

WHY IS THIS PROJECT BEING CONSIDERED?

In 2004, Contra Costa voters approved Measure J, which continued the County’s half-cent transportation sales tax program to 2034.* The Measure J Expenditure Plan includes the “I-680 Carpool Lane Gap Closure/ Transit Corridor Improvements.” One component of the improvements is the addition of High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) on- and off-ramps, called Direct Access Ramps, in San Ramon. HOVs include buses, carpools and vanpools.

** Measure J was approved by 67 percent among those who voted in San Ramon. It is recognized that voters approved Measure J as a whole, not specific projects included in the Expenditure Plan.*

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS PROJECT?

The purpose of the I-680 HOV Direct Access Ramps (HOV DAR) Project is to promote and facilitate carpooling, vanpooling and transit use by improving freeway access for transit and HOVs traveling into and out of San Ramon. Residents and commuters will have access to the HOV direct access ramps. The project is consistent with the intent of State Legislation (SB 375) to reduce green house gas emissions and vehicle congestion, improve air quality and increase the use of HOVs. The Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) and the City of San Ramon also encourage carpooling, vanpooling and the use of transit as ways to reduce congestion on local roadways, improve air quality, reduce fuel consumption and improve the overall quality of life in our communities. In addition, the project may enhance west-east connectivity for pedestrians and bicyclists if the Norris Canyon Road alternative is built.

WHO IS WORKING ON THIS PROJECT AND WHAT ARE THEIR ROLES?

CCTA is the project sponsor, and is working in cooperation with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), who is the lead agency for the Environmental Document. The City of San Ramon is a partner agency facilitating the public outreach effort.

HAS THIS PROJECT ALREADY BEEN APPROVED?

No. CCTA, Caltrans and the City of San Ramon are beginning the project development and environmental review process that will take place through late 2015. Once project development and environmental review are complete, CCTA, Caltrans and the City of San Ramon will decide whether to proceed with the project. The project design would only proceed after the final Environmental Document is released and approved. Project construction would potentially begin in 2018 at the earliest, pending the availability of funding.

HOW IS THIS PROJECT BEING FUNDED?

The project is included in Contra Costa Measure J approved by Contra Costa voters in 2004. The project would be funded through a variety of sources, including \$10.2 million from Measure J with the remainder from other State and Federal funding sources. No local funds are required from the City of San Ramon for this project.

DOES MEASURE J MANDATE THE MONEY BE SPENT ON HOV RAMPS/LANES?

Yes, the proposed HOV Direct Access Ramps are one component of several individual projects included in the Measure J Expenditure Plan. Should a “No Build” alternative be chosen for the proposed project, Measure J requires that the funds would be spent on other HOV improvements within the I-680 corridor.

WHAT PROJECT ALTERNATIVES ARE BEING STUDIED?

Three project alternatives are being studied. They include:

1. The addition of on- and off- ramps for HOV and transit use at Norris Canyon Road, including enhanced pedestrian/bike facilities on the overpass.
2. The addition of on- and off- ramps for HOV and transit use at Executive Parkway.
3. A “No Build” alternative.

WILL THE EIR LOOK AT IMPACTS FOR EACH ALTERNATIVE EQUALLY?

Yes. The environmental document prepared for this project will study alternatives at both Norris Canyon Road and Executive Parkway as well as the “No Build” alternative and will address the impacts identified for each equally.

WHAT HAPPENS WITH THE PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS RECEIVED FOR THIS PROJECT?

All written comments received at meetings (via regular mail or e-mail) are part of the administrative record. All will be compiled following completion of the environmental review process. Comments submitted in response to the draft Environmental Document when it is circulated will be responded to in the final Environmental Document and can influence which alternative is chosen.

WHAT HAS HAPPENED SO FAR?

CCTA, City of San Ramon and Caltrans completed a Project Study Report (PSR) in March 2010. However, completion of the PSR does not approve the project for construction. The PSR determines the scope, schedule and estimated cost of the project and allows proceeding with the project development and environmental review phase.

A scoping meeting was held in November 2011 to provide information about the proposed project and receive public input on the range of issues to study during the environmental analysis. Scoping does not result in the ultimate decision about a project or selection of an alternative – it is one of the beginning stages of the overall process to initiate the study of a proposed project.

A public workshop was held in March 2012 to provide additional information about the proposed project, alternatives being studied and range of issues to study during the environmental analysis. A second workshop was held in March 2013 to introduce the Executive Parkway alternative.

The next public meeting is anticipated to occur in summer 2015.

HAS THE ORIGINAL PROJECT SCHEDULE CHANGED?

Yes. The timeline for release of the I-680 HOV DAR Project, draft Environmental Document (ED) has been extended from spring 2013 to fall 2014. This extended period of time is required due to several project-related factors, including:

- Adding the Executive Parkway alternative for further study.
- Incorporating data from the recently updated Travel Demand Model into the environmental document for further study.
- Preparation of a full Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the project.

After the draft ED has been released for review, a public meeting will be held to receive comments. Release of the final ED is anticipated in early 2015.

WHAT IS AN NOP?

The Notice of Preparation (NOP) is a document notifying public agencies regarding the scope of the environmental report. This allows regulatory agencies to anticipate and schedule their review. The NOP will be posted on the CCTA website when it is released.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Engineering and environmental technical studies will be conducted to evaluate a wide range of topics and issues including traffic, noise, air quality, and community impacts. This information will be documented in a draft Environmental Document (ED), which will be made available to the public for review and comment (anticipated in summer 2015). The public will be encouraged to review the draft ED and submit written comments on the project during this time. A public meeting will also be held, allowing for additional public comments to be submitted.

Once the public comment period for the draft ED is complete, the next step is to prepare a final ED which addresses all of the comments received on the draft ED. The final ED must also define the “preferred alternative” that the lead agency recommends among all the alternatives considered. The chosen alternative is identified as the most suitable to meet the project’s purpose and need. This could be an action (build) alternative at Norris Canyon Road or Executive Parkway or the “no action” (No Build) alternative. Publication of the final ED is anticipated to occur in late 2015.

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

Conducting an open and transparent process that provides multiple opportunities for community involvement is a key goal of the project. Members of the public are encouraged to participate during public meetings held to provide input and feedback during the project development and environmental review process. A meeting was held in November 2011 to provide information about the proposed project and receive public input on the issues to study during the environmental process. Public workshops with additional information were held in spring 2012 and spring 2013.

The next steps in the project development and environmental review process involve conducting environmental technical studies and preparing a draft ED for public review. Community members are encouraged to review the draft ED, which is anticipated to be released for public review in summer 2015, and provide written comments. A public meeting to discuss the draft ED is being planned for summer 2015. Release of the final ED is anticipated in late 2015. Following approval of the ED and project design, construction of the project would take place from 2018 - 2019, pending funding availability.

WHERE CAN I GO FOR MORE INFORMATION?

Go to www.ccta.net/projects/project/46

Call CCTA at (925) 256-4700

Email I680hovdarproject@gmail.com to ask questions, request information, or be added to our project mailing list.