

California Department of Transportation Report on Freeway Landscape Maintenance and Refuse Removal

Board of Directors

March 12, 2007

Follow-Up to OCTA Litter & Landscape Concerns:

- 1. “Identify opportunities for Caltrans’ self-improvement”***

Response:

- a) Increased district-wide litter removal contract work***
- b) Identify roadside designs that are more easily maintained***
- c) Implement improvements in the Adopt-A-Highway Program***

2. *Provide Adopt-A-Highway (AAH) Program descriptions:*

a) Types of Adoption: litter removal, wildflower planting, graffiti removal, tree planting, and vegetation control

***b) Cost: by contract (\$300-400/month)
by volunteer (no cost)***

c) Caltrans provides: permit, signs, safety orientation & gear, bags, collection and disposal of litter

***d) Participants:
individuals, organizations, businesses, cities, county, state and federal agencies***

3. AAH Program descriptions (continued)

a) Length of Adoptions:

5 years - can amend after 2 years (increase frequency)

2 miles or directional interchange (frequency varies)

b) Process:

identify location, contact coordinator, submit permit application, if planting or vegetation control – submit schedule, obtain sign panel approval, obtain permit, go to work

c) Signs:

freeways - large (45''x21'')

conventional highways - small (30''x15'')

black/white – no cost

color – pay additional \$150-250



On-going construction SR-91



Unsafe work area I-405

5. Examples of roadsides unavailable for AAH

6. *“Write to cities about ramp adoptions”*

Response:

a) Letters mailed to all OC cities on November 17

b) Sample letter is included in handouts

c) To date - three cities have responded

7. *“Increase AAH work frequency, especially popular areas”*

Response:

a) Increase permit frequency from 24/yr. up to 48/yr

*b) OCTA and cities can help inform public
and potential sponsors of the AAH programs*

*c) Wait-listed sponsors will be encouraged to provide
multiple activities and increased frequencies*

8. *“Show how locally-funded projects will be protected & maintained”*

Response:

a) Prioritize landscape maintenance activities:

- 1. irrigation repair and water management*
- 2. vegetation control*
- 3. pruning and trimming*
- 4. replanting*

*b) Typical frequency for vegetation control:
mowing (min. 3/yr); chemical spraying (4/yr)*

c) Landscape improvements that exceed Caltrans standard level will require local agency to maintain by Landscape Maintenance Agreement

9. *Use more native plants*

Response:

a) Native plants are generally short-lived

b) Freeway plants should be long-lived, easy to maintain, and relatively drought-tolerant. Some California natives that meet these requirements are already being used

c) Low public acceptance - native plants have been used on freeway projects, but are not generally acceptable due to objections of poor appearance and visual incompatibility with the lush visual appearance of ornamental plantings

10. *Typical trees used on Orange County freeways*

(N) Native (D) Drought Tolerant

TREES

Deodar Cedar (D)

Western Redbud (N/D)

Floss Silk Tree

Arizona Cypress (D)

Sweetshade

Jacaranda

Goldenrain Tree

Crepe Myrtle (D)

Liquidambar (D)

Southern Magnolia

Date Palm (D)

Canary Island Pine (D)

Carolina Laurel Cherry

Hong Kong Orchid Tree

Brisbane Box (D)

Mexican Fan Palm (D)

See Caltrans Plant Setback and Spacing Guide

<http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/ptguide/ptguid00.htm>

11. “Show how D12 can improve efficiency with its limited resources”

Response:

- a) Improve & reduce use of chemical herbicides***
- b) Improve water management with central computer control systems; repair existing irrigation systems.***
- c) Partner and obtain continuous feedback from locals***
- d) Emphasize landscape plants and designs that require less maintenance and are more drought tolerant***