I-5 HOV Lane Extension Project

Fact Sheet • March 2010

The Interstate 5 (I-5) HOV Lane Extension Project, under the direction of the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), in cooperation with the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA), proposes to widen I-5 between Avenida Pico and San Juan Creek Road. The project goals are to:

- Provide continuity of the I-5 mainline carpool network within the project limits
- Reduce congestion on I-5 within the project limits
- Relieve local street congestion within interchange areas, on- and off-ramps, and local intersections

The I-5 project area spans from Avenida Pico to San Juan Creek Road. The project will add one carpool lane in each direction on I-5, add auxiliary lanes where needed, improve interchanges (including reconstruction of Avenida Pico), and add soundwalls where needed. To make the needed improvements, OCTA and Caltrans are working closely with the following cities: San Clemente, Dana Point, and San Juan Capistrano.

The Environmental Process

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), an Initial Study and Environmental Assessment (IS/EA) are being prepared as part of the I-5 HOV Lane Extension Project. The purpose of the IS/EA is to inform decision makers and the public about the environmental effects of the project and move forward with a preferred alternative.

The IS/EA will assess a wide range of topics including, but not limited to: air quality, noise, natural environment, community impacts, visual impacts, relocation impacts, cultural resources, water quality, floodplain impacts, and paleontological resources.

The project team will conduct extensive environmental studies and preliminary engineering, resulting in the preparation of a Draft IS/EA.

What is Measure M2?

In November 2006, Orange County voters approved the renewal of Measure M, the half cent sales tax for transportation improvements. With the approval of Measure M2, voters agreed to a continued investment of local tax dollars in Orange County's transportation for another 30 years. Measure M2 includes approximately $300 million for the I-5 HOV Lane Extension Project. Additionally, the Early Action Plan for Measure M2, approved in August 2007, included the project and recommended it be advanced on a fast-track schedule.

Project and Environmental Process Timeline

I-5 HOV Lane Extension Project Begins → Technical Studies & Preparation of Draft IS/EA → Public Review of IS/EA → Incorporate Public Comments → Final Environmental Document

Project Alternatives

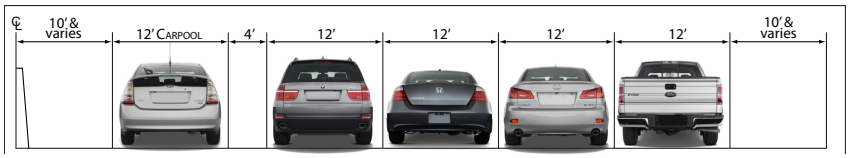
Alternative 1 (No Build)

The no-build alternative proposes no improvements to I-5, maintaining the existing four general purpose lanes throughout the project limits in the northbound (NB) and southbound (SB) directions and inside and outside shoulders.

NOTE: Cross-section shows one direction of traffic, though improvements will be made in both directions on I-5.

Alternatives 2 and 3

Alternatives 2 and 3 both propose to construct a new lane to the outside of the NB and SB lanes to accomodate HOV lanes. This alternative proposes full standard widths, including a four-foot HOV buffer, throughout the majority of the project limits. Additionally, auxiliary lanes would be constructed as necessary to improve mainline operations. The difference between the two alternatives is that Alternative 2 corrects the sight distance on the SB horizontal curve north of Pacific Coast Highway and Alternative 3 does not correct this curve.



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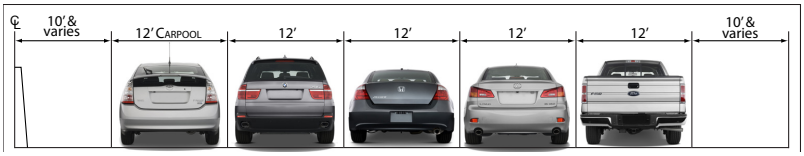
Alternative 4

Alternatives 4 includes many of the improvements common to Alternatives 2 and 3, with a few modifications. Alternative 4 still proposes the addition of an HOV lane in NB and SB direction, but includes continuous access rather than the four-foot buffer propsed in Alternatives 2 and 3. Also, the sight distance on the SB horizontal curve north of Pacific Coast Highway would be improved, but still would not be corrected to full standard.



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Next Steps

Over the next several months, the environmental analysis of the alternatives will continue. A formal public hearing will be held in Early 2011.

AVENIDA PICO INTERCHANGE DESIGN OPTIONS

OPTION A - MODIFIED TIGHT DIAMOND

Under this option, the on- and off-ramps at Avenida Pico would be realigned and the NB on-ramp would be widened to three lanes. The overall configuration of the interchange would be similar to the existing configuration. Additionally, Avenida Pico would be widened under the structure to provide dual left-turn lanes to both the NB and SB on-ramps. This alternative would optimize signal timing and operations for the closely spaced intersections at the interchange. The geometry of Avenida Pico will be improved on the east side of I-5 to remove the existing reversing curves. Bicycle lanes and standard outside shoulders would be provided throughout the majority of the interchange in the both the EB and WB directions.

OPTION B - NORTHBOUND LOOP ON-RAMP IN SE QUADRANT

Under this option, a NB loop on-ramp will be added to allow for the removal of the existing left-turn lane for eastbound (EB) traffic on Avenida Pico accessing NB I-5. The existing directional on-ramp would remain in place for westbound (WB) traffic accessing NB I-5. Additionally the NB off-ramp would be realigned around the loop on-ramp, resulting in a partial cloverleaf configuration. The SB ramps would be realigned, and the geometry of Avenida Pico will be improved on the east side of I-5 to remove the existing reversing curves. Dual WB left-turn lanes would be provided under the structure to the SB on-ramp. Bicycle lanes and standard outside shoulders would be provided throughout the majority of the interchange in the both the EB and WB directions.

ESTIMATED SCHEDULE

Preliminary Design, Environmental Studies, Project Approval	2009-2011
Final Design, Right-of-Way Process	2011-2014
Construction	2015-2019

Get Involved

For more information about the project and opportunities to get involved, please visit our website at

www.octa.net/I-5HOV

or contact Tresa Oliveri, OCTA External Affairs at (714) 560-5374