Quality Planner, Butte County Air Quality Management District	Letter, November 14, 2003
I	Ed McLaughlin	BCAG website, November 19, 2003
J	June Dailey	Letter, November 20, 2003
K	Greg Redeker	Electronic mail, November 21, 2003

1 BCAG BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
2 November 20, 2003, 9:00 a.m.
3 Chico Municipal Building, Council Chambers
4 421 Main Street, Chico, California

5
6 Attendees:

7 Colleen Jarvis
Jane Dolan
8 Andria Paul-Busch
Gordon Andoe, Chair
9 Mary Anne Houx
Frank Cook
10 Alan White

11 Janice Fratallone
Cheryl Burton
12 Gail Putnam
Jim Peplow

13 Ivan Garcia
14 Andy Newsum
Jon Clark
15 Karen Tatman
Sue Bushnell
16 Debbie Loh
Alan Glen

17
18 Reported by: Sheryl Dirks, CSR 3513

19
20
21
22
23
24
25

1 MR. ANDOE: The clock on the wall says it's a little
2 bit after 9:00 so we'll call this meeting to order.

3 Will you, please, stand and join me in the pledge of
4 allegiance to the flag.

5 (Pledge of allegiance)

6 We'd like to welcome you this morning to the BCAG
7 meeting. I realize a number of you are here for the public
8 hearings that we have on the agenda this morning. I would
9 like to remind you that everybody will be given a chance to
10 speak on the unmet transit needs. I'm sure that some of you
11 have already either written your comments which we have,
12 either verbally expressed those at maybe at one of the other
13 meetings.

14 At this point we have had 31 comment cards from
15 Sierra Sunrise and it was three that spoke at the Chico
16 meeting. We have on record 143 comments on the unmet
17 transit needs. And I mention that because those, whether
18 you speak here this morning or not, those comments that we
19 have on record will be taken into consideration. So in the
20 interest of the time we have allotted this morning, we have
21 another meeting immediately following this meeting. I'm not
22 trying to cut anybody short; but if we do have your
23 comments, it's not necessary to speak again.

24 I might ask how many are here to speak on the unmet
25 transit needs this morning?

1 (show of hands)

2 I would just ask you to keep your comments short, to
3 the point; and if somebody expresses what you would like to
4 say before you get there, just a simple "ditto" would
5 suffice. We have the comments that we will take into
6 consideration, and we also have the State Route 99 project
7 also for public hearing this morning. And remind you that
8 there will be no action taken on either of these items.
9 We're simply here to take public comment on both of those
10 items.

11 How many are here for the State Route 99 project?

12 (show of hands)

13 Looks like about maybe 50/50.

14 Okay. With that we'll begin our agenda and the
15 first item is the Consent Agenda Item 1 is Approval of
16 Minutes for October 23rd, 2003, BCAG Board of Directors
17 meeting.

18 And Item 2 is approval of 2003-2004 OWP and Budget
19 Amendment for Work Element 04-300 Transportation Development
20 Act Administration Work Element 04-301, Transit Planning.

21 Item 3 is Resolution Supporting the County of
22 Butte's Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Application
23 for Lookout Point.

24 MS. HOUX: I move approval of the consent agenda.

25 MS. PAUL-BUSCH: Second.

1 MR. ANDOE: If there are no questions or comments?

2 All those in favor "aye"? Any opposed? Motion carried.

3 Next two items that says on Items for Action simply
4 public hearing items; am I correct?

5 MR. CLARK: Correct.

6 MR. ANDOE: Item 4 is the Unmet Transit Needs Public
7 Hearing.

8 Jim.

9 MR. PELOW: The administrator of the TDA funds BCAG
10 annually is charged with holding that unmet needs process.
11 What that is we take comments, testimony from the general
12 public on any perceived unmet transit needs that may be out
13 there that may be reasonable to meet. We take all the
14 comments, we analyze them and we determine if there are
15 unmet needs that are, indeed, reasonable to meet.

16 If that's the case, it's our charge to make sure
17 that those are met before any of the TDA money is used for
18 any other purposes such as streets and roads.

19 MS. HOUX: Could you avoid using the alphabet soup
20 language.

21 MR. PELOW: Okay. Okay, Mary Anne.

22 The Transportation Development Act funds is what
23 we're talking about and that's one of the main sources of
24 transit funding for all the systems within the County.
25 We've held a series of public open houses throughout the

1 county during this past month. We had one in Gridley, one
2 in Paradise, one in Oroville and one earlier this month in
3 Chico. We received comments from people in person who
4 attended those. In addition we received a lot of comments.
5 We have comment cards that look like this. We have them on
6 all the buses and also a lot of the agencies have them.
7 People fill these out and turn them in. Also some people
8 e-mail us and called us. So we received comments in a lot
9 of different forms. This is the final public hearing of
10 that process. After today we'll take all the comments that
11 have been received. We'll analyze them, review them with
12 our Social Services Transportation Advisory Council and then
13 either in January or February will bring the recommendations
14 back to this board for approval.

15 So what today is is I would ask the board to open up
16 the final public hearing for receiving testimony from the
17 public.

18 MS. JARVIS: Jim, could you tell us what times those
19 hearings were? Were those hearings at night as well as
20 during the day?

21 MR. PELOW: Yes. The one in Chico was from 5:00 to
22 7:00 in the evening so people would be able to come after
23 work if they needed to. The one in Paradise was from 3:00
24 to 5:00. The ones in Oroville and Gridley were from 2:00 to
25 4:00.

1 Ms. JARVIS: Do our buses run during those times to
2 be able to have been, provide people a ride?

3 MR. PEPLow: Yes. That's one of the reasons actually
4 like the Oroville one in the past it started at 3:00, and we
5 heard from people who tried to attend it that the last bus
6 left there at like at 3:30. They didn't have time to give
7 their comments. This year we switched it to 3:00 o'clock.
8 We probably had probably about 30 people in Oroville who
9 turned out. So it helped by changing it.

10 MS. JARVIS: Could people who are here if they didn't
11 want to speak at the podium, could they fill out one of
12 those things?

13 MR. PEPLow: Absolutely. These comment cards I have
14 a stack of them in the rack in the back and they could fill
15 it out and hand it in. That's one of the things I tried to
16 emphasize in our publicity. We actually did a really large
17 effort this year to try and put the word out. We put ads in
18 TV, several newspapers, flyers and posters on all the buses
19 so we really tried to get the word out. And one thing we've
20 emphasized is that all testimony, all comments whether they
21 were given in person, whether they come on a comment card,
22 whether they were e-mailed, no matter how they come, are all
23 given equal weight. When we analyze it we don't know if it
24 was given in person or written down, but everything is
25 weighed equally. Once we've received the comment, as Gordon

1 said, once we received the comment, there is really no need
2 to repeat it. It goes in there once.

3 MS. JARVIS: Okay. Thank you. You might have said
4 this when you were giving your opening comments. How many
5 of the cards have we received?

6 MR. PEPLow: Total comment I think it was 143.

7 MR. ANDOE: 143 comments.

8 MR. PEPLow: I am not sure how many were cards
9 versus -- like I say, doesn't make a difference. A comment
10 is a comment.

11 MS. JARVIS: Thank you.

12 MR. ANDOE: Any other questions from the board?
13 Okay. If not at this time we will open the public hearing
14 on the unmet transit needs. Public hearing. Anybody here
15 wish to speak on this just step forward to the microphone.

16 State your name, please.

17 MS. SAIT-HUNEVEN: My name is Shirley Sait-Huneven. I
18 live in California Park. But I am wanting to make comments
19 on a different route, one that has maybe not been
20 considered.

21 There are many people in California Park who work in
22 the city. There are seniors who go to school at Chico
23 State. There are 25 classes a week for seniors who are
24 prime-timers. There are students in that area who go to the
25 university and there are many of us who like to shop and

1 support downtown Chico.

2 I would like to suggest that you have a bus service
3 that runs -- I don't know where it would start but
4 California Park area, the apartment stop and running down
5 Highway 32 and up into downtown Chico. In fact, I'd love it
6 if the bus sort of went along 2nd Street along the
7 university because in the wintertime it's very wet and cold,
8 and it's hard for us to park so far away and get to classes
9 and get to shopping.

10 So it seems to me that even along Highway 32 there
11 would be many people who live even up toward the park area
12 who would be able to take the bus like Forest Avenue. Right
13 now I don't take a bus because I have to go clear down to
14 20th Street and wait for another bus and come clear back up
15 and go into Chico and there is no time to do that.

16 So I hope you will consider a more direct route that
17 will support the downtown Chico area and support those of us
18 who live out on the outskirts. Thank you.

19 MR. ANDOE: Thank you. Okay. Next.

20 MS. SILIGO: Lois Siligo and I'm the director of
21 resident services at the Terraces Retirement Community in
22 Sierra Sunrise Village and I'd like to ask all those that
23 are here with me from Sierra Sunrise to please stand up.
24 There are approximately 500 residents that live in Sierra
25 Sunrise Village and half of them do not or should not, do

1 not or should not be driving; and as they age, there are
2 more and more that should not be driving and that would mean
3 more bus passengers.

4 The loss of the bus service to Sierra Sunrise
5 Village has taken away some independence and security and
6 limits their freedom and somewhat their participation in the
7 community as Shirley had mentioned.

8 Many of them rely on public transportation to meet
9 medical transportation needs and shopping. And although we
10 do have our own bus at the Terraces it does provide limited
11 transportation. I would urge you to restore or partially
12 restore bus service to Sierra Sunrise Village, and it would
13 provide these seniors with a much needed service. Thank
14 you.

15 MR. ANDOE: Thank you. Next. It wasn't my intent
16 to scare you out of speaking; but if we do have your
17 comments on record, it will be considered.

18 MS. HURLEY: I want to give you all of these. There
19 is a schedule I want to talk about.

20 MS. DOLAN: Did you mark every one?

21 MS. HURLEY: Every one I want to talk about. And I
22 got one just about for everybody. Something I wanted to
23 mention.

24 Joanne Hurley, citizen, Oroville.

25 MR. WHITE: If you're going to do it verbally, you

1 don't have to do it in writing.

2 Ms. HURLEY: Really? Now you're telling me. I
3 already got it all down there. I'm one of those kind of
4 complete, thorough people. Anyway, this is the third time I
5 have been here and for two years I had to do this solo. Now
6 at least I have three other people with me.

7 I gave Mr. Peplow the petitions for changes in
8 service from --

9 MR. ANDOE: For the record, would you give us your
10 name, please.

11 MS. HURLEY: Oh, I'm sorry. Joanne Hurley, Oroville.
12 And I gave Mr. Peplow the petitions for changes in service
13 from the bus riders and we had 306 bus riders that signed
14 the petition and petitions for business support, 240
15 businesses sign the petitions for changes in service; and I
16 must admit raised her hand, Jessie over here about three and
17 a half weeks walked all of Oroville and got 240 businesses
18 to sign. She did it single-handedly. It's awesome.

19 One of the things I want to say about the annual
20 meetings you had one annual meeting, the one in Chico was on
21 November 3rd. I suggest from now on that you don't have any
22 meetings, annual meetings the first three days of any month
23 because most seniors and people are going to be paid between
24 the 1st and the 3rd of the month. So because when Oroville
25 even beats Chico at these meetings that's pretty

1 amazing because we had 26. I understand Chico had 20 that
2 time. But that could be that the scheduling that was on the
3 3rd.

4 One of the things I brought up at meetings they had
5 these big posters made up about the annual meetings and the
6 County meeting but they were supposed to be in the two OATS
7 buses but they weren't on either bus. And on the
8 Oro-Express right after Jim and Gail and I think it was
9 Sherry left about 4:00 o'clock then I was picked up by
10 Oro-Express; they didn't have it either. So I'm the only
11 one Oro-Express had it on it. Somehow it disappeared. They
12 got thrown out or something. I don't know what happened. So
13 a lot of people did not know about that meeting. Okay.

14 The map here, if you open your map up and look at
15 where it says going north, north -- this one is not the
16 color full side. It's kind of plain. And you notice number
17 one down at the very bottom it's the southern-most part it
18 goes in the county down to Monte Vista. And Las Plumas High
19 School number one. They deliver the kids at Las Plumas High
20 School at 7:47 and they go down Autrey Lane, then up Monte
21 Vista and I catch it off Monte Vista and on to town. Notice
22 that I have to catch the bus, catch the earliest one is 7:47
23 at Las Plumas High School and then the next isn't until
24 10:02 and the next one there is little more than two hours.
25 11:52. Almost two hours. So it would be nice to have

1 service every hour.

2 One of the things is a lot of the high school kids
3 are north serviced by the Oroville Union High School bus
4 service because they live within two miles or two-and-a-half
5 miles of the school and it's considered they would be able
6 to walk. However, if you have ever been in Oroville up to
7 the cemetery in Oroville where I have number two here is,
8 this road here. It's Lincoln Boulevard. Up from the
9 cemetery down to about Jefferson I think which would be one
10 of these little, right where it's going to by Myers. It's a
11 very dangerous road to walk. It's very steep. There is a
12 cemetery up at the top by the 7-Eleven. I always think that
13 the reason why there is a cemetery up there because if you
14 ever have to walk that road and I have had to walk it twice,
15 just twice, you are glad there is a cemetery because by the
16 time you get to that steep hill, that treacherous hill
17 you're ready for the second plot over; and I don't care if
18 you're in the best shape possible. It will just take about
19 everything out of a marathon runner. It's just very steep
20 and treacherous. We also have on the average about one
21 child killed on that road every 18 months. Okay. Let me
22 see.

23 Now it used to be when the kids rode the bus they
24 would be picked up -- they would if you turn over to the
25 other page briefly to, yeah, going south Las Plumas High

1 School it's 3:02 is when they pick up the kids, 3:02. You
2 go down, start going down the hill. It used to be that
3 almost 75 percent of the kids would get off. They don't get
4 off anymore because they continue to ride the bus all the
5 way out to, all the way out to the senior center. I'll make
6 you flip again. Please go back to the north side, the other
7 side where number 5 is. That's where the teen center is.
8 So they have to go all the way through town and out all
9 through downtown and all out through almost Thermalito.

10 Also the district, Oroville Union High School
11 district because of the shortage of funds this year they
12 asked that the riders of their school buses which will
13 mostly be for the outlying areas that are further east such
14 as Gordon Ranch or Garden Ranch Road, Mount Ida Road and so
15 on, Miners Ranch Road, they asked them to contribute \$200 a
16 year to help defray the costs of the buses. Now I don't
17 know any district that has asked that. That's one thing.
18 Our kids that go, leave Las Plumas High School at 3:02
19 have -- they are so impacted on that 3:02 bus that often
20 they are standing because the bus can only seat 22 people.
21 If you have a person with a wheelchair, it's almost
22 impossible. You sometimes have the kids all the way past
23 the white line where they're not supposed to go beyond and
24 they're riding the bus now. They're not getting off usually
25 by number 3 on this north. It should be the Martin Luther

1 King. Most the time they would all get off.

2 MR. ANDOE: Joanne, let me interrupt you just for a
3 minute. Are you asking for a more direct route from the Las
4 Plumas area to the teen center area?

5 MS. HURLEY: That would be nice because we do need a
6 route really for them.

7 MR. ANDOE: Okay.

8 MS. HURLEY: That's a very good idea. Glad you
9 mentioned that. Okay.

10 MR. ANDOE: In the interest of time please be brief.

11 MS. HURLEY: I'm trying to. On the other side where
12 it says south if you get to Wal-Mart and you went the
13 northern route and you left my area at 7:47 you would get to
14 Wal-Mart about 8:32. But if you have to, did a lot of
15 shopping at Wal-Mart because it's the only store in town now
16 as most small towns in America are at Wal-Mart's mercy
17 because that's the only store in many little towns, if you
18 don't catch that 9:19, you got to wait almost two hours.
19 11:09 before you can get the bus.

20 Also I had number 7 on this side, the south side. I
21 would know. One time I was called for jury duty and I
22 didn't even think about the BCT comes up there and can get
23 you after 6:00. They asked me one time to stay maybe 5:30.
24 Jury duties there was two ways to get out of it. One thing
25 you show them this bus schedule and you'll get out of it.

1 Or the other way that I like to do before I ever do this, I
2 always ask, you know, you get in the jury box and they ask
3 you all these questions. I mean, no, they ask do you have
4 any questions. All the people sitting there. They don't
5 have any questions. Well, I got 20. I ask just about
6 everyone. So and they don't need you. So that's one way to
7 do it. You better be inventive and creative. Let me see.

8 MS. JARVIS: Ms. Hurley, I think just to clarify the
9 point you were making is that we need to have later
10 departure times from the courthouse.

11 MS. HURLEY: From the courthouse.

12 MS. JARVIS: And that would allow people to
13 participate and do their civic duty by serving on juries.

14 MS. HURLEY: Right. That's true.

15 BCT some runs have been so crowded that it was quite
16 crowded this morning but not so crowded that you couldn't
17 get a seat but we've heard stories of people riding the bus
18 that they have to sit on the floor. I mean, that's pretty
19 bad. All right. BCT's Saturday service from Gridley it
20 only goes down Lincoln Road and up Myers to Wyandotte Olive
21 Highway, Oro-Dam, Wal-Mart and the theaters there and it
22 goes back down that way and out to Biggs and Gridley. So
23 there is a lot of, a part of Oroville is not covered on
24 Saturday. That's the reason why we like to have a Saturday
25 run.

1 The other one, the BCT that comes from Chico it goes
2 just to that section around the county center but it is a
3 lot of Thermalito it doesn't cover it all. We like to if
4 any of you are willing to ride the bus sometime from Monday
5 from 8:00 a.m. from Oroville to Chico and see whether it's
6 so impacted, you might be lucky to get a seat like we did
7 today; you might not. Okay.

8 MR. ANDOE: Joanne, do you have all your comments?
9 written there?

10 MS. HURLEY: Yeah.

11 MR. ANDOE: I would ask you to submit those maybe to
12 Jim, and he would contact you maybe to go over those with
13 you. I'm not trying to cut anybody short again, but you've
14 had ten minutes and we have a number of hands shown to speak
15 and a limited amount of time. I would suggest that you give
16 those to Mr. Peplow and he would be glad to give you a call.

17 MS. HURLEY: Okay. Well, yeah. Okay. One of the
18 things that we suggest that maybe you stagger the hours.
19 Have a heavier run during the early morning and late
20 afternoon and do a separate run maybe for the high school,
21 for that high school. That's one more thing I want to say.
22 I'm going to give this to Mr. Peplow.

23 MR. ANDOE: Thank you. I appreciate that. Okay.
24 Next. Anybody else wish to speak on the unmet transit
25 needs? Anybody?

1 MR. COOK: I just have a question. When will this
2 come back for action? January?

3 MR. ANDOE: In January.

4 MR. COOK: Or February.

5 MR. PELOW: The assessment should be before this
6 board either in January or February we'll be back with the
7 final assessments, but actually final adoption what our
8 recommendations will be.

9 MR. ANDOE: Okay. If there is nobody else that
10 wishes to speak on this item, I will close the public
11 hearing at this time. Any comments for a few moments from
12 the board? Anybody from the board have any questions?

13 MS. HOUX: No.

14 MR. ANDOE: Okay. For those that come here for that
15 item we thank you for coming and comments I mentioned before
16 that have been submitted will be taken into consideration.
17 We appreciate you being here.

18 So at this time we will move to the next item, item
19 5, State Route 99 Chico Auxiliary Lane Public Hearing on the
20 Draft Environmental Impact Report.

21 Andy?

22 MR. NEWSUM: Yes. Good morning to the board. As the
23 board is aware, the staff has been working on the
24 preparation of the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the
25 State Route 99 Auxiliary Lane Project between State Route 32

1 and East 1st Avenue.

2 During the preparation of this document we've held
3 two public meetings, both of which were held here. One in
4 March 12th of 2003 was the latest one we had and then
5 earlier when we initially started the process we had a
6 public meeting on May 29th of '02.

7 The draft environmental impact report has now been
8 completed and has been made available for public review as
9 of October 1st. Today's public hearing with BCAG being the
10 lead CEQA agency for the environmental document will be to
11 retain comments, get comments from the public in order to
12 give the board the ability to assess the legal adequacy of
13 the document.

14 It's our intention today to hear all the public
15 comments that are out there. I do have since the first
16 public meeting that we have in March, I have a stack of
17 roughly a hundred written comments that we've received in
18 which case approximately 70 percent of the comments have
19 been in favor of a project.

20 As the board is aware, we have a couple of
21 alternatives that we're looking at that both meet purpose
22 and need. Today what we're going to do we have our
23 consultant that we've hired, Quincy Engineering. Alan Glen
24 is our project manager over here. And Karen Tatman also
25 represents Quincy Engineering. The environmental consultant

1 for Quincy is Jones & Stokes and here today is Debbie Loh
2 and also Sue Bushnell senior biologist or senior botanist,
3 excuse me, Sue, to answer any particular questions that we
4 may have.

5 The presentation that we're going to put out for you
6 is really the presentation from our second meeting that we
7 held on May 29th and it's in the interest of being able for
8 the board to see what we've been having the public, having
9 the public look at.

10 So with that I can hand it over to Alan and he'll go
11 through the presentation after which time we will have any
12 comments; and, obviously, the public hearing will be opened
13 and we'll be ready to hear anything anyone has to say. So
14 if Alan wants to talk it over, we can go from there.

15 MR. COOK: Thank you.

16 MR. GLEN: Thank you, Andy. Do all the Board members
17 have it on their screen? First of all, I'd like to talk
18 about the three elements of the purpose and needs statement.
19 The first being to reduce travel delays and congestion. As
20 you know, the peak hour traffic volumes are rapidly
21 approaching the capacity. The level of service at the
22 northbound ramp intersection is at a level of service C. At
23 the southbound ramp intersection is level of service D and
24 by 2027 which is the design life of the project, they would
25 both be level of service F in the event that no project was

1 adopted.

2 There is also high volumes of merging traffic both
3 at the on and off ramps and that contributes to the second
4 element which is improved safety operations. This project
5 really is about improving the operations and safety at this
6 section of Route 99. In fact, there is an oddity in that
7 there is 31 percent of all accidents on Route 99 in Butte
8 County occur within this one-mile stretch.

9 MS. JARVIS: 31 percent?

10 MR. GLEN: That's out of 46 miles of Route 99. To
11 have 31 percent of all those accidents occur in a one-mile
12 stretch is very significant.

13 As I indicated there are rather short merge areas
14 which certainly contribute to those accidents. In the p.m.
15 peak period there is often traffic backed up on the
16 northbound off ramp to East 1st Avenue which creates a
17 safety concern. There is also narrow shoulders on the
18 existing bridges over Bidwell Park.

19 And then the third element of the purpose and need
20 is to improve this access across Bidwell Park. As you know,
21 there is very limited north-south routes there through and
22 connecting the north half and the south half of the cities;
23 and, in fact, there is 70 percent of the traffic that gets
24 on in the northbound direction at Route 32 exits at East 1st
25 Avenue. So you can see that this section of the freeway is

1 being heavily utilized by local trips.

2 As far as our study we've evaluated two
3 alternatives. Actually three alternatives on Route 99. We
4 have an outside widening alternative which widens the
5 freeway to the outside with the use of retaining walls to
6 stay within the State right-of-way. We have an inside
7 widening alternative that's been considered that utilizes
8 the existing median by transitioning the existing lanes in
9 towards that median in order to utilize the number two lane
10 on the outside as the auxiliary lane.

11 And then, of course, we've evaluated the no built
12 project. Those are the alternatives on Route 99. In
13 addition we've studied two alternatives in how to handle the
14 East 1st Avenue improvement. We have a signalized ramp
15 intersection improvement option which would be to widen East
16 1st Avenue and provide additional capacity through the
17 interchange and we'll go into more detail about that; and as
18 a result of public comment, we did add a second alternative
19 and evaluate the possibility of utilizing roundabouts in
20 lieu of more traditional signalized intersections.

21 This exhibit shows a pictorial of what the outside
22 widening alternative would look like. Some of the
23 advantages of the outside widening alternative on Route 99
24 is to save the oleanders and the recently constructed median
25 barrier. It also retains the median for future use in the

1 event that Caltrans needs to add capacity to the freeway.
2 This particular alternative allows us to widen the bridges
3 both over Palmetto and the Bidwell Park viaduct just on the
4 outside rather than on both sides as you'll see in the other
5 alternative and the sound wall would be placed at its
6 ultimate location which would be very important in the event
7 that Caltrans needs to add capacity and it also would
8 maintain the existing freeway alignment and eliminate the
9 need for this transition outside widening alternative would
10 require.

11 Some of the disadvantages are it does require
12 removal of significant vegetation on the outside slopes. It
13 does require extensive retaining walls. These walls will be
14 somewhat taller and more visible to the adjacent properties
15 and it's been perceived as encroachment to those adjacent
16 properties, but keep in mind all of the improvements are
17 within the existing State highway right-of-way.

18 Here is a picture of existing freeway section, I
19 believe, looking northbound. And this is a rendering of
20 what it would look like under the outside widening
21 alternative with the existing median barrier and oleanders
22 being retained and the sound wall additional northbound
23 lanes on the outside.

24 The inside widening alternative would look something
25 like this. The advantages is that it does save most of the

1 outside vegetation. It requires less retaining walls. The
2 sound walls, though, would be, they would be less visible
3 but they would have to likely be removed and relocated in
4 the future in the event that 99 was widened for through
5 capacity. It does provide a wider inside shoulder because
6 the entire median would be paved rather than a five-foot
7 shoulder as would normally be constructed on this type of
8 facility. And this alternative is perceived as less
9 encroaching to the adjacent properties.

10 Some of the disadvantages are that the oleanders
11 would be removed as well as the removal of the recently
12 completed median barrier. This alternative does require
13 widening both inside and outside on the Bidwell viaduct as
14 well as Palmetto. Basically there is a northbound and
15 southbound bridge at both locations today. The area between
16 the two bridges in this alternative would be decked for the
17 bridges would be connected into a single bridge and the
18 outside widening is also required in order to improve the
19 ramp geometry going down to both interchanges. This
20 alternative does require a lane transition on the freeway;
21 and as I indicated, it would require future removal of the
22 sound walls. Here is the same picture from before with a
23 rendering of the inside widening option.

24 Now switching to the two intersection options at
25 East 1st Avenue, this is the more conventional signalized

1 option. It would provide two westbound through lanes, two
2 westbound left-turn lanes, one eastbound through lane and
3 one eastbound left-turn lane. The operations of this
4 interchange required a little bit of an unbalanced lane
5 configuration in order to make it operate as effectively as
6 possible.

7 This alternative would require both Sheridan and
8 Sarah Avenues to be closed off to left-turn traffic. It
9 would allow for right in, right out only because of the
10 close proximity between those intersections and the
11 interchange making it virtually impossible to retain those
12 movements. It would provide dual left-turn lanes from the
13 northbound off ramp.

14 And switching to the roundabout option this option
15 would replace the conventional signalized intersection with
16 two roundabouts and they would be dual lane roundabouts
17 which we don't currently have much experience of in this
18 country. We've got, we're gaining experience in the use of
19 roundabouts but primarily with single lane roundabouts.
20 Single lane roundabouts were not adequate to convey the
21 level of traffic that's require at this particular location.

22 Again, Sheridan would require right in right out
23 only at both intersections there. It does in order to make
24 these roundabouts operate effectively, it would require a
25 separate lane that would be outside of the roundabout the

1 configuration to convey traffic from the northbound off ramp
2 to eastbound and it would effectively be a bypass of the
3 roundabout to keep traffic flowing. And this particular
4 alternative does require cul-de-sacing of Sarah Avenue
5 because of that bypass need.

6 Here is a picture of the typical sections
7 essentially underneath the bridges, and you're looking
8 eastbound in both cases. The one on the left would be for
9 the roundabout option. It does provide for four 12-foot
10 lanes which would be considered standard in Caltrans terms
11 as well as a shoulder and sidewalks, and there would be a
12 little bit of room left over. On the signalized
13 intersection option, we have to reduce those lanes to
14 11-foot lanes which will operate fine and the shoulders will
15 be a little narrower but adequate for bicycle travel and
16 there would be a sidewalk on both sides but that would
17 utilize the entire cross-section that exists today.

18 Now as far as advantages and disadvantages of the
19 signalized intersection, this is a more conventional service
20 or solution. This particular option has a superior level of
21 service when compared to a roundabout. In 2027 we would
22 achieve a level of service C for both ramp intersections as
23 compared to level of service B for the northbound roundabout
24 and level of service F for the southbound roundabout with
25 significant queuing in the eastbound direction trying to get

1 onto the southbound on ramp. That's one of the points here.
2 There is also an important point about a conventional
3 solution is that the pedestrian and bicycle movements which
4 are very important to this community are better served in a
5 conventional solution because you have 90-degree crossings.
6 You have signal controls that allow the pedestrians to cross
7 on a light and the bicycles can also maneuver through this
8 interchange more readily.

9 Some of the disadvantages are that it does require
10 the reduced lane widths, 11-foot lanes as I indicated in
11 order to maintain two sidewalks. Earlier in the study we
12 did look at an option that had one sidewalk on one side but
13 it was necessary to maintain the two sidewalks. This
14 particular option does require one residential acquisition
15 and it does require a little longer transition both to the
16 west and to the east in order to transition back to the
17 existing cross-section along East 1st Avenue. Some of the
18 advantages of the roundabout option is that it does provide
19 for the standard lane widths underneath the structure as
20 indicated earlier. Roundabouts have been shown to reduce
21 accidents, volume and severity primarily because the speeds
22 are reduced and the speeds are reduced by requiring the
23 motorists go through a deflection angle on the approach to
24 the roundabout which does require them to reduce their speed
25 in order to navigate through that, and the accident

1 reduction is attributed to reduced conflict points through
2 the operation of a roundabout.

3 Some of the disadvantages are that it's a
4 nonconventional solution although it's gaining popularity in
5 this country. The visually impaired have a very difficult
6 time maneuvering through this type of interchange because of
7 not understanding what the direction of travel is at all
8 times unlike the squared off type intersection. This
9 alternative also requires two additional residential
10 acquisitions so that would be a total of three acquisitions;
11 and, frankly, we have not a lot of experience in this
12 country with dual lane roundabouts so it gives us in the
13 business a little bit of heart trepidation to recommend such
14 an alternative. And this does also require closure of Sarah
15 Avenue.

16 With that I'd like to turn this over to Debbie to
17 cover some of the environmental aspects.

18 MS. LOH: Okay. Thanks, Alan, and good morning. An
19 important part of the environmental review process was to
20 solicit input from the public and the various resource
21 agencies that have jurisdiction over this project. As Andy
22 mentioned, this is the third public meeting that we've had.
23 We also issued a notice of preparation. When we began the
24 technical studies on this report there was a pretty
25 widespread mailing to residents in the area and businesses

1 as well as interested citizens in the resources agencies to
2 try to get input on the appropriate scope of the
3 environmental document.

4 We've had quite a bit of coordination with the
5 various resources agencies. We've met with them in the
6 field, there has been a lot of correspondence, telephone
7 conversations and so on.

8 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service we have submitted
9 what's called a biological assessment. There is one listed
10 species, wildlife species, the Valley Elderberry Longhorn
11 Beetle that would be impacted by the project. The service
12 has reviewed our biological assessment and they've indicated
13 that they will be issuing what's called a no jeopardy
14 biological opinion once a preferred alternative is selected.
15 The impacts under the inside and outside widening are
16 slightly different with regard to the beetle. And then a no
17 jeopardy opinion basically means that the project with the
18 proposed mitigation would not jeopardize the survival and
19 recovery of that particular species.

20 We've also coordinated with the National Marine
21 Fishery Service, also known as NOAA Fisheries. We also
22 prepared a biological assessment on the three fish species
23 that would be impacted by the project that are either listed
24 or considered commercially valuable species. We have gotten
25 a letter of concurrence from NOAA Fisheries that they do

1 agree with the mitigation measures that have been proposed.
2 So we are essentially done with our consultation with NOAA
3 Fisheries.

4 The environmental impact report analyzes the inside
5 and outside widening alternatives as well as the no action
6 alternative in equal level of detail, so that the board has
7 the option of adopting any one of these three alternatives
8 without the need for further environmental review.

9 And then finally, obviously, all the written
10 comments that are received during the public review period,
11 all the comments that are received today that address the
12 legal adequacy of the EIR will be addressed in written form
13 in the final EIR which should be issued early next year.

14 The conclusions of the EIR are essentially that with
15 the exception of impacts to large native trees that all
16 environmental impacts that are identified can be mitigated
17 to a lessened significant level with the proposed
18 mitigation.

19 The loss of large mature trees in the short term has
20 been identified as a significant and unavoidable impact.
21 And the reason is that it obviously takes many many years
22 for these large mature trees to grow even though part of the
23 project is to replant the trees both within the area, within
24 the Caltrans right-of-way near Bidwell Park underneath and
25 adjacent to the viaduct as well as along what we call the

1 State Route 99 side slopes. And those are the areas within
2 the right-of-way along the main line north of Vallombrosa
3 and south of the Bidwell Park viaduct.

4 The tree survey that was conducted for the EIR
5 counted trees that were six inches or greater in diameter at
6 breast height, and this is a very common approach for
7 analyzing trees for environmental impact analysis. And the
8 rationale for looking at trees six inches or greater is that
9 these are mature trees. On many local ordinances throughout
10 the country that are meant to protect native trees focus on
11 large trees and many of these ordinances are stated as
12 protecting trees that are 10 inches or greater, 12 inches,
13 some 6 inches or greater. So, again, we look at those that
14 are 6 inches or greater.

15 I understand that a local group here in town called
16 Tree Action has proposed a tree ordinance to protect trees
17 on private land. And they're focusing on what they call
18 landmark trees and those would be trees that would be 12
19 inches or greater in diameter at breast height. There are
20 obviously, many smaller trees that are less than six inches
21 that would be affected by both alternatives. The numbers
22 that we have in the environmental impact report obviously
23 give you a very good idea of the relative differences
24 between the inside and outside widening alternatives with
25 regard to tree removal. When you're talking about the side

1 slopes, again, the area within the Caltrans right-of-way
2 north of Vallombrosa and south of the Bidwell Park viaduct
3 the outside widening alternative resulting in the removal of
4 many more trees, twice as many in fact as the inside
5 widening alternative. However, when you're just focusing on
6 the Caltrans right-of-way by the Bidwell Park viaduct, the
7 impacts are quite similar between the inside and outside
8 widening alternative. With the inside widening alternative
9 resulting in the removal of a few more trees.

10 Very quickly, there is a listing in front of you of
11 some of the more major mitigation measures that are
12 recommended in the Environmental Impact Report. A 14-foot
13 noise barrier is recommended that would start at East 1st
14 Avenue, go along the ramps. It actually goes onto the
15 Bidwell Park viaduct about a quarter of the way into the
16 park south of Vallombrosa. And aesthetic treatment of that
17 noise barrier is also recommended to try to make it blend
18 into the environment as much as possible.

19 In terms of impacts by the viaducts near Big Chico
20 Creek, riparian restoration and enhancement plan is being
21 recommended. This is a concept that we've discussed with the
22 resource agency, and the idea here is that there would be an
23 area that would be replanted and enhanced with riparian
24 vegetation at a two-to-one basis which means for every acre
25 that would be impacted two acres would be planted. So this

1 would be the actual construction area near the viaduct and
2 then other areas preferably within Bidwell Park would be
3 planted and enhanced. By "enhanced" I mean that a greater
4 percentage of native trees and vegetation would be planted
5 than exists right now. In the area near the viaduct there
6 are a lot of non-natives. Eucalyptus trees, Himalayan
7 blackberry and so on.

8 In terms of the Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle
9 which, again, is a listed species the service has a very
10 well-defined compensation for that. And so that would
11 involve identifying a conservation area where the Elderberry
12 shrubs that would be removed because of construction would
13 be replanted. There would also be Elderberry seedlings that
14 would be replanted as well as other native plants. So we're
15 talking about a conservation area that's about within the
16 range of one-and-a-half to 1.7 acres depending on what
17 alternative we're talking about. And then finally along the
18 SR-99 side slopes part of the project involves replanting
19 those areas as well.

20 In terms of noise walls we did a noise analysis that
21 was based on the Federal protocol as well as the local noise
22 element here in Chico. If Federal funds are going to be
23 used for noise abatement, it's required by the Federal
24 Highway Administration that the Federal protocol be used for
25 analysis. Basically we looked at noise abatement that could

1 be achieved with an 8-, 10-, 12- and 14-foot high wall; and
2 basically what the Feds say is that the wall must achieve at
3 least 5 decibels of noise attenuation and must be reasonable
4 from a cost perspective. The 10-, 12- and 14-foot high
5 walls all achieve the 5 decibel attenuation but only the
6 14-foot high wall was deemed to be reasonable from a cost
7 perspective and that's because a 14-foot high wall provides
8 noise attenuation for the greatest number of residences. So
9 there would be about 80 residences that would at least
10 achieve at least a 5 decibel noise attenuation with a
11 14-foot wall.

12 The next slide shows some photo simulations that we
13 prepared showing kind of pre- and post-project views. This
14 first one is a view from a back yard on Palmetto Avenue,
15 looking east towards south on State Route 99 and you can see
16 under the outside widening alternative there would be a
17 14-foot high noise wall over a 9-foot retaining wall. And
18 there would be basically the vegetation within the
19 right-of-way would be removed. The wall would be probably
20 about halfway down the slope. Whereas under the inside
21 widening alternative because the wall would be set back only
22 about two feet from the existing outer shoulder, current
23 outer shoulder there would be a lot less vegetation removal;
24 and there would just be basically a 14-foot high wall. And
25 a lot of the existing vegetation outside of that

1 construction area would be retained.

2 The next photosimulations show the same types of
3 view along Rey Way. Again, you can see under the outside
4 widening alternative there would be a higher wall that would
5 be visible. The vegetation that's shown in these
6 post-project simulations are about after 10 to 15 years of
7 growth and vegetation.

8 A part of the noise wall design would involve BCAG
9 and Caltrans working with the landscape architect from the
10 City of Chico Arts Commission to come up with an aesthetic
11 treatment to try to blend the wall into the environment as
12 much as possible. So we're talking about things like using
13 natural colors, using a roughened wall surface to try to
14 reduce the verticality of the wall and design motifs to try
15 to break up some of the visual monotony of the noise wall.

16 Some of the next slides show some renderings of what
17 this might look like. You can see one here along Rey Way.
18 It's also another rendering.

19 And with that I'll turn it over to Andy who is going
20 to be talking about costs.

21 MR. NEWSUM: Both of these alternatives approach the
22 roughly 24- to 25-million-dollar range. That would be for
23 all phases of the project which we've identified now as
24 having a phase 1, phase 2 and phase 3.

25 The cost difference in the inside widening

1 alternative is largely due to us needing to widen the
2 structures over the viaduct in both directions. There is a
3 -- we would be decking between the structures but we would
4 also be having to accomplish what we call a sliver widening
5 to the outside in order to accommodate the on ramps and the
6 merge lanes as necessary.

7 In terms of a schedule, we're here today to have
8 this public hearing for the environmental document. We
9 expect to take our comments and develop our final
10 environmental impact report and then bring the document back
11 to the board in early 2004 for certification and the choice
12 of an alternative.

13 After we approve our EIR and we complete the CEQA
14 process, Federal Highways will complete a categorical
15 exclusion to satisfy the NEPA process which at that point in
16 time we would begin the design process and expect we would
17 have right-of-way acquisition occurring within 12 months
18 after the environmental document. Our final design
19 occurring 12 months also in the same period of time after
20 our environmental document is approved, and then
21 construction is something that we would pursue roughly 12
22 months after all of the right-of-way is acquired.

23 Our phase 1 project just for the benefit of the
24 board, would be the improvements to the northbound off ramp
25 down to East 1st Avenue and the improvements on East 1st

1 Avenue.

2 Phase 2 construction would be the northbound
3 auxiliary lane.

4 Phase 3 construction would be the southbound
5 auxiliary lane. So with that that concludes our
6 presentation here and we can open the public hearing.

7 MR. ANDOE: Thank you, Andy. First of all, let me
8 ask if there is any questions of the board regarding
9 presentation.

10 MR. COOK: Just a couple. You're talking about three
11 phases. They will not be undertaken all at the same time;
12 they have to be done in phases?

13 MR. NEWSUM: To accommodate the likely funding
14 constraint of funding all 23-plus million dollars, it would
15 be required that we look at phasing the project. Phase 1
16 project estimate is somewhere in the neighborhood of
17 5-and-a-half million dollars.

18 MR. COOK: Is it the consensus that's the biggest
19 problem is going to be the first phase?

20 MR. NEWSUM: Well, I think the first phase project
21 accomplishes the -- a lot of the congestion issues that are
22 being developed on Highway 99 for the volume of or lack of
23 storage on the off ramp to accommodate the volumes that are
24 going down to East 1st Avenue.

25 MR. COOK: I know from personal experience that

1 Caltrans doesn't like roundabouts. Has there been any input
2 from Caltrans on the EIR at this point?

3 MR. NEWSUM: Caltrans was involved in the preparation
4 of the traffic study specifically for the purpose of helping
5 us get some guidance on their experience with roundabouts.
6 So they were on board during the preparation of the traffic
7 portion of it to assess the viability and look into
8 resources as to what type of information they have on
9 roundabouts and Caltrans is not against roundabouts. They
10 are very pro of having supporting documentation to support a
11 decision that meets a purpose and need, and that's really
12 the primary issue that we have is we don't have a lot of
13 documentation on particularly two-lane roundabouts.

14 MR. COOK: Thank you.

15 MS. JARVIS: Are we going to be using technology
16 anymore?

17 MR. GLEN: No.

18 MR. JARVIS: Great because my screen is gone.

19 MR. GLEN: Mine is too.

20 MR. ANDOE: Any other questions?

21 MR. WHITE: I've got some. First, Debbie, my college
22 physics was a long time ago. 5 decibel reduction in sound
23 is about two-thirds volume?

24 MS. LOH: Well, again, 3 decibel is considered barely
25 perceptible. 3 is perceptible change. 4 and 5 is

1 considered perceptible. A 10 decibel is a doubling of sound
2 to give you some idea.

3 MR. WHITE: Okay. 5 decibels is significant but
4 you're still going to hear it real clearly.

5 Alan, you commented that 70 percent of the traffic
6 getting on Highway 32 gets off East 1st. During peak
7 periods how many cars is that?

8 MR. GLEN: Oh, tough question. Ask your next
9 question and I'll find the answer to that.

10 MR. WHITE: My next question is predicated on that
11 one.

12 MR. GLEN: It may take a while. I want to say it's
13 in the 1200 vehicle range but I'm not positive.

14 MR. WHITE: That's 20 cars a minute. Jim nodding his
15 head.

16 MR. PELOW: That's my exit. That's probably about
17 right at peak time.

18 MR. GLEN: Today's volumes or forecasted?

19 MR. WHITE: We can go with today's. There is enough
20 of a problem today. Actually even if we, we can if you come
21 up with a different number, but even at 1200 cars an hour.
22 20 cars a minute. When this --

23 MR. GLEN: 880 in the a.m. peak and 833 in the p.m.
24 peak today.

25 MR. WHITE: 14, 15 cars when this topic first came up

1 when council member Keene first approached the subject I had
2 made the suggestion then and I'm wondering if the City of
3 Chico has still considered this.

4 The challenge, 70 percent of those cars are getting
5 off and on of the freeway because they can't get across
6 Bidwell Park. Is the City of Chico still considering
7 Bidwell Park to be sacred looking at the impacts that this
8 will give? I hear, I've heard a lot of concerns and
9 complaints about this project. The reason for the need for
10 this project is that there is no surface traffic. You can't
11 drive across Bidwell Park. I just think that needs,
12 something that needs to be looked at. It is another
13 alternative was not studied. It was not studied because
14 direction was not --

15 MS. JARVIS: I can't believe there would be any
16 support by any council member to look at that. The public
17 would hang us at a stake somewhere. Maybe Council member
18 Keene --

19 MR. WHITE: I think the biggest point I want to make
20 is that this is not maybe a great option, but it's better
21 than one of the options. One of the reasons I wanted it
22 looked at so this would look like suddenly this is the
23 better choice. We're going to have to move those people
24 somehow. I don't know what the better way to do it would
25 be.

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1 MS. HOUX: Well, there is surface transportation to
2 go from East 1st to East 8th. It has just become I think a
3 very bad habit. I feel very sorry for the people who are
4 going to be directly impacted by this, and I wonder if
5 you're prepared to deal with the financial implications of
6 lower the value of property.

7 The number of houses that have gone on the market on
8 Sarah and Sheridan (applause) in the last few months is kind
9 of scary. Somehow there is an unwillingness to look at the
10 beltway and to me that makes the most sense of all. Because
11 it would be used by people who are north going to get off at
12 East 1st Avenue.

13 The City of Chico is talking about Eaton Road out on
14 the west side and this keeps being brought up but it keeps
15 getting buried. We've look at that and the Board of
16 Supervisors and the City Council. I believe it goes back,
17 you know, 10 or 12 years. What is the, you know, what's the
18 hang-up here?

19 MR. CLARK: As far as looking at a bypass?

20 MS. HOUX: Yes.

21 MR. CLARK: Well, I guess if you're looking at a
22 bypass, I thought you said easterly. Well, the park does
23 continue easterly for quite some ways and I am not sure --

24 MS. HOUX: Well, it would be less intrusive to the
25 park, and I'm a loyal Chico respect the park, but it would

**A-1
cont.**

1 be less intrusive in the park on the east there on
2 Manzanita.

3 MR. CLARK: If you built a State highway --

4 MS. HOUX: I really am opposed to this widening.

5 MR. CLARK: If you were to look at a beltway as a
6 conventional city/county road, that would be something the
7 City and County could do. If you are talking about moving
8 the State highway under a bypass, then you're talking about
9 a -- I think more significant impact of building the bypass.
10 You're looking at probably more environmental impacts.
11 Again, I'm not sure how far south you would start that
12 bypass, but you're looking at more costs all the way around,
13 more impacts; and, again, we have an existing problem out
14 there today that, again, was our charge to try to come up
15 with viable solutions to deal with the problem that exists
16 today.

17 MS. HOUX: I know but I believe when we started on
18 this I asked you please look at the bypass.

19 I know I did.

20 MR. CLARK: You did and I think our comment was a
21 bypass would be too cost prohibitive.

22 MS. HOUX: Well, I do recall the very first meeting
23 we had in this large conference room over here; and the
24 neighbors to this awful project came and they all commented
25 to me, "This is useless. They've already made up their

**A-1
cont.**

1 mind."

2 (applause)

3 MR. CLARK: Part of the issue, too, is that, again,
4 our study was the next step from the project study report
5 that was done by Caltrans, and that study did not look at a
6 bypass. It was looking at the alternatives that we've gone
7 into, you know, the environmental studies with. So if we
8 were to do that, we would have to step back, do a study to
9 look at where we would even do this bypass; and, you know,
10 we would really be going back to ground zero to start
11 looking at solutions that would put us back several years;
12 and, again, I can tell you just in looking at the Marysville
13 bypass, it's extensive planning. I think the costs would be
14 significant.

15 MS. HOUX: Well, the expedient is not always right,
16 though, Jon.

17 MR. CLARK: I understand but, again, I think part of
18 our concern then is the existing safety problems that exist
19 out there today.

20 MS. HOUX: Well, it is a nice neighborhood that is
21 going to get ruined.

22 MS. JARVIS: Mary Anne, what bypass route are you
23 talking about?

24 MS. HOUX: I'm talking about Highway 32.

25 MS. JARVIS: Bypass on Eaton.

1 MS. HOUX: On the south coming down Bruce Road
2 Manzanita to Eaton and west to the western side.

3 MS. JARVIS: All we would do is pit one neighborhood
4 against another. Manzanita the council approved is a
5 two-lane not going to four-lane. And in order to not do
6 this project and do it a bypass, we'd have to make Manzanita
7 four lanes and there are people in this audience who aren't
8 applauding right now because they live on Manzanita and
9 fought really hard to keep Manzanita to two lanes. Unless
10 you're talking about a bypass that's going to go somewhere
11 other than Manzanita.

12 MS. SMITH: 32.

13 MS. JARVIS: 32. You mean 32 on the west side?

14 MS. SMITH: East side. I mean on the west side and
15 then go back down Muir or Meridian back to 99.

16 MS. JARVIS: Sorry. There is going to be a
17 neighborhood affected. It may be yours and it may be
18 someone else's but not everybody is going to be happy with
19 this.

20 MR. ANDOE: Anything else from the board? Okay. If
21 not, at this time we will open the public -- let me ask.
22 How many wish to speak? Let me see a show of hands.

23 (show of hands)

24 Please keep your comments brief. If we get out of
25 here on time, that allows us about 30, 40 minutes. So that

1 means about four minutes per person. Request you to be
2 brief. Again, I'm not trying to cut you short but we would
3 like to retain schedule. So who will be first. At this
4 time I'll open the public hearing.

5 MS. SUMNER: My name is Juanita Sumner. I live at
6 1258 Filbert Avenue. My house is going to be right under
7 the freeway. I was alive in 1965 or so when they first put
8 the freeway through and I remember what it did. The houses
9 that were removed, the families that were removed and the
10 effect it had on the community that was there at that time.
11 I realize other neighborhoods could be affected. I think
12 that's a false dilemma, Colleen.

13 Let me talk about the need for this thing. He says
14 32 percent of the accidents that occur on that 40-something
15 mile stretch occur right there in that one-mile stretch.
16 Well, I have yet to read about an accident that wasn't
17 caused by speeding, drunk driving or otherwise criminal
18 driving acts. One guy was doing 85 miles an hour through
19 that stretch when a cement truck ahead of him had to make a
20 quick lane change and the boy driving the car went right
21 into the median. It was the 85-mile-an-hour speed that
22 killed that man, not the setup of the freeway.

23 I used to drive that section of freeway. I've seen
24 every jackass maneuver you could possibly pull in a car on
25 that section of freeway. I've seen people do ignorant,

1 stupid things. Speeding being the chief cause among all of
2 them. Speeding. No enforcement from any of the law
3 enforcement agencies.

4 The CHP officer Maylon Pringle (phonetic) told me
5 they had three CHP officers on duty at any one time in all
6 of Butte County. He told me to tell my public officials
7 that they need to put more emphasis on traffic control with
8 the Chico City Police Department and that was five or six
9 years ago.

10 One of the alternatives to this freeway widening
11 would be to give people some safe alternatives to using
12 cars. I'm 43. I've lived in this area all my life. I have
13 been trying to make it around this town on a bicycle for
14 about 20 years and it has gotten worse. My kids and I tried
15 to ride our bicycles out yesterday. We tried to go to the
16 Butte County library which is about a mile from our house.
17 That library intersection there on East 1st Avenue is one of
18 the most horrible places on the planet. Ask the library
19 staff what they've seen from inside that library building.

20 Adding more traffic to the freeway and adding more
21 traffic to East 1st Avenue is the wrong way to go. You
22 widen that freeway you're going to get more cars. Widening
23 an overused strip of road is like buying a new pair of pants
24 when you find out you're overweight. Buying a new pair of
25 pants to solve your weight problem, widening your damn

A-2

1 freeways to solve stupidity problems.

2 And I refuse to sit by while that freeway is moved
3 closer to my house. I refuse to sit by while you put up an
4 L.A. style gang tagging bulletin board right across from my
5 friend Stanley's house. My friend Stanley has to grow up in
6 the neighborhood. My children have to grow up in this
7 neighborhood. You're talking about stick your foot right in
8 the middle of my children's childhood; and, no, I'm not
9 going to put up with it. I just won't. Sorry. Do I need
10 to sign this sign-in sheet?

11 MS. HOUX: Please.

12 MS. SUMNER: I think this whole project is horribly
13 thought out. I don't think these people have really
14 investigated the alternatives.

15 Ms. Houx, I think you're right. I think that
16 they've ignored us. They got some money they need to spend
17 or they're going to lose it. I feel, I'm going to say it,
18 Rick Keene has some friends who have something to gain from
19 this. I know he does. I haven't found them yet, but I'm
20 looking.

21 MS. HOUX: Thank you for coming.

22 MS. SUMNER: Thank you.

23 MR. ANDOE: Thank you. Next.

24 MR. BOOS: David Boos. B-O-O-S. I've lived in Chico
25 my whole life. Born and raised pretty much on and off in

1 that neighborhood the whole time. I know most of you here.

2 I want to make quick comment; then I'll explain my comment.

3 Everybody here, all you people, all you people up
4 there, you might as well go home.

5 MS. HOUX: What?

6 MR. BOOS: This project has been decided. And now I
7 will explain. Three years ago I looked out my window and
8 Caltrans workers were devastating the underbrush across from
9 my house which had been there for basically 40 years.

10 Habitat, my sound wall, my visual, block between cars
11 flashing by and the strobe light of the sun blinking on my
12 window all night long, you know, until the sun went down.

13 I called up Caltrans. Well, I didn't call them
14 first. I went out and talked to the guys. I said, "What
15 are you doing?" They said, "Well, it's all coming out." I
16 said, "What do you mean it's all coming out?" "It's all
17 coming out. We're clear cutting all this and we're going to
18 expand the freeway out." I said, "No." So I called Byron
19 Pierce who did not return my calls. Many many times.

20 Finally got through. "Oh, we have a rat problem." That's
21 what he said. A rat problem. Okay. So and he says, "It
22 will all grow back," you know. "You're crying over spilled
23 milk here. Don't worry about it. It will all grow back."

24 Okay. The next summer I noticed the water wasn't
25 being put on. You probably noticed this two summers ago.

1 Looked like ick on that stretch of freeway. Everything was
2 dead and dying. They didn't even turn the water on all
3 summer. I called Byron. No return. I called Byron. No
4 return. I called his boss Nevada City, Grass Valley
5 wherever that is. Finally I got a call-back and it was at
6 the end of the summer. "Oh, well, the reason why we took
7 all those bushes out was to fix the sprinklers." "Well, you
8 never turned them on. Why don't you turn them on because
9 what happens when you turn off the water? Things die."
10 Okay. So the water comes on right at the end of the summer.
11 Two summers ago.

12 This last summer so I figured, well, okay. They'll
13 get the water out. They know we're watching. No, no water.
14 They turn on little tiny sprinklers up at the top. There is
15 like two sets of water, the ones at the top goes a few feet
16 basically go very busy to water trees, you know, and 40-year
17 old trees that are used to getting water 20, 30 minutes for
18 20, 30 years. They cut the water off. No water, no water,
19 no water. Finally I go to News and Review. I say, "Look,
20 what's going on here?" They call them. They get the
21 run-around. They get so many different stories they don't
22 even know what to believe.

23 Finally -- well, back up a little bit. One of the
24 Caltrans workers comes out. I finally get some action. And
25 Byron says, "The guy is coming out to turn the water." So I

1 go out there and I see the guy up there. He's messing with
2 the water. Boom. Right out of the ground about a
3 two-and-a-half, three-inch hole of mud and water comes
4 gushing out. I get on my cell phone. Hey -- of course you
5 can't get Byron because he always has the answering machine
6 on. Hey, you know, maybe part of your problem is this big
7 water gushing out here. Seeing how that's all dirt that
8 could cause a sinkhole. That's pretty serious situation.
9 You guys might want to -- well, I look up. When I look up
10 around the corner comes a Caltrans worker who just turned
11 the water on. He drives up. I stop him. I say, "Hey, look
12 you got a hole right there. Water is gushing out here." He
13 says, "No, it isn't." And I said, "Well, turn your head and
14 look. You can see it gushing out with the mud. I can take
15 you to the spot, show you where it is." "No, it isn't." I
16 said, "Look, we live here. I know what you're doing, but
17 could you just turn the water on and let the bushes grow
18 back until you guys decide what to do. We're going to
19 meetings. We're trying to be a part of this thing, trying
20 to cooperate. Nothing has been decided. He says, "Well,
21 yes, it has been decided." I said, "What are you talking
22 about?" He says, again, "It's all coming out," quote
23 unquote. I said, "It's not all coming out. We're still
24 going to meetings." I said, "It hasn't been decided yet."
25 He says quote "It was decided a long time ago." That's my

1 story.

2 (applause)

3 We were at the meeting public meetings. I say to
4 them, "Hey, I talked to the guys out there counting trees.
5 They're only counting six-inch trees." I happen to know
6 because I was a kid and there is a pomegranate across from
7 my house. I happen to know that pomegranate had been there
8 40 years. But it's not a tree now. They're going to cut it
9 down. In fact, they did that. So what happened? Does
10 anybody know how many dead trees there are right now on that
11 stretch of road? You hear emotions out there but you, what
12 you don't see is what we've had to go through. It's
13 humiliating. I've said enough about that. I just wanted to
14 give that aspect to you.

15 I did want to mention something I thought was a
16 little curious. 30 percent of the accidents in Butte County
17 are in that stretch of road. 30 percent of the people that
18 get on 8th and 9th cross traffic to continue through. Hum?
19 Maybe their problem is you got a short piece of area here.
20 You got people going 70 miles an hour here and people coming
21 on and wanting to get over in that lane right away. The
22 problem really is the crossing of the traffic at 4:00
23 o'clock. 3:00 or 4:00 o'clock. Once the cars start slowing
24 down 45 miles an hour, no problem. Once the people slow
25 down, there really are no problems. It's when you have

1 Mr. 70-mile-an-hour, 80-mile-an-hour guy coming in there
2 and, you know, grandma getting off. She's only going from
3 32 to East 1st. She's never going to go past the 45 miles an
4 hours.

5 MS. HOUX: Let's don't insult grandmothers.

6 MR. BOOS: Someday I'll be one of them and probably
7 right here in this community.

8 MS. HOUX: Well, I already am.

9 MR. BOOS: I wouldn't want to insult you, Mary Anne.
10 Anyway that's my story. It's hard not to get emotional when
11 you have been treated like this, and you ask some questions
12 and you get the switch and bait.

13 Those pictures they show the pictures of the wall
14 14-foot. They show these great big trees behind them.
15 Sorry. Never going to happen because they're cutting those
16 trees down with the outside widening. Another little
17 deception, switch and bait.

18 MR. ANDOE: Please sum up.

19 MR. BOOS: All right. I'll do this as quick as
20 possible. I knew three years ago that they were going out.
21 Nobody else seemed to except the workers cutting down
22 bushes. Now a lot of trees are dead. They have been
23 cutting them down. I do have videotape of that if you like.
24 They're big trees they killed.

25 So let's get to the rails in the middle. Why did

1 they do that? Why did they put those rails in when they
2 knew that they were going to do this project and possibly go
3 in? I'll tell you why. They knew they weren't going in.
4 That's all I have to say. Thank you.

5 MR. ANDOE: Thank you.

6 (applause)

7 Next, please.

8 MR. MOORE: My name is Robert Moore. I live at 1074
9 Sierra Vista Way. It is at the end of Rey Way. I'm
10 probably going to be impacted as much or more than anybody
11 else by this project, and I'll try to be brief, I really
12 will; but there is some concerns I have and Mr. Boos already
13 covered a couple of them. So that takes a few minutes away.
14 But I do have some things that I have to address.

15 For one like he said, the graphic they show with the
16 animation with the trees behind, you know, these walls is
17 fiction. There is no way that those trees are going to grow
18 up over those walls. Matter of fact I made a joke about it.
19 What are they are going to do, put up these big walls and
20 draw trees on them? Well, you know what, guess what?

21 The wall height. I was serious. That's what's
22 happened. The wall height I don't think they really
23 impressed how much different the inside and outside widening
24 is going to be. We're talking a 14-foot wall if they go
25 into the center. That's fine. I live next to the freeway.

A-4

1 I know what that's all about. You're going out. You're
2 going to talk about 38-foot wall and when you bring it
3 closer and you do the geometry on it basically after about
4 3:00 o'clock in the afternoon in the spring and summer I'll
5 have no light in my house, my back yard.

6 Wildlife. Okay. I didn't get any pictures of
7 beetles. I got, me and my neighbor got other pictures. I
8 got a lot of really cool pictures. All kind of wildlife.
9 This is out of my front yard. Raccoons. I got possums. I
10 got -- I think it's Northern Harrier. I'm not sure. I'm
11 not a biologist. Stuff living there. It's more than just
12 beetles. You know.

13 And before you guys call me a tree-hugger, I have
14 been a conservative Republican my whole life. But I know
15 what's right and what's wrong, and the impact this is going
16 to have on the trees, the wildlife. Chico the City of Trees
17 for crying out loud. Just think about that.

18 Another thing that I take exception to is I've
19 talked about vibration. I have a lot of trucks going by my
20 house shakes. Fine. I live next to the freeway. I bought
21 the house with the freeway there. I knew that. They're
22 going to rip all these trees out, all the roots out, bring
23 it another 40 feet my way. No roots to diffuse these
24 vibrations. What kind of impact is that going to have?
25 That question has never been asked and I've, I asked it

A-5

A-6

1 several times. Even side guardrail. I asked them at like
2 the second meeting, "Why are you guys going through this?"
3 The response I got, "We already got paid for that." And
4 that's the God's honest truth. How much does what I say or
5 anybody else here impact what is going to happen? I haven't
6 heard how many -- you guys take all the write your comments.
7 Do all this. I've never seen any statistics of who likes
8 what plan. Who, you know, the ideas that people have. Do
9 they take these ideas and stick them in a drawer somewhere?
10 I don't understand this. I don't know what my neighbors
11 think except when I talk to them and I talk to them quite
12 often and they're pretty upset about it. So where is all
13 this input that we have been putting in? I'm sure there
14 would be a lot more people here if this didn't happen in the
15 middle of the week.

16 I'm supposed to be student teaching right now but
17 this is very important. I took the morning off so I could
18 come in here and do this because I'm not going to stand by
19 and let this happen. The ER October 13th. And you can take
20 it with a grain of salt. The ER. Everybody has got their
21 comments about the ER.

22 BCAG, Caltrans already made up their mind. "Trees
23 get reprieve," it says. What the heck is that all about?
24 Then they say, "Well, you know, with the sound wall you
25 should be able to hear the birdies sing and all this. Where

A-7

1 in the heck are they going to live? I promise you I'm
2 almost done.

3 I'm a little bit personally irritated by this whole
4 thing because, as you can tell, I'm disabled. I live at the
5 end of Rey Way. I have an extra parcel of land that they
6 want to take for an access road. That means an extra six
7 trees they're going to take out, mature trees that are over
8 six inches in diameter. And they're going to take my
9 property and they're going to make an access road out of it.
10 So I'll have a chain link fence, a dirt road and a wall.
11 Okay. I have a riding lawnmower. One thing that I can do
12 is I can mow my own lawn. I won't be able to get that
13 lawnmower in my front yard because I won't have any side
14 yard to get it over there.

15 I paid a lot of money to get a driveway put in that
16 area so I can have a level surface so I can get my
17 wheelchair and car up in that. They're going to take that
18 too. So, yeah, you know, I'm a little bit selfish too; but
19 also I have other things. I'm thinking about just, more
20 than just myself. And I love Chico. And I do think it is a
21 city of trees; and if we sit back and let this happen, it's
22 just a travesty and I just hope I'm not here to watch it
23 happen, you know, the way it seems to be playing out. Thank
24 you.

25 MR. ANDOE: Thank you.

A-8

1 MS. HOUX: Where are you doing your student teaching?

2 MR. MOORE: I'm at Bidwell right now. I was at
3 Hooker Oak before that and that intersection what she was
4 talking about is totally correct. That intersection is
5 crazy.

6 MS. HOUX: Thank you for coming.

7 MR. MOORE: Thank you for listening.

8 MR. GAIR: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. My
9 name is Alan Gair, and I represent R.O.A.R. which is
10 Residents Outraged About Roads and also Tree Action who are
11 two parties with many hundreds of interested supporters.

12 I think that we've got to ask you to use your power.
13 This is not a party political issue. You are very powerful
14 people and you really must bring this Caltrans operation to
15 some kind of reality. Can I just point out that these walls
16 here are probably rather less than the walls that will be
17 along the freeway and on which they will paint trees. Now
18 at the moment we actually have trees and they intend to move
19 something like 600 of them because they have the right to do
20 so. It's on their right-of-way.

21 The case, ladies and gentlemen, is not made for this
22 widening at all. It's based on bogus, absolutely bogus
23 build out and traffic forecast figures. The money is not
24 available for it to actually take place and I reckon that if
25 you ask the families in Chico who use this road if they

A-9

1 would like a thousand dollars each rather than actually do
2 this work I think you'd find that they'd take the money and
3 find some other way down the roads of Chico. So what you
4 really got is a local traffic problem.

5 There are some statistics but you above all people
6 must know that there are statistics and statisticians and
7 just damn liars. What's happening here is we are all being
8 snowed. This is a snow job and I should know because as an
9 international marketing man for about 40 years I've done my
10 fair share of this. We are being confused out of mind.
11 This is an Alice in Wonderland scenario.

12 We have a road that is nowhere near capacity where
13 there are a lot of accidents taking place because the
14 traffic backs up on quite inadequate ingress and egress
15 roads. If anything, if any justification is being made for
16 anything, it is that those ramps need altering. 70 percent
17 I'm told from the figures of these organizations who are
18 very well paid to produce them, these accidents take place
19 as rear-enders, as many as 70 percent of them. So if you
20 solve that, then you've solved the problem. Now the fact is
21 that doesn't cost you very much money and it is the course
22 that I recommend.

23 I do not think that the sound walls have any
24 noticeable effect. I think your question was right on. The
25 actual decibel level that is altered by the walls is almost

A-10

1 imperceptible and what does happen the sound wall
2 characteristics spreads the sound across a wider area. It
3 reflects it up and across a wider area.

4 So if we are faced with the problem of putting a
5 four-lane road through Manzanita because we haven't found
6 any way of doing it to the south that seems sad but we don't
7 do even the simplest things. For example, Manzanita is
8 designated for the use of heavy traffic and oversized loads.
9 That's right through the park. Now why would that be? It's
10 because you can't be bothered to lower the road under the
11 existing bridges on 33, 90 -- whatever. I'm not a local
12 with enough road knowledge on the numbers at the moment.
13 But if you just lower the road so the big vehicles can get
14 under, then they have access. So it's a simple solution,
15 you know. It doesn't really take much. All we're doing at
16 the moment, though, is moving the bottle neck and the
17 traffic experts here don't seem to be very brave. They say,
18 "We have no experience of roundabouts."

19 Look, do I look rather like you? I'm very similar,
20 you know. I'm a human being. And the population of the
21 United States is four-and-a-half percent of the world's
22 population. The rest of the population of the world seems
23 to manage to deal with roundabouts.

24 Now what's wrong with all you people? Nothing is
25 the answer except that we have dinosaurs giving us traffic

1 solutions. We've really have. These are knee-jerk routine
2 traffic solutions that are always done in America and why is
3 it always done? Because they're always done.

4 If you don't get it that stoplights stop traffic, if
5 you don't get it that stop signs stop traffic, you will
6 never understand why the rest of the world manages to
7 negotiate roundabouts without any trouble. If you've ever
8 been on the autostrad or the autobahn or the freeway or
9 motorway systems in Britain, you come off a four- or
10 six-lane motorway onto a four-lane roundabout and you come
11 off it at 70 miles an hour and the accident levels are
12 minimal. We do not have anything like the accident levels
13 in Europe that you have here. And why? Our roads more
14 often than not are narrower. Narrower. You've got to drive
15 more carefully on a narrow road. That's true. We have
16 roundabouts everywhere. The British are so weird if you get
17 an intersection and somebody complains that traffic is bad,
18 a man will come with a pot of white paint and will paint a
19 white dot in the middle of the road and put a sign that says
20 "roundabout" and in the British come and they drive round.
21 Negotiating a roundabout is what you always do. It's the
22 same as turning right on red. You merge. It's exactly the
23 same procedure.

24 So to summarize may I just say what it is we would
25 like to happen. What we want is we want no widening at all

1 of the State Route 99 through Chico because the traffic
2 figures are absolutely bogus. Really they showed us traffic
3 figures on Manzanita to justify their structure there. They
4 were wrong and we had traffic experts to show that. On
5 their own simulations which showed traffic going through
6 these roundabouts what happened? They came up through the
7 roundabouts okay, through the narrow road, okay, and stopped
8 dead at Wildwood. Why? Because they put in a series of
9 complications, stoplights which cost three times as much as
10 a roundabout.

11 So, you know, let's look at this Alice In Wonderland
12 kind of fix. Let's just think about it from an ordinary
13 people's point of view. We want you to implement only phase
14 1 of the project. You probably won't have the money for it
15 anyway; and if our new governor has got any sense, he'll
16 slap down all the stuff that Caltrans are trying to sell you
17 at the moment. So the ingress and the egress, yes, let's do
18 that. Let's not put stop signs and stop signs because
19 surprisingly enough they do stop traffic. Let's put in
20 roundabouts. They're not a risk. The Federal and insurance
21 people all recommend them. You get no side accidents. You
22 get no head-on accidents. You don't get people running the
23 red lights to try and get through. You actually have a
24 continuous flow of traffic all the time. We don't have to
25 prove that. Just send all these people into Britain or

1 France or Germany and let them have a look at those roads.
2 This is not brain surgery. This is being done for a hundred
3 years.

4 What do we want? We want to reduce the use of 99 by
5 local traffic. Their initial design of the freeway was
6 wrong. They should never have had an exit and entry at East
7 1st because coming too frequently on your motorway. If you
8 really want to do a ruthless thing, you just close those
9 entrances and exits and you wouldn't have a problem because
10 70 percent of the traffic on that road is, in fact, local
11 traffic going on and off, on and off. As you say, Ms. Houx,
12 that's perfectly right and I'm a grandfather so I back you
13 on that.

14 What I think we need to do then is to make sure that
15 we get our forecast right. It's quite obvious that we're
16 all going to run out of gas by 1927 (sic) anyway. Anyway
17 they're going to have to redo the job in 1927.

18 MS. HOUX: You mean 2027.

19 MR. GAIR: 2027. What is more they're obviously not
20 going to get going with it for another six years. My
21 objections to it, let me summarize. I'll only take a
22 moment.

23 Wider freeways will take all the trees out. 600 to
24 1000 trees and all the young trees. It's like taking out
25 adolescence. We don't need adolescence in the community.

A-13

1 We can take it out all the seniors and everything will be
2 okay. 21-foot sound wall is an abomination. More expensive
3 high-tech traffic-like systems are not necessary. Massive
4 construction, additional pillars, dark tunnels under the
5 freeways with artificial lighting. The costs of traffic
6 light systems, lighting on the bridges and the maintenance
7 of all these systems is enormous. The disruption caused to
8 the community and the park by construction traffic which is
9 going to take six years is something I recommend we avoid.
10 The stripping of vegetation, the removal of trees you've
11 heard about. The damage to hundreds of houses and their
12 value. We don't want to look like L.A. We'll never have
13 their traffic problems and we should get on with the quality
14 of life, something we really enjoy here. Thank you.

15 MR. ANDOE: Thank you.

16 Next, please. How many more do we have? We're
17 going to run out of time. We're allowed till 11:00 o'clock
18 for this. Please be brief. There is another meeting
19 scheduled at 11:00 o'clock. So if it has been said, we have
20 those comments and here, again, I'm not trying to stop
21 anybody from their rights but, please, be brief.

22 MR. BALLIN: Good morning. I'm Walter Ballin from
23 the Green Party of Butte County which consists of over 2800
24 voters strong. The Green Party of Butte County strongly
25 opposes the widening of Highway 99 through Chico and we

**A-13
cont.**

1 oppose cutting down any trees in Bidwell Park. Upgrading
2 highway simply promotes the use of the automobile and
3 creates more congestion. This upgrading of highways also
4 creates more development which then results in more highways
5 and more freeways, a never-ending cycle.

6 As a result of terrible poor planning, too many
7 people live too far away from their jobs; and too many
8 people work too far away from their homes. The position of
9 the Green Party of Butte County is that the funds for this
10 project would be better spent on the following. Place a
11 moratorium on highway widening like 99 and use the money, 25
12 million dollars for mass transit and facilities for
13 pedestrians and bicyclists. 25 million dollars sure could
14 buy a lot of buses which could serve the unmet transit needs
15 which people have been talking about.

16 Develop affordable and accessible mass transit
17 systems and they could be more economical and convenient to
18 use than the private vehicles. Encourage employer
19 subsidizes of transit commuter tickets for employees funded
20 by government congestion management grants.

21 Throwing money at problems solves nothing. We must
22 spend the 25 million dollars on alternative means of
23 transportation other than the automobile if we are to reduce
24 congestion on Highway 99. Thank you very much.

25 MR. ANDOE: Thank you.

A-14

1 MR. BALLIN: Do I sign something?

2 MR. ANDOE: Sign the register.

3 MS. HOUX: Could you move the sign-in sheet so the
4 other people can just flow?

5 Ms. FREEMAN: Good morning. My name is Katie
6 Freeman. I am also a member of the Green Party of Butte
7 County. I'm here today to speak as a frequent user of the on
8 ramp at Highway 32. It is very scary. There is oftentimes
9 when I feel like I'm just holding my breath and jumping into
10 a pool of water just hoping that you're going to be safe
11 getting on there. It's very scary when you have two lanes
12 of traffic on your left. You have a wall coming up in front
13 of you and you have somebody tailgating you trying to push
14 you to go faster and faster. It's very scary.

15 The miles per hour I believe in that stretch is
16 supposed to be 60 miles per hour versus 65. There is a
17 small stretch but as you know, most people are always going
18 to be pushing the envelope and people are going 70 miles an
19 hour frequently through there.

20 It's very dangerous but I don't think that putting
21 25 million dollars toward widening Highway 99 is the answer.
22 I think that that money would be better spend towards mass
23 transit. Towards campaigns for motorists to be more aware
24 of bike safety, to keep improving bike paths, enhancing bike
25 paths. I was really disappointed with the East Avenue

1 section they just completed, how narrow the bike path was.

2 I think that was a very big mistake there.

3 I think the money is better spent on future projects
4 that have longevity, like I just mentioned. I think that
5 some immediate thing that could be done to make that on ramp
6 more safe would be to add some temporary orange flags onto
7 the merging signs so people are more aware of it. To keep
8 it in the media, to keep people aware that they need to be
9 over in that left lane if they're not going to be getting
10 off right away; and possibly putting one of the temporary
11 Caltrans signs. I don't know if there is room between the
12 off ramp and the on ramp there on 32 but there definitely is
13 room between 20th Street and the off ramp for 32 to put one
14 of the temporary Caltran signs warning people to get over
15 and use that as a temporary measure to help people be aware
16 they need to do that. There also is signs at both the
17 south, very south end of Chico and the north end of Chico
18 reminding traffic to pull over to the left lane if they're
19 moving through. I think keeping that in the media would be
20 helpful.

A-15

21 I think ultimately changing the miles per hour. I
22 think making from Estates Drive which is our furthest-most
23 to the south all the way to Eaton Road making it 45 miles an
24 hour on 99. It's a very short stretch of the road. I'm
25 guessing approximately three miles and time saving that's

A-16

1 going to be only a few minutes. I think 45 is probably a
2 good speed because people are usually going to be pushing
3 the envelope and going 50 miles an hour at least anyways if
4 the posted speed limit is 45 miles an hour.

**A-16
cont.**

5 And my last point that I'd like to make -- is the
6 mike working? I'd like to -- is it working? I don't know
7 if it's completely included on here but, as I said, I don't
8 think that spending money towards doing anything to 99 other
9 than changing the miles per hour and making public awareness
10 more safe. I don't think that spending money would be wise.
11 But if there is absolutely some sort of need to do something
12 with this stretch of the on ramp here, I think there is room
13 to be able to instead of widening at this section, to
14 actually start the on ramp on 8th Street so that you can
15 have a more graded long on ramp to be able to start pulling
16 traffic over. It would definitely increase some costs here
17 into fixing this whole intersection because I'm not sure
18 what you'd have to do with traffic this direction, if they'd
19 have to go around onto 8th Street and come on; but there are
20 some on ramps like that in the Sacramento area. And I think
21 that that would be a more feasible option than going over
22 the park. Thank you.

A-17

23 MR. ANDOE: Thank you. Next.

24 MS. LASLO: Hi, I'm Karen Laslo. I'm a citizen here
25 in Chico. One thing I've noticed is that a lot of the

1 speakers sound a little angry and I can understand that.
2 They're very concerned that this project will go through and
3 I don't feel angry. I just feel really worried and
4 concerned. I think this is too important to be angry about.

5 I think that sometimes there is a mind-set that
6 happens when a group of people go to try and figure out how
7 to figure out a problem, a solution and they get input, you
8 know, okay, this is what you have to do and there is no
9 alternative; and I think a mind-set sets in and it doesn't
10 have to be that way.

11 What I'm asking you, I'm pleading with you, please,
12 take a deep breath, listen to citizens, consider their
13 opinions and their ideas and have the courage to maybe say
14 no. Maybe there is an alternative. I don't want the years
15 of noise and pollution and construction. It just seems like
16 a nightmare the construction of what would happen, you know,
17 for years. The chaos of the construction would be terrible.
18 I urge you to listen to the citizens. I haven't studied
19 this, you know, as much as some people here have; but I know
20 that there would be a group of people that would be willing
21 to study this and help you come up with alternatives that
22 would work. Yes, it is unsafe but I'm sure there are
23 alternatives that would work that would save our beloved
24 park because just remember once the park is destroyed that's
25 forever. So you have a really big responsibility in

1 deciding whether this is going to happen or not.

2 I think that's all I have to say. Just think about
3 it and consider people's ideas. Thank you.

4 MR. ANDOE: Thank you.

5 MR. LUVAAS: My name is John Luvaas. I've been in
6 Chico for 30 years and very involved in our growth planning.
7 I'm currently a member of the Chico Planning Commission. So
8 I talk with a lot of people including a number of neighbors
9 I've met with this week who relied very heavily on the
10 Highway 32 northbound on ramp to 99. I'm also speaking for
11 Robin Keen (phonetic) who was here and intended to speak but
12 had to get back to work. I and many of us and I don't think
13 you're really hearing much public support for this project
14 as proposed, are highly opposed to widening 99 because it's
15 not solving the problem. It is not a necessary solution.
16 We're also very opposed to this idea of a sound wall,
17 designed apparently for the purpose of protecting neighbors
18 who don't want, thank you, that kind of protection. They'd
19 just as soon be able to have a skyline. They'll take the
20 noise because it's not really going to be significantly
21 reduced anyway.

22 The greatest problems are getting onto and off of 99
23 and you know that. I sort of regard getting onto 99 from 32
24 my male ego responds to that and I kind of get into the
25 challenge. It puts me into the mood of some urban driving

A-18

1 days I used to do but for my wife Tanha it is absolutely
2 terrifying, and she has frequently been forced by the
3 traffic in the right lane that refuses to move over to stop
4 at the top of the on ramp unable to get onto the freeway
5 with cars barreling up behind her, looking over their
6 shoulders and not ahead because they're looking for the
7 oncoming traffic. Scared to death that they're going to
8 clobber her from the rear. And it is the rear-end accidents
9 that are the problem. That ramp needs to be rebuilt.
10 Traffic needs to be moved over into the left lane.
11 Especially through traffic. I don't understand why there is
12 one sign about two miles south that says "Move left." That
13 right lane needs to be signed the entire distance saying,
14 "Get over, Buster, you're in the wrong lane unless you're
15 getting off here." That itself would be a tremendous
16 solution to the problem.

A-19

17 And finally I think as others have said, the speed
18 needs to be reduced. It's not appropriate. If cars are
19 slower, they travel closer together and the volume remains
20 the same. There is no reduction in volume and it's much
21 safer. And finally in terms of getting off at First Avenue
22 I do think as Alan Gair elucidated that a roundabout is the
23 appropriate solution. They are used all over the world. I
24 have been on many of them. They're just fine. People take
25 very little time to adapt to them. They're sort of a

A-20

1 novelty. I do think the off ramp, First Avenue deserves a
2 roundabout. It will work. There is no need for a traffic
3 bike crossing at that location in my opinion. Having been
4 on a bike through that area many many times. I think that
5 the west side may be another matter. I'm not so sure a
6 roundabout is needed on the west side. There is not that
7 kind of volume and I think having to stop for a light may be
8 fine. It's also an area where crossings are needed. Many
9 people use the park as an east-west route and then go north
10 and cross at that location and need to be able to get across
11 if there is a way to keep that crossing there. I don't
12 think a roundabout really necessarily will work on the west
13 side.

14 So there are options here that are really not even
15 part of the discussion. I think the discussion needs to be
16 considerably broaden. Save the money, save a chunk of that
17 money and use it for other modes of transportation besides
18 widening a highway and attracting more cars to it. Thank
19 you.

20 MS. FRITSCH: Hi. My name is Sharon Fritsch. I was
21 in Mexico in 1970. They had better bus transportation there
22 in Mexico than we have in Chico here today. The reason is
23 bus transportation is cheaper than driving a car. I was
24 thinking the buses here are so inconvenient to use. They
25 only run once an hour. If you have to change, it takes two

1 hours to get wherever you're going to go.

2 I was wondering if we could use like get smaller
3 vans to develop more routes, more bus routes so that it
4 would be more convenient.

5 Now I did talk with Janice a couple years, four
6 years ago about this and apparently it costs the same amount
7 for a great big bus than it does for a little one and I was
8 wondering why that is if someone could give me an
9 explanation. I don't know. That's just a question I have
10 for you. Why is it, why does it cost as much? Why can't we
11 cut down the costs of getting smaller vehicles to expand the
12 bus route. Thank you.

13 MR. ANDOE: You're here to probably address the
14 unmet transit needs on the bus transportation. Is that
15 correct?

16 MS. FRITSCH: Yes. Just more, a lot more and more
17 often.

18 Mr. ANDOE: Okay. Jim, would you note that and maybe
19 get her phone number contact.

20 Mr. PEPLow: She can sign the sheet right there.

21 MR. ANDOE: Just follow up on that. Appreciate
22 that. Thank you.

23 MS. RUHNKE-GOODWIN: Very interesting this morning.
24 It's hard to follow the English act, though.

25 MR. WHITE: You're right. He was tough.

1 MS. RUHNKE-GOODWIN: My name is Joan Ruhnke-Goodwin.
2 I'm from Chico except for 20 years working in New York City,
3 but I have been here most of my life. Graduated from high
4 school here. Anyway, in 1960s when they first put in the
5 freeway they promised protection from the noise by
6 vegetation along the freeway. I don't have any. They
7 promised me last year they would put some in and the year
8 before that they would put some vegetation in. I'm on the
9 north ramp going up north of 1st and the freeway is in my
10 back yard. Okay. My not watering lady has completely
11 killed all the brush that was on the ground. There weren't
12 any trees but there was brush. Okay. And when you make the
13 four-lane into a two-lane behind me it's going to be a
14 bottle neck. Merging cars from four lanes to two. I would
15 like a noise barrier put up anyway, that section, because
16 it's very loud. I would like -- it's getting louder every
17 year. I have been there since '72. I would prefer no
18 roundabouts. We don't have to get fancy with roundabouts.
19 And lower the speed limit going through Chico would help a
20 lot because everybody speeds like demons.

21 I notice that the police are picking up more lately.
22 I hear the sirens in the back finally of the Highway Patrol
23 but it has been, they have been slowing down a little bit.
24 The speed limit should be lowered from being what it is now.
25 Thank you very much.

A-21

1 MR. ANDOE: Thank you. Next.

2 MS. SMITH: Good morning. My name is Melanie Smith,
3 and I have been a resident here most of my life. I lived in
4 Fresno about 13 years. I went to L.A. last month and
5 noticed a lot of their retaining walls. They're beautiful.
6 They've got art all over them and it's like graffiti art.
7 Do you know what I mean? That's what they look like in L.A.
8 Also in Sacramento they look like that and in Fresno they
9 look like that, too.

10 One of the things that really has bothered me is the
11 way that BCAG has been manipulating the people of Chico.
12 For an example, I have the very first one that we got in
13 2002 here and on their schedule of activities the approving
14 the environmental document would be winter 2004-2005. On
15 the one that we just got in March of 2003, the approval
16 environmental document will be approved by summer 2004. So
17 that right there they're moving it up. Well, actually it
18 was the opposite way. It was 2003-2004. No. It was 2004
19 for the summer and the winter 2004-2005. Now on the end of
20 their report from their board it says that certification of
21 the environmental document in early 2004. That means like
22 in a couple months is going to be approved. That's just one
23 of the things that's really been bothering me. Seems like
24 they're just kind of shoving it down our throats and the
25 deadlines are coming closer and closer because they're

1 moving them up.

2 And another thing that I also noticed when I was in
3 the L.A. area is what would they do in a situation like
4 this. They have no trees to take down. They have no cement
5 to, you know -- I mean they have plenty of cement that's
6 just like everywhere. So they have nowhere to go. So what
7 would they do? They put signals at the top of their ramps
8 that only lets one car on at a time during traffic times.
9 And I think that we should try some of these smaller
10 less-cost kind of things before we go into billions of
11 dollars to expand a freeway that I don't even think needs
12 it.

13 I have been traveling that freeway -- my daughter
14 went to Chico Christian for the last seven years. She's in
15 seventh grade now. She's not there this year. The seven
16 years that I have driven that freeway from Chico Christian
17 to East 1st Avenue -- I live on Rey Circle which is off of
18 Rey Way -- the traffic has not changed. It has been the
19 same. And it's only during mommy rush hours and heavy
20 traffic hours. During the summer there is zero, zero
21 problems there. And also during the vacations like
22 Christmas and Easter, zero problems on the freeway.

23 So we're spending a lot of money for just rush hour
24 and I don't think that L.A., Fresno, Sacramento would widen
25 something that's not going to really take care of like the

1 whole problem which is Chico is growing. The streets are
2 small and there is a lot of people here. And it's just not
3 going to solve the problem of us growing. I think that's
4 all I have to say.

5 MR. ANDOE: Thank you.

6 MR. BLACKLOCK: Good morning. I know you're past
7 your 11:00 o'clock time. I'll try to be brief. I'm Johnny
8 Blacklock representing the Chico Chamber of Commerce and its
9 over 1000 area member businesses. I've had a chance to look
10 at the -- I should back up briefly.

11 The chamber has adopted a policy by the Board of
12 Directors that calls for a variety of local transportation
13 improvements including some specific focus on the
14 north-south routes in Chico such as Highway 99.

15 The project before you I've had a chance to look at
16 the EIR. I believe the alternatives have been pretty
17 carefully evaluated, impacts have been identified and the
18 mitigation measures that are identified seem to reasonably
19 address those impacts. So the chamber encourages that you
20 keep this project on track, particularly in light of the
21 statistics you've heard so that improvements are made so
22 that people's lives aren't threatened on a daily basis by
23 accidents on that stretch of highway. So we ask you to move
24 ahead at your January time line, early 2004 time line,
25 certify the EIR and please move forward with this project.

A-22

1 Thank you.

2 MR. ANDOE: Is this the last? Any more? Okay. I
3 appreciate your indulgence with us and your courtesy, one
4 another here today. This will be the last speaker. Thank
5 you.

6 MS. BRASHEARS: My name is Mary Brashears. I live
7 about four, five houses down from the freeway. I love
8 Chico. I love the trees in Chico. I hear we're doing a
9 tree ordinance, and Meghdadi got in a lot of trouble for
10 cutting down trees. Now I hear we're go to save the
11 oleanders in the middle and cut down all the trees on the
12 outside. Does that make any sense? Thank you.

13 MS. HOUX: Please sign in, Ms. Brashears.

14 If the hearing is over --

15 MR. ANDOE: We'll declare the public hearing closed,
16 at this time confine comments to the board.

17 MS. HOUX: I heard a recurring theme listening to the
18 citizens. Slow the traffic down. Now I know what the
19 answer is going to be that Caltrans or California Highway
20 Patrol will only enforce boom, boom. Well, I never liked
21 that idea anyway. They're telling us how we're going to
22 lead our lives. The left-lane signs I have spoken to you
23 about for at least four years. There is two of them. There
24 is one way north of East Avenue and there is one quite south
25 of East 20th. The young lady who said they ought to be

A-23

1 aerial little bit is absolutely right on. There also needs
2 to be a lesson in some manners of those of us who use that
3 highway. People are, you know, they're on their cell phone.
4 They're in their SUV just going like bats out of you know
5 where and they don't care about anybody else. There has to
6 be sort of an understanding that, hey, folks, we're in this
7 together and I really do agree that spending this millions
8 of dollars desecrating the neighborhood is not the way to
9 go. I would appreciate back to the drawing boards, fix the
10 on and off ramps.

11 Somebody at one of the first hearings on this
12 several years ago said close East 1st Avenue. That's really
13 not a bad idea. That's where I have to get on and off but
14 it's really not a bad idea. I think you have not looked at
15 it enough and I have the highest respect for Jon and every
16 single person on your staff but, please, don't let Caltrans
17 make us dance to their tune.

18 (applause)

19 MR. ANDOE: Okay. Anybody else?

20 MR. COOK: I have just a couple comments. I heard a
21 recurrent theme out here that Caltrans was pushing this down
22 our throats. And I'm probably the -- I'm not the smallest.
23 I've heard a recurring theme about Caltrans and this and I
24 may be wrong and Jon can correct us, but the request from
25 this basically stemmed from the City of Chico's

1 representatives before the current representative was here
2 initially this group of people who has to go through this
3 process and make applications to Caltrans to make the
4 changes thought it was a good idea. So that's the point we
5 are. Caltrans isn't telling us to do this. We're
6 requesting that Caltrans do this, and we are taking some of
7 the money that we have available at our discretions to
8 pursue this project.

9 There has been a lot of interesting things said
10 today and it comes back to me that it gets back to a local
11 issue about what's really best for Chico and what Chico
12 wants, and I'm curious about what their representatives say.
13 That this isn't, again, it's not Caltrans generated. This
14 was BCAG initiated. This was to solve a problem that we
15 were presented with about, we were told there are terrible
16 on ramp problems. Mary Anne has said that many times. I've
17 heard her about taking her life in her hands trying to get
18 on. So we may have found that this may not be the right
19 approach; but, again, we're the ones that can take action to
20 do that so.

21 MR. CLARK: That's correct. Caltrans did initially
22 respond to, you know, the locals' request to do the project
23 study report which they did. Since that time it has been
24 BCAG to step in and we've coordinated the development of the
25 environmental document.

1 MR. WHITE: To amplify Frank's statements it was
2 presented to us by the City of Chico representative people
3 getting killed on that stretch. Ivan looked into that and
4 ascertained that was not the case. We do accept many of
5 this board are not from Chico. And one of the things that
6 we as a board do is listen to the opinions of the local
7 representative. The concern was that there is a safety
8 hazard there and those of us who pass through Chico
9 especially in the, when I notice it is in the early evening
10 hours there is definitely back-up problem, definitely an off
11 ramp problem at East 1st. I don't think anyone who talked
12 about this disagrees with that aspect of it. There are some
13 other issues that are very obvious and we as a board need to
14 look into. But, please, the conspiracy theory that Caltrans
15 is slamming this down our throat is a little bit out there.
16 This was initiated by this board. Was not initiated by
17 Caltrans and this board will look into this but don't -- I
18 think the thought that this is a done deal, is a conspiracy
19 theory notwithstanding the watering issue, I don't know
20 what's going on there. To be honest that's not our issue at
21 this point. But, please, don't think that this is a
22 Caltrans issue. There may be somebody at Caltrans who
23 doesn't like plants. I don't know.

24 MR. ANDOE: Anybody else?

25 MS. JARVIS: When was the last time a request has

1 been made to Caltrans to put in additional signage regarding
2 driving in the left lanes? I, too, believe there should be
3 one at every on ramp. Right after every on ramp should be
4 a sign saying, "Drive in the left lane."

A-25

5 MR. CLARK: It has been a over year. We fought --

6 MS. JARVIS: And we fought to reduce it to 60. We
7 all wanted 55 and Caltrans won't have any of it, and they
8 gave us 60 for just a very short period. But maybe that's
9 something we can do immediately because this project whether
10 we approve it or not is still going to take a long time.
11 That signage should go in immediately.

A-26

12 I don't know what to say to folks. I have been
13 working on traffic issues in Chico for over seven years. I
14 can't even get my partners and my best friend to drive in
15 the left lane and I yell at them all the time. Now I just
16 choose to drive. I don't let them drive on the freeway when
17 I'm with them. I just drive so I know I'm in the left lane.
18 I don't have the same experience with First Avenue ramp but
19 I can tell you the scariest on ramp as far as I'm concerned
20 is the on ramp from 8th to 32. And I don't know how to make
21 that on ramp better without some major construction. I just
22 don't know how to do it.

23 I like the idea of maybe doing a phased -- I know we
24 have a phased approach but looking at it after phase one.
25 If we can do some part of phase one and then stop at that

1 point, I don't know if that's realistic and we'll resolve
2 all of the issues or not.

3 I also know that people aren't going to slow down
4 just because we put up slow down signs. I know that in the
5 neighborhoods and I know that on the freeways. When
6 neighbors come to us and say lower the speed limit from 35
7 to 25, you know who gets ticketed? The neighbors. Not the
8 people who drive through the neighborhood, but the neighbors
9 themselves. So often we are our worst enemies because we're
10 not following our own rules.

11 And, again, we've talked about -- we have a traffic
12 calming program in Chico for this same reason and it's
13 slowly starting to work but it's education, it's education
14 in the schools. How many of you talk to your kids about how
15 they're driving on the freeways and what lane they're
16 driving in. I really don't know what to do. One of the
17 things I'm thinking of we need to the neighbors affected by
18 the two lanes versus by four lanes. We need to lock them in
19 a room with you guys, and the folks on Highway 32 west side
20 because nobody wants to increase their traffic. Nobody
21 wants to go from two to four lanes. But we have to do it
22 somewhere. Makes more sense to me that we do it on the
23 freeway than we widen 32 on the west side which has no room
24 to widen or Manzanita which we just had a huge battle with
25 the neighbors over. Unless you guys can come up with an

1 alternative where there isn't neighborhood opposition, there
2 is going to be neighborhood opposition everywhere. It
3 doesn't matter on north-south corridor we're looking at
4 improving there are people aren't go to be happy.

5 Now I'm not saying I support everything that's in
6 this plan. I'm just sharing my frustration having sat on
7 the internal affairs committee which serves as the City's
8 traffic committee for seven years now there are no simple
9 solutions to resolving traffic issues. Everybody has to
10 give.

11 MR. ANDOE: Thank you.

12 MR. WHITE: Real quick. If we're going to go back to
13 Caltrans asking for signage, ask them to reconsider the 55.

14 MR. CLARK: I've noted the left-lane signs, the speed
15 reduction. I will bring those back our next meeting which I
16 believe in January with follow-up status is where we're at.

17 MR. WHITE: If I'm driving through Chico with a truck
18 or trailer I got to yield then I'm moving over and I'm doing
19 55. I'm not doing 60. I'm failing to yield if I don't move
20 to the right and if I move to the right, I'm yielding so
21 there is no way you're going to merge over me. So we'd slow
22 down to 55 then I wouldn't have to yield. And neither would
23 any other truck going through town.

24 MS. JARVIS: I don't necessarily find that. People
25 speed. Please believe me I know that but the difficulty I

A-27

1 think people I took Driver's Ed on the 405 freeway in L.A.
2 Because that's where I was raised. They had me on the
3 freeway the second day in my car. People in Chico who are
4 taught to drive don't know how to drive on freeways. They
5 don't know how to merge and how do we teach people to do
6 that. More often than not I'm more nervous about the people
7 driving 25 on an on ramp than I am somebody who is flooring
8 it. People they stop at the end of the on ramp. There is
9 nothing scarier than stopping and you're right; there is a
10 cement wall.

11 MR. ANDOE: With that I'm sure we'll come back for
12 more discussion, and I'm going to close on that item.

13 We do have one more item, that's items from the
14 floor. Anybody want to bring up that's not on today's
15 agenda? Okay. Seeing none, the next item down we'll be
16 adjourned to the next regular scheduled meeting January 22,
17 2004 9:00, a.m. (meeting adjourned)

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REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

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STATE OF CALIFORNIA)
COUNTY OF BUTTE)

I do hereby certify that the foregoing transcript, consisting of _____ pages hereof, was taken by me in shorthand at the time of the proceedings in the above-entitled matter, and that the foregoing is a full, true and correct transcription of the proceedings held at said time.

Dated _____, 2003.

SHERYL DIRKS,
Certified Shorthand Reporter
CSR No. 3513

Responses to Comments Received at the November 20, 2003 Draft EIR Public Hearing

Response A-1 (comment by Mary Anne Houx): This comment questions whether another crossing of Bidwell Park or a “bypass” should be evaluated as one of the alternatives. A bypass alternative does not meet proposed project objectives, would likely result in greater environmental impacts than both build alternatives analyzed in the draft EIR, and is likely to be unfundable for many years due to significantly higher costs and limitations on available transportation funding. A bypass would not meet the project objectives of improving operational difficulties on SR 99, improving access across the park, and improving safety between the SR 32 and East 1st Avenue interchanges. The project will improve the ramp merge areas onto and off of SR 32 and East 1st Avenue, and reduce congestion at the East 1st Avenue off-ramp.

A bypass alternative to the east would be a project pursued under the direction of either the City of Chico or County of Butte and would require local road funding sources. Another crossing of the park or a bypass would not divert enough traffic from the project area to solve the existing operational and safety problems at this location.

Response A-2 (comment by Juanita Sumner): Since the objective of the proposed project is to improve safety and reduce congestion on SR 99 between SR 32 and East 1st Avenue, alternative ways to address these needs must either improve operations or reduce demand volumes along this segment. Since public transit currently accounts for only 1% of commuter trips in Butte County, according to the 2000-2001 California Statewide Household Travel Survey (Caltrans 2002), even a significant increase in transit routes, in areas that have a high enough density to support transit use, is unlikely to result in a large enough reduction in traffic volumes. Travelers in the project area are unlikely to switch to biking or walking even with a significant increase in bicycle pedestrian facilities since these modes are typically used for shorter distance trips.

Response A-3 (comment by David Boos): Previous and current landscaping maintenance activities are the responsibility of Caltrans and are not related to this project. While the project alternatives have varying impacts to the existing freeway landscaping, previous and current landscaping maintenance activities have had no influence on the proposed project. Mitigation Measures V3a and V3b on page 12-13 of the draft EIR call for relandscaping of the Caltrans right-of-way with project implementation. Page 2-5 of the draft EIR identifies that Caltrans would likely propose a comprehensive restoration planting project along portions of SR 99, including the project area, that would remove all overgrown or unmaintainable vegetation and prune or remove any dying or undesirable vegetation, even in the absence of the proposed project. If the No-Project Alternative is adopted, Caltrans will continue to maintain the existing freeway landscaping. Following completion of either build alternative, Caltrans would be responsible for landscaping maintenance.

Response A-4 (comment by Robert Moore): As noted on the photo simulations for Rey Way in Figures 12-9b (Outside Widening Alternative) and 12-9c (Inside Widening Alternative), the simulations approximate the appearance of planted vegetation after about 15 years of growth. The same holds true for Figures 12-10b and 12-10c on Palmetto Avenue. These simulations

show the degree to which the planted vegetation would likely shield the proposed wall. These simulations show that under the Outside Widening Alternative, the vegetation would partially shield the wall, but not to the degree that the freeway is visually shielded by vegetation under existing conditions or under the Inside Widening Alternative.

Response A-5 (comment by Robert Moore): The draft EIR describes in detail the non-special status or common wildlife species that would be affected by the proposed project. The purpose of describing the impacts to the Valley elderberry longhorn beetle in the public hearing presentation was to highlight those species that are protected by federal law and require consultation with federal agencies.

The “Urban Habitat” section on page 9-4 of the draft EIR lists the common species that use the project area. The “Great Valley Oak Riparian Forest” section on page 9-4 also describes those species that frequent Bidwell Park. Impact BR1 acknowledges that the riparian habitat in the project area provides habitat values that would be lost with project implementation. Impact BR14 states that the loss of trees in the project area would result in the loss of wildlife habitat.

Response A-6 (comment by Robert Moore): Typically, noticeable shaking in a structure from traffic traveling on a freeway can result from groundborne vibration induced by vehicles traveling over discontinuities (i.e., potholes) or from low frequency airborne noise generated by heavy trucks. Because vehicles have pneumatic tires and flexible suspension systems, they generally do not impart enough energy into the ground to result in perceptible groundborne vibration at adjacent residences. Exceptions to this can occur when heavy trucks travel over significant discontinuities in the roadway surface. Adverse vibration effects resulting from this type of condition typically can be remedied by smoothing the roadway surface. In the case of the proposed project, a new smooth roadway surface would be constructed which should minimize vibration effects from discontinuities. The specific effect of removing tree roots on groundborne vibration propagation has not been previously studied, nor does any required methodology exist for studying such effects. However, given the relatively short distance between the roadway and the residence, it is unlikely to result in any meaningful effect, particularly if the new smooth roadway surface minimizes energy imparted into the ground by vehicles.

If the noticeable shaking is the result of airborne noise from heavy trucks, the removal of roots would have no effect. The proposed noise barrier would likely reduce the transmission of low frequency energy from heavy trucks.

Response A-7 (comment by Robert Moore): BCAG has held three public meetings in an effort to allow residents and others to exchange information and discuss issues related to the proposed project. BCAG has considered all of the comments received. Due to public input, roundabouts were added as a design option for the SR 99/East 1st Avenue intersections.

The comments received from the first two meetings are summarized in the draft EIR on page 3-3. The Notice of Preparation comments received are contained in Appendix A of the draft EIR. Appendix A of this report contains copies of all of the comments received during the May 29, 2002 public scoping meeting; the March 12, 2003 public meeting; and since the close of the 45-day draft EIR public review period (October 1 through November 20, 2003). This chapter contains all of the comments received during the 45-day review period.

Response A-8 (Robert Moore): As described on pages 4-9 through 4-11 of the draft EIR, permanent sliver or corner acquisitions would be required under both build alternatives from several properties on East 1st Avenue. One full property acquisition would also be required on East 1st Avenue. No acquisition would be required from Assessor Parcel Number 045-251-019 where the commenter lives.

Response A-9 (comment by Alan Gair): As documented on page 5-7 of the draft EIR, the traffic forecast used in the traffic impact analysis is based on the City of Chico's travel demand model, adjusted to forecast traffic volumes in 2027. The adjustment procedure is explained on page 5-7 of the draft EIR. This model is based on planned uses as contained in the adopted City of Chico General Plan. Since the commenter does not indicate why he believes the forecast to be inaccurate, no further explanation is possible.

Response A-10 (comment from Alan Gair): The construction of noise barriers is proven to reduce traffic noise levels within several hundred feet of a highway. For a noise barrier to be considered feasible by federal standards, it must provide at least 5 decibels (dB) of noise reduction. A 5-dB change is considered to be a distinctly noticeable change while a 3-dB change is considered to be barely perceptible. The noise analysis for the project indicates that many residences will receive at least 5 dB of noise reduction with the number of benefited residences increasing with increased wall height. Noise barriers do, in fact, reflect sound. However, this sound energy is reflected back to the highway and not across a wider area. Sound energy diffracts over the top of the wall thereby elevating the effective height of the sound source. However, the elevated sound source is substantially attenuated compared to the without-wall condition which, in practice, compensates for the increased source height. The Technical Noise Supplement of the Caltrans' Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol (Caltrans 1998) states "after years of research, Caltrans has found no objective evidence that noise levels increase perceptibly due to noise barriers."

Response A-11 (comment by Alan Gair): Due to public input, roundabouts were analyzed as a feasible design option to conventional signalized ramp intersections at the SR 99/East 1st Avenue intersections, and, therefore, could be selected for adoption. The analysis of roundabouts in Chapter 5 of the draft EIR is based on recent analysis of roundabouts including studies conducted in Europe (U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration 2000). Pages 5-18 and 5-19 of the draft EIR present the advantages and disadvantages of roundabouts.

Response A-12 (comment by Alan Gair): This comment addresses the commenter's preferred alternative and does not relate to the adequacy of the draft EIR analyses. The comment is noted.

Response A-13 (comment by Alan Gair): This comment addresses the commenter's preferred alternative and does not relate to the adequacy of the draft EIR analyses. The comment is noted.

Response A-14 (comment by Walter Ballin): The development of mass transit and pedestrian and bicycle facilities would not address the objectives of the project since it is unlikely that they would result in a large enough reduction in traffic volumes in the project area. See also Response A-2.

Response A-15 (comment by Katie Freeman): Cautionary message signs were installed by Caltrans advising through traffic to use left lanes for the next three miles. These signs were installed south of the 20th Street northbound offramp and north of the southbound East Avenue offramp. Additional signage instructing through traffic to move left would be pursued by Caltrans as a separate project. Cautionary message signs alone will not meet the proposed project objectives.

Response A-16 (comment by Katie Freeman): Speeds on all functionally classified roadways within California are set according to speed studies, as required under the Basic Speed Law within the California Vehicle Code (CVC). The CVC requires that 4-lane roads be set at 65 miles per hour (mph) unless an Engineering and Traffic Survey (E&TS) determines that a different speed is appropriate and safe. An E&TS takes into account the accident history, non-apparent road conditions, and the 85th percentile or critical speed. Critical speeds are measured under free flow conditions. This method is used as it encourages the highest number of drivers to drive within the 10 mph pace that leads to the lowest accident rate. Speed limits set below the speed determined by the E&TS are likely to be less safe and require constant enforcement to maintain traffic flow at the speed limit. In addition, judges are likely to throw out tickets not based on an E&TS as required by the CVC. (Sykes pers. comm.)

The current speed limit within the project limits is posted at 60 mph. Based on speed studies, an enforceable speed limit is 65 mph. Reducing the speed further will not alone meet the proposed project objectives and likely cannot be implemented.

Response A-17 (comment by Katie Freeman): The extension of the length of the SR 99 northbound on-ramp onto 8th street would significantly impact the circulation characteristics of the SR 32 couplet and is not warranted. Extending the on-ramp as suggested would not solve the congestion at the top of the ramp. The extension and modification of the ramp in the absence of constructing the auxiliary lane would not solve the existing weaving problem, and therefore, would not meet the proposed project objectives.

Response A-18 (comment by John Luvaas): See Response A-10 regarding the effectiveness of noise barriers in reducing noise.

Response A-19 (comment by John Luvaas): See Response A-15.

Response A-20 (comment by John Luvaas): See Response A-16.

Response A-21 (comment by Joan Ruhnke-Goodwin): This comment addresses the commenter's preference for noise barriers and no roundabouts and does not relate to the adequacy of the draft EIR analyses. The comment is noted.

Response A-22 (comment by Johnny Blacklock): This comment addresses the commenter's support for the project and does not relate to the adequacy of the draft EIR analyses. The comment is noted.

Response A-23 (comment by Mary Anne Houx): See Response A-15.

Response A-24 (comment by Mary Ann Houx): Because of the large volume of local traffic using the East 1st Avenue interchange, its closure would result in redirecting traffic to the SR 32 and the Cohasset Road interchanges, resulting in a reduction in service at these interchanges. North-south travel would then need to use the local road system. Based upon the City of Chico General Plan, there are no plans to improve access across Bidwell Park. Without such improvements, traffic would continue to use SR 99. Closing East 1st Avenue would not meet the proposed project objectives and would not improve access across Bidwell Park.

Response A-25 (comment by Colleen Jarvis): See Response A-15.

Response A-26 (comment by Colleen Jarvis): See Response A-16.

Response A-27 (comment by Alan White): See Responses A-15 and A-16.

-----Original Message-----

From: The3Gairs@aol.com [mailto:The3Gairs@aol.com]

Sent: Wednesday, October 08, 2003 7:00 PM

To: jpeplow@bcag.org

Subject: SR 99 Auxiliary Lane Chico Comment Page

Hello,

After filling out your comment page, I was frustrated to find that all I got was an error message. The site would not let me submit my comments. Can you please check on it.

Here are my answers to the questions:

1. No

2. The traffic forecasts on which the project is founded are incorrect as they assume a build out level that will not take place as projected. The accident and traffic build-up at the exit and entrance ramps is caused by their poor design, the absence of roundabouts and because the major use of the road on this section is for short local trips. The removal of 1000's of trees, the building of 20' sound walls is an environmental and visual nightmare.

The cost is prohibitive at over \$500 for every man woman and child in Chico. This money should be spent on solving the real problem which is traffic flow in the local city streets.

(x) prefer median widening

3. The problem is caused by the existing signalizes sections of the ramps. How can maintaining them possibly help? Go with new thinking that has only been in use throughout Europe and most of the rest of the world for 100 years!

(x) prefer roundabouts

4. Sound walls of the height and visual impact you propose will be awful. Covering them with paintings or sculpted pictures of trees will not compensate for the loss of the real trees that you will remove.

We don't want this project. It is not needed. The road with decent engineering of exits and entrances will carry the projected through traffic. Local traffic should be discouraged from using this road for short hops.

5. I do not believe your accident records show that there are fatal accident caused on this section of the road by the flow of traffic. They are caused by the build-up of vehicles entering and leaving.

On no account should the freeway be widened by additions to the outside, if this unnecessary work is done then fill in the median.

Alan G. Gair
6 Summerwood Court
Chico, CA 95926
the3gairs@aol.com

B-1

B-2

B-3

Responses to Comments from Alan G. Gair (October 8, 2003)

Response B-1: As noted in Response A-9, the traffic forecast used in the traffic impact analysis is based on the City of Chico's travel demand model, adjusted to forecast traffic volumes in 2027. The adjustment procedure is explained on page 5-7 of the draft EIR. This model is based on planned uses as contained in the adopted City of Chico General Plan. Use of adopted general plan land uses as input into traffic prediction models is common practice in conducting traffic impact analyses since as the "blue print" for future land use planning and development, these adopted land uses could be adopted on a project-specific basis in the future. The land use inputs used in the City of Chico's travel demand model constitute the best available information since these uses are reasonably foreseeable.

The commenter also expresses his preference for the Inside Widening Alternative, if one of the build alternatives is to be built, and roundabouts. These comments do not relate to the adequacy of the EIR and are noted.

Response B-2: Mitigation Measure V4a, Provide Aesthetic Treatments to the Noise Barrier, is recommended as mitigation only for travelers on SR 99. Drivers on SR 99 are considered to have low visual sensitivity to their surroundings because of their concentrated focus on negotiating the road.

To mitigate for the loss of vegetation and trees near Bidwell Park and adjacent to residences, Mitigation Measures BR1d, Enhance Riparian Habitat by Developing and Implementing a Riparian Restoration and Monitoring Plan; V3a, Implement Project Landscaping to Replace Trees that are Removed, Using the Specified Guidelines; and V3b, Implement the Specified Best Management Practices for Inclusion in the Project Description of the Project Report, are recommended. These measures would replace riparian habitat lost adjacent to Bidwell Park on a 2:1 acreage basis and relandscape the Caltrans right-of-way adjacent to residential backyards and frontage roads.

Constructing the East 1st Avenue improvements only would not address the project objectives of improving safety and traffic operations on SR 99, including the ramp merge areas, and across Bidwell Park.

Response B-3: This comment addresses the commenter's preference for the Inside Widening Alternative, if one of the build alternatives is to be built, and does not relate to the adequacy of the draft EIR analyses. The comment is noted.

From: Stewart O'Marah [sjo022669@yahoo.com]

Sent: Thursday, October 16, 2003 12:13 PM

To: anewsum@bcag.org

Subject: short and sweet about hwy 99 widening

Hi Andy,

I know you must be busy, so I won't take too much of your time.

I wish to show my support for widening the proposed stretch of 99 on the inside, as it seems to be less disruptive to the environment, nearby home owners, as well as being more economical. This way sound way construction could wait till a future date when more money was available or if needed at all. Please consider widening the inside.

C-1

Thank you.

Stewart O'Marah

City resident and frequent driver of that stretch of highway.

Do you Yahoo!?

The New Yahoo! Shopping - with improved product search

Response to Comment from Stewart O'Marah (October 16, 2003)

Response C-1: This comment addresses the commenter's preference for the Inside Widening Alternative and does not relate to the adequacy of the draft EIR analyses. The comment is noted.

"Meadows, Jennifer" <JMeadows@csuchico.edu> 10/27/03 4:56:42 PM

where do I find information about the proposed widening of highway 99 between Elst and 32? I am looking specifically for information on the impact for
a. people living near the overpass -- is the city going for eminent domain to take out homes? what about people who live close. will their homes lose property value?

D-1

b. bidwell park -- how many trees will be removed. Will people still be able to go on the roads. I commute to work on my bike and use that trail.

D-2

c. alternatives to solve the problem. metering lights, enforcing traffic laws in that area. merging traffic signs.

D-3

d. what is the traffic impact of going from 2 lanes to 4 then back to 2

D-4

I live on Filbert Ave. Why has there been so little information given to those who live in neighborhoods that will be affected by this proposed project?

D-5

Thanks

Jennifer

Jennifer Meadows, Ph.D.
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Department of Communication Design
California State University, Chico
Chico, CA 95929-0504
530) 898-4775 Fax (530) 898-5877
jmeadows@csuchico.edu

Responses to Comments from Jennifer Meadows (October 27, 2003)

Response D-1: As described in Tables 4-4 and 4-5 on pages 4-9 through 4-11 of the draft EIR, one residence would be displaced and 10 properties (residential, commercial, and public facility) would experience permanent sliver or corner acquisitions with conventional signalized intersections at SR 99/East 1st Avenue. With roundabouts, three homes would be displaced due to the need to close Sarah Avenue, and 10 properties would experience permanent sliver or corner acquisitions. In all cases, BCAG has contacted and met with the property owners. Displaced residents would be compensated in conformance with federal and state relocation assistance and real property acquisition laws.

BCAG would only use eminent domain, if necessary, in the case of an owner unwilling to sell. If the courts decide that it is in the best interest of the public to take the land by eminent domain, the affected property would be acquired at fair market value.

Regarding real estate values, some residents appear to feel that the proposed project will reduce their property values. Others appear to believe the proposed noise barrier will increase property values.

Response D-2: As described under Impact BR1 on pages 9-21 through 9-25 of the draft EIR, approximately 101 trees would be impacted either through removal, trimming, or construction vehicle compaction of soils above root zones under the Outside Widening Alternative (82 trees removed, 19 trees otherwise potentially affected). Under the Inside Alternative, approximately 106 trees would be impacted (94 trees removed and 12 trees otherwise potentially affected). Under both widening alternatives, all ground-disturbing activities would be accomplished within the existing Caltrans right-of-way adjacent to Bidwell Park. The existing Caltrans right-of-way is an approximately 250-foot wide strip that is centered on the existing Bidwell Park viaduct.

The construction contractor's contract would be conditioned to allow as much continued vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle access through Bidwell Park during construction as is safe. Construction near Bidwell Park would take approximately 18-24 months.

Response D-3: Metering is likely to become a reality in the future, but it is not warranted yet based on speed and volume. See Responses A-15 and A-16 regarding merging traffic signs and enforcing traffic laws, respectively.

Response D-4: With construction of either build alternative, SR 99 would go from two lanes to three lanes (not four lanes as stated by the commenter) in each direction. Pages 5-14 and 5-15 of the draft EIR describes the weaving analysis that was done for SR 99 between SR 32 and East 1st Avenue. Impact T7 (page 5-22) states that the freeway weaving sections would operate at level of service (LOS) D or better in the a.m. peak hour and LOS E in the p.m. peak hour, thereby meeting the LOS E criteria for SR 99.

Response D-5: BCAG has had extensive mailings to nearby residents in an effort to keep them informed about the project. BCAG sent the notice of preparation (notice alerting the public that an EIR is being prepared) and notice of availability of the draft EIR to each of the residences

fronting SR 99 in the project area, as well as the residents on both sides of Sheridan and Sarah Avenues, the east side of Holben Avenue, and the west side of Neal Dow Avenue. Also notified were residents along East 1st Avenue, Palmetto Avenue, Sierra Vista Way, Filbert Avenue, Vallombrosa Avenue, Rey Way, and Rey Circle between Sheridan Avenue, Sarah Avenue, Holben Avenue, and Neal Dow Avenue (outer limits of these cross streets). The draft EIR was made available for review at seven local libraries, at BCAG office, and on BCAG's website. BCAG also held two public meetings in May 2002 and March 2003 that were each advertised twice in the Enterprise Record.

Please explain your statement at the City of Chico's October 27, 2003 Parks Commission meeting that the signalized intersection option performs better than roundabouts.

E-1

—Steve Lucas telephone message to Andy Newsum, BCAG, on October 28, 2003.

Responses to Comments from Steve Lucas (October 28, 2003)

Response E-1: Page 5-18 of the draft EIR states the following (Option D-1, referenced below, is the best performing version of the signalized intersection configurations evaluated. Option E-1 is the best performing alternative of the roundabout configurations. See pages 5-8 and 5-9 for a description of the different configurations):

Of the options analyzed, Options D-1 and E-1 have the best traffic operations. The following list summarizes the differences in traffic operations between these two options:

- In terms of freeway operations, both perform similarly and operate acceptably although Option E-1 has a better LOS in the southbound direction during the p.m. peak hour since traffic is constrained at the roundabout on East First Avenue from entering the freeway.
- Intersection LOS is better with the signalized intersections under Option D-1: the ramp terminal intersections operate at LOS B or better during the a.m. peak hour and LOS C or better during the p.m. peak hour. In contrast, the southbound ramp intersection under Option E-1 operates at LOS E and F during the a.m. and p.m. peak hours, respectively.
- Although both Options D-1 and E-1 have similar travel times on East First Avenue during the p.m. peak hour, the a.m. peak hour travel times are up to 35 seconds longer for Option E-1.
- Both options have long queues on the eastbound approach to the interchange during the p.m. peak hour, but Option E-1 also has a long queue on the southbound off-ramp during the a.m. peak hour.

From an overall traffic operations standpoint, Option D-1 is slightly better than Option E-1.

Options D-1 and E-1 have different traffic safety considerations for East First Avenue.

- The roundabout intersections under Option E-1 reduce the possibility of severe accidents since vehicles must travel at a slower speed through the roundabout and the number of conflict points is reduced.
- Option D-1 gives pedestrians the right-of-way using traffic signals. The roundabouts in Option E-1 have uncontrolled pedestrian crossing which can be especially difficult for the visually-impaired to use.

From a safety standpoint, Option E-1 may result in fewer severe vehicular accidents, although Option D-1 may be safer for visually-impaired pedestrians.

This performance assessment is based on traffic operations in design year 2027. Operationally speaking, the roundabout begins to break down in the design year due to the queue at the

eastbound approach to the roundabout, resulting in LOS E conditions at the southbound ramp intersection during the p.m. peak hour.

BCAG staff prefers conventional signalized intersections to roundabouts at the SR 99/East 1st Avenue intersection since they offer more predictable, controlled use by all modes of traffic; alleviate the concern of safe use for disabled persons; and minimize full property acquisitions, as compared to roundabouts. Signalized intersection would require only one full property acquisition, whereas the roundabout option would require three full property acquisitions and the cul-de-sacing of Sarah Avenue. Both affected Sarah Avenue property owners were not in favor of cul-de-sacing.

The BCAG Board of Directors will be responsible for adopting signalized intersections, roundabouts, or the No-Project Alternative.

-----Original Message-----

From: Mills, Russell [<mailto:RMills@csuchico.edu>]
Sent: Tuesday, October 28, 2003 12:53 PM
To: anewsum@bcag.org
Cc: Dennis Beardsley
Subject: SR 99 Project

Andy:

Took a guess on your e-mail - hope this works.

Great presentation at the Park Commission last night. You've got a tough job, but keep at it.

I had a follow-up concern that I'll bring up at the next commission meeting, regarding construction access to S. Park Drive. Today I looked at the access at the end (very end) of Woodland - there is a curb cut there which could be used to access S. Park Drive. It would mean removing a section of fence (no big deal) but then there are many mature oaks in the way before hitting the pavement of the roadway. Although equipment might be able to wind around these trees, it would be traveling right over the root zones. And I suspect we are talking about very heavy loads.

On the other hand, there is the exit point from S. Park Drive, at the Y-junction of E. 7th Street and Woodland. This would seem to be a more likely access point, but will conflict with vehicles exiting the park (at times there is a lot of traffic here) plus a longer route through the park to get to the project area. I'd like to know which route is planned and what measures will be used to mitigate impacts. I didn't see that this was addressed in the EIR (if I missed it, please let me know).

Thanks,
Russ
Park Commissioner

Russell S. Mills, Ph.D., P.E.
Professor and Chair
Department of Civil Engineering
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(530) 898-6274 (direct line)
(530) 898-5342 (department office)
(530) 898-4576 (fax)

F-1

Responses to Comments by Russell Mills (October 28, 2003)

Response F-1: There are two logical choices for construction access to the Bidwell Park viaduct site. One option is to access the Caltrans right-of-way from the very end of Woodland Avenue. The other option is to use the already existing paved access road, through the swinging gate off of the Wooland Avenue cul-de-sac return, to South Park Drive.

Under the first option, construction vehicles and equipment would directly access the Caltrans right-of-way by skirting the toe of the fill to the east of the existing fence. Encroachment onto the existing bike path would also be avoided. Construction access would be established at no closer than the drip line of the large oak tree that exists just to the west of the bike path entrance. All modes of construction traffic could be accommodated at this location, including heavy equipment, without having to traverse the root zone of this tree. BCAG also believes that access and use of the bike path could be maintained and would specify in the construction contract that the path be protected from damage.

Given that there is already a paved access road through the swinging gate to South Park Drive, it would seem that this would be a good access point as well. There is an oak immediately adjacent to the easterly edge of this access and another approximately 20 feet to the west of this roadway. These trees would have rooting systems that extend under this paved access. However, based on input from a certified arborist (Oakes pers. comm.), the portion of the root system under the access road would be primarily comprised of structural roots because the paved surface would not be suitable for smaller roots that contribute to oxygen and nutrient absorption. Therefore, traversing this paved access would not further impact these trees. Because BCAG is unsure of the depth of this asphalt, the viability of this roadway to support movement of heavy loads would be assessed and any required limitations would be included in the project specifications. Movement of contractor vehicles such as pickup trucks through this access would appear to be acceptable at this location.

An optimal solution would be to allow the contractor access through both locations with the appropriate types of equipment. In all cases, the use of these locations would be conditioned in the temporary construction easement.

-----Original Message-----

From: Meadows, Jennifer [<mailto:JMeadows@csuchico.edu>]
Sent: Wednesday, October 29, 2003 5:31 PM
To: Andy Newsum
Subject: RE: SR 99

Thanks Andy-- you have really helped. I have read the report and I am wondering about one thing -- if the lanes are widened on the outside will that affect streets and properties currently next to 99. For example, is Rey Way going to be affected? The report is clear about the on and off ramps but the area in between is not too clear (at least to me ;-))

Thank you again for your detailed response. I really appreciate your help.

Jennifer Meadows, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Department of Communication Design
California State University, Chico
Chico, CA 95929-0504
(530) 898-4775 Fax (530) 898-5877
jmeadows@csuchico.edu

G-1

Response to Comment by Jennifer Meadows (October 29, 2003)

Response G-1: Other than the four residential properties on Sheridan Avenue and six residential properties on Sarah Avenue, for which temporary construction easements would be required, no other properties along SR 99 would require temporary or permanent acquisitions (see page 4-9 of the draft EIR for a detailed description of these temporary construction easement impacts). The view from the backyards of homes along the west and east sides of SR 99 between Vallombrosa Avenue and the East 1st Avenue ramps and along Rey Way would be affected under the Outside Widening Alternative. Vegetation within the Caltrans right-of-way would be removed, including on the slope that extends from the current edge of freeway down to Rey Way. From the backyards adjacent to SR 99 and along Rey Way, one would see a 14-foot noise barrier wall over a 9-foot retaining wall, approximately half way down the slope, under the Outside Widening Alternative. The area between the wall and the backyards and between the wall and Rey Way would be replanted with trees and vegetation. Figures 12-9b depicts Rey Way under the Outside Widening Alternative with approximately 15 years of growth of the replanted trees. Figure 12-10b is a simulation of the view from a Palmetto Avenue backyard under the same alternative. See also Impact V7 on page 12-19 of the draft EIR for a discussion of these impacts.

2525 Dominic Drive, Suite J
Chico, CA 95928
(530) 891-2882
(530) 891-2878 Fax



W. James Wagoner
Air Pollution Control Officer
Robert McLaughlin
Asst. Air Pollution Control Officer

November 14, 2003

IVED
2003
A.G.

Andy Newsum,
BCAG
965 Fir Street
Chico, CA 95928-6301

Re: Draft Environmental Impact Report for the State Route 99 Auxiliary Lane Project

Dear Mr. Newsum:

The District has reviewed the request for comments for the project noted above. The District submits the following comments:

Page 6-9 Table 6-4 Construction Emission Estimates - the NOx emission estimates exceed the District's significance threshold of 137 pounds per day. The PM10 estimates do not appear to include PM10 exhaust emissions from diesel construction equipment. Diesel PM10 emissions are toxic air contaminants. The District recommends incorporating additional mitigation measures (listed below) to reduce the air quality impacts below the level of significance.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Construction equipment exhaust emissions <u>Emission</u> limitations. 2. Construction contracts should stipulate that equipment included in the inventory be powered as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 175 hp - 750 hp 1996 and newer engines 100 hp - 174 hp 1997 and newer engines 50 hp - 99 hp 1998 and newer engines | District Rule 201 <u>Visible</u>

the heavy-duty off-road
equipped off-road engines, as |
|--|--|

H-1

In lieu of or in addition to this requirement, an applicant can use other measures to reduce particulate matter and nitrogen oxide emissions from their project through the use of emulsified diesel fuel and or particulate matter traps.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed project. If you have any questions, please contact the District at 891-2882.

Sincerely,

Gail Williams
Air Quality Planner

File No 3452

Responses to Comments from the Butte County Air Quality Management District, Gail Williams, Air Quality Planner (November 14, 2003)

Response H-1. As a follow-up to the Butte County Air Quality Management District's comment, Jones & Stokes spoke with Gail Williams on December 8, 2003. Ms. Williams stated that District Rule 200, Nuisance, and Rule 205, Fugitive Dust Emissions, should be applied to the proposed project rather than Rule 201, Visible Emissions. Therefore, Rules 200 and 205, as well as the measure for heavy-duty off-road equipment contained in Ms. Williams' letter, have been added to Mitigation Measure AQ1a. See Chapter 3, Errata.

State Route 99 Auxiliary Lane Project Comment Sheet

1. Do you support the project?

Yes No Unsure

2. Please provide your comments on the freeway widening alternatives:

Since our new governor has said that it won't be business as usual in Sacramento The first order of new business should be an exemption from the 85th percentile factor in the Basic Speed Law. This would allow the implementation of a lower enforceable speed limit on SR 99 and this should facilitate the entrance of slower vehicles with less conflict. Given the fiscal constraints now facing the state a fiscally conservative approach should be applied to this situation and the money projected applied to creating more convenient alternative modes to actually lower the traffic numbers expected.

Do you prefer one alternative over the other?

prefer outside widening prefer median widening no preference

3. Please provide your comments on the East First Avenue improvement alternative:

I don't think the suggestion to build multi lane roundabouts would work very well for bicyclists and pedestrians.

Do you prefer one alternative over the other?

prefer Signalized Ramp Intersections prefer Roundabouts No preference

4. Please provide your comments regarding potential soundwall locations and treatments:

Soundwalls should be built the length of the freeway from Skyway to Eaton Rd, especially in front of Wittmeier Auto which causes a distraction to drivers and can create an unsafe condition.

5. Please provide any other comments that you have related to the project:

I reiterate my request that if this widening is approved, that Filbert St be reconnected for bike/ped access under the freeway.

Name: Ed McLaughlin

Address: P0 Bx 2285, Chico CA 95927

email: ed@chicovelo.org

I-1

Response to Comment by Ed McLaughlin (November 19, 2003)

Response I-1: See Response A-16 regarding the Basic Speed Law. The proposed project provides noise barriers as mitigation from Vallombrosa Avenue to East 1st Avenue as justified by the project's Noise Study Report. Noise barriers beyond these limits is not justified by the proposed project. Connecting Filbert Avenue under SR 99 is not related to the proposed project's objectives.

November 20, 2003

BCAG
965 Fir St.
Chico, CA 95928

RECEIVED

NOV 20 2003

B.C.A.G.

Attn: Andy Newsum, Project Manager

Sirs,

Regarding the State Route 99 Auxiliary Lanes Project, my comments in response to the public hearing today are as follows:

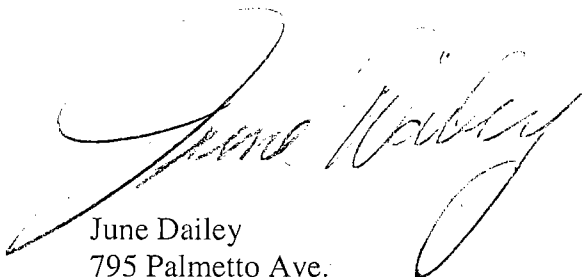
While "conspiracy" was a word introduced by someone other than a member of Public and while it may be a bit strong, I DO feel a bit "manipulated" for the following reasons.....

From the outset the public was offered 3 alternatives to solve problems presented by a one mile stretch of Highway 99 in Chico....two unsuitable alternatives that only temporarily solve some of those problems, (while presenting more, new problems, at a cost of over \$20 million) and the third alternative is "Do Nothing". Stated in that manner it suggests that there are absolutely NO other ways to mitigate the identified problems. It implies that only alternatives #1 and #2 are possible. That is patent nonsense and the framers of those documents know it and so do the decision makers...and the public seems to know as well, since they have proffered plenty of suggestions. It sounds so much like word games that I felt I had to respond.

If the City of Chico did indeed request of Caltrans a solution, did the City specify those two alternatives only?

Why is the project titled "...Auxiliary Lanes Project"?

I sincerely hope the Enterprise Record was wrong....that this is not a done deal. There are many things that can be done...you all know what they are. So do we.



June Dailey
795 Palmetto Ave.
Chico, CA 95926

J-1

Response to Comment by June Dailey (November 20, 2003)

Response J-1: This comment addresses the commenter's preference for the No-Project Alternative and does not offer any specific comments related to other alternatives that should be analyzed or the adequacy of the draft EIR analyses.

A rationale planning process was undertaken to develop the project alternatives. In developing the Chico Corridor Study (October 2001) (see page 3-2 of the draft EIR for a description of this study) that led to preparation of the Project Study Report for the proposed project, a series of public information meetings were held on March 30, 2000; October 26, 2000; and August 30, 2001 to give the public an opportunity provide input on needed improvements to SR 99. The comments received at these meetings are contained in Appendix D of the corridor study and are summarized on pages 31 and 32 of that report. The summary acknowledges that some public members wished to have transit alternatives developed as an option to widening roads. Page 24 of the corridor study identifies other alternatives to improving the SR 99/East 8th Street interchange, including retiming signals and reconfiguring the interchange. Such improvements to SR 99/East 8th Street would not meet the proposed project objectives since they would not solve the weaving problem.

The following responses explain why other alternatives suggested by other commenters are infeasible:

- Response A-1 – another crossing of Bidwell Park or a bypass
- Response A-2 – expanded transit and/or bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- Response A-15 – additional merge warning signs
- Response A-16 – lowering speed limits
- Response A-17 – longer SR 32 on-ramp
- Response A-24 – close East 1st Avenue interchange

> -----Original Message-----
> From: Gregory Redeker [<mailto:GREDEKER@ci.chico.ca.us>]
> Sent: Friday, November 21, 2003 9:17 AM
> To: anewsum@bcag.org
> Subject: Feedback on 99 widening
>
>
> Mr. Newsum,
>
> While I realize it is likely too late to submit "official" comments, I
> would like to include my replies that I tried to submit via your
> website. (The online form submission was experiencing technical
> problems.)
>
> Name: Greg Redeker
> Address: 405 Legacy Lane, Chico, CA 95973
> E-mail address: gredeker32@yahoo.com
>
> I've attempted to include all information requested in the comment
> form.
>
> - - -
>
> I support the project.
>
> Comments on freeway widening: After reading the article in the paper
> this morning, I just wanted to let you know that I (along with many
> other Chicoans who have regular jobs and thus can't attend a daytime
> meeting) am fully in favor of the freeway expansion between SR 32 and
> E. 1st Avenue. I have used the the freeway for both my morning and
> evening commutes for over a year now, and have noticed traffic
> getting
> worse in that time period. Currently, there is a regular slowdown on
> the southbound freeway as one approaches E. 1st Avenue; this morning,
> traffic slowed down to 3-4 mph. This expansion is overdue and will
> be
> welcomed by many residents as soon as it's constructed.
>
> I prefer outside widening.
>
> Comments on E. 1st Avenue improvements: All the new development in
> town in north of the East Avenue Marketplace is feeding into the E.
> 1st Avenue interchange. Since this section of town is still slated
> for substantial new growth, the traffic situation will only get
> worse,
> contrary to the assertions of some who spoke at the hearing. The E.
> 1st Avenue interchange needs to be expanded and improved; signals are
> still the most efficient way to control the interchange given the
> large amount of truck traffic using the interchange. Use of
> roundabouts would be problematic due to high traffic volumes and the
> amount of truck traffic.
>
> I prefer signalized ramp intersections.
>
> Comments on soundwalls: While soundwalls aren't my first choice, I do
> recognize the utility and right-of-way width savings of using

K-1

> retaining walls compared to the current berm-style elevated freeway.
> Please be sure to include significant landscaping in whatever
> alternative is pursued.
>
> Other comments: Please recognize that many of the speakers described
> in the E/R article are hostile to both the automobile and to growth.
> I doubt if any of them use the freeway during peak commute times, and
> thus have a skewed perception of the need for additional lanes. As
> long as the freeway remains the only convenient north-south corridor
> through Bidwell Park, and as long as political will doesn't exist to
> connect Madrone through the Park to Forest Avenue, the only viable
> option is to expand the freeway. Given the lead time to construct a
> project of this nature and the growth rate of the Chico Urban Area, I
> urge you to complete the project as soon as possible. There will
> surely be additional thousands of Chicoans wishing to use the freeway
> by the time the improvements are completed.
>
> - - -
>
> Please let me know if you have any questions or require any further
> clarification.
>
> Sincerely,
>
> Greg Redeker
> Chico resident since 1992
>

**K-1
cont.**

Response to Comment by Gregory Redeker (November 21, 2003)

Response K-1: This comment addresses the commenter's preference for the Outside Widening Alternative and signalized ramp intersections and does not address the adequacy of the draft EIR. Comment is noted.

Regarding the commenter's comment on landscaping, landscaping will be replanted between the proposed noise barrier and the residential backyards adjacent to SR 99, as well as between the proposed noise barrier and Rey Way, under the Outside Widening Alternative. Under the Inside Widening Alternative, the exposed portion of the 5-foot-wide area (a portion of this 5-foot-wide area will be occupied by the noise barrier) beyond the existing outer edge of shoulder, where vegetation would be removed, would be revegetated. See Mitigation Measures V3a and V3b on page 12-13 of the draft EIR for a description of the proposed relandscaping plans.

Chapter 3 Errata

This chapter shows all revisions to the September 2003 draft EIR that have been made to respond to draft EIR comments. Text in standard print is original draft EIR text, underlined text is added text, and text that is struck out is deleted text. A corrected version of Figure 9-2a is also contained in this chapter. This figure has been corrected to omit a construction staging area that was originally shown to be located south of East 8th Street, east of SR 99, in the existing park-and-ride lot. A construction staging area will not be situated at this location.

3.1 Chapter 6. Air Quality

Revise language on page 6-10, as follows:

- j. During initial grading, earth moving, or site preparation, construct a construction entrance similar to the Caltrans Temporary Erosion Control Detail (part of the Caltrans Erosion Control Best Management Practices) where construction equipment leaves paved areas. This detail utilizes a layer of crushed rock at entrances to minimize dust and the tracking of dirt in areas adjacent to the work area.

- k. Comply with BCAQMD Rules 200 (Nuisance) and 205 (Fugitive Dust Emissions). Rule 200 states:

No person shall discharge from any non-vehicular source such quantities of air contaminants or other material which cause injury, detriment, nuisance, or annoyance to any considerable number of persons or to the public or which endanger the comfort, repose, health or safety of any such persons of the public or which cause or have a natural tendency to cause injury or damage to business or property.

Rule 205 states:

A person shall take every reasonable precaution not to cause or allow the emissions of fugitive dust from being airborne beyond the property line from which the emission originates; from any construction, handling or storage activity; or any wrecking, excavation, grading, clearing of land or solid waste disposal operation. Reasonable precautions shall include, but are not limited to:

- 1.1 Use, where possible, of water or chemicals for control of dust in the demolition of existing buildings or structures, construction operations, construction of roadways, or the clearing of land;
- 1.2 Application of asphalt, oil, water, or suitable chemicals on dirt roads, material stockpiles, and other surfaces which can give rise to airborne dusts;
- 1.3 Other means approved by the Air Pollution Control Officer.

- k l. Post a publicly visible sign with the telephone number and person to contact regarding dust complaints. This person will respond and take corrective action within 24 hours. The telephone number of BCAQMD will also be visible to ensure compliance with BCAQMD Rules ~~204~~ 200 and ~~207~~ 205 (Nuisance and Fugitive Dust Emissions).
- l-m. Before project completion, demonstrate that all ground surfaces are covered or treated sufficiently to minimize fugitive dust emissions.
- n. Construction contracts should stipulate that at least 20% of the heavy-duty off-road equipment included in the inventory be powered by CARB certified off-road engines, as follows:

175 hp-750 hp 1996 and newer engines

100 hp-174 hp 1997 and newer engines

50 hp-99 hp 1998 and newer engines

In lieu or in addition to this requirement, an applicant can use other measures to reduce particulate matter and nitrogen oxide emissions from their project through the use of emulsified diesel fuel and or particulate matter traps.

II. Streets: ...

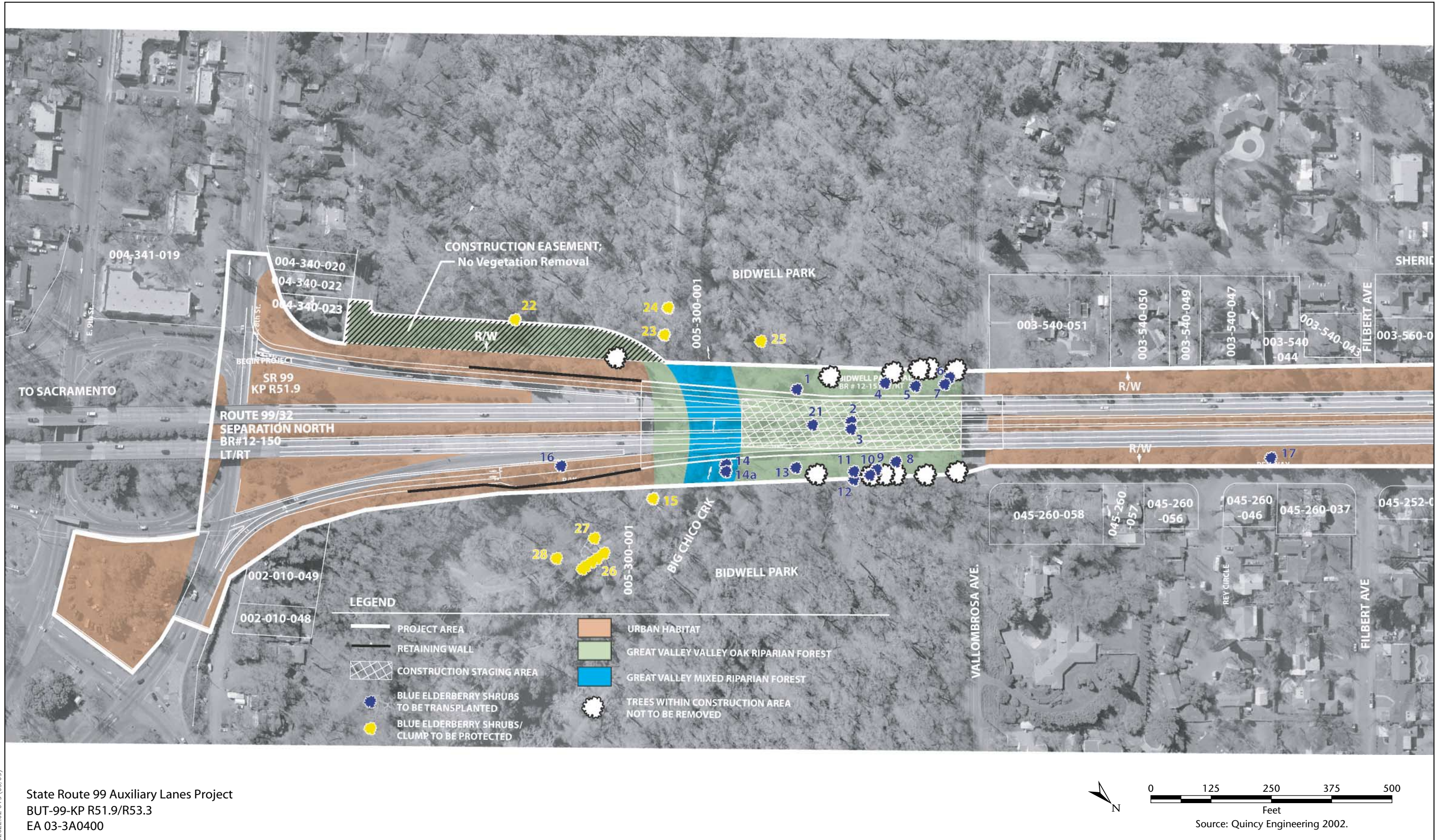


Figure 9-2a
Inside Widening Alternative:
Biological Communities and Impacts

02022.02.013 (05/03)

Chapter 4 Mitigation Monitoring Program

Table 4-1 contains the project's proposed mitigation monitoring program. This program was developed based on the findings of the draft and final EIRs. In accordance with CEQA (Pub. Res. Code sec. 21081.6) and the State CEQA Guidelines (sec. 15091(d) and 15097), this program identifies those mitigation measures from the EIR that are recommended for adoption by BCAG to ensure that potential significant environmental impacts of the proposed project are avoided or mitigated to a less-than-significant level. For each mitigation measure, Table 4-1 identifies the party responsible for implementing the mitigation measure, the timing for implementing the measure, how the measure will be monitored, and the standards that can be used to determine the success of the measure.

Table 4-1. Draft Mitigation Monitoring Program

Mitigation Measure	Party Responsible for Implementation	Implementation Timing	Monitoring Program	Standard for Success
Chapter 4 Land Use and Socioeconomics				
LU1a: Compensate displaced land uses in conformance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Polices Act (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG's or Caltrans' relocation advisor	During purchase of displaced properties	BCAG/Caltrans approval of the relocation payment program and monitoring of the administration of the program	Compliance with federal and state relocation laws
LU2a: Provide at least 10 additional parking spaces for business at 1078 East 1st Avenue (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives; conventional ramp intersection and roundabout)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	Immediately after taking parking spaces	Periodic site inspection during construction	Provision of compensation to landowner, as part of right-of-way compensation, for in-kind parking spaces on a 1:1 basis
LU2b: Provide exit driveway for business at 1108 Sheridan Avenue (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives; roundabout)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	Immediately after taking current exit driveway	Periodic site inspection during construction	Provision of adequate egress
LU3a: Implement a transportation management plan (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	During construction	Periodic monitoring of traffic flow in construction zones and coordination with emergency services personnel to ensure that adequate access is being maintained during construction	Adequate traffic flow and safety maintained throughout construction per Caltrans' and City of Chico standards
Chapter 5. Transportation				
T4a: Relocate the Class III bicycle route to Sherman Avenue/Mildred Avenue (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	City of Chico with BCAG reimbursement	Immediately prior to construction of East 1 st Avenue improvements	Site inspection during placement of new bicycle signs	Removal of bicycle route signs on Sherman Avenue and placing bicycle route signs along the relocated route (Sherman Avenue between East 5 th Avenue and East 1 st Avenue and then along Mildred Avenue, Marguerite Avenue, and Macy Avenue)
Chapter 6. Air Quality				
AQ1a: Implement construction mitigation measures to reduce construction emissions, as required by BCAQMD (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	During construction	Periodic site inspection during construction	Compliance with BCAQMD standards for construction emissions

Table 4-1. Continued

Mitigation Measure	Party Responsible for Implementation	Implementation Timing	Monitoring Program	Standard for Success
Chapter 7. Noise				
N2a: Employ noise-reduction construction measures (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	During construction	Periodic site inspection during construction	Compliance with the City of Chico's construction noise limits specified in the City's noise ordinance
N3a: Employ traffic noise-reduction design features in the design of the proposed project (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	During construction	Periodic site inspection during construction	Compliance with federal noise abatement criteria if federal funds to be used to construct a soundwall; compliance with the City of Chico's Noise Element if non-federal funds are used to construct a soundwall or if open-graded asphalt is to be constructed
Chapter 8. Hydrology and Water Quality				
W3a: Implement construction-related Best Management Practices (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	Caltrans or designated contractor	During construction	Periodic site inspection during construction	Compliance with NPDES permit and stormwater pollution prevention plan
W4a: Implement permanent post-construction Best Management Practices (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	Caltrans or designated contractor	During and immediately following construction	Long-term inspection and maintenance of permanent BMPs	Compliance with NPDES permit and stormwater management plan
Chapter 9. Biological Resources				
BR1a: Conduct a biological resources education program for construction crews and enforce construction restrictions (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	Qualified biologist	Prior to construction	BCAG approval of education program, monitoring of administration of program, and periodic inspections during construction by BCAG and biological monitor to ensure implementation of construction restrictions and guidelines by contractors	Adherence by construction contractor to construction restrictions and guidelines

Table 4-1. Continued

Mitigation Measure	Party Responsible for Implementation	Implementation Timing	Monitoring Program	Standard for Success
BR1b: Install a construction barrier fencing around the construction area to protect sensitive biological resources that will be avoided (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	Prior to construction	Periodic site inspections by BCAG and biological monitor per Mitigation Measure BR1c	Installation of fencing around construction area so as to avoid removal or disturbance of sensitive biological resources that are outside of the construction zone
BR1c: Retain a biologist to monitor construction activities in and near Big Chico Creek (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	Prior to and during construction in and adjacent to Big Chico Creek	Daily monitoring during construction in Big Chico Creek, weekly monitoring during construction outside of Big Chico Creek, and monthly monitoring after ground-disturbance activities until project construction is complete	Adherence to all adopted biological resources mitigation measures
BR1d: Enhance riparian habitat by developing and implementing a riparian restoration and monitoring plan (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	Qualified biologist to develop plan, BCAG or designated contractor to implement plan	Develop and approve plan prior to construction in riparian area, implement plan during and after construction in riparian area	Development of a restoration and monitoring plan in consultation with the USFWS, DFG, City of Chico, and Caltrans, and if required by the Section 404 permit, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; submittal of annual monitoring plans to the appropriate agencies for a minimum of 5 years until success criteria met; periodic site inspection by BCAG and biological monitor during construction	Replacement of riparian vegetation on a 2:1 acreage basis; achievement of success criteria specified in the mitigation measure
BR4a: Fence elderberry shrubs to be protected (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	Prior to removal of elderberry shrubs	Periodic site inspections by BCAG and biological monitor per Mitigation Measure BR1c	Installation of fencing around elderberry shrubs and clumps that will be protected during construction so as to avoid removal or disturbance of these shrubs

Table 4-1. Continued

Mitigation Measure	Party Responsible for Implementation	Implementation Timing	Monitoring Program	Standard for Success
BR4b: Inspect buffer area fences during construction (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	Qualified biologist	During construction adjacent to Bidwell Park	Inspect buffer area fences around elderberry shrubs weekly during ground-disturbing activities and monthly after ground-disturbing activities until construction is complete	Maintenance of 100-foot (or 20-foot) buffer area around elderberry shrubs to be protected that occur within 100 feet of the Caltrans right-of-way (or at construction zone boundary or in construction staging area)
BR4c: Water down construction areas to control dust in the vicinity of elderberry shrubs (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	During construction adjacent to Bidwell Park	Periodic site inspection during construction	Dust control near elderberry shrubs
BR4d: Compensate for direct and indirect effects on Valley elderberry longhorn beetle habitat in a conservation area (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	After construction	Monitoring to be conducted in compliance with USFWS-approved procedures (if conservation is established, monitoring is required over 10 consecutive years or 7 years over a 15-year period)	Compliance with USFWS-approved guidelines for establishment of valley elderberry longhorn beetle conservation areas; approval of conservation area by USFWS prior to initiation of program; compliance with conditions of biological opinion
BR5a: Conduct preconstruction surveys for northwestern pond turtle and construct exclusion fencing, if needed (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	Qualified biologist	In April or May before construction; if turtles are observed during spring survey, a second survey is to be conducted 24 hours prior to construction	Site inspection by BCAG and biological monitor during construction per Mitigation Measure BR1c	If turtle found, construct fences upstream and downstream of the project area and relocate turtle outside
BR6a: Conduct a preconstruction survey for nesting Swainson's hawks and begin construction activities and remove trees during the Swainson's hawk nonbreeding season (September 15 to March 1) (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	Qualified biologist	During April-July the year before construction	Site inspection by BCAG and biological monitor during construction per Mitigation Measure BR1c	Construction and tree removal activities to begin before the Swainson's hawk nesting period and to occur during the hawks' nonbreeding season if hawks nesting in the survey area
BR7a: Begin construction activities and remove trees and shrubs during the nonbreeding season for most birds (generally, August 15 to March 1) (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	During tree removal activities	Site inspection by BCAG and biological monitor during construction per Mitigation Measure BR1c	Construction and tree removal activities to begin before migratory birds' and raptors' breeding season and to occur during the migratory birds' and raptors' nonbreeding season

Table 4-1. Continued

Mitigation Measure	Party Responsible for Implementation	Implementation Timing	Monitoring Program	Standard for Success
BR10a: Conduct preconstruction surveys for special-status species bats and avoid construction activities, if maternity colonies are found within the project area, until after migration (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	Qualified bat biologist	Two visual and acoustic surveys to be conducted between April and August before construction begins	Site inspection by BCAG and biological monitor during construction per Mitigation Measure BR1c	If special-status maternity roosts are located, work on the Bidwell Park viaduct and tree removal will occur after the bats have migrated
BR11a: Implement measures to protect fish species and water quality of Big Chico Creek (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	During construction	Periodic site inspections during construction	Construction does not interfere with reproductive cycles of fish species and compliance with stormwater pollution prevention plan
BR 13a: Avoid construction activities that could disturb nesting swallows (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	Prior to and during construction	Site inspection by BCAG and biological monitor during construction per Mitigation Measure BR1c	No disturbance to nesting swallows
BR15a: Avoid the introduction of new noxious weeds or the spread of existing noxious weeds (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	During and after construction	Site inspection by BCAG and biological monitor during construction per Mitigation Measure BR1c and followup inventory after construction	No introduction of new noxious weed infestations during or after construction
Chapter 10. Cultural Resources				
CR1a: Implement procedures for the unanticipated discovery of cultural resources (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	During construction	Development and implementation of procedures, if required, that identifies monitoring requirements by a qualified archeologist during construction	Compliance with Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines
Chapter 11. Earth Resources				
ER5a: Implement recommendations related to hazardous materials contained in the project initial site assessment (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	Prior to removing soil from the construction zone, disturbance to any bridge structure or yellow pavement stripping, and contact by construction workers with groundwater, or if leaky electrical transformers are found in the construction zone	Periodic site inspections during construction	Compliance with local, state, and federal regulations related to handling or disposing of hazardous materials

Table 4-1. Continued

Mitigation Measure	Party Responsible for Implementation	Implementation Timing	Monitoring Program	Standard for Success
Chapter 12. Visual Resources				
V1a: Install temporary, visual barriers between construction zones and residences (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	Prior to beginning construction	Site inspection at the beginning of construction	Obstruction of undesirable views of construction to the extent feasible
V2a: Construct walls with low-sheen and non-reflective surface materials (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	During construction	Periodic site inspections during construction	Construction of walls that blend into the environment to the extent feasible given input from the City of Chico Arts Commission, Caltrans landscape architect, and the public
V3a: Implement project landscaping plan to replace trees that are removed, using the specified guidelines (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	Within one year of vegetation removal	BCAG approval of landscaping plan and periodic site inspections during and after replantings per the approved landscaping plan	Compliance with the approved landscaping plan including meeting the success criteria specified in the plan
V3b: Implement the specified Best Management Practices for inclusion in the project description of the Project Report (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	During and after construction	Periodic site inspections during construction	Protection of disturbed areas from soil erosion
V4a: Provide aesthetic treatments to the noise barrier (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	During construction	Periodic site inspections during construction	Construction of walls that blend into the environment to the extent feasible given input from the City of Chico Arts Commission, Caltrans landscape architect, and the public
V5a: Implement landscape plantings in roundabout islands (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	Within one year after completion of roundabouts	Periodic site inspections during construction	Landscaping of roundabouts without obstruction of drivers' views

Chapter 5 References Cited

5.1 Printed References

Caltrans (California Department of Transportation). 1998. *Technical noise supplement*. Environmental Program: Noise, Air Quality, and Hazardous Waste Management Office. Sacramento, CA.

U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration. 2000. *Roundabouts, an information guide*. Publication No. FHWA-RD-00-067. McClean, Virginia.

5.2 Personal Communications

Oakes, Harry. ISA Certified Arborist, No. WE-6469A, Jones & Stokes. Memorandum to Debbie Loh, Jones & Stokes, and Andy Newsum, BCAG - November 5, 2003; telephone conversations with Debbie Loh - November 5, 2003.

Sykes, Ron. Chief, Office of Traffic Operations, Caltrans. Electronic mail to Andy Newsum, BCAG – June 13, 2002.

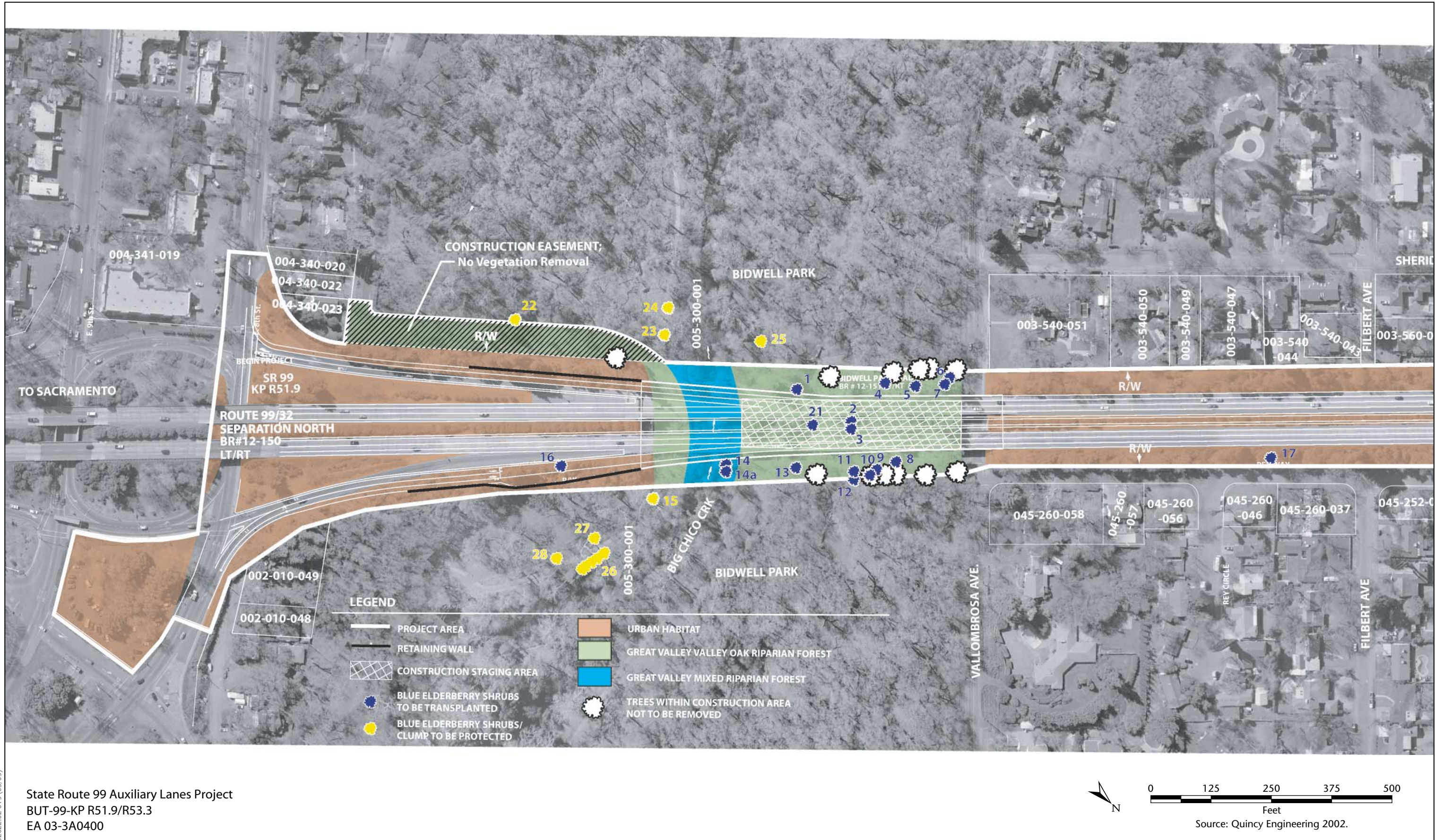


Figure 9-2a
Inside Widening Alternative:
Biological Communities and Impacts

02022.02.013 (05/03)

Chapter 4 Mitigation Monitoring Program

Table 4-1 contains the project's proposed mitigation monitoring program. This program was developed based on the findings of the draft and final EIRs. In accordance with CEQA (Pub. Res. Code sec. 21081.6) and the State CEQA Guidelines (sec. 15091(d) and 15097), this program identifies those mitigation measures from the EIR that are recommended for adoption by BCAG to ensure that potential significant environmental impacts of the proposed project are avoided or mitigated to a less-than-significant level. For each mitigation measure, Table 4-1 identifies the party responsible for implementing the mitigation measure, the timing for implementing the measure, how the measure will be monitored, and the standards that can be used to determine the success of the measure.

Table 4-1. Draft Mitigation Monitoring Program

Mitigation Measure	Party Responsible for Implementation	Implementation Timing	Monitoring Program	Standard for Success
Chapter 4 Land Use and Socioeconomics				
LU1a: Compensate displaced land uses in conformance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Polices Act (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG's or Caltrans' relocation advisor	During purchase of displaced properties	BCAG/Caltrans approval of the relocation payment program and monitoring of the administration of the program	Compliance with federal and state relocation laws
LU2a: Provide at least 10 additional parking spaces for business at 1078 East 1st Avenue (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives; conventional ramp intersection and roundabout)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	Immediately after taking parking spaces	Periodic site inspection during construction	Provision of compensation to landowner, as part of right-of-way compensation, for in-kind parking spaces on a 1:1 basis
LU2b: Provide exit driveway for business at 1108 Sheridan Avenue (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives; roundabout)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	Immediately after taking current exit driveway	Periodic site inspection during construction	Provision of adequate egress
LU3a: Implement a transportation management plan (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	During construction	Periodic monitoring of traffic flow in construction zones and coordination with emergency services personnel to ensure that adequate access is being maintained during construction	Adequate traffic flow and safety maintained throughout construction per Caltrans' and City of Chico standards
Chapter 5. Transportation				
T4a: Relocate the Class III bicycle route to Sherman Avenue/Mildred Avenue (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	City of Chico with BCAG reimbursement	Immediately prior to construction of East 1 st Avenue improvements	Site inspection during placement of new bicycle signs	Removal of bicycle route signs on Sherman Avenue and placing bicycle route signs along the relocated route (Sherman Avenue between East 5 th Avenue and East 1 st Avenue and then along Mildred Avenue, Marguerite Avenue, and Macy Avenue)
Chapter 6. Air Quality				
AQ1a: Implement construction mitigation measures to reduce construction emissions, as required by BCAQMD (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	During construction	Periodic site inspection during construction	Compliance with BCAQMD standards for construction emissions

Table 4-1. Continued

Mitigation Measure	Party Responsible for Implementation	Implementation Timing	Monitoring Program	Standard for Success
Chapter 7. Noise				
N2a: Employ noise-reduction construction measures (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	During construction	Periodic site inspection during construction	Compliance with the City of Chico's construction noise limits specified in the City's noise ordinance
N3a: Employ traffic noise-reduction design features in the design of the proposed project (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	During construction	Periodic site inspection during construction	Compliance with federal noise abatement criteria if federal funds to be used to construct a soundwall; compliance with the City of Chico's Noise Element if non-federal funds are used to construct a soundwall or if open-graded asphalt is to be constructed
Chapter 8. Hydrology and Water Quality				
W3a: Implement construction-related Best Management Practices (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	Caltrans or designated contractor	During construction	Periodic site inspection during construction	Compliance with NPDES permit and stormwater pollution prevention plan
W4a: Implement permanent post-construction Best Management Practices (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	Caltrans or designated contractor	During and immediately following construction	Long-term inspection and maintenance of permanent BMPs	Compliance with NPDES permit and stormwater management plan
Chapter 9. Biological Resources				
BR1a: Conduct a biological resources education program for construction crews and enforce construction restrictions (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	Qualified biologist	Prior to construction	BCAG approval of education program, monitoring of administration of program, and periodic inspections during construction by BCAG and biological monitor to ensure implementation of construction restrictions and guidelines by contractors	Adherence by construction contractor to construction restrictions and guidelines

Table 4-1. Continued

Mitigation Measure	Party Responsible for Implementation	Implementation Timing	Monitoring Program	Standard for Success
BR1b: Install a construction barrier fencing around the construction area to protect sensitive biological resources that will be avoided (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	Prior to construction	Periodic site inspections by BCAG and biological monitor per Mitigation Measure BR1c	Installation of fencing around construction area so as to avoid removal or disturbance of sensitive biological resources that are outside of the construction zone
BR1c: Retain a biologist to monitor construction activities in and near Big Chico Creek (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	Prior to and during construction in and adjacent to Big Chico Creek	Daily monitoring during construction in Big Chico Creek, weekly monitoring during construction outside of Big Chico Creek, and monthly monitoring after ground-disturbance activities until project construction is complete	Adherence to all adopted biological resources mitigation measures
BR1d: Enhance riparian habitat by developing and implementing a riparian restoration and monitoring plan (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	Qualified biologist to develop plan, BCAG or designated contractor to implement plan	Develop and approve plan prior to construction in riparian area, implement plan during and after construction in riparian area	Development of a restoration and monitoring plan in consultation with the USFWS, DFG, City of Chico, and Caltrans, and if required by the Section 404 permit, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; submittal of annual monitoring plans to the appropriate agencies for a minimum of 5 years until success criteria met; periodic site inspection by BCAG and biological monitor during construction	Replacement of riparian vegetation on a 2:1 acreage basis; achievement of success criteria specified in the mitigation measure
BR4a: Fence elderberry shrubs to be protected (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	Prior to removal of elderberry shrubs	Periodic site inspections by BCAG and biological monitor per Mitigation Measure BR1c	Installation of fencing around elderberry shrubs and clumps that will be protected during construction so as to avoid removal or disturbance of these shrubs

Table 4-1. Continued

Mitigation Measure	Party Responsible for Implementation	Implementation Timing	Monitoring Program	Standard for Success
BR4b: Inspect buffer area fences during construction (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	Qualified biologist	During construction adjacent to Bidwell Park	Inspect buffer area fences around elderberry shrubs weekly during ground-disturbing activities and monthly after ground-disturbing activities until construction is complete	Maintenance of 100-foot (or 20-foot) buffer area around elderberry shrubs to be protected that occur within 100 feet of the Caltrans right-of-way (or at construction zone boundary or in construction staging area)
BR4c: Water down construction areas to control dust in the vicinity of elderberry shrubs (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	During construction adjacent to Bidwell Park	Periodic site inspection during construction	Dust control near elderberry shrubs
BR4d: Compensate for direct and indirect effects on Valley elderberry longhorn beetle habitat in a conservation area (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	After construction	Monitoring to be conducted in compliance with USFWS-approved procedures (if conservation is established, monitoring is required over 10 consecutive years or 7 years over a 15-year period)	Compliance with USFWS-approved guidelines for establishment of valley elderberry longhorn beetle conservation areas; approval of conservation area by USFWS prior to initiation of program; compliance with conditions of biological opinion
BR5a: Conduct preconstruction surveys for northwestern pond turtle and construct exclusion fencing, if needed (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	Qualified biologist	In April or May before construction; if turtles are observed during spring survey, a second survey is to be conducted 24 hours prior to construction	Site inspection by BCAG and biological monitor during construction per Mitigation Measure BR1c	If turtle found, construct fences upstream and downstream of the project area and relocate turtle outside
BR6a: Conduct a preconstruction survey for nesting Swainson's hawks and begin construction activities and remove trees during the Swainson's hawk nonbreeding season (September 15 to March 1) (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	Qualified biologist	During April-July the year before construction	Site inspection by BCAG and biological monitor during construction per Mitigation Measure BR1c	Construction and tree removal activities to begin before the Swainson's hawk nesting period and to occur during the hawks' nonbreeding season if hawks nesting in the survey area
BR7a: Begin construction activities and remove trees and shrubs during the nonbreeding season for most birds (generally, August 15 to March 1) (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	During tree removal activities	Site inspection by BCAG and biological monitor during construction per Mitigation Measure BR1c	Construction and tree removal activities to begin before migratory birds' and raptors' breeding season and to occur during the migratory birds' and raptors' nonbreeding season

Table 4-1. Continued

Mitigation Measure	Party Responsible for Implementation	Implementation Timing	Monitoring Program	Standard for Success
BR10a: Conduct preconstruction surveys for special-status species bats and avoid construction activities, if maternity colonies are found within the project area, until after migration (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	Qualified bat biologist	Two visual and acoustic surveys to be conducted between April and August before construction begins	Site inspection by BCAG and biological monitor during construction per Mitigation Measure BR1c	If special-status maternity roosts are located, work on the Bidwell Park viaduct and tree removal will occur after the bats have migrated
BR11a: Implement measures to protect fish species and water quality of Big Chico Creek (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	During construction	Periodic site inspections during construction	Construction does not interfere with reproductive cycles of fish species and compliance with stormwater pollution prevention plan
BR 13a: Avoid construction activities that could disturb nesting swallows (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	Prior to and during construction	Site inspection by BCAG and biological monitor during construction per Mitigation Measure BR1c	No disturbance to nesting swallows
BR15a: Avoid the introduction of new noxious weeds or the spread of existing noxious weeds (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	During and after construction	Site inspection by BCAG and biological monitor during construction per Mitigation Measure BR1c and followup inventory after construction	No introduction of new noxious weed infestations during or after construction
Chapter 10. Cultural Resources				
CR1a: Implement procedures for the unanticipated discovery of cultural resources (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	During construction	Development and implementation of procedures, if required, that identifies monitoring requirements by a qualified archeologist during construction	Compliance with Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines
Chapter 11. Earth Resources				
ER5a: Implement recommendations related to hazardous materials contained in the project initial site assessment (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	Prior to removing soil from the construction zone, disturbance to any bridge structure or yellow pavement stripping, and contact by construction workers with groundwater, or if leaky electrical transformers are found in the construction zone	Periodic site inspections during construction	Compliance with local, state, and federal regulations related to handling or disposing of hazardous materials

Table 4-1. Continued

Mitigation Measure	Party Responsible for Implementation	Implementation Timing	Monitoring Program	Standard for Success
Chapter 12. Visual Resources				
V1a: Install temporary, visual barriers between construction zones and residences (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	Prior to beginning construction	Site inspection at the beginning of construction	Obstruction of undesirable views of construction to the extent feasible
V2a: Construct walls with low-sheen and non-reflective surface materials (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	During construction	Periodic site inspections during construction	Construction of walls that blend into the environment to the extent feasible given input from the City of Chico Arts Commission, Caltrans landscape architect, and the public
V3a: Implement project landscaping plan to replace trees that are removed, using the specified guidelines (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	Within one year of vegetation removal	BCAG approval of landscaping plan and periodic site inspections during and after replantings per the approved landscaping plan	Compliance with the approved landscaping plan including meeting the success criteria specified in the plan
V3b: Implement the specified Best Management Practices for inclusion in the project description of the Project Report (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	During and after construction	Periodic site inspections during construction	Protection of disturbed areas from soil erosion
V4a: Provide aesthetic treatments to the noise barrier (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	During construction	Periodic site inspections during construction	Construction of walls that blend into the environment to the extent feasible given input from the City of Chico Arts Commission, Caltrans landscape architect, and the public
V5a: Implement landscape plantings in roundabout islands (Outside and Inside Widening Alternatives)	BCAG or Caltrans or designated contractor	Within one year after completion of roundabouts	Periodic site inspections during construction	Landscaping of roundabouts without obstruction of drivers' views