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Note: A vertical line in the margin indicates changes in the text from the original Draft Initial Study/Environmental Assessment

Executive Summary

The proposed High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) connector is subject to review under both the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as amended (Public Resources Code [PRC] Section 21000 *et seq*.) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 United State Code [U.S.C.] 4321 *et seq*.). The Lead Agency for CEQA compliance is the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). The Lead Agency for NEPA compliance is the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Acronyms and abbreviations used in this Initial Study/ Environmental Assessment are identified in Section 89.0 of this document.

Project Description and Location

The proposed project is located at the northern end of the City of Los Angeles partially within city limits and partially within an unincorporated section of Los Angeles County, at the intersection of Interstate 5 and State Route 14. The exact project limits are from kilopost (KP) R70.9 along Interstate 5 to KP R41.2 along State Route 14 and KP R73.6 along Interstate 5. This proposal would provide system continuity for proposed HOV lanes on Route 5 (Golden State Freeway) and State Route 14 (Antelope Valley Freeway) by providing direct connections from northbound Route 5 to northbound Route 14 and southbound Route 14 to southbound Route 5 (see Figures 1-1 to 1-23).

Purpose and Need

The proposed project is intended to achieve the following objectives:

- Facilitate the efficient flow of goods and services through this area,
- Insure continued mobility of the public at the state, regional and local levels,
- Improve traffic safety,
- Increase capacity of the interchange and improve local access and circulation, and
- Conform to state, regional, and local plans and policies.

Route 14 currently experiences serious congestion while carrying substantial traffic volume through the study area during peak hours. Long-range projections indicate an increase in person trips along this freeway section associated with the continuing development along the project corridor. Travel demands and urban growth projections indicate that if no improvements are made, unacceptable levels of service would extend for longer periods of time, over larger sections during peak travel hours.

There is a critical need to eliminate existing and projected freeway congestion by improving the people carrying capacity of this interchange and to reduce the number of accidents. Improvements are also needed to allow for the continuity of the proposed interregional HOV system to the outlying communities of Palmdale and Lancaster. These improvements must be cost effective and minimize impacts to the environment to the maximum extent feasible.

Alternative 1: No Build

The No-Action Alternative would consist of not adding the proposed High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes to the I-5/SR-14 Interchange. The infrastructure in the project area would remain as it now exists and the current traffic conditions would continue. The No-Action Alternative would not result in fewer adverse environmental impacts, however, this alternative is not consistent with the long-term objective of reducing congestion and improving the overall operation and safety for the Route 5/ Route 14 interchange. Additionally, it doesn't allow for continuity of the proposed HOV system to the outlying communities of Palmdale and Lancaster.

Alternative 2

Alternative 2 is a proposal to construct a two-lane elevated HOV direct connector within the median areas of Route 5 and Route 14 to join the southbound and northbound HOV lanes on Route 5 and Route 14 (see Figures 2-1, 2-2). The roadway and bridges would be widened on the outside to provide the required widths. A ramping section would be provided to transition from at grade to the height of the elevated HOV connector. The HOV connector would finally join the existing median of Route 14.

In the northbound (NB) direction the Truck Route would be moved 3.9m (12.8 feet) to the right to provide the required width for the HOV lanes in the median. Additionally, a retaining wall would be constructed along the right shoulder of the NB Truck Route.

In the southbound (SB) direction, the Balboa Boulevard overcrossing off-ramp would be realigned which requires that the existing bridge be removed and reconstructed.

A bi-directional CHP enforcement area in the median on Route 5 is proposed for this project and would be located in

the NB direction.

The estimated cost for Alternative 2 is $44,400,000 in 1997 dollars. Right of way acquisition would be required for this alternative.

Alternative 3

Alternative 3, as shown on Figures 2-3 and 2-4, is a proposal to construct an elevated HOV direct connector to join the southbound and northbound HOV lanes on Route 5 and Route 14. This proposal would begin in the median of Route 5 and join in the median of Route 14 at the same location as in Alternative 2. However, the elevated HOV structure diverts to the northeast away from the median of the Route 5 alignment. The elevated HOV connector would run basically parallel but east of the existing mixed-flow connectors for Route 5 and Route 14. The structure would finally ramp down to join the median of Route 14 at the existing grade.

In the southbound direction, the Balboa Boulevard overcrossing off-ramp would be realigned which requires that the existing bridge be removed and reconstructed.

The limits of this alternative, from beginning in the median of Route 5 to the ending in the median of Route 14, are identical to Alternative 2. Also, a bi-directional CHP enforcement area is proposed in the same location as in Alternative 2.

The estimated cost for Alternative 3 is $54,000,000 in 1997 dollars. Right of way acquisition would be required for this alternative.

Environmental Impacts of the Alternatives

All potential impacts resulting from the build alternatives would be less than significant. Although no significant unavoidable impacts are expected as a result of project construction and operation, some environmental impacts may occur. The following measures to minimize harm are included as part of the project to reduce impacts to a less than significant level. The following is a summary of these measures that would be required as a result of this project.

Hazardous/Solid Waste

HAZ-1 In the event that excavation reveals unknown potentially hazardous materials, Caltrans policy would require work to be halted in the vicinity until the area in question is investigated and proper mitigation proposed.

HAZ-2 The contractor, prior to the start of construction, would identify borrow and disposal sites. At that time, impacts from the use of such borrow and disposal sites and associated haul routes would be investigated.

Modify channel of river or stream

CH-1 Application for permits with the pertinent agencies.

Water Quality

WQ-1 The contractor must provide a comprehensive water pollution and erosion control plan. The plan must be approved by the resident engineer and submitted for approval to the Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Quality Control Board 402 permit, National Pollution Discharge Elimination System - NPDES).

Wetlands

WET-1 Application for United States Army Corps of Engineers Nationwide 404 Permit.

Air Quality

AQ-1 Stabilize construction roads and dirt piles with water and/or chemicals twice daily.

AQ-2 Limit speeds on unpaved construction roads to 15 mph.

AQ-3 Daily removal of dirt spilled onto paved roads.

AQ-4 Cease grading and excavation activities when wind speeds exceed 25 miles per hour and during extreme air pollution episodes.

AQ-5 Require covering of all haul trucks.

AQ-6 Phase grading to minimize the area of disturbed soils.

AQ-7 Phase construction activities to minimize daily emissions.

AQ-8 Proper maintenance of construction vehicles to maximize efficiency and minimize erosion.

AQ-9 Prompt re-vegetation of roadsides.

Noise

NOI-1 Construction contractors would comply with all Caltrans and local noise ordinances that are applicable to construction activities.

NOI-2 Internal combustion engines used for construction would be equipped with the type of mufflers recommended by equipment manufacturers.

NOI-3 To the maximum extent feasible, the noisiest construction operations would be scheduled to occur together in the construction program to avoid continuing periods of greater disturbance to wildlife and to humans in the vicinity of construction activities.

Biology

BIO-1 The following permits would be required prior to construction

- *California Department of Fish and Game 1601 Streambed Alteration Agreement*
- *U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 404 Permit*
- *California Regional Water Quality Control Board 401 Certification*

BIO-2 Bridge work on the West Sylmar Overhead would occur between September 15th and March 1st to avoid impacts to a known bat colony in the project area.

BIO-3 No gasoline or diesel equipment would be operated under the West Sylmar Overhead between March 1st and September 15th to avoid impacts to a known bat colony in the project area.

BIO-4 If bat colonies are discovered at any other bridge, beside the West Sylmar Overhead, during the course of construction, work at that bridge will cease until further instructions are obtained from the appropriate resource agencies.

BIO-5 Bird surveys will be conducted if work occurs between March 1st to September 15th. If nesting birds are present, work in that area will cease until further instruction with appropriate resource agencies is obtained.

BIO-6 The contractor would prepare a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan or Water Pollution Control Plan. This plan would be submitted to, reviewed by, and approved by the Resident Engineer and the District Biologist prior to implementation.

BIO-7 New access routes would be recontoured to the original grade and revegetated upon completion of construction.

BIO-8 All disturbed areas would be revegetated with seed collected within a 2-mile radius of the

project site.

BIO-9 Exotic vegetation would be removed by either an approved Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) aquatic herbicide in streambed/riparian areas or an approved EPA herbicide for upland areas (considering the appropriate distance away from the streambed).

BIO-10 No debris (removed vegetation, trash, discarded materials, etc.) would be stored near a streambed, as defined as top of slope to top of slope.

BIO-11 No stockpiling of materials near or in a streambed, as defined as top of slope to top of slope.

BIO-12 No equipment maintenance in or near a streambed, as defined as top of slope to top of slope.

BIO-13 Protection from dust and debris would be part of the design scaffolding.

BIO-14 The revegetation plan would be approved by California Department of Fish and Game as

part of the Streambed Alteration Agreement (1601).

BIO-15 Yearly monitoring of the success of the revegetation plan with monitoring reports submitted to the resource agencies.

BIO-16 No alterations should occur to the hinges of the West Sylmar Overhead to avoid impacts to a known bat colony in the project area.

Utilities

UTIL-1 Coordination with Metrolink and the various utilities companies would be necessary. If any changes in utilities or Metrolink need to occur due to the proposed project, Caltrans permit and mitigation requirements are binding to the other agencies, unless they choose to prepare a separate environmental document.

Transportation Systems

TRAN-1 Consultation and Coordination will be required with Southern Pacific Railroad.

Cultural Resources

CUL-1 Although the project area has been surveyed for cultural resources and no archaeological sites have been identified, subsurface deposits may exist. If during project construction cultural materials appear, work will stop in the immediate area. The Caltrans District 7 Archaeologist will be notified upon such discovery and appropriate measures will be performed to mitigate the impacts to the resource. Work may only resume with approval from the Caltrans Archaeologist.

Aesthetics

AES-1 Aesthetic elements to enhance the structure would be included in project design. These elements shall include matching color to natural stone or earth and adding texture to structure supports, bridges, and rails.

Construction

CON-1 Contractors would be required to comply with all local noise regulations and ordinances as well as the State Standard Specifications restricting noise levels. In addition, vehicles and equipment would be equipped and maintained with the type of mufflers recommended by equipment manufacturers. Construction equipment would be operated and maintained to manufacturers' specifications.

CON-2 To the maximum extent feasible, the noisiest construction operations would be scheduled to occur together in the construction program to avoid continuing periods of greater disturbance to wildlife and persons in the vicinity of construction activities.

CON-3 Fugitive dust, emissions, and other pollutants normally associated with equipment and highway construction activities would be minimized to a level of insignificance by ensuring effective and rigid controls on activities during the construction phase as outlined in the Standard Specifications and special provisions. Construction vehicles and equipment would be maintained properly to minimize short-term air pollution emissions.

CON-4 Construction vehicles would be washed and cleaned as necessary to remove mud and other deposits prior to leaving the construction site.

CON-5 Construction techniques would be used to ensure the safety of construction workers and the general public. Such techniques would include the use of shoring and falsework to support structures under construction.

Required Permit Approvals

The following federal, state, and local permits would be required for implementation of the proposed project:

- California Department of Fish and Game 1601 Streambed Alteration Agreement
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 404 Permit
- California Regional Water Quality Control Board 401 Certification
- California Regional Water Quality Control Board 402, NPDES

1. Purpose and Need

1. Purpose of the Proposed Project

This environmental document analyzes the proposal to construct a two lane High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) connector from Interstate Route 5 (KP R70.9) to State Route 14 (KP R40.6). The proposed project is located at the northern end of the City of Los Angeles partially within the City of Los Angeles limits and partially within an unincorporated section of Los Angeles County (see Figures 1-1 to 1-23). The proposed project also lies approximately 1 mile south of the City of Santa Clarita. This proposal would provide system continuity for proposed HOV lanes on Interstate Route 5 (Golden State Freeway) and State Route 14 (Antelope Valley Freeway) by providing direct connections from northbound Route 5 to northbound Route 14 and southbound Route 14 to southbound Route 5. The proposed project is intended to achieve the following objectives:

- Facilitate the efficient flow of goods and services through this area,
- Insure continued mobility of the public at the state, regional and local levels,
- Improve traffic safety,
- Increase capacity of the interchange and improve local access and circulation, and
- Conform to state, regional, and local plans and policies.

1. **Need for the Proposed Project**

This section documents the need for the proposed improvement to the Interstate 5/State Route 14 interchange. The following discussion focuses on deficiencies in the existing interchange, constraints in capacity, and accident rates.

1. **Operational Deficiencies**

Route 5 is part of the National Highway System and is designated as an Interstate Highway. Route 5 is a major north-south interstate route that is used for international, interstate, interregional travel, commuting, and goods movement. Land use along Route 5 south of the project area is classified as highly urbanized, primarily industrial, commercial, residential, however, the area is undeveloped within the proposed project limits.

Route 14 is primarily a commuter freeway providing access to the greater Los Angeles metropolitan area with major employment centers and recreational areas along the corridor. Communities that are served by Route 14 experience an imbalance of housing and jobs. This imbalance causes most of the residents of these developing corridor communities to commute long distances.

During winter months when weather can impede traffic along Route 5, travelers utilize Route 14 as an alternate. Compounding this congestion is the fact that Route 14 is also designated as a Super Truck Route (STR) and is part of the SHELL System (Subsystem of Highways for the movement of Extra Legal Permit Loads). This designation promotes the use of Route 14 by trucks.

Los Angeles Regional Transportation Study (LARTS) information which uses the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) socioeconomic data as its base, forecasts that Route 14 will be congested by the year 2010. Congestion occurs in both the morning (southbound/inbound) and evening (northbound/outbound) commute peak periods. The traffic volumes are highest at the junction of Route 5 and Route 14. Peak direction traffic is highest in this area as morning commuters from Route 14 corridor communities merge with other inbound commuters onto Route 5.

2. **Capacity Constraints**

Roadway capacity is generally measured by the number of vehicles that can pass over a given section of roadway during a specified period of time. This capacity is usually considered in terms of Levels of Service (LOS) where different levels of service represent different levels of congestion.

The Highway Capacity Manual defines six levels of service, A through F, where A represents free flow conditions and F being the most congested. For areas where traffic volumes exceed level F in an adverse way, Caltrans has developed a LOS classification that includes levels F0 through F3. The LOS along this segment of the corridor is D (see Table 1-1).

Table 1-1

Levels of Service

Level of Service	Description	Characteristics
A	Free Flow (Best) 55+ mph	Low volumes, high speeds, selectivity. Drivers not impaired by other traffic.
B	Stable Flow 55+ mph	Operating speeds beginning to be restricted by traffic conditions.
C	Stable Flow (Design Value) 50+ mph	Volume restricts driver's speed and maneuverability: suitable for urban design.
D	Approaching Unstable Flow 35-50 mph	Temporary restrictions cause drop in volume speed; comfort convenience is low but tolerable for short periods of time.
E	Unstable Flow 30-35 mph	Speeds on freeway at 30 mph with momentary stoppages. Unsuitable for use in design.
F	Forced Flow < 30 mph	Low speeds, many stoppages on freeways, long queues, and long delays: Roadway becomes storage area.
F0		Congestion delay of 0-1 hour
F1		Congestion delay of 1-2 hour
F2		Congestion delay of 2-3 hour
F3		Congestion delay of more than 3 hours

Traffic in the study area can also be expressed in terms of the Average Daily Traffic (ADT). The following tables illustrate future Average Daily Traffic for the build and no build alternatives and also anticipated peak hour volumes along this stretch of roadway.

Table 1-2

No Build Average Daily Traffic

	Southbound		Northbound	
	2008	**2025**	**2008**	**2025**
MFL Volume	59000	93000	59000	93000
HDT	0	0	0	0
MDT	1650	2650	1650	2650
LDT	10915	18228	10915	18228

MFL – Mixed Flow Lanes

HDT – Heavy Duty Trucks

MDT- Medium Duty Trucks

LDT – Light Duty Trucks

Table 1-3

Build Average Daily Traffic

	Southbound		Northbound	
	2008	**2025**	**2008**	**2025**
MFL Volume	49000	76000	49000	76000
HOV	10000	17000	10000	17000

MFL – Mixed Flow Lanes

HOV – High Occupancy Vehicle

Table 1-4

No Build AM/PM Peak Hour Volumes

	2008 Southbound		**2025 Southbound**		**2008 Northbound**		**2025 Northbound**	
	AM	**PM**	**AM**	**PM**	**AM**	**PM**	**AM**	**PM**
MFL Volume	6200	2800	9700	4400	2800	6200	4400	9700
Speed	20	59	5	41	59	20	41	5
HDT	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

MDT	174	79	276	125	79	174	125	276
LDT	1147	518	1900	862	518	1147	862	1900

MFL – Mixed Flow Lanes

HDT – Heavy Duty Trucks

MDT- Medium Duty Trucks

LDT – Light Duty Trucks

Table 1-5

Build AM/PM Peak Hour Volumes

	2008 Southbound		**2025 Southbound**		**2008 Northbound**		**2025 Northbound**	
	AM	**PM**	**AM**	**PM**	**AM**	**PM**	**AM**	**PM**
MFL Volume	4100	2500	6900	4000	2500	4100	4000	6900
Speed	45	60	13	46	60	45	46	13
HOV Volumes	2100	300	2800	400	300	2100	400	2800
Speed	44	65	26	65	65	44	65	26

MFL – Mixed Flow Lanes

HOV – High Occupancy Vehicle

These projected increases in congestion are due to a number of factors including:

- Current and projected development in the communities of the Santa Clarita Valley and the Antelope Valley,
- The fact that Route 14 is the sole freeway into the Antelope Valley,
- The current and projected imbalance of houses to employment opportunities which causes many residents in these communities to commute long distances, and
- Route 14 provides the only freeway access to Fox Airport in Lancaster, the Palmdale Airport, and the Agua Dulce Airport, as well as several recreational points of interest (such as Vasquez Rocks County Park, Los Padres National Forest, Angeles National Forest, and the Lake Hughes Recreational Area).

Ridesharing opportunities currently exist along the corridor in the form of park-and-ride lots, express bus service provided by the Antelope Valley Transit Authority and Santa Clarita Transit Authority, rideshare matching services, and other programs. These rideshare incentives have increased the number of persons per vehicle, however, they have not adequately reduced congestion experienced along portions of the freeway corridor.

A project is needed that would provide a queue by-pass for rideshare vehicles which would increase the capacity of the freeway and improve the LOS to an acceptable level. Improvements should result in a reduction of traffic densities that would increase headways, enhancing the safety of Route 14 in the study area. The project should also increase the people carrying capacity of the route, and reduce congestion along the freeway and local streets during peak periods.

1. **Accident Analysis**

   Based on the Traffic Accident Surveillance and Analysis System (TASAS) output data obtained between July 1992 to July 1996, the Accidents (ACC) per Million Vehicle Miles (MVM) on Route 5 and Route 14 were as follows:

   On Route 5, the actual accident rate was 0.80 ACC/MVM (northbound) and 0.77 ACC/MVM (southbound) along this segment, which is higher than the statewide average of 0.75 ACC/MVM for a similar facility.

   On Route 14, the actual accident rate was 0.43 ACC/MVM (northbound) and 0.72 ACC/MVM (southbound) compared to the statewide average of 0.68 ACC/MVM for a similar facility.

   Most accidents that occurred were rear-ends, hit objects, and sideswipes which are typically associated with congestion. Providing the HOV connectors would relieve the congestion, reduce accident rates, and improve the operating conditions and safety of both Routes 5 and 14.

2. **Summary of Transportation Problems**

Route 14 currently experiences serious congestion while carrying substantial traffic volume through the study area during peak hours. Long-range projections indicate an increase in person trips along this freeway section associated with the continuing development along the project corridor. Travel demands and urban growth projections indicate

that if no improvements are made, unacceptable levels of service would extend for longer periods of time, over larger sections during peak travel hours.

There is a critical need to eliminate existing and projected freeway congestion by improving the people carrying capacity of this interchange and to reduce the number of accidents. Improvements are also needed to allow for the continuity of the proposed interregional HOV system to the outlying communities of Palmdale and Lancaster. These improvements must be cost effective and minimize impacts to the environment to the maximum extent feasible.

1. **Scope of This Environmental Analysis**
    1. **History of the Planning and Scoping Process**

        The I-5/SR-14 High Occupancy Vehicle Project was initiated with a Project Study Report (PSR). The PSR is a project initiation document that is required for all major projects prior to their being programmed in a state or local programming document. The PSR for this project was completed in March of 1997. A Preliminary Environmental Assessment was prepared concurrently with the PSR in order to identify the environmental issues and anticipated environmental impacts of the proposed project. An Environmental Significance Checklist was prepared as part of the Preliminary Environmental Assessment and is included in this Initial Study/Environmental Assessment (IS/EA).

    2. **Related Environmental Documents**

Relevant information from the Initial Study/Environmental Assessment for the Antelope Valley Freeway High Occupancy Vehicle Lane (1994) and its subsequent reevaluation (1998) has been incorporated into this document.

Additionally, there are various projects located in and around the City of Santa Clarita along Interstate 5 that have accompanying environmental documents. The projects themselves are discussed in detail in the following chapter.

The following Technical Reports have also been prepared for this proposal: Geotechnical Report, Noise Investigation, Initial Site Assessment (ISA), Archaeological Survey Report, Visual Impact Assessment, Air Quality Conformity Analysis, Hydraulics Study, Physical Environmental Report, Natural Environmental Study Report, Natural Environmental Study Report Reevaluation, Historic Property Survey Report, and Historic Resource Evaluation Report. All of these reports are referenced in the creation of this document and are available under separate cover.

1. **Description of the Proposed Project and Alternatives Considered**
    1. **Project Description**

        The proposed project is located at the northern end of the City of Los Angeles partially within the City of Los Angeles limits and partially within an unincorporated section of Los Angeles County. The proposed project also lies approximately 1.6 kilometer (1 mile) south of the City of Santa Clarita. The proposal is located at the interchange of Interstate Route 5 and State Route 14 between kilopost (KP) 70.9 and 73.6 along Route 5 and from KP 39.9 and 41.2 along Route 14.

        Three alternatives were studied in the Project Study Report (PSR) (Caltrans, March 1997), including a no-action alternative and two build alternatives. Alternatives 2 and 3, the build alternatives, deal with improving congestion, traffic flow and the level of service, along with reducing accident rates. The build alternatives propose to construct a two-lane High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) connector from Route 5 to Route 14 by widening on the outside of the existing roadways and bridges. The improvements proposed in these two alternatives provide the necessary roadway widths for future extension of the HOV lanes on Route 5 from the Route 5/14 interchange northward.

    2. **Alternative 1: No-Action Alternative**

        The No-Action Alternative would consist of not adding the proposed High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes to the I-5/SR-14 Interchange. The infrastructure in the project area would remain as it now exists and the current traffic conditions would continue. The No-Action Alternative would not result in adverse environmental impacts, however, this alternative is not consistent with the long-term objective of reducing congestion and improving the overall operation and safety for the Route 5/Route 14 interchange. Additionally, it doesn't allow for continuity of the proposed HOV system to the outlying communities of Palmdale and Lancaster.

    3. **Alternative 2**

        Alternative 2 is a proposal to construct a two-lane elevated HOV direct connector within the median areas of Route 5 and Route 14 to join the southbound and northbound HOV lanes on Route 5 and Route 14 (see Figures 2-1, 2-2). The roadway and bridges would be widened on the outside to provide the required widths. A ramping section would be provided to transition from at grade to the height of the elevated HOV connector. The HOV connector would finally join the existing median of Route 14.

        In the northbound (NB) direction the Truck Route would be moved 3.9m (12.8 feet) to the right to provide the required width for the HOV lanes in the median. Additionally, a retaining wall would be constructed along the right shoulder of the NB Truck Route.

        In the southbound (SB) direction, the Balboa Boulevard overcrossing off-ramp would be realigned which requires that the existing bridge be removed and reconstructed.

        A bi-directional CHP enforcement area in the median on Route 5 is proposed for this project and would be located in the NB direction.

        The estimated cost for Alternative 2 is $44,400,000 in 1997 dollars. Right of way acquisition would be required for this alternative.

    4. **Alternative 3**

Alternative 3, as shown on Figures 2-3 and 2-4, is a proposal to construct an elevated HOV direct connector to join the southbound and northbound HOV lanes on Route 5 and Route 14. This proposal would begin in the median of Route 5 and join in the median of Route 14 at the same location as in Alternative 2. However, the elevated HOV structure diverts to the northeast away from the median of the Route 5 alignment. The elevated HOV connector would run basically parallel but east of the existing mixed-flow connectors for Route 5 and Route 14. The structure would finally ramp down to join the median of Route 14 at the existing grade.

In the southbound direction, the Balboa Boulevard overcrossing off-ramp would be realigned which requires that the existing bridge be removed and reconstructed.

The limits of this alternative, from beginning in the median of Route 5 to the ending in the median of Route 14, are identical to Alternative 2. Also, a bi-directional CHP enforcement area is proposed in the same location as in Alternative 2.

The estimated cost for Alternative 3 is $54,000,000 in 1997 dollars. Right of way acquisition would be required for this alternative.

5. **Current Programming Status of the Proposed Project**

The Direct HOV Connector proposed in this IS/EA is identified in the Draft 2000/01 – 05/06 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) prepared by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). The project is also identified in the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority's (LACMTAs) 1999 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) "Call for Projects" listing.

6. **Related Roadway Projects**

Related roadway improvements in the project area include the following:

- A proposal to add a High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane in each direction in the median on Route 5 from Route 118 (KP 63.4) to Route 14 (KP 73.4) is a Caltrans sponsored project that would ultimately connect with the HOV lanes proposed in this environmental document. This proposal is within the City of Los Angeles. The proposed construction start date for this project is in the 2002-03 fiscal year.

- Currently under construction is the Caltrans sponsored project to widen Route 14 by adding a High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane in each direction from San Fernando Road in Santa Clarita to Avenue P-8 overcrossing in the City of Palmdale.

- A proposal to reconstruct the median on Route 14 to add High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes from Route 5 to San Fernando Road is a Caltrans sponsored project. This project would ultimately connect with the HOV lanes proposed in this environmental document and the previously described project in this section. Construction is scheduled to begin in early 2001 and end in late 2002.

- Interchange improvements are proposed at the I-5/Valencia Boulevard overcrossing. Improvements include modifying the ramp configurations, replacing the existing bridge, and construction of a new southbound direct on-ramp. This proposal is partially in the City of Santa Clarita and partially in an unincorporated area of Los Angeles County. The proposed construction start date for this project is July 2000.

- Interchange improvements are proposed at the I-5/Magic Mountain Parkway interchange, partially located in the City of Santa Clarita and partially within an unincorporated area of Los Angeles County. Proposed improvements include upgrading the freeway interchange and widening and realigning Magic Mountain Parkway from Fairway's Entrance to McBean Parkway. The anticipated construction start date for Phase I of this project is April of 2001.

- A proposal to replace the Santa Clara River Bridge along interstate 5 is a Caltrans sponsored project. This proposal is partially in the City of Santa Clarita and partially in an unincorporated area of Los Angeles County. The proposal would replace the existing northbound and southbound structures with a single structure due to degradation of the riverbed surrounding the Santa Clara River Bridge pilings. The anticipated construction start date for this project is April of 2001.

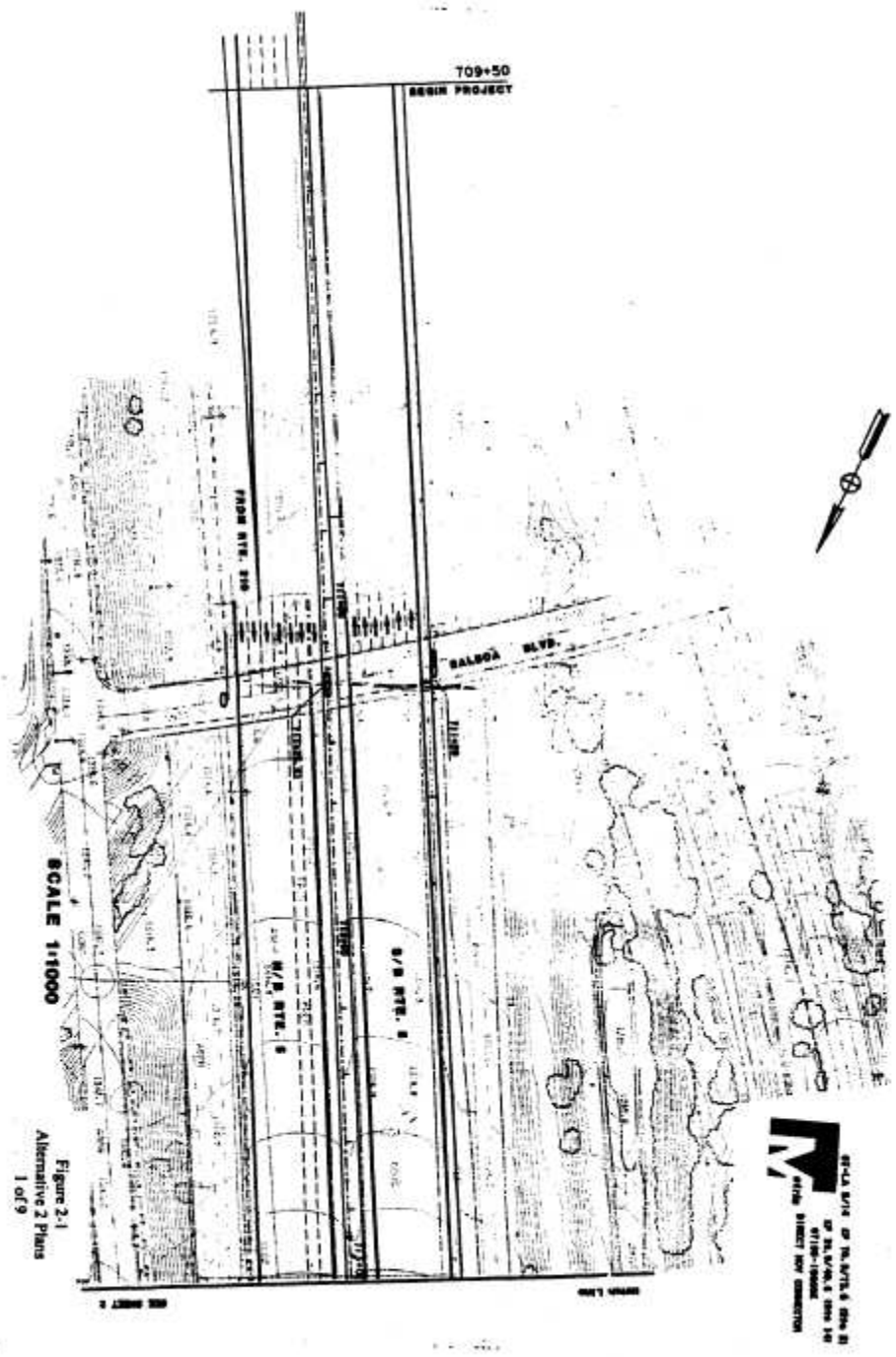

Figure 2-1
Alternative 2 Plans
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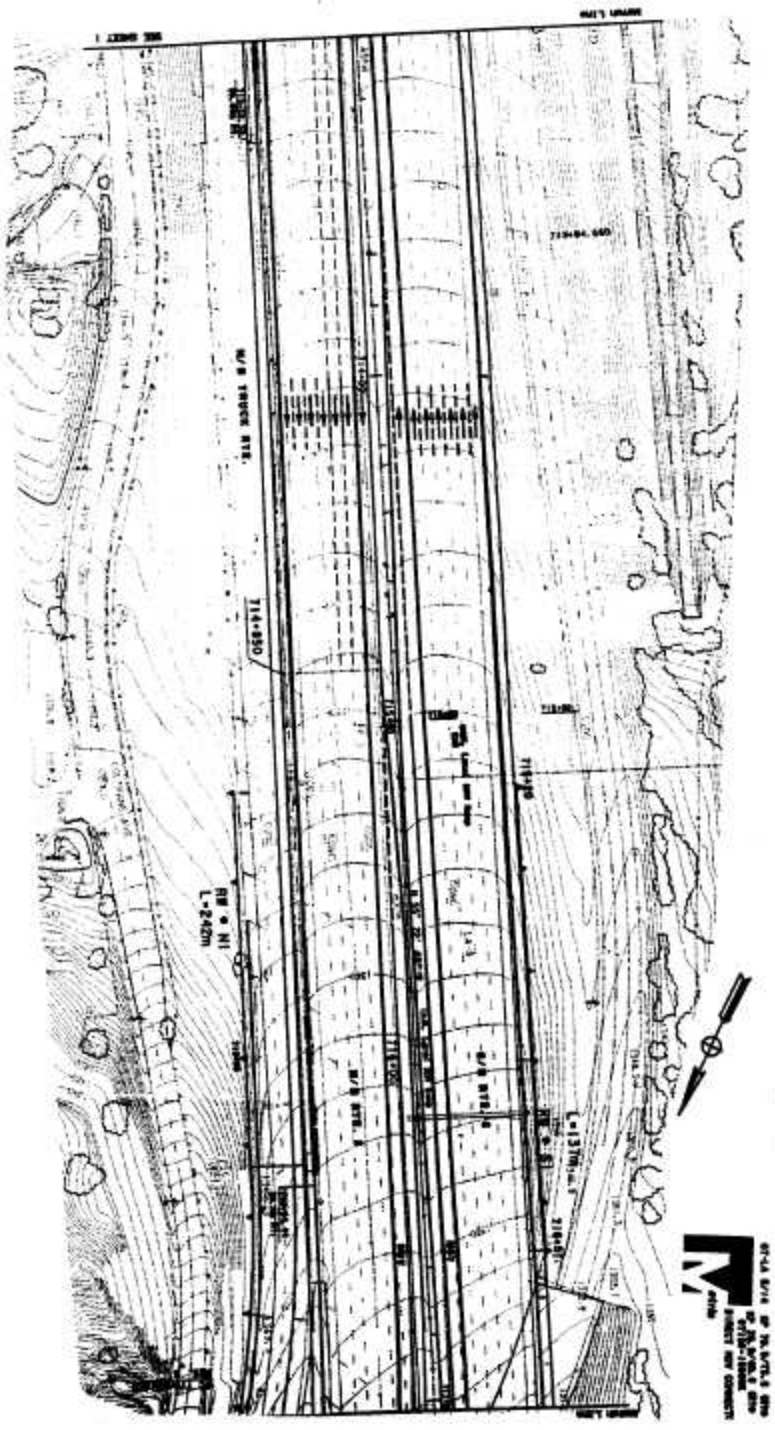

Figure 2-1
Alternative 2 Plans
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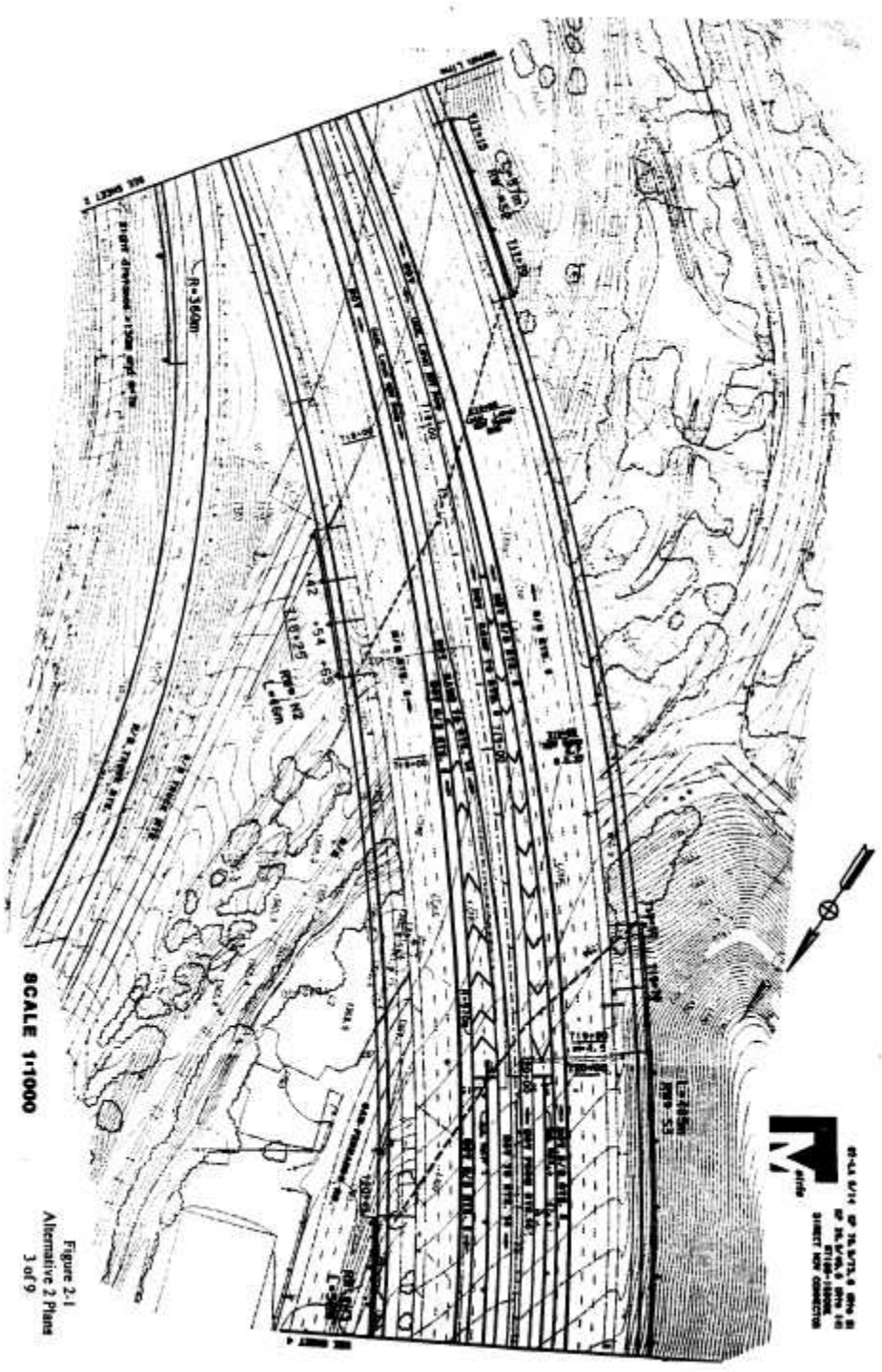

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Figure 2-1
Alternative 2 Plans
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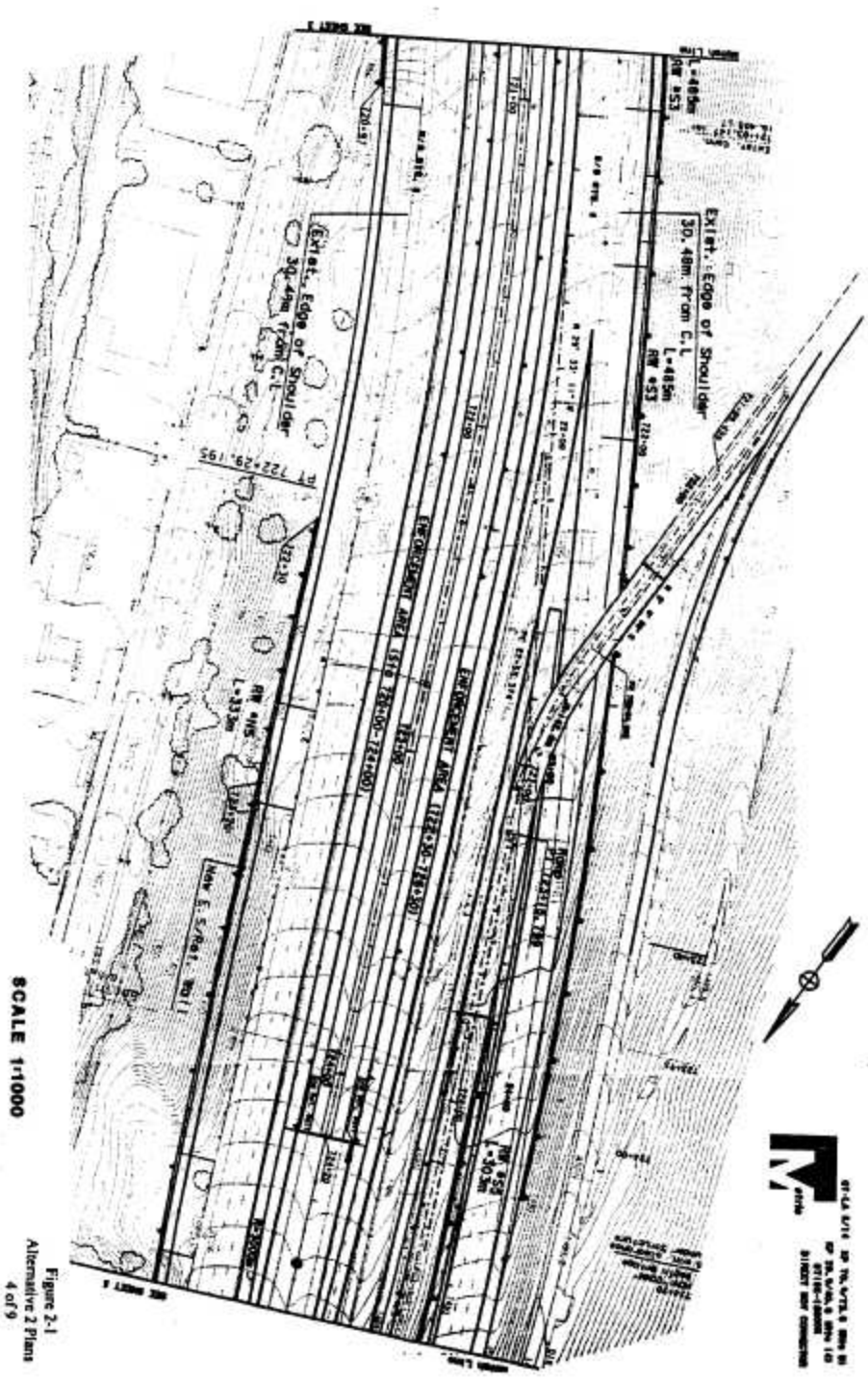

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Figure 2-1
Alternative 2 Plans
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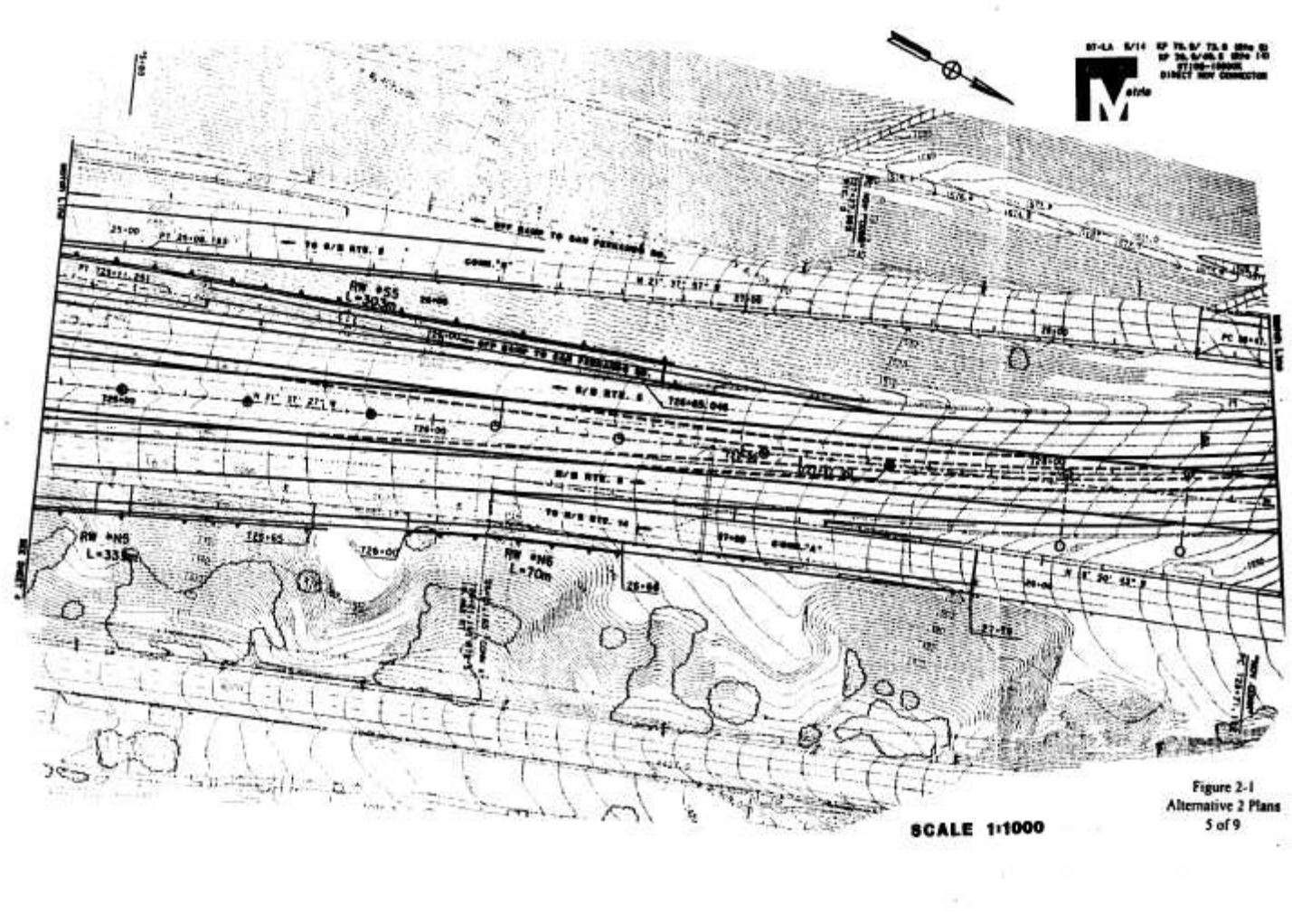

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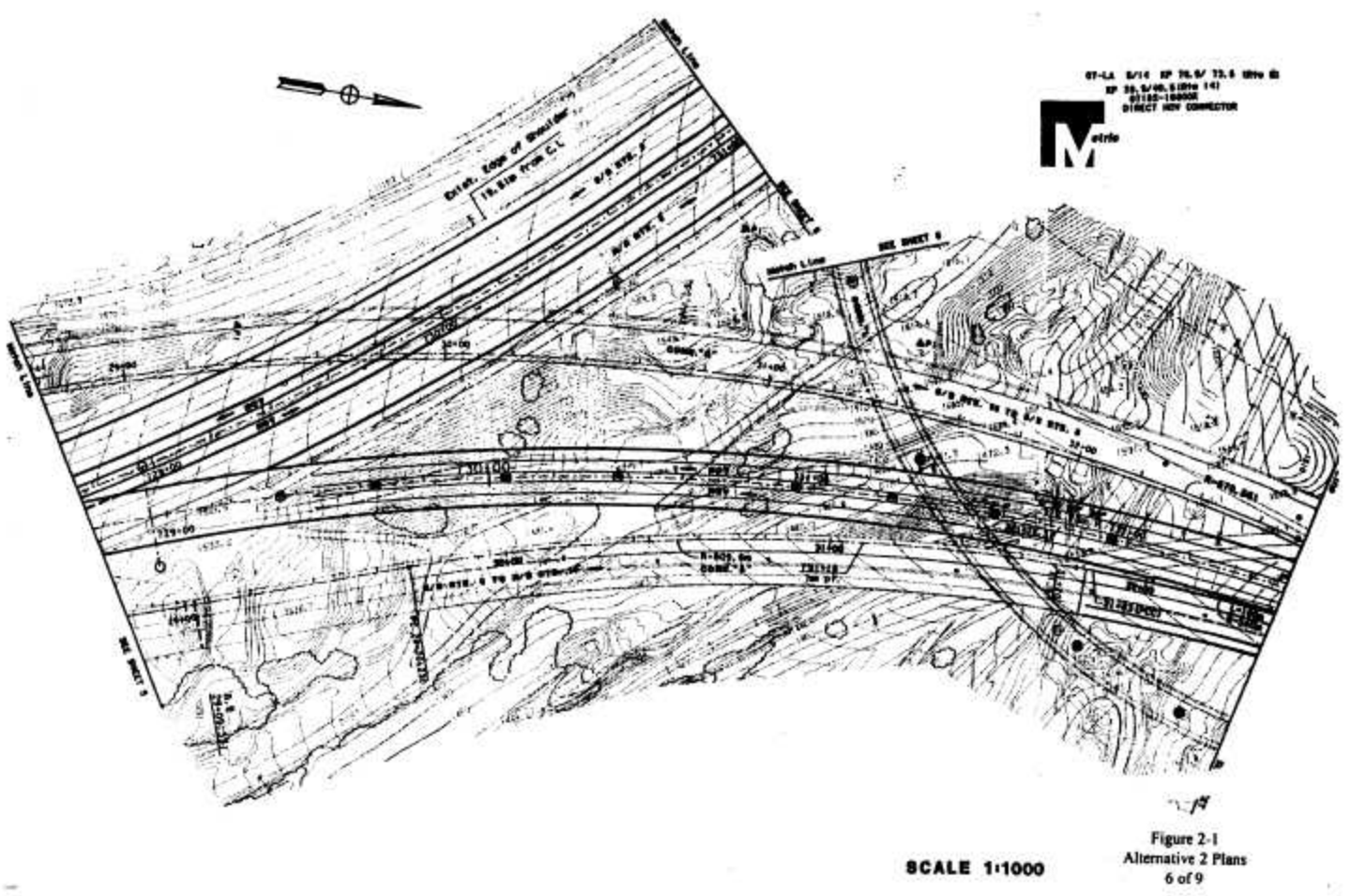
Figure 2-1
Alternative 2 Plans
5 of 9



SCALE 1:1000

Figure 2-1
Alternative 2 Plans
6 of 9

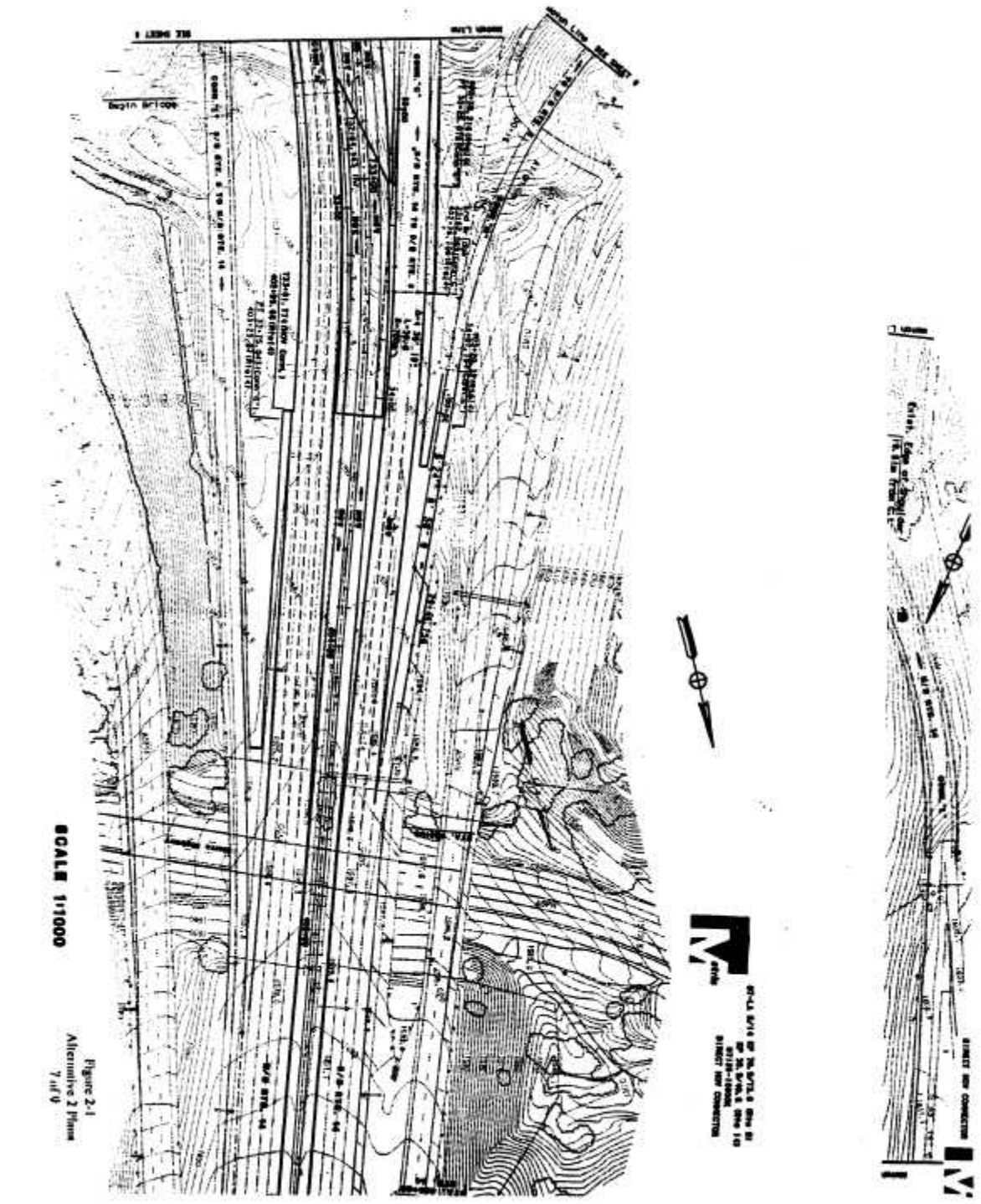


Figure 2-1
Alternative 2 Plans
7 of 9

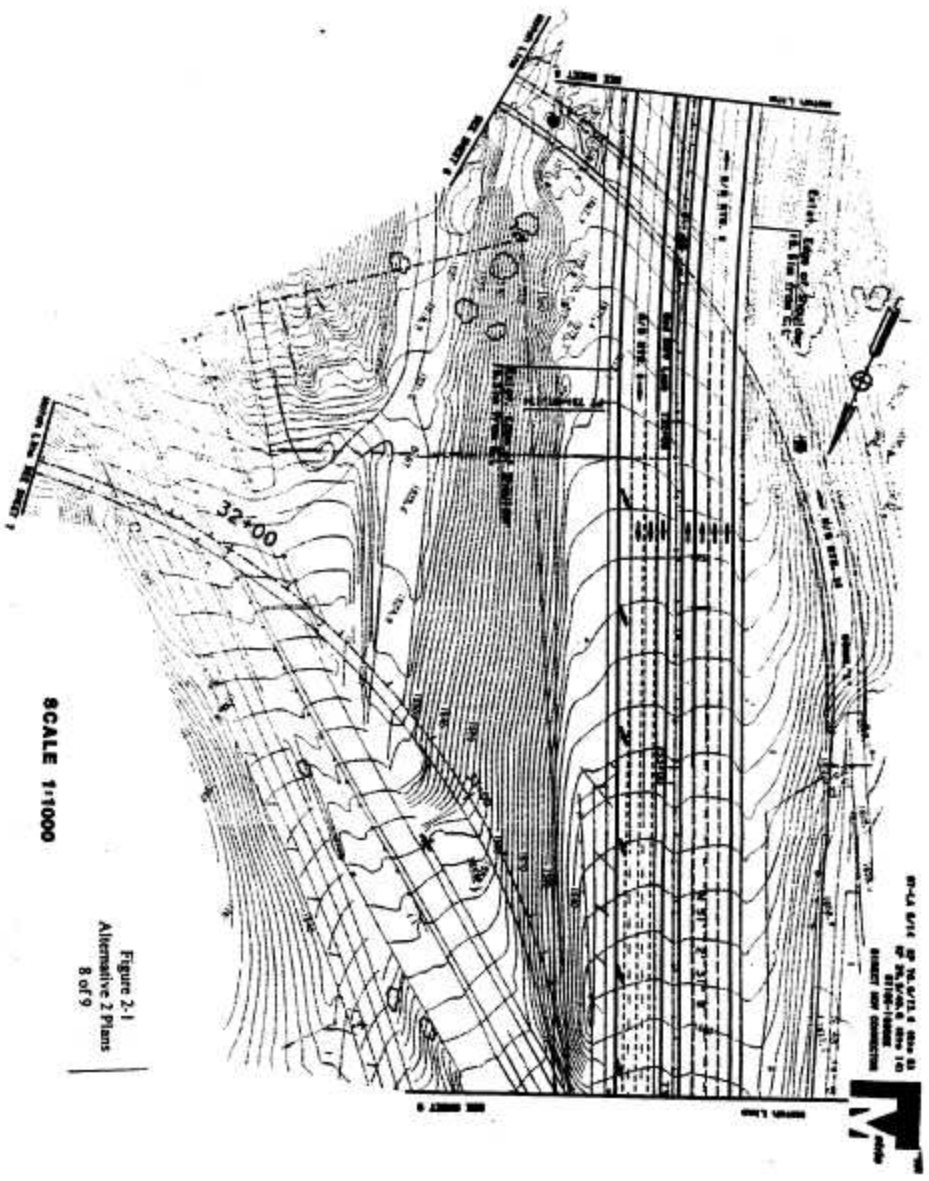


Figure 2-1
Alternative 2 Plans
8 of 9

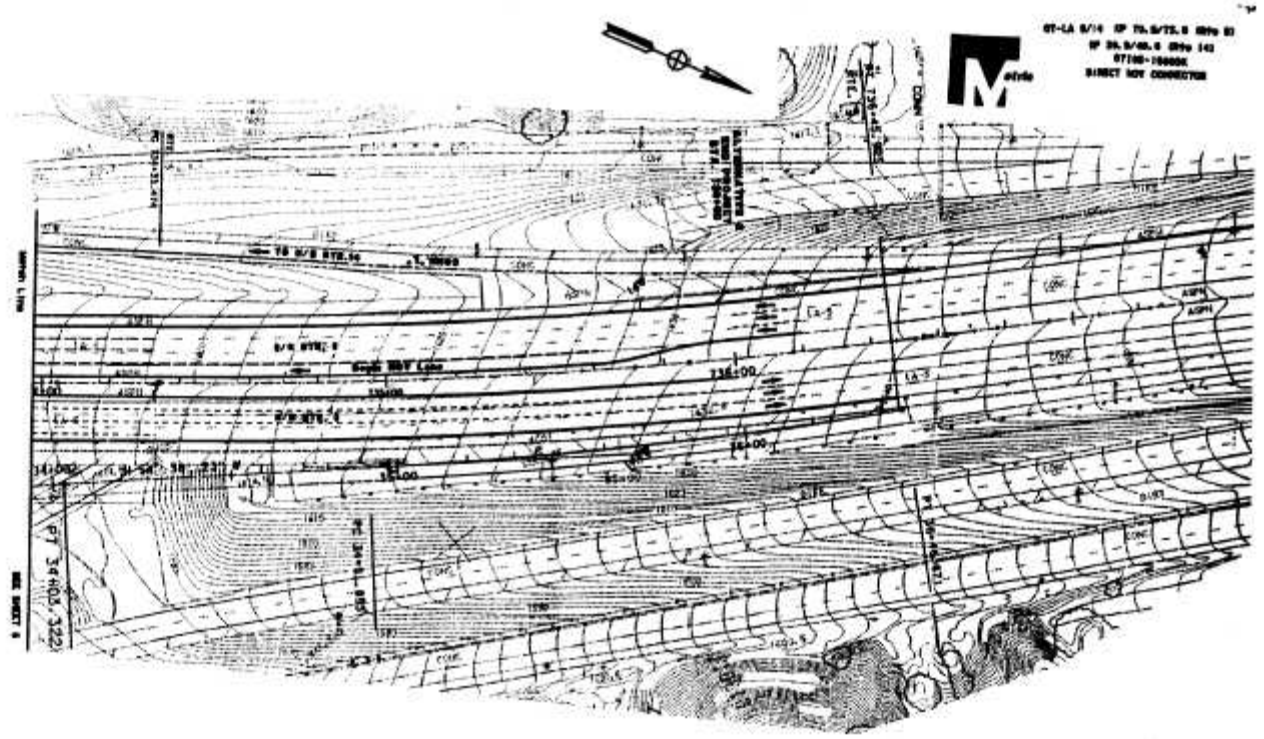


Figure 2-1
Alternative 2 Plans
9 of 9

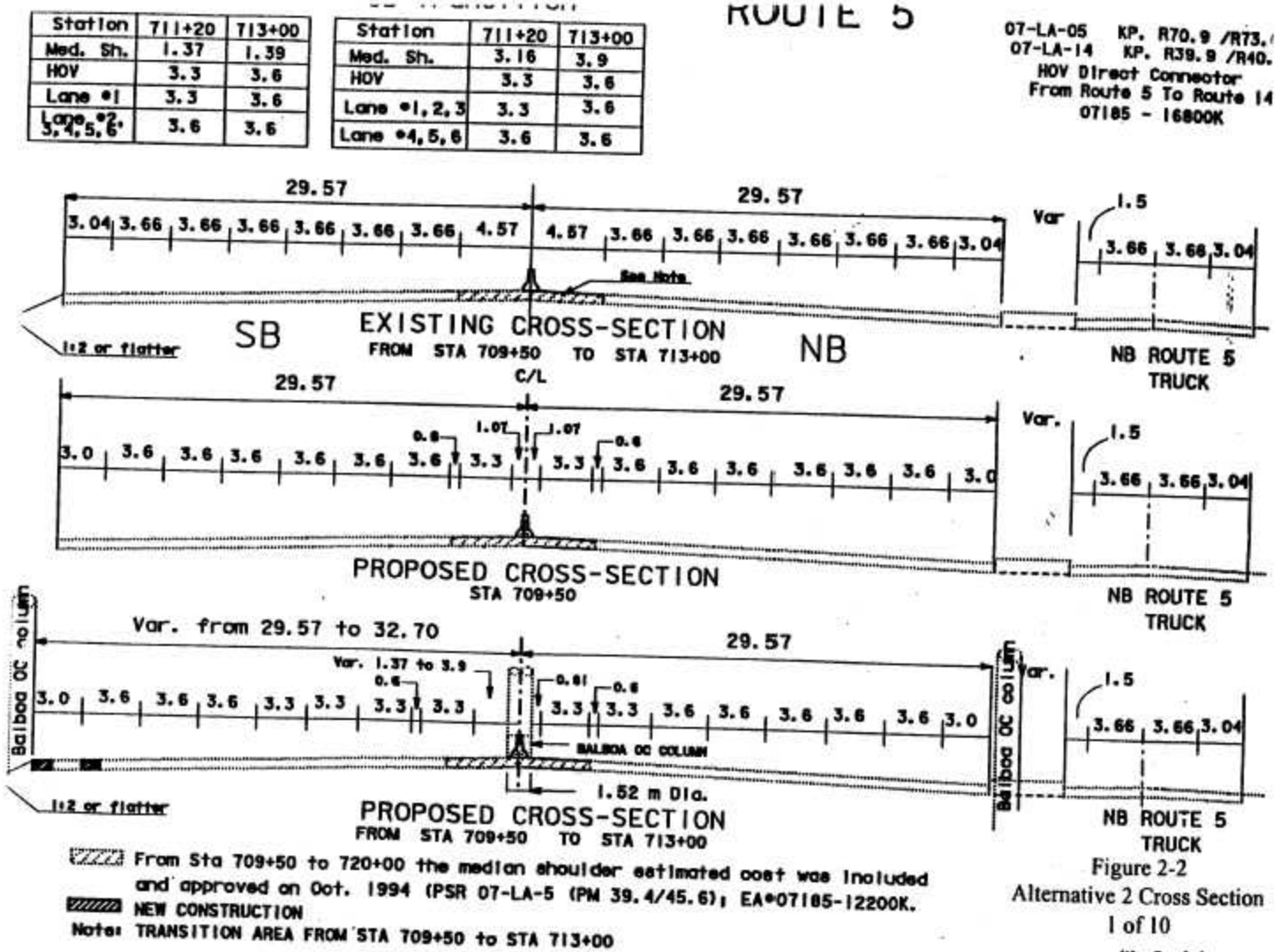
SCALE 1:1000

Station	711+20	713+00
Med. Sh.	1.37	1.39
HOV	3.3	3.6
Lane #1	3.3	3.6
Lane #2, 3, 4, 5, 6	3.6	3.6

Station	711+20	713+00
Med. Sh.	3.16	3.9
HOV	3.3	3.6
Lane #1, 2, 3	3.3	3.6
Lane #4, 5, 6	3.6	3.6

ROUTE 5

07-LA-05 KP. R70.9 /R73.
07-LA-14 KP. R39.9 /R40.
HOV Direct Connector
From Route 5 To Route 14
07185 - 16800K



From Sta 709+50 to 720+00 the median shoulder estimated cost was included and approved on Oct. 1994 (PSR 07-LA-5 (PM 39.4/45.6); EA#07185-12200K.

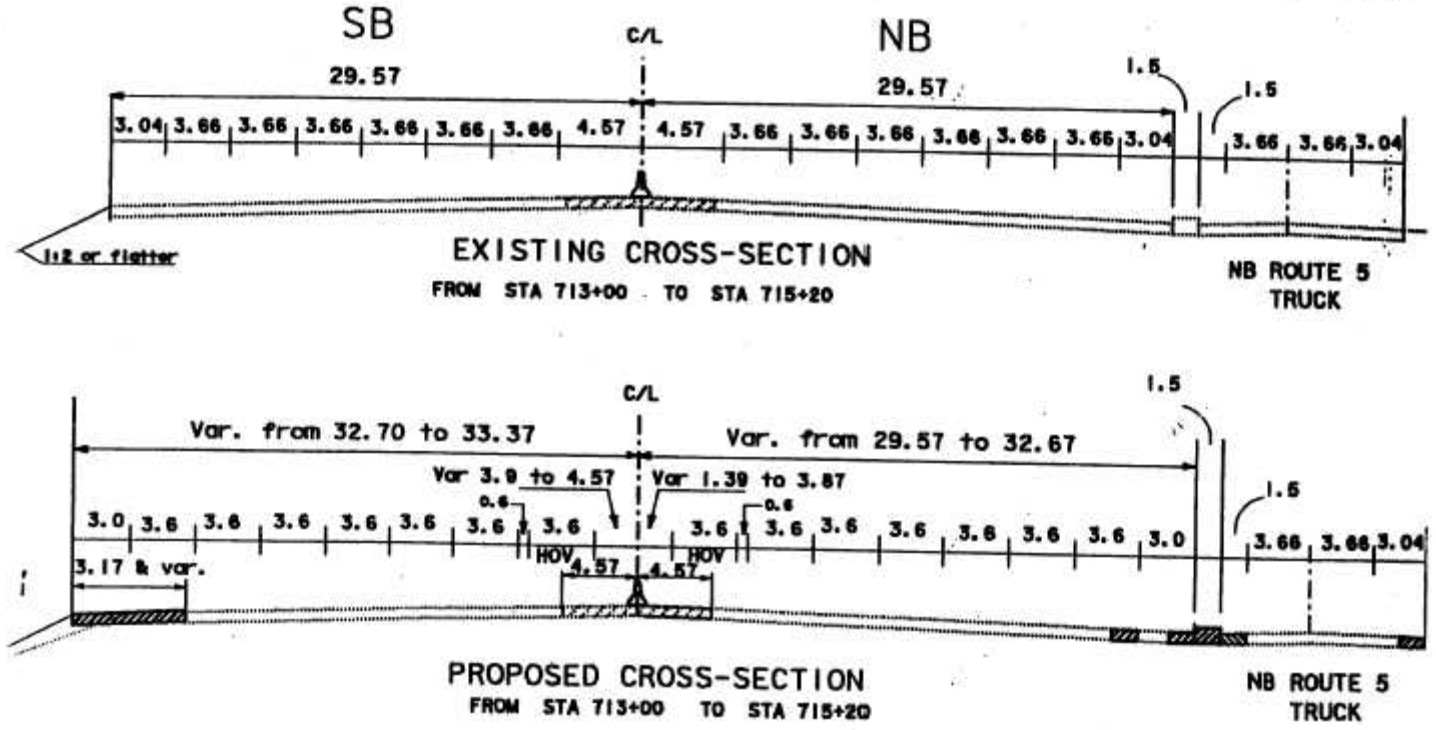
NEW CONSTRUCTION

Note: TRANSITION AREA FROM STA 709+50 to STA 713+00

Figure 2-2
Alternative 2 Cross Section
1 of 10
(No Scale)

ROUTE 5

07-LA-05 KP. R70.9 /R1
07-LA-14 KP. R39.9 /R
HOV Direct Connector
From Route 5 To Route
07185 - 16800K



From Sta 709+50 to 720+00 the median shoulder estimated cost was included and approved on Oct. 1994 (PSR 07-LA-5 (PM 39.4/45.6); EA*07185-12200K.

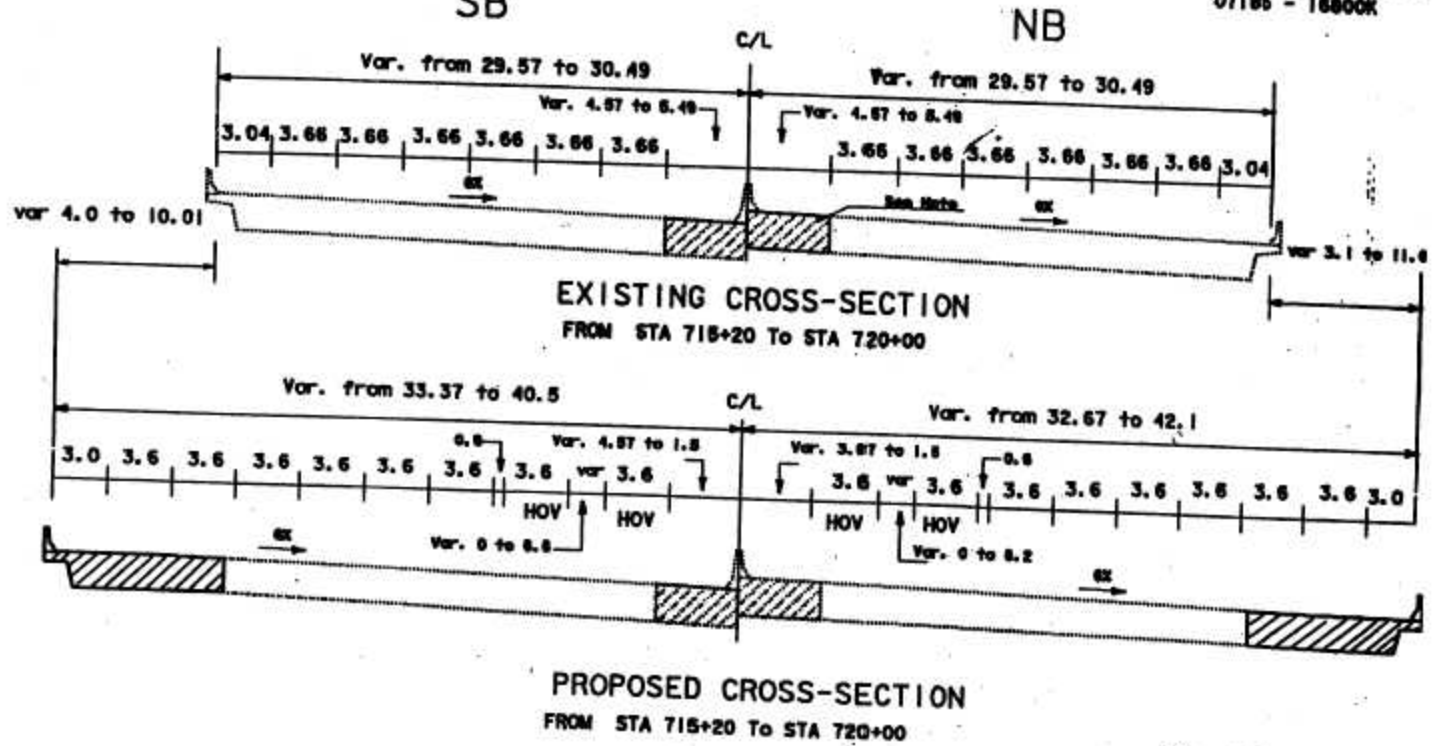
NEW CONSTRUCTION

Figure 2-2
Alternative 2 Cross Section
2 of 10

(No Scale)

ROUTE 5

07-LA-05 KP. R70.9 /R73.
07-LA-14 KP. R39.9 /R40.
HOV Direct Connector
From Route 5 To Route 1
07185 - 16800K



From Sta 709+50 to 720+00 the median shoulder estimated cost was included and approved on Oct. 1994 (PSR 07-LA-5 (PM 39.4/45.6); EA*07185-12200K.

NEW CONSTRUCTION

Note: TRANSITION AREA FROM STA 709+50 to STA 713+00

Figure 2-2
Alternative 2 Cross Section
3 of 10

(No Scale)

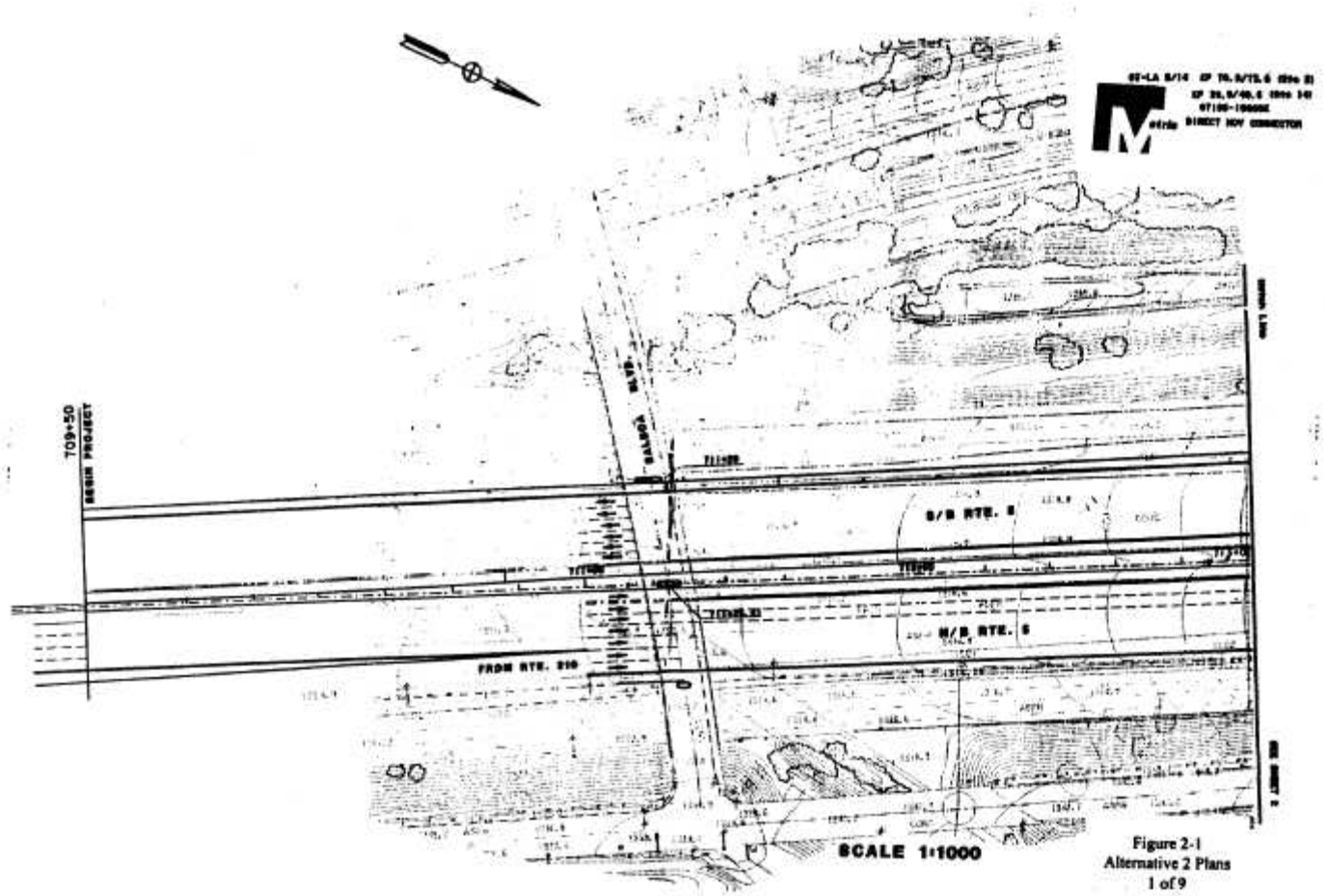


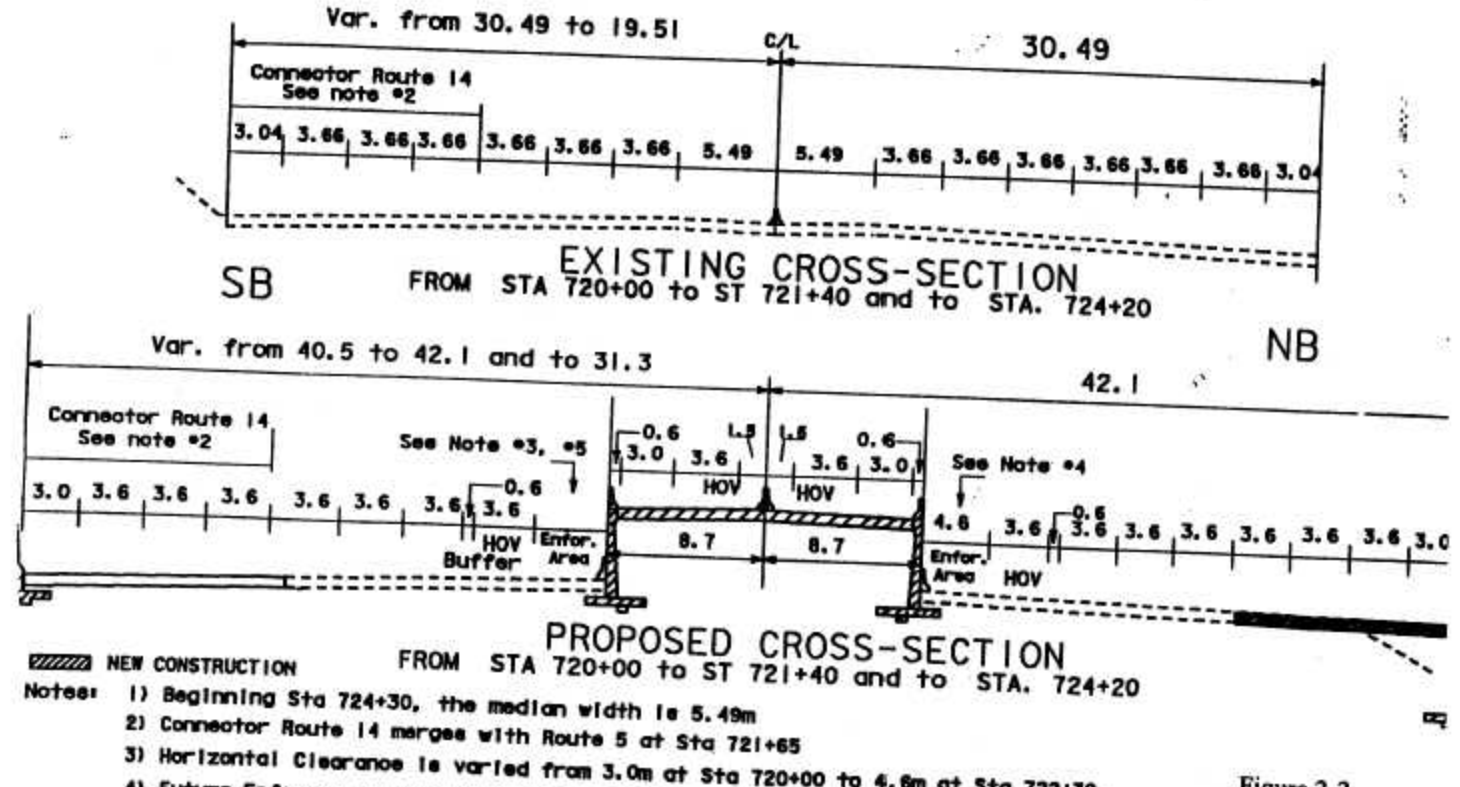
Figure 2-1
Alternative 2 Plans
1 of 9

SB Transition

Station	720+00	721+40	724+20
Side Clearance	3.0	4.30	4.60
Total Lane	6	6	3
Total Width	40.50	42.10	31.3

ROUTE 5

07-LA-05 KP. R70.9 /R73.(
07-LA-14 KP. R39.9 /R40.6
HOV Direct Connector
From Route 5 To Route 14
07185 - 16800K



Notes:
1) Beginning Sta 724+30, the median width is 5.49m
2) Connector Route 14 merges with Route 5 at Sta 721+65
3) Horizontal Clearance is varied from 3.0m at Sta 720+00 to 4.6m at Sta 722+30
4) Future Enforcement Area NB from Sta 720+00 to Sta 724+00
5) Future Enforcement Area on SB From Sta 722+30 to Sta 726+20

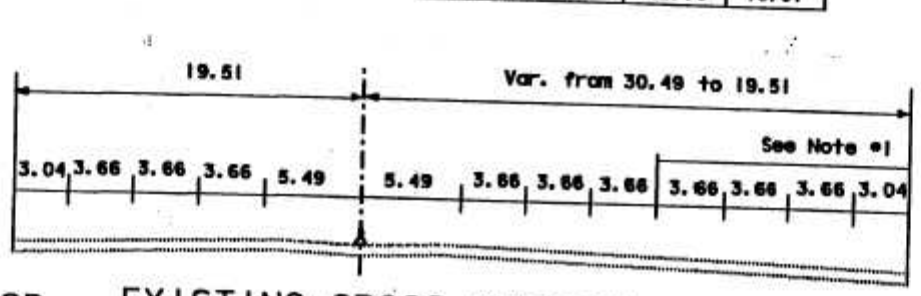
Figure 2-2
Alternative 2 Cross Section
4 of 10
(No Scale)

Station	724+20	727+10
Median Shoulder	13.3	1.81
Lane HOV Width	3.6	3.6
Lane #1, #2, #3	3.6	3.6
Total Width	31.3	19.81

Station	724+20	727+10
Median Shoulder	13.3	1.81
Lane HOV Width	3.6	3.6
Lane #1, #2, #3	3.6	3.6
Lane #4, #5, #6	3.6	N/A
Total Width	42.10	19.81

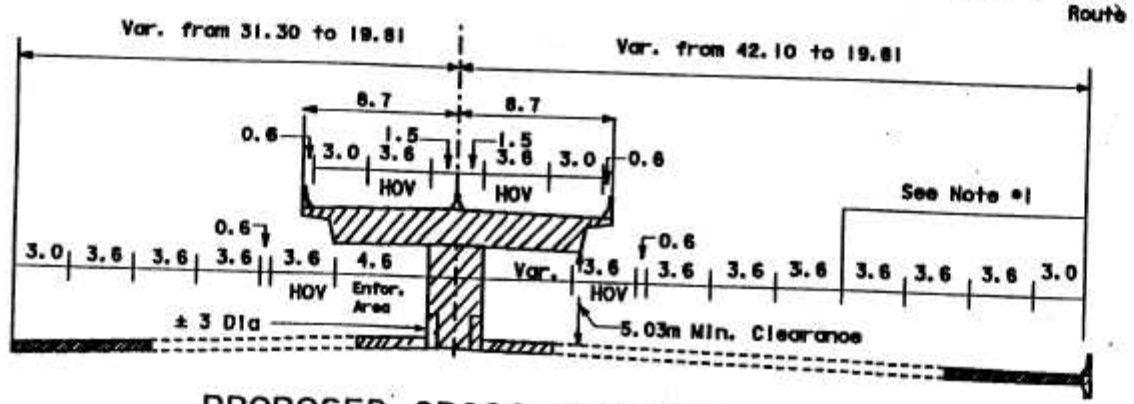
ROUTE 5

07-LA-05 KP. R70.9 /R73.
07-LA-14 KP. R39.9 /R40.
HOV Direct Connector
From Route 5 To Route 14
07185 - 16800K



SB EXISTING CROSS-SECTION NB
FROM STA 724+20 TO STA 727+10

Note #1 Lanes #4, 5, 6 go to North Route 14 from Sta 725+20



PROPOSED CROSS-SECTION
FROM STA 724+20 TO STA 727+10

NEW CONSTRUCTION

Figure 2-2
Alternative 2 Cross Sectio
5 of 10
(No Scale)

NB Transition

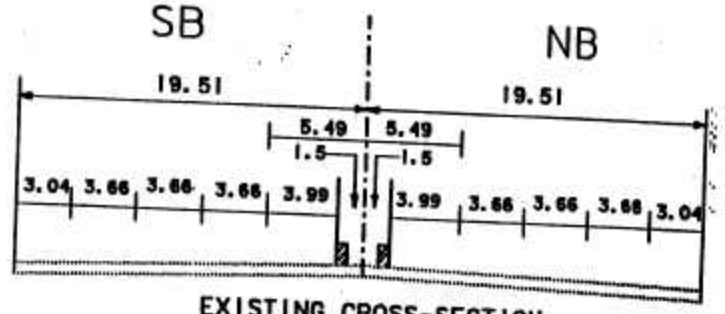
Station	727+60	732+00	736+00
Med. Sh.	1.81	1.81	5.49
HOV	3.6	3.3	0
Lane #1,2,3	3.6	3.6	3.6

SB Transition

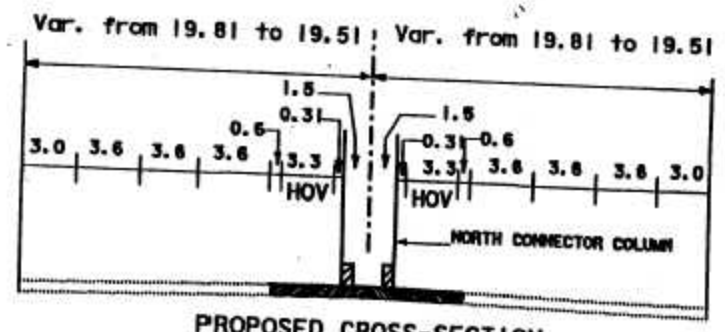
Station	727+00	732+00	736+00
Med. Sh.	1.81	1.81	5.49
HOV	3.6	3.3	3.3
Lane #1,2,3	3.6	3.6	3.6

ROUTE 5

07-LA-05 KP. R70.9 /R73.
07-LA-14 KP. R39.9 /R40.
HOV Direct Connector
From Route 5 To Route 1
07185 - 16800K



EXISTING CROSS-SECTION
FROM STA 727+30 TO STA 736+00



PROPOSED CROSS-SECTION
FROM STA 727+30 TO STA 736+00

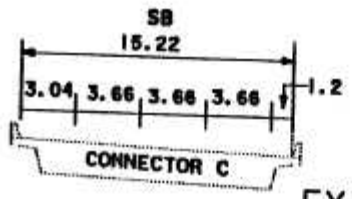
NOTE : 1) TRANSITION AREA ONLY FROM STA 727+30 TO STA 736+00
2) Most side clearances by the median column are 0.61 except the clearance at Sta 731+50 is 0.31

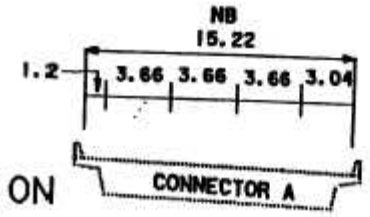
CONSTRUCTION AREA

Figure 2-2
Alternative 2 Cross Sectio
6 of 10
(No Scale)

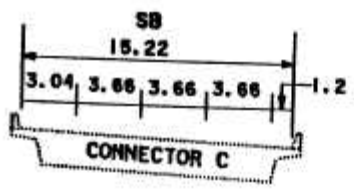
CONNECTOR RTE 5 & RTE 14

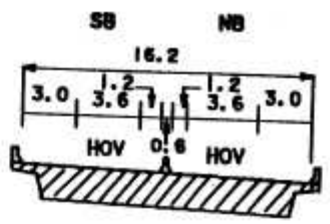
07-LA-05 KP. R70.9 /RT3
07-LA-14 KP. R39.9 /R40
HOV Direct Connector
From Route 5 To Route 1
07185 - 16800K

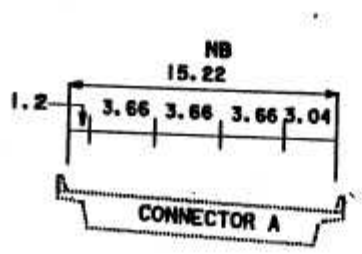




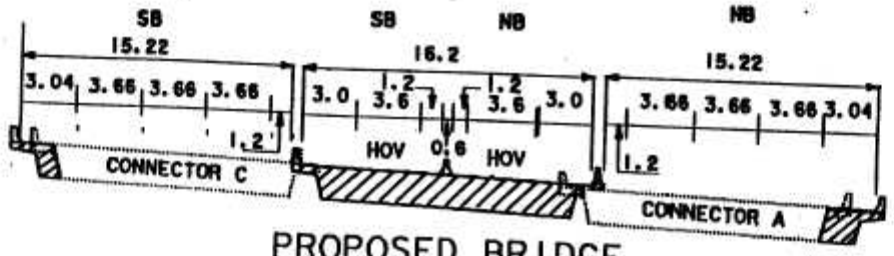
EXISTING CROSS-SECTION
FROM STA 728+50 TO STA 732+82.8







PROPOSED BRIDGE
FROM STA 728+50 TO STA 732+20

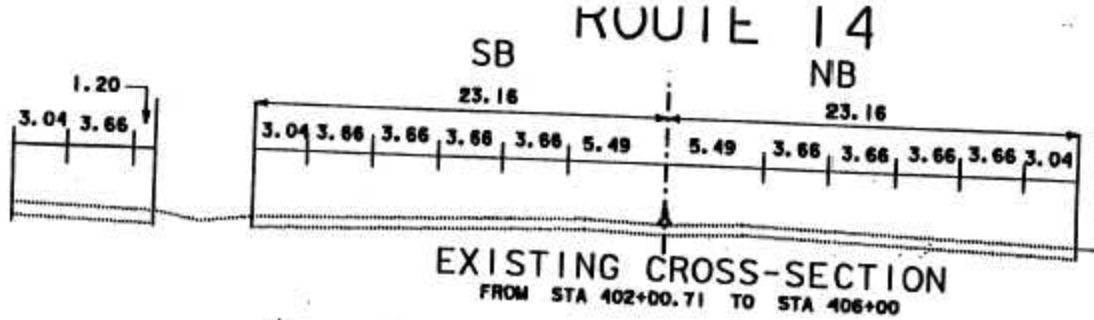


PROPOSED BRIDGE
FROM STA 732+20 TO STA 732+82.8 (or 402+00.71)

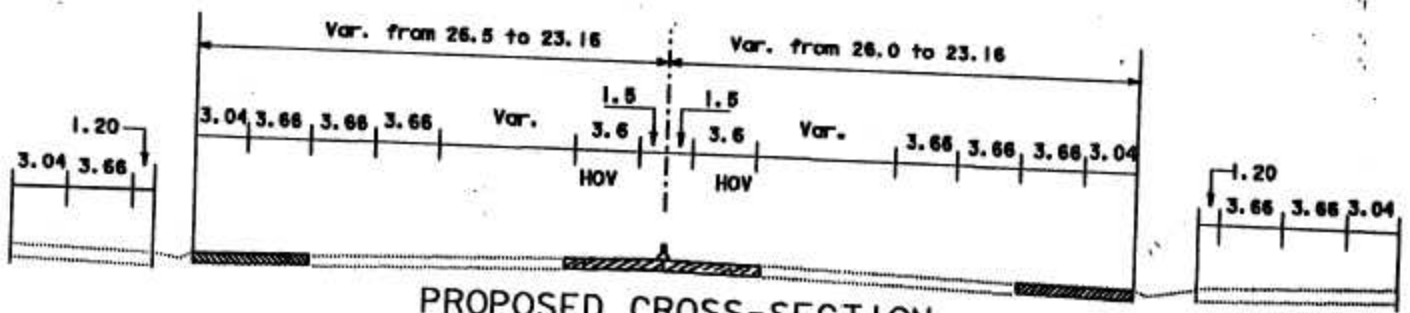
NEW CONSTRUCTION

Figure 2-2
Alternative 2 Cross Section
7 of 10

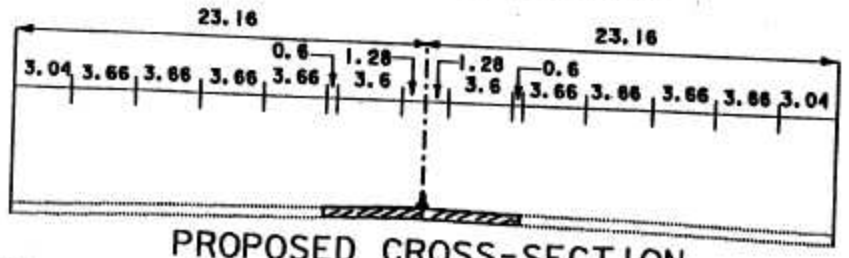
ROUTE 14



EXISTING CROSS-SECTION
FROM STA 402+00.71 TO STA 406+00



PROPOSED CROSS-SECTION
FROM STA 402+00.71 TO STA 406+00



PROPOSED CROSS-SECTION
STA 406+00

NEW CONSTRUCTION

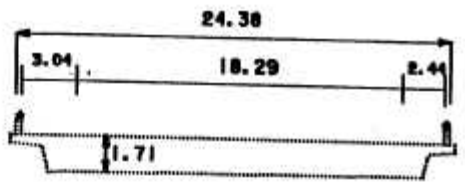
Note: HOV Connector Joins Rte. 14 at 732+83 on HOV Connector/
402+22 on Rte. 14

Figure 2-2
Alternative 2 Cross Sectior
8 of 10
(No Scale)

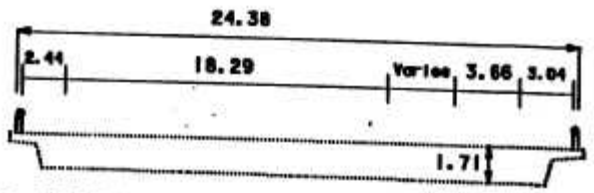
ROUTE 5

07-LA-05 KP. R70.9 /R73.
07-LA-14 KP. R39.9 /R40.
HOV Direct Connector
From Route 5 To Route 1
07185 - 16800K

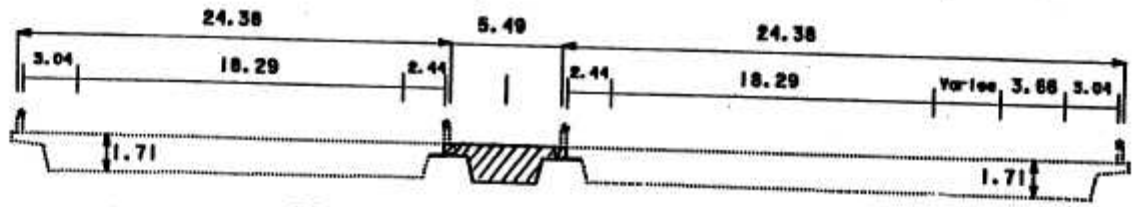
SB



NB



EXISTING CROSS-SECTION
FROM STA 404+45 To STA405+09



PROPOSED BRIDGE WIDENING

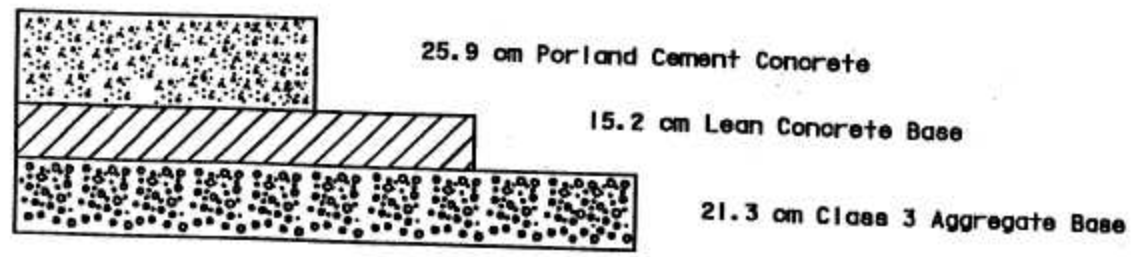
(SIERRA HIGHWAY UNDERCROSSING)
FROM STA 404+40.7 To STA405+10.4

LEGEND
Proposed New Structures
Existing Structures

Figure 2-2
Alternative 2 Cross Section
9 of 10
(No Scale)

07-LA-05 KP. R70.9 /R7
07-LA-14 KP. R39.9 /R4
HOV Direct Connector
From Route 5 To Route
07185 - 15800K

Proposed Structural Section



MEDIAN AND WIDENING AREA

Figure 2-2
Alternative 2 Cross Section
10 of 10
(No Scale)

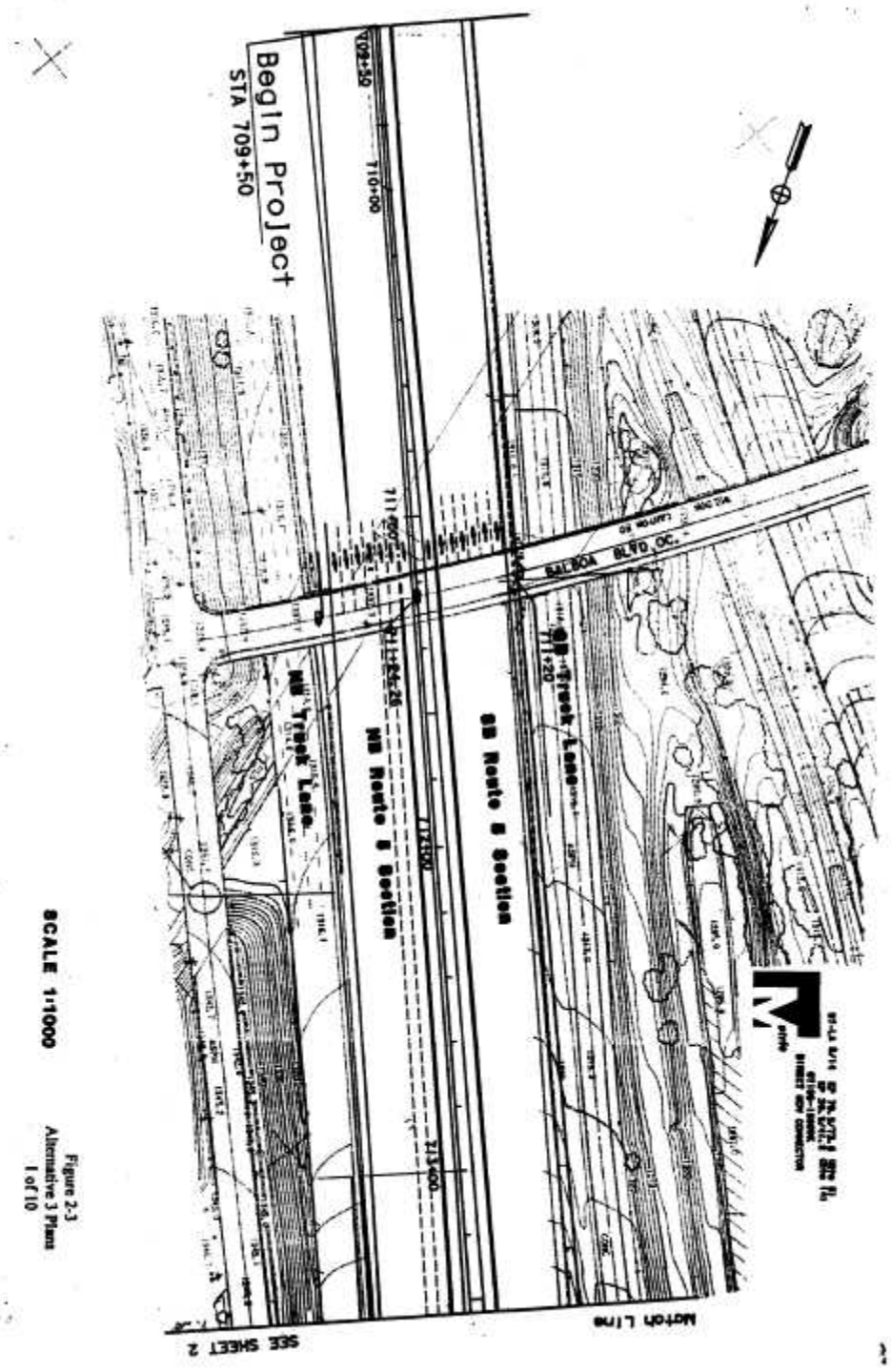


Figure 2-3
Alternative 3 Plans
1 of 10

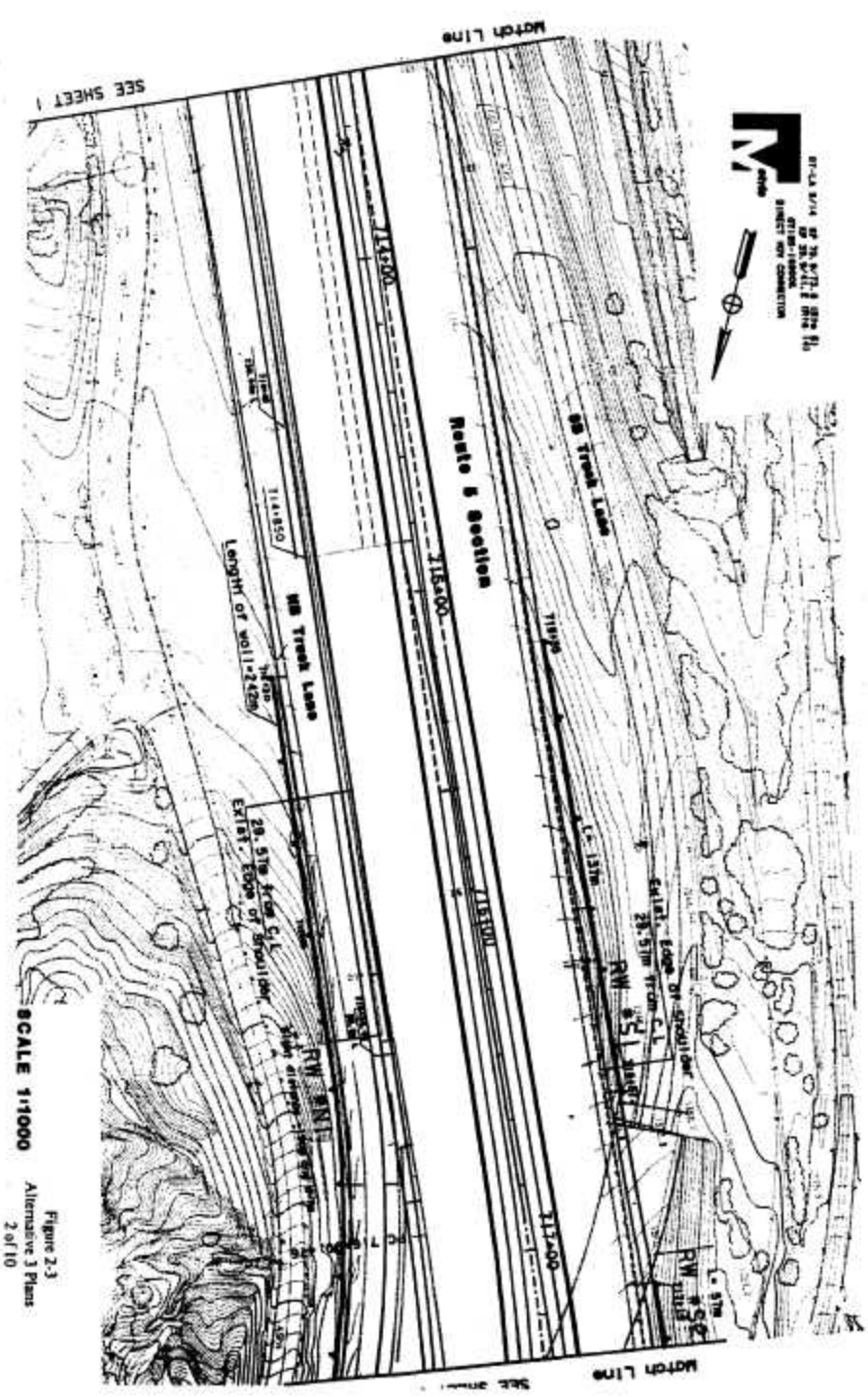


Figure 2-3
Alternative 3 Plans
2 of 10

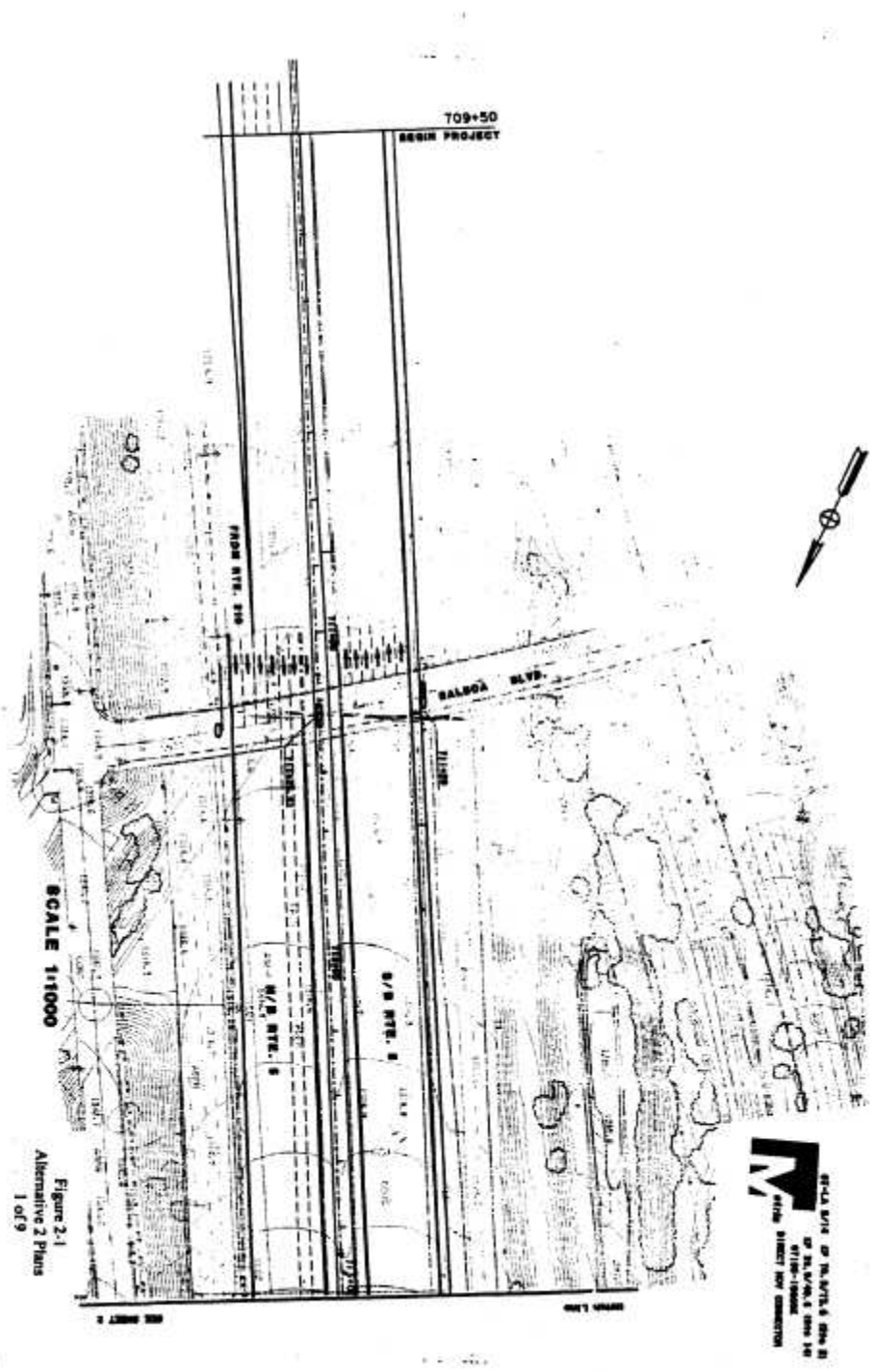


Figure 2-1
Alternative 2 Plans
1 of 9

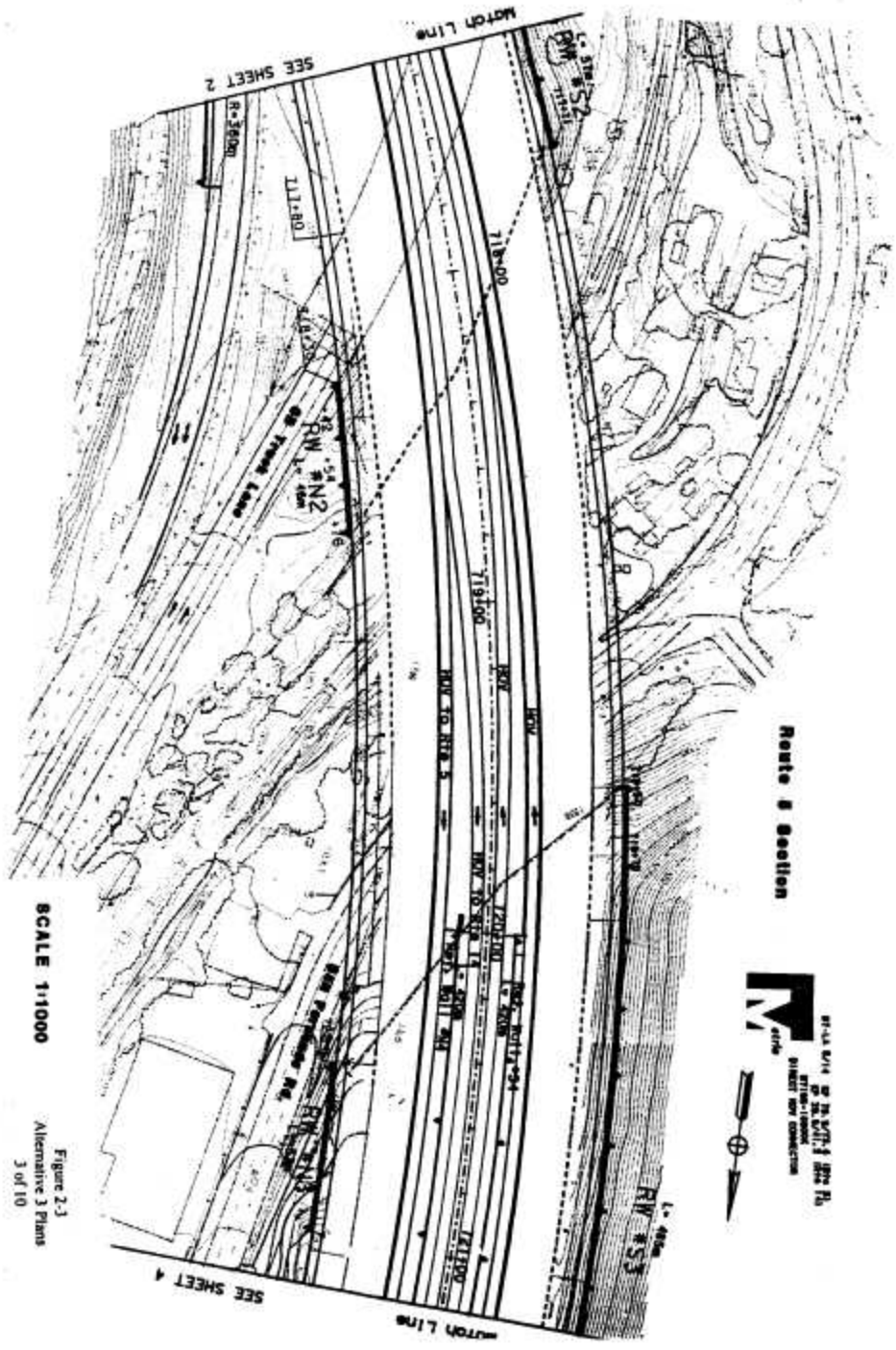


Figure 2-3
Alternative 3 Plans
3 of 10

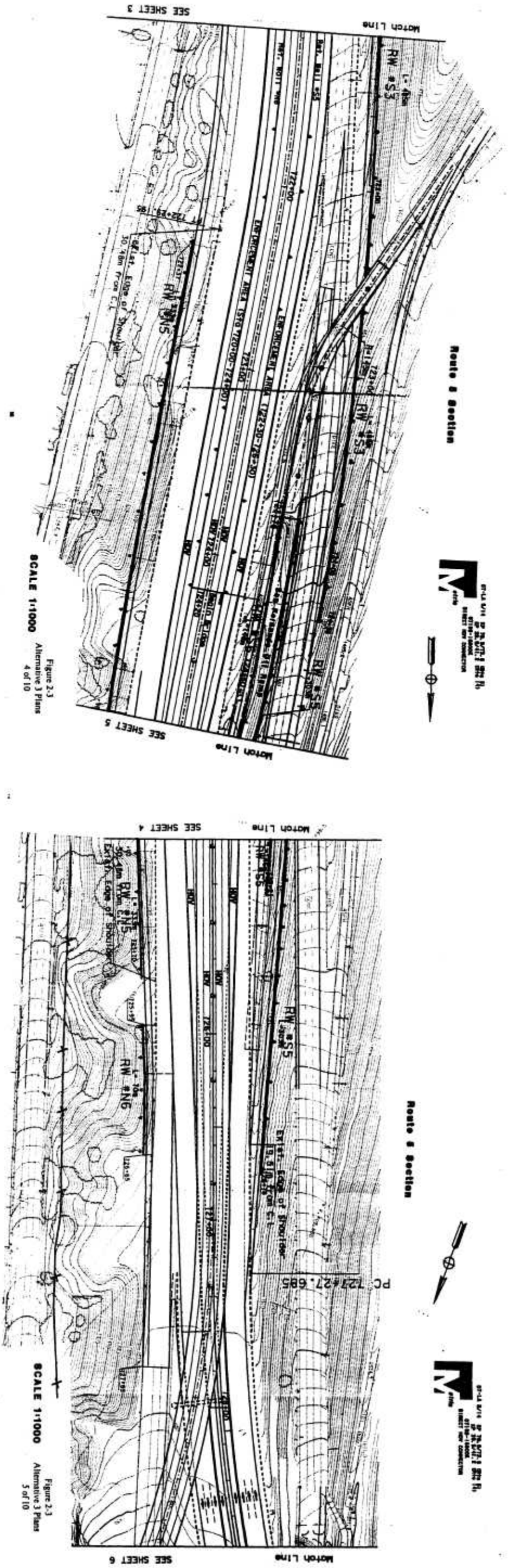
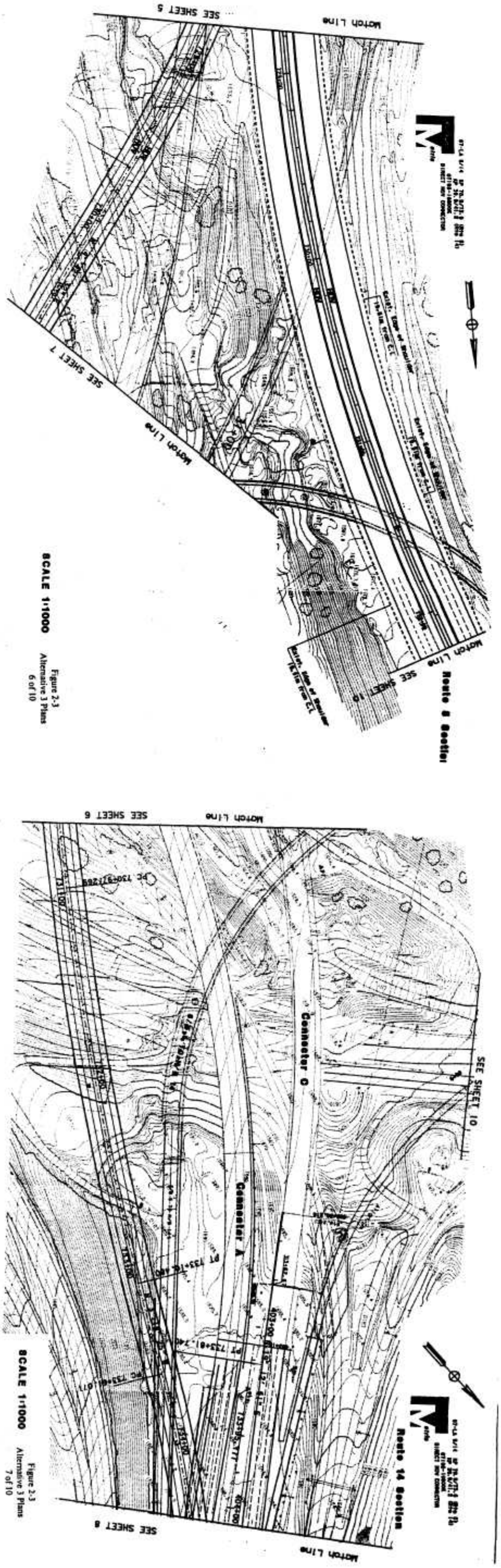


Figure 2-3
Alternative 3 Plans
4 of 10

Figure 2-3
Alternative 3 Plans
5 of 10


SEE SHEET 5
Match Line
SEE SHEET 7
Match Line
Match Line
SEE SHEET 9
Route 9 Section
SCALE 1:1000
Figure 2-3
Alternative 3 Plans
6 of 10
Match Line
SEE SHEET 6
Connector C
Connector A
SEE SHEET 10
Route 14 Section
SEE SHEET 8
Match Line
SCALE 1:1000
Figure 2-3
Alternative 3 Plans
7 of 10

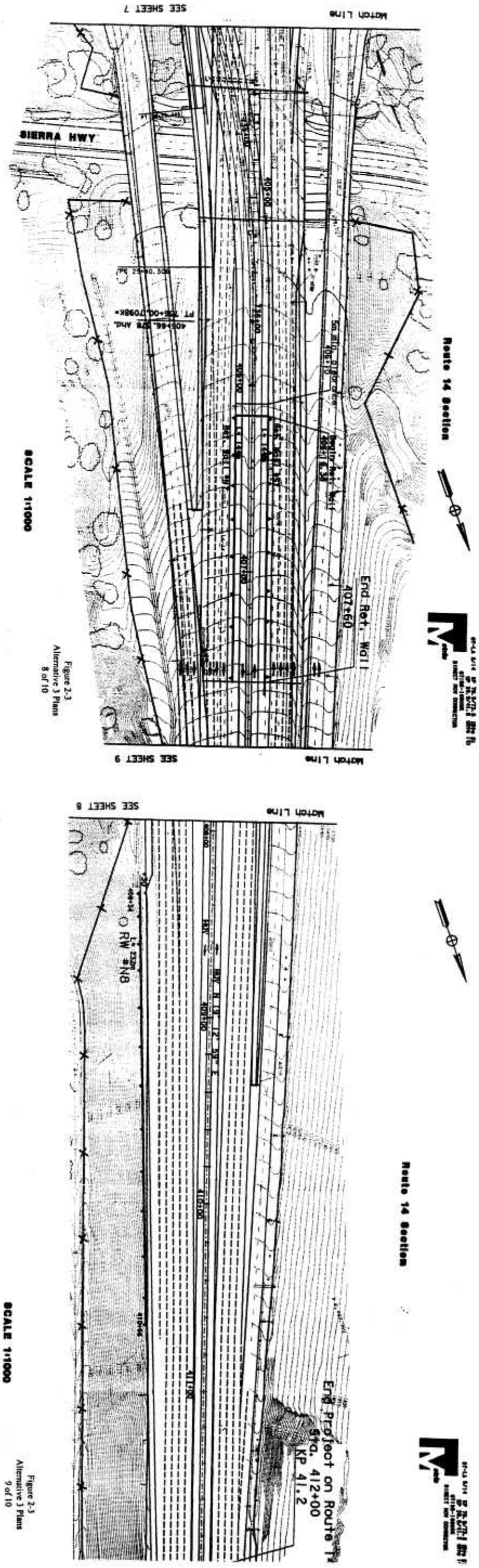


Figure 2-3
Alternative 3 Plans
8 of 10

Figure 2-3
Alternative 3 Plans
9 of 10

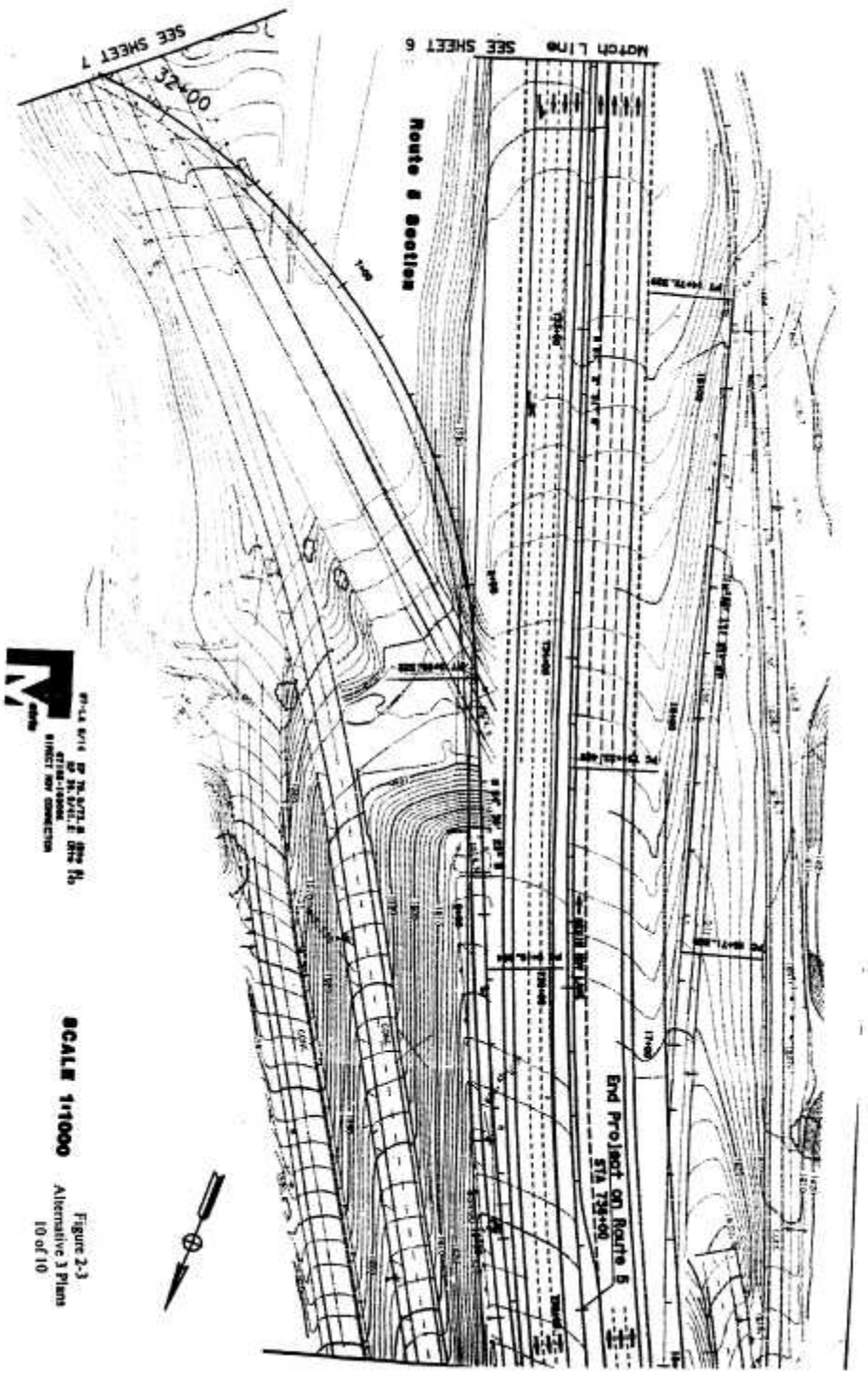


Figure 2-3
Alternative 3 Plans
10 of 10

SCALE 1:1000

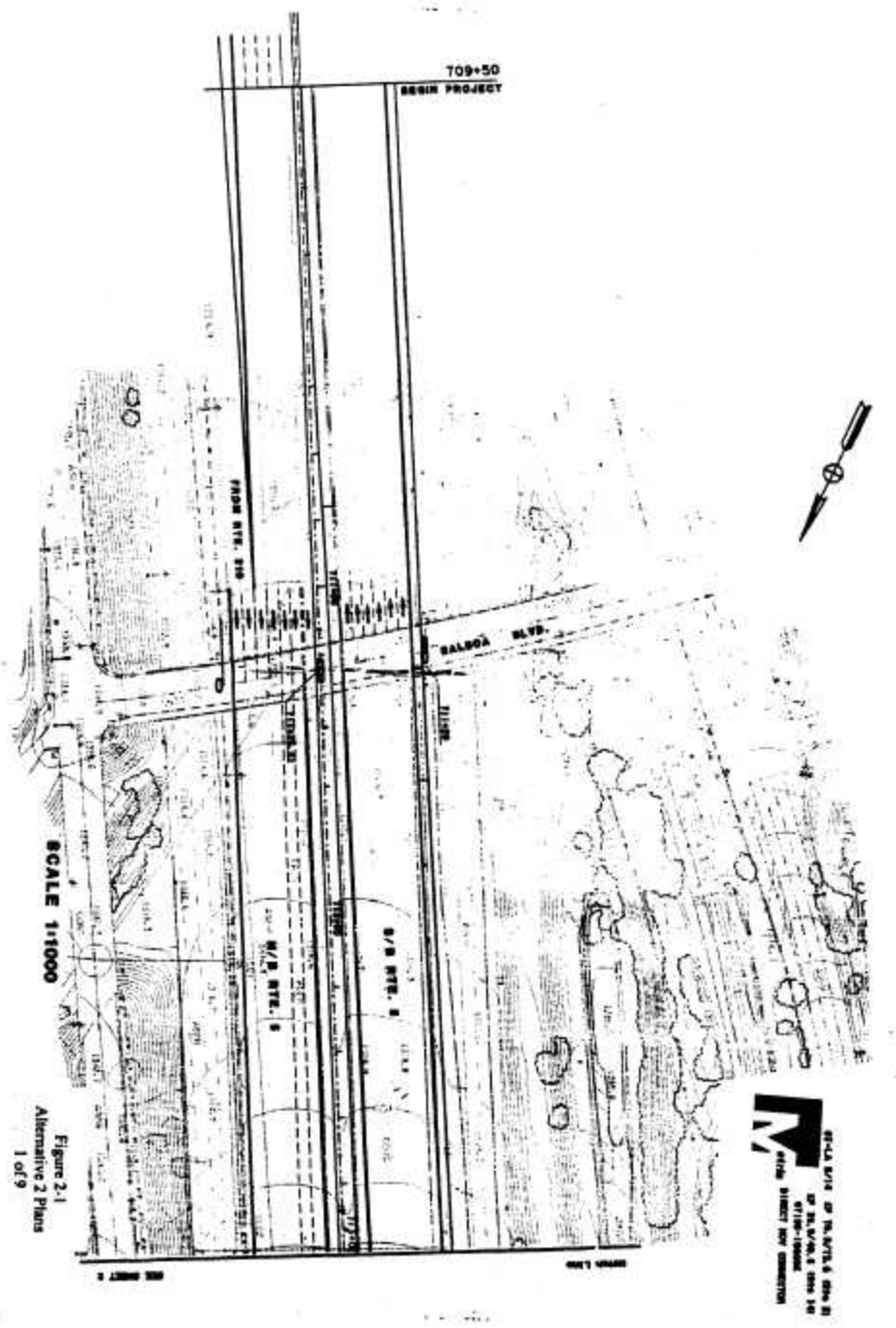


Figure 2-1
Alternative 2 Plans
1 of 9

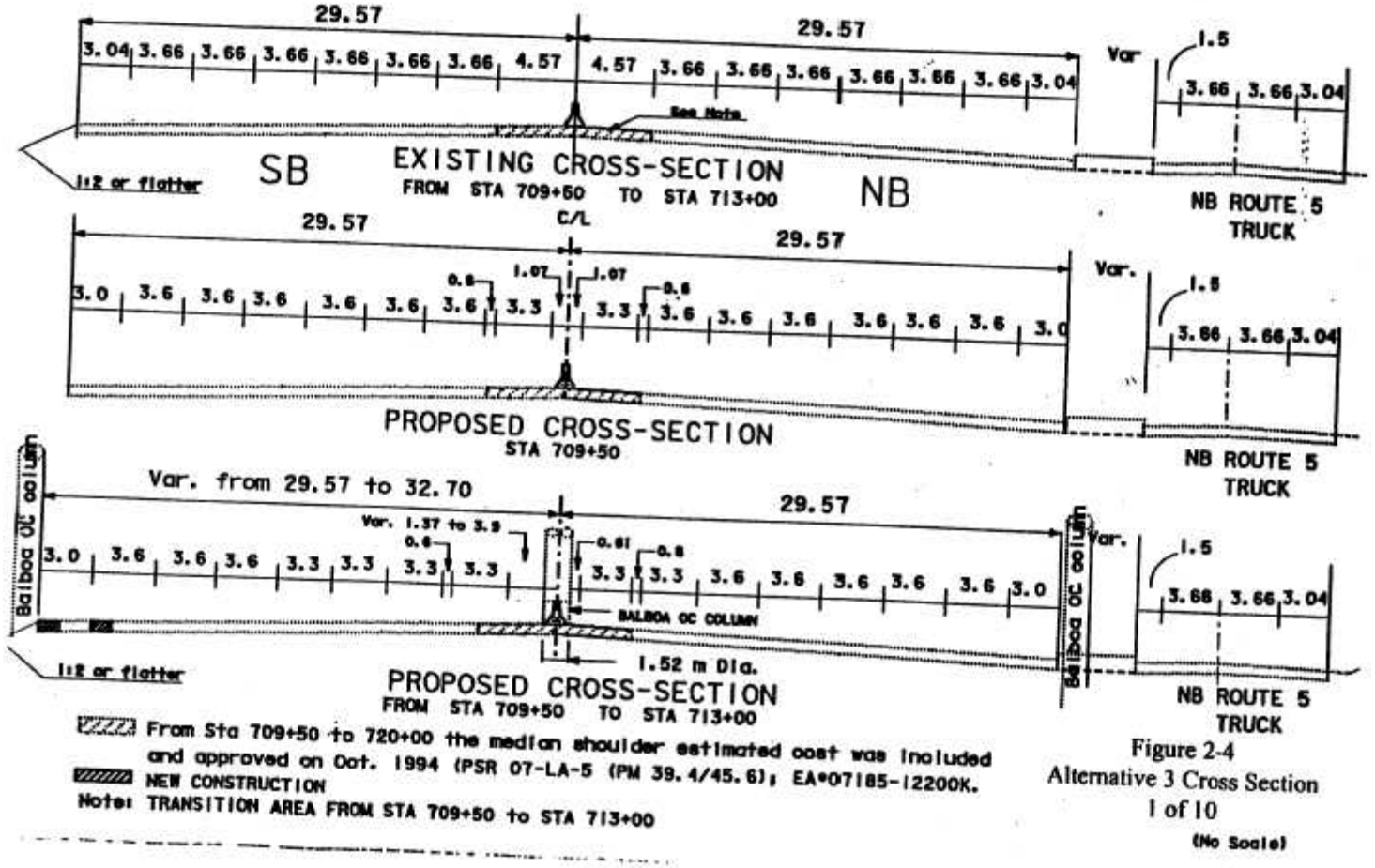
SCALE 1:1000

Station	711+20	713+00
Med. Sh.	1.37	1.39
HOV	3.3	3.6
Lane #1	3.3	3.6
Lane #2, 3, 4, 5, 6	3.6	3.6

Station	711+20	713+00
Med. Sh.	3.16	3.9
HOV	3.3	3.6
Lane #1, 2, 3	3.3	3.6
Lane #4, 5, 6	3.6	3.6

ROUTE 5

07-LA-05 KP. R70.9 /R73.
07-LA-14 KP. R39.9 /R41.
HOV Direct Connector
From Route 5 To Route 14
07185 - 16800K



From Sta 709+50 to 720+00 the median shoulder estimated cost was included and approved on Oct. 1994 (PSR 07-LA-5 (PM 39.4/45.6); EA#07185-12200K.

NEW CONSTRUCTION

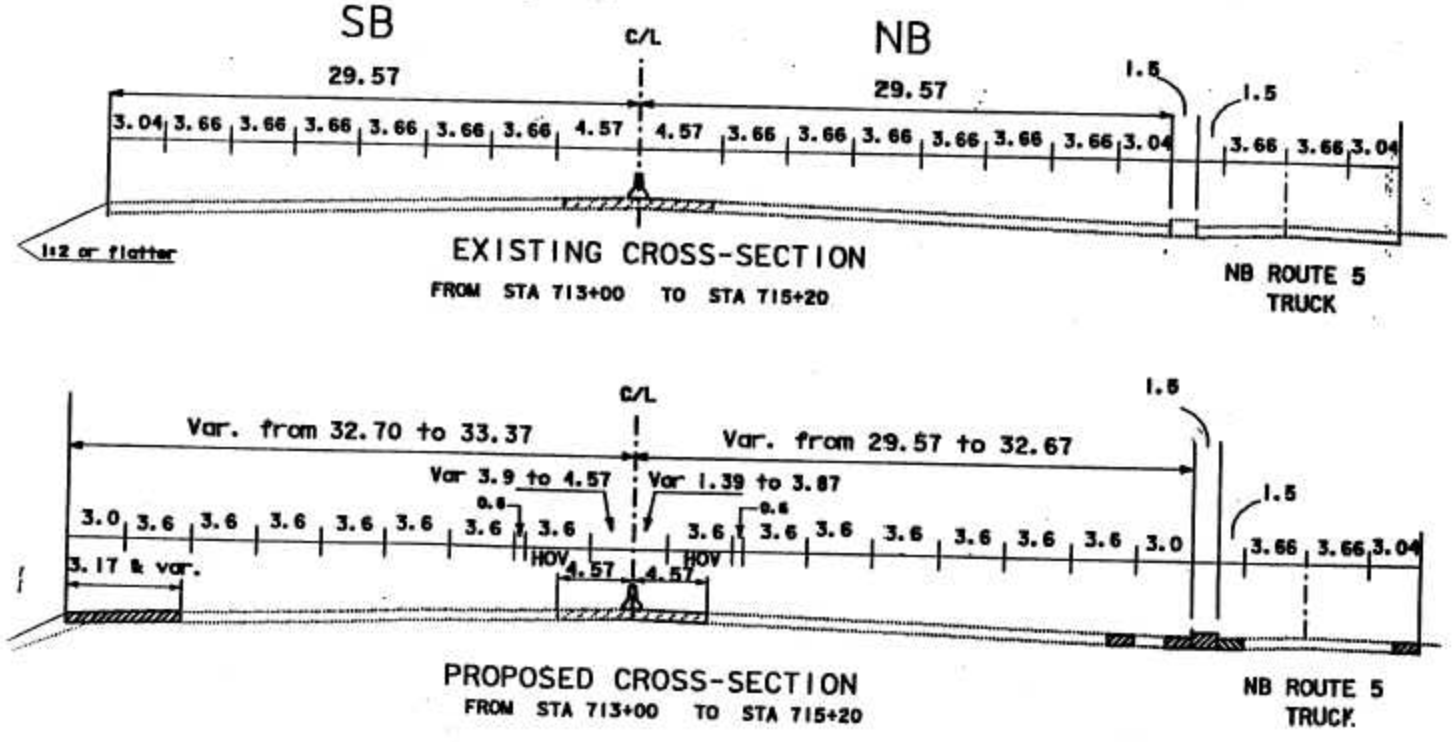
Note: TRANSITION AREA FROM STA 709+50 to STA 713+00

Figure 2-4
Alternative 3 Cross Section
1 of 10

(No Scale)

ROUTE 5

07-LA-05 KP. R70.9 /R73.
07-LA-14 KP. R39.9 /R41.
HOV Direct Connector
From Route 5 To Route 1
07185 - 16800K



From Sta 709+50 to 720+00 the median shoulder estimated cost was included and approved on Oct. 1994 (PSR 07-LA-5 (PM 39.4/45.6); EA#07185-12200K.

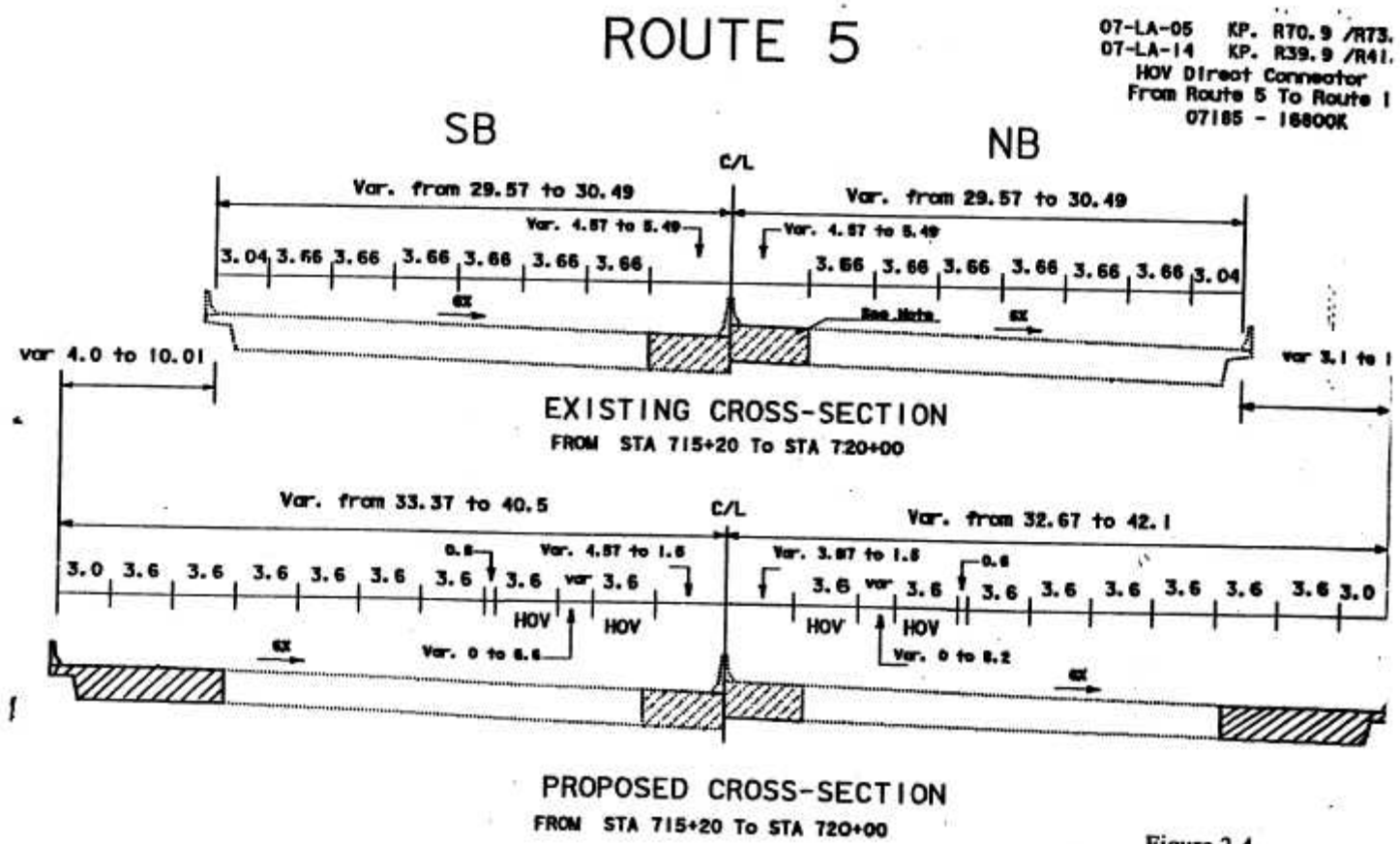
NEW CONSTRUCTION

Figure 2-4
Alternative 3 Cross Section
2 of 10

(No Scale)

ROUTE 5

07-LA-05 KP. R70.9 /R73.
07-LA-14 KP. R39.9 /R41.
HOV Direct Connector
From Route 5 To Route 1
07185 - 16800K



From Sta 709+50 to 720+00 the median shoulder estimated cost was included and approved on Oct. 1994 (PSR 07-LA-5 (PM 39.4/45.6); EA#07185-12200K.

NEW CONSTRUCTION

Note: TRANSITION AREA FROM STA 709+50 to STA 713+00

Figure 2-4
Alternative 3 Cross Section
3 of 10

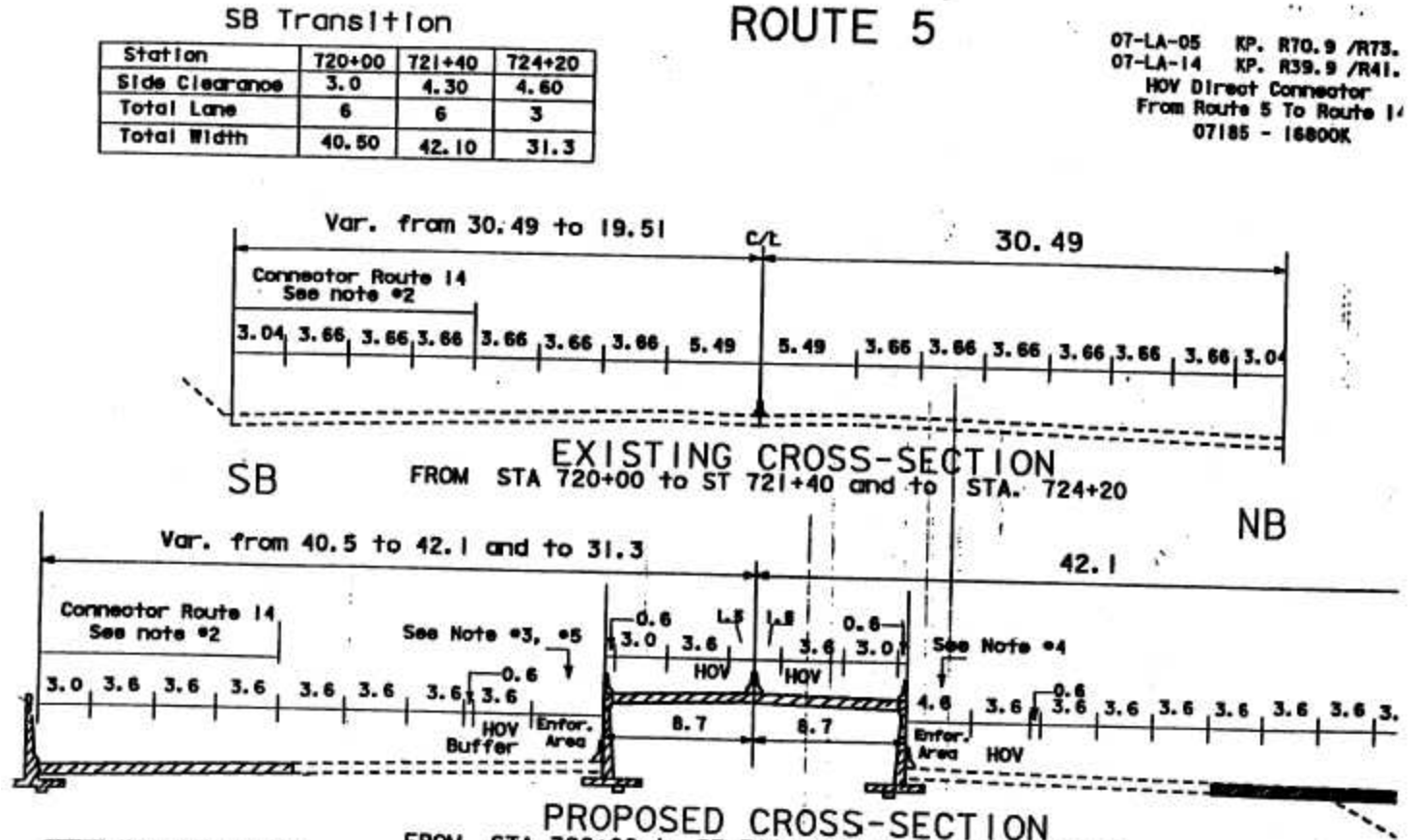
(No Scale)

SB Transition

Station	720+00	721+40	724+20
Side Clearance	3.0	4.30	4.60
Total Lane	6	6	3
Total Width	40.50	42.10	31.3

ROUTE 5

07-LA-05 KP. R70.9 /R73.
07-LA-14 KP. R39.9 /R41.
HOV Direct Connector
From Route 5 To Route 1
07185 - 16800K



NEW CONSTRUCTION

Notes:
1) Beginning Sta 724+30, the median width is 5.49m
2) Connector Route 14 merges with Route 5 at Sta 721+65
3) Horizontal Clearance is varied from 3.0m at Sta 720+00 to 4.6m at Sta 722+30
4) Future Enforcement Area NB from Sta 720+00 to Sta 724+00
5) Future Enforcement Area on SB From Sta 722+30 to Sta 726+20

Figure 2-4
Alternative 3 Cross Sectio
4 of 10

(No Scale)

SB Transition

Station	724+20	727+10
Median Shoulder	13.3	1.81
Lane HOV Width	3.6	3.6
Lane #1, #2, #3	3.6	3.6
Total Width	31.3	19.81

NB Transition

Station	724+20	727+10
Median Shoulder	13.3	1.81
Lane HOV Width	3.6	3.6
Lane #1, #2, #3	3.6	3.6
Lane #4, #5, #6	3.6	N/A
Total Width	42.10	19.81

ROUTE 5

07-LA-05 KP. R70.9 /R73.6
07-LA-14 KP. R39.9 /R41.2
HOV Direct Connector
From Route 5 To Route 14
07185 - 16800K

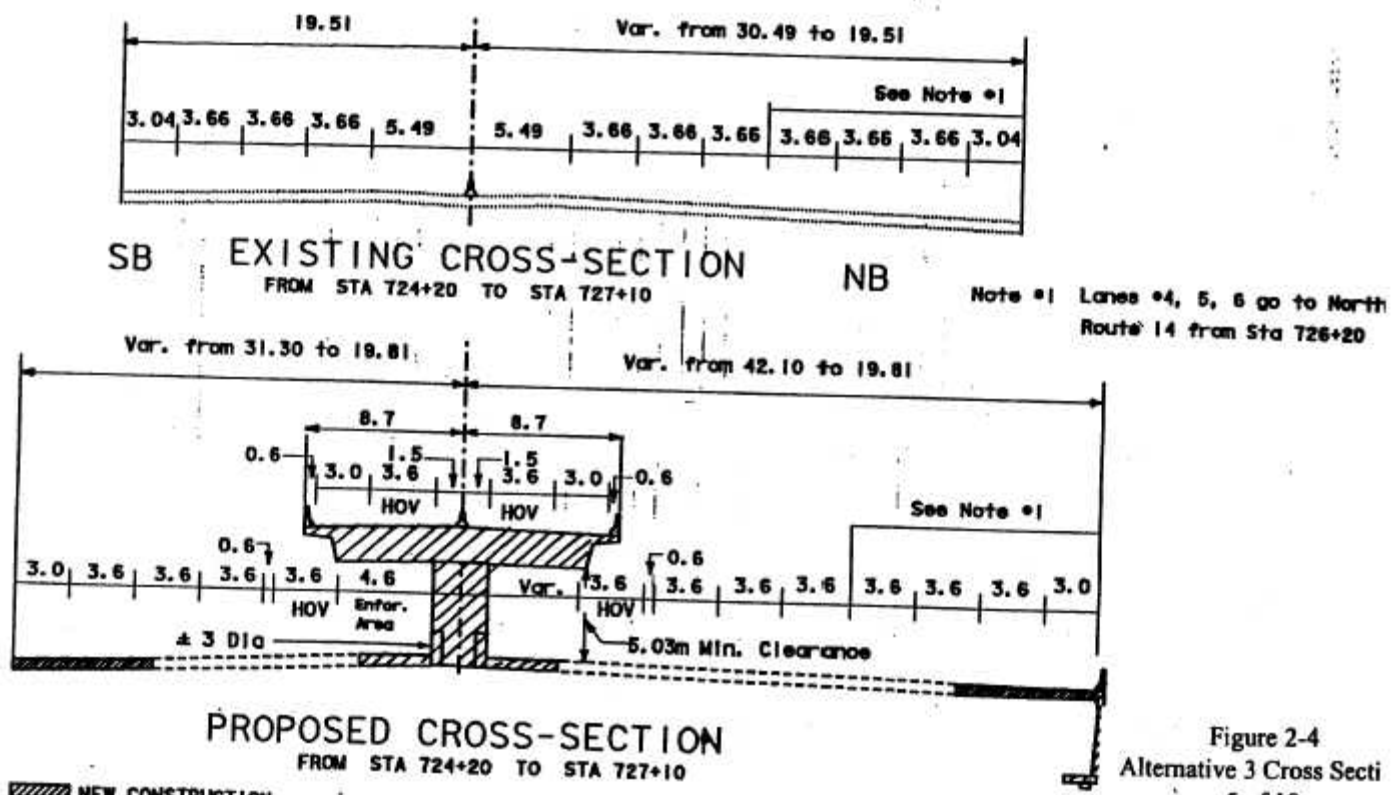


Figure 2-4
Alternative 3 Cross Secti
5 of 10
(No Scale)

NB Transition

Station	727+60	732+00	736+00
Med. Sh.	1.81	1.81	5.49
HOV	3.6	3.3	0
Lane #1,2,3	3.6	3.6	3.6

SB Transition

Station	727+00	732+00	736+00
Med. Sh.	1.81	1.81	5.49
HOV	3.6	3.3	3.3
Lane #1,2,3	3.6	3.6	3.6

ROUTE 5

07-LA-05 KP. R70.9 /R73.6
07-LA-14 KP. R39.9 /R41.2
HOV Direct Connector
From Route 5 To Route 14
07185 - 16800K

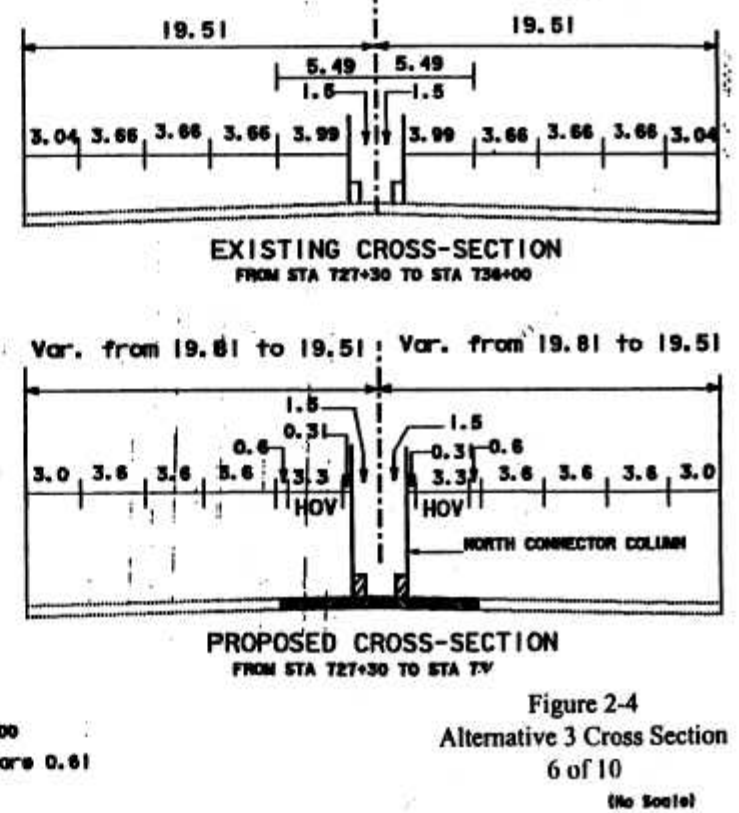
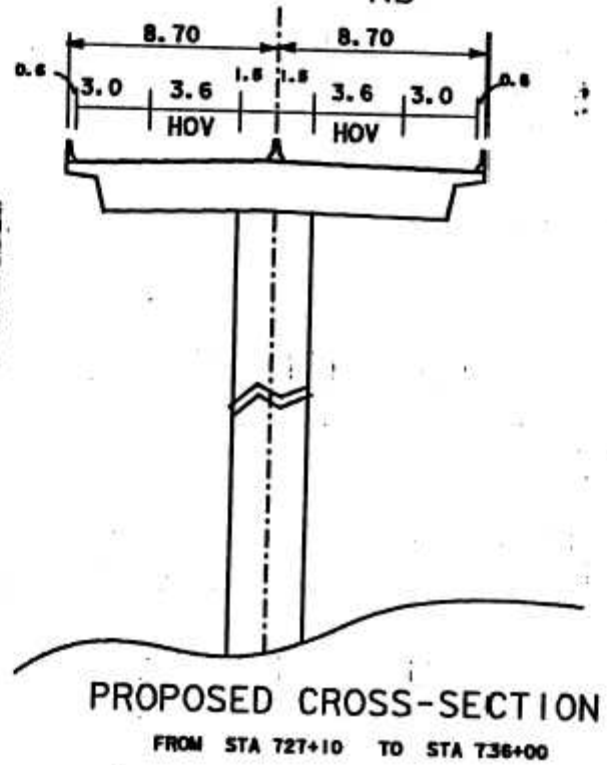


Figure 2-4
Alternative 3 Cross Section
6 of 10
(No Scale)

NOTE : 1) TRANSITION AREA ONLY FROM STA 727+30 TO STA 736+00
2) Most side clearances by the median column are 0.61 except the clearance at Sta 731+50 is 0.31

CONSTRUCTION AREA

CONNECTOR RTE 5 & RTE 14



PROPOSED CROSS-SECTION

FROM STA 727+10 TO STA 736+00

Note: Equation between Rte5/14 : EQ= 736+00 on Rte 5 / 405+66.38 on Rte 14

07-LA-05 KP. R70.9 /R73.6
07-LA-14 KP. R39.9 /R41.2
HOV Direct Connector
From Route 5 To Route 14
07185 - 16800K

Figure 2-4
Alternative 3 Cross Section
7 of 10

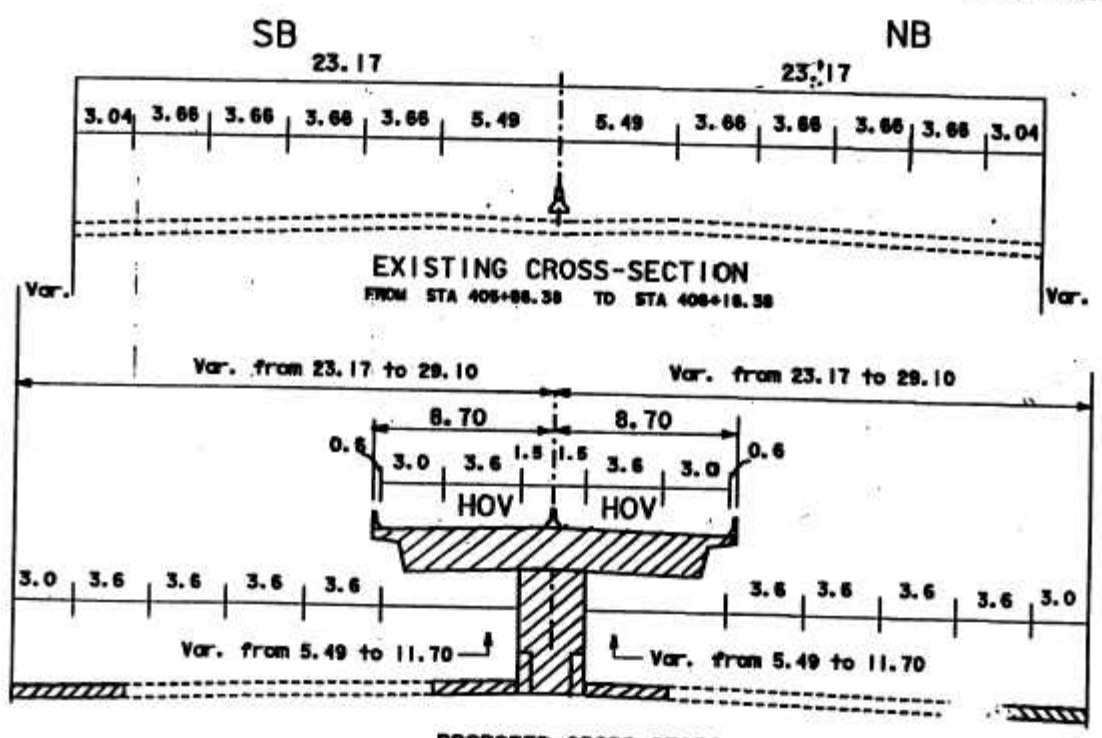
(No Scale)

NB & SB Transition

Station	403+00	405+60
Total Lane	3	4
Lane Width	3.6	3.6
Median Width	5.49	11.70

ROUTE 14

07-LA-05 KP. R70.9 /R73.6
07-LA-14 KP. R39.9 /R41.2
HOV Direct Connector
From Route 5 To Route 14
07185 - 16800K



PROPOSED CROSS-SECTION

FROM STA 405+66.38 TO STA 406+16.38

CONSTRUCTION AREA

Note: Equation between Rte5/14 : EQ= 736+00 on Rte 5 / 405+66.38 on Rte 14

Figure 2-4
Alternative 3 Cross Section
8 of 10

(No Scale)

ROUTE 14

07-LA-05 KP. R70.9 /R73.6
07-LA-14 KP. R39.9 /R41.2
HOV Direct Connector
From Route 5 To Route 14
07185 - 16800K

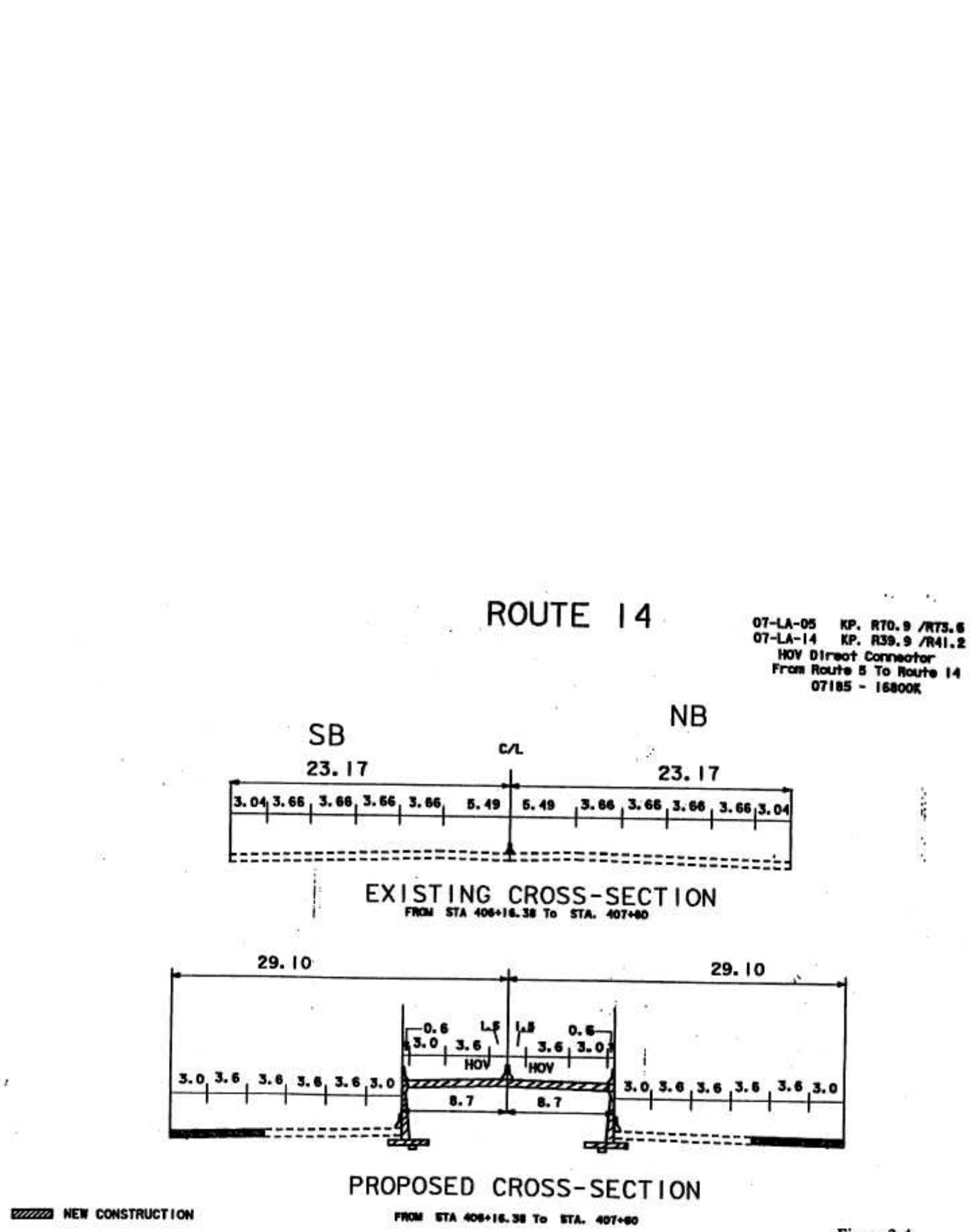
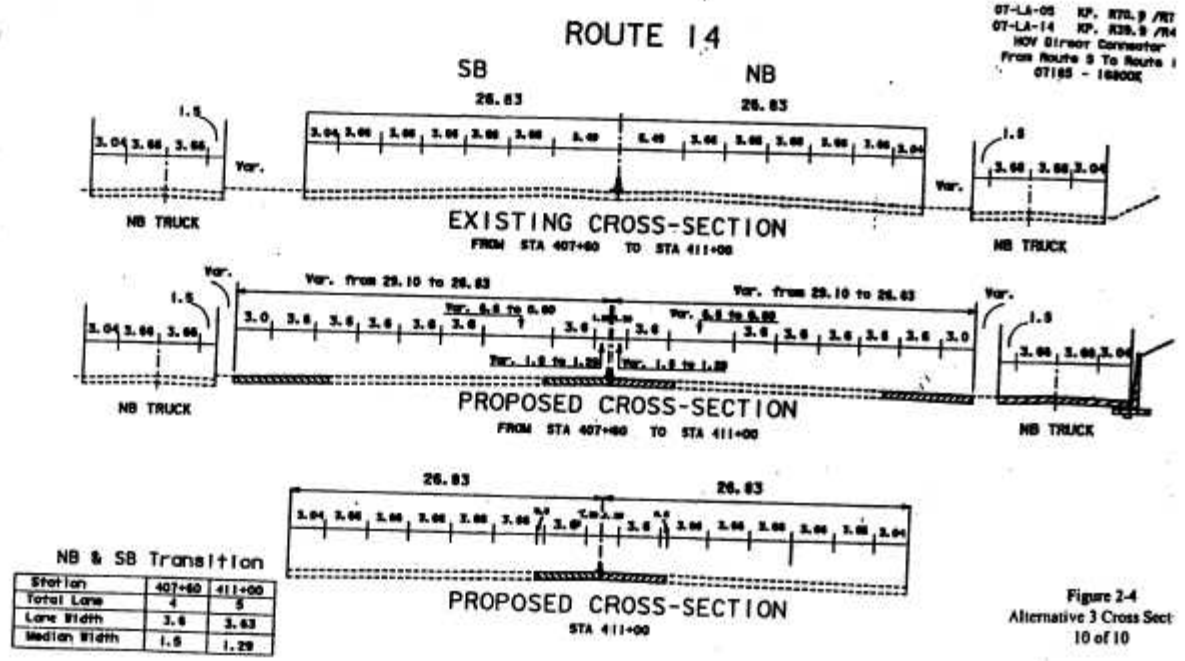


Figure 2-4
Alternative 3 Cross Sectio
9 of 10
(No Scale)



NB & SB Transition

Station	407+60	411+00
Total Lane	4	5
Lane Width	3.6	3.63
Median Width	1.5	1.29

Figure 2-4
Alternative 3 Cross Sect
10 of 10

(No Scale)

1. **Affected Environment**
    1. **Topography and Geology**

    Regionally, the proposed project is located in the northern end of the San Fernando Valley, which is situated within the Transverse Ranges Geomorphic Province. This Province consists of numerous east-west trending mountain ranges. The existing freeway is located at the juncture of the Santa Susana and San Gabriel Mountains (Weldon Canyon). Structurally, late Cenozoic deformation and strike slip typify this Province, reverse and thrust faulting are also prevalent (Geotechnical Report, 2000).

    Locally, the existing freeway crosses sediments from the Tertiary Towsley, Pico and Saugus Geologic Formations. These formations consist mainly of pebble-cobble conglomerate, sandstone and lesser amounts of soft siltstone and claystone. The central portion of the interchange connectors also crosses a thin section of alluvial sediments, consisting of gravel, sand, silt, and clay.

    2. **Seismicity**

    A number of characteristics have been used to identify active faults, such as historic seismicity or surface faulting, crustal strain, recent geologic displacement inferred from topography or stratigraphy, or physical connection with a known active fault. A fault is considered by the State of California to be active if geologic evidence indicates that movement on the fault has occurred in the last 11,000 years, and potentially active if movement is demonstrated to have occurred in the last 2 million years.

    The proposed project is located in a seismically active area. The geologic processes that have caused earthquakes in the past can be expected to continue. Seismic events that are likely to produce the greatest bedrock accelerations could be a moderate event on the Oak Ridge, Santa Susana, or San Fernando fault zones and/or a large event on an active distant fault.

    3. **Hazardous Waste**

    Geocon Environmental Consultants, Inc. conducted an Initial Site Assessment (March 1997) of the area located within the vicinity of the Interstate 5 and State Route 14 interchange in Los Angeles County. The purpose of the Initial Site Assessment (ISA) was to estimate the potential for existing impacts to the search area (i.e. levels of hazardous materials/wastes likely to warrant mitigation action pursuant to current regulatory guidelines) from the presence of hazardous materials/wastes within the designated search area, specifically within and adjacent to the existing and proposed right-of-ways.

    The ISA included review of various information sources for reported historical and current sources of hazardous materials/wastes, and a field survey of the properties located within the project area. The search area included 182.88 meters south of the intersection of Balboa Boulevard and I-5 to the I-5/SR-14 interchange. The search area continued north along both I-5 and SR-14 from approximately 1.24 kilometers and 1.09 kilometers, respectively. The search area included properties within approximately 91.44 meters to the east and west of the existing right-of-way.

    Establishments/improvements within the search area consist of the I-5 and SR-14, vacant property, and residential and commercial developed properties. Commercial structures are apparent adjacent and to the east of I-5, south of the I-5/SR-14 interchange. Sunshine Canyon Sanitary Landfill is located southwest of the search area. The Susana Granada Chlorination Station, the Magazine Canyon Shaft, and the City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (DWP) facility are located within the southern portion of the search area.

    4. **Biological Resources**

    The biological resources present within the project area, defined as the Area of Potential Effects (APE), are described in this section. This information has been derived from a biological investigation, the detailed results of which are presented in the *Natural Environmental Study Report, Interstate 5/State Route 14 High Occupancy Vehicle Lane Connector* prepared for this project and available under separate cover (Caltrans, March 1998). As part of this report, Caltrans biologists conducted field surveys of the project area on April 1, 1997 through May 27, 1997. A Natural Environmental Study Report Reevaluation was prepared in March 2000. As part of this report, general surveys of the proposed project site were again conducted on February 28, April 20, and May 8, 2000. These surveys consisted of observing the biological resources present in the areas of project impact. The observations made during the 2000 surveys were found to be consistent with the findings of the previously written Natural Environmental Study Report of March 1998.

    The Natural Environmental Study Report (NESR) was prepared using the results from a literature search of sensitive biological resources in the area and a biological field survey of the area. Dominant plant species and vegetation types were identified, and wildlife was observed by sight, sound, tracks, and other signs. Waters of the United States and potential wetlands in the APE of the proposed project were also investigated and the results described in a wetland delineation (see Section 3.5).

    The available literature on natural resources in and near the project area was consulted including information from the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB). The potential occurrence of other species was examined by identifying their documented or known habitat preferences.

    1. **Vegetation**

    The proposed project is located at the juncture of the Santa Susanna and San Gabriel Mountain Ranges, which are part of the larger Transverse Range. Coastal sage scrub and chaparral compromise the major shrubland types that occur in the cismontane areas of California. Characteristic species of coastal sage associations are California Sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), Sage (*Salvia mellifera*,

Salvia leucophilla), California Encelia (*Encelia californica*), and California Buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*, *Eriogonum cinereum*). The proposed project area is disturbed as a result of freeway construction, as well as railway construction and activities, brush fires and slides.

A search of the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) in September of 1997 and an updated search on September 13, 1999 listed the following sensitive vegetation species:

Table 3-1

Sensitive Vegetation Species

Common Name	Scientific Name	Federal/State Status	Survey Results
Slender Mariposa Lily	*Calochortus clavatus var. gracilis*	FSC/None	Species not observed
Plummer's Mariposa Lily	*Calochortus plummerae*	FSC/None	Species not observed
San Fernando Valley Spineflower	*Chorizanthe parryi var. fernandina*	FSC/None	Species not observed
Santa Susanna Tarplant	*Hemizoniz minthornii*	FSC/Rare	Species not observed
Slender-Horned Spineflower	*Dodecahema leptoceras*	FE/SE	Species not observed
Nevin's Barberry	*Berberis nevinii*	FE/SE	Species not observed
California Orcutt Grass	*Orcuttia californica*	FE/SE	Species not observed
Palmer's Grappling Hook	*Harpagonella palmeri*	FSC/None	Species not observed

LEGEND:

FE = Federally Endangered Species

FT = Federal Threatened Species

FSC = Federal Species of Concern

SE = State Endangered Species

ST = State Threatened Species

SSC = State Species of Concern

Slender Mariposa Lily (*Calochortus clavantus var. gracilis*)

(State Status: None, Federal Status: Species of Concern)

The Slender Mariposa Lily can be found in shaded foothill canyons less than 1000m (3300 ft). This species flowers between April and June. The habitat requirements for this species are not present at the project site.

Plummer's Mariposa Lily (*Calochortus plummerae*)

(State Status: None, Federal Status: Species of Concern)

The Plummer's mariposa lily is located in dry, rocky chaparral, and yellow-pine forests at elevations less than 1700m (5610 ft). This species flowers between May and June. The habitat requirements for this species are not present at the project site.

San Fernando Valley Spineflower (*Chorizanthe parryi var. fernandina*)

(State Status: None, Federal Status: Species of Concern)

San Fernando Valley spineflower occurs in the hills near Santa Ana (CNDDB, 1987). This species is generally found in dry sandy places in coastal sage scrub (Munz, 1974). This species is presumed extinct.

Santa Susana Tarplant (*Hemizonia minthornii*)

(State Status: Rare, Federal Status: Species of Concern)

The Santa Susana tarplant is found in chaparral between 300-500m (990-1650 ft). The Santa Susana tarplant is not located within the project limits and was not observed during field surveys.

Slender-Horned Spineflower (*Dodecahema leptoceras*)

(State Status: Endangered, Federal Status: Endangered)

This plant is associated with chaparral, coastal scrub (alluvial fan sage scrub), and in flood deposited terraces and washes. This species is typically found in areas free of exotic species or ground disturbances. This species was not found in the project area during general surveys, nor is it expected to be in the project area due to lack of habitat suitable for its existence.

Nevin's Barberry (*Berberis nevinii*)

(State Status: Endangered, Federal Status: Endangered)

The Nevin's barberry is associated with chaparral, foothill woodland, coastal sage scrub, and riparian scrub plant communities and occurs in sandy gravelly soil in riparian habitats. This species grows in two distinct habitat types, first of which have sandy gravelly areas along margins of dry washes, below the foothill zone of the Southern California Transverse Ranges, and in coarse soils in chaparral communities. Most of the project area has been altered by prior railroad and highway activities and does not contain suitable habitat for this species.

California Orcutt Grass (*Orcuttia californica*)

(State Status: Endangered, Federal Status: Endangered)

The California orcutt grass is associated with vernal pool habitats, and occurs under vernally flooded conditions. The project area exists on a sloped landscape lacking vernal pool habitat, therefore, suitable habitat for this species does not exist within the project area.

Palmer's Grappling Hook (*Harpagonella palmeri*)

(State Status: None, Federal Status: Species of Concern)

The Palmer's grappling hook is associated with chaparral, coastal scrub, and valley and foothill grassland in clay soils, dry slopes and mesas below 458m (1500 ft). Most of the project area has been altered by prior railroad and highway activity and does not contain suitable habitat for this species.

2. **Fish and Wildlife**

Birds are the most conspicuous wildlife element present within the project area. A variety of species are present including, but not limited to White-throated Swift (*Aeronautes saxatalis*), Black Swift (*Cypseloides niger*), Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*), Scrub Jay (*Aphelocoma coerulescens*), Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), Red-shouldered Hawk (*Buteo lineatus*), Olive-sided Flycatcher (*Contopus borealis*), House Finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*) and Brown-headed Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*).

Bats dominated the mammal population at the proposed project site. In the I-5 West Sylmar Overhead, two separate bat colonies use the structure. One is a Big brown (*Eptesicus fuscus)* maternity colony of approximately 20 individuals and the second is a Mexican free-tail (*Tadarida brasiliensis*) maternity colony represented by 200 individuals. In the I-5/Route 14 connector bridges, bat species were flying around, but an accurate point of entry or exit was not visible, partially due to the height of the structure.

Additional mammals present included the following: Western Rattlesnake (*Crotalus viridis*), Gopher Snake (*Pituophis cateniter*), Coyote (*Canis latrans*), Gray Fox (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*), Bobcat (*Lynx rufus*), Gopher (*Thomomys bottae*), and Jackrabbit (*Lepus townsendi*).

The California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) was searched in September of 1997 and again in the September 13, 1999 version. The following table lists the sensitive wildlife species that were identified in the CNDDB.

Table 3-2

Sensitive Wildlife Species

Common Name	Scientific Name	Federal/State Status	Survey Results
San Diego Desert Woodrat	*Neotoma lepida intermedia*	None/SSC	Species not observed
San Diego Horned Lizard	*Phrynosoma coronatum blainvillei*	None/SSC	Species not observed
Monarch Butterfly	*Danaus plexippus*	None/None	Species not observed
Least Bell's Vireo	*Vireo bellii pusillus*	FE/SE	Species not observed
Southwestern Willow Flycatcher	*Empidonax traillii exitimus*	FE/None	Species not observed
California Gnatcatcher	*Polioptila californica californica*	FT/SSC	Species not observed
Arroyo Toad	*Bufo californicus*	FE/SSC	Species not observed

LEGEND:

E = Federally Endangered Species

T = Federal Threatened Species

FSC = Federal Species of Concern

SE = State Endangered Species

ST = State Threatened Species

SSC = State Species of Concern

San Diego Woodrat (*Neotoma lepida intermedia*)

(State Status: Species of Concern, Federal Status: None)

This species is found in coastal southern California from San Diego County to San Luis Obispo County. This mammal is particularly abundant in rocky outcrops, cliffs and slopes, preferring a moderate to dense canopy of vegetation. Although occurrences of this species have been documented in the CNDDB, the surveys conducted at the I-5/SR-14 interchange have not shown any indications of this species inhabiting the site. The project impact area does not contain the rocky outcrops, cliffs and slopes that are preferred by this species.

San Diego Horned Lizard (*Phrynosoma coronatum blainvillei*)

(State Status: Species of Concern, Federal Status: None)

The San Diego Horned Lizard is a state species of concern, however, is not listed federally. This species occurs in a variety of habitats where there are open areas of loose soil and scattered low brush (Stebbins 1954) and is found below 1800m (6000 ft) in the mountains of southern California exclusive of desert regions. This species inhabits open county, especially sandy areas, washes, floodplains, and wind-blown deposits in a wide variety of habitats found chiefly below 900m (3000 ft). The San Diego horned lizard avoids extreme heat, choosing to bask in the early morning sun. This species burrows into loose soils to avoid heat and predators. Lastly, this species hibernates in burrows under logs, rocks, or crevices. The San Diego horned lizard was not observed during surveys.

Monarch Butterfly (*Danaus plexippus)*

(State Status: None, Federal Status: None)

The monarch butterfly migrates from the Sierra Mountain Ranges to the southern coastal areas. Monarch butterflies require Eucalyptus groves for winter roosting sites. There are no Eucalyptus groves within the project limits.

Least Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus)*

(State Status: Endangered, Federal Status: Endangered)

The least Bell's vireo is described as a once common songbird that is now restricted to scattered riparian habitats in southern California. The vireo is typically present in California between March and August and requires areas of dense willow thickets for breeding. It is generally found in willows and other low, dense valley foothill riparian habitats (willow, cottonwood, baccharis, wild blackberry). This species is found at elevations up to 610m (2000 ft). The vireo eats some fruit and gleans insects from foliage and branches usually within 8 ft. from the ground. They usually nest from March through the end of August. The vegetation within the project area does meet the habitat requirements of the least Bell's vireo.

Southwestern Willow Flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii exitimus)*

(State Status: None, Federal Status: Endangered)

The general habitat associations for this species include riparian woodlands in southern California covering the northern limits of its range. This species prefers to nest in dense riparian vegetation generally dominated by willow and mulefat approximately 4-7 meters high, with a high percentage of canopy cover. Most breeding habitats for this species are within close proximity of water or very saturated soil. A CNDDB search for this species did not reveal any historical occurrences within the project area. Additionally, the dense riparian vegetation needed by this species is not present in the area of project impact.

California Gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica)*

(State Status: Species of Concern, Federal Status: Threatened)

The gnatcatcher is a southern California resident that is restricted to coastal sage scrub vegetation. It is typically found on arid hillside, mesas and washes below 609m (2000 feet) dominated by California sage, black sage, white sage and California buckwheat (Atwood 1980). The existing populations continue to decline because of habitat destruction and possible brood parasitism by brown-headed cowbirds.

Arroyo Toad (*Bufo californicus)*

(State Status: Species of Concern, Federal Status: Endangered)

The arroyo toad is associated with sandy pools along low gradient sections of streams. Flood terraces and other upland streamside habitats are important for foraging and wintering sites. The altered habitat in the project area, resulting from past construction and railroad activities in addition to the steep banks of the creek, does not provide a suitable habitat for the Arroyo Toad.

5. **Wetlands**

Wetlands are defined as areas of land which, either permanently or seasonally, are wet and support specifically adapted vegetation. To regulate activities in wetlands, federal and state agencies have developed specific definitions and methods for identifying wetland boundaries. Identification methods, which vary among the agencies, focus on hydrologic, soil, and vegetative parameters. For sites to be identified as wetlands they must have specific indicators of wetland conditions for each of these three parameters.

The areas of the project site that are subject to the US Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) jurisdiction under section 404 of the Clean Water Act are described in a wetland delineation report prepared by Caltrans. A jurisdictional determination was performed in order to accurately describe and quantify wetlands and non-wetlands at the project site.

The California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) regulates any alteration of streambeds or lakes in accordance with Section 1601-1603 of the Fish and Game Code. Any project that would impact a streambed or lake would require notification of CDFG in order to obtain the appropriate permit.

The California Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) regulates the Clean Water Act in accordance with Section 401 and 402 of the Clean Water Act. Any project that would impact the waters of the State of California requires 401 certification/waiver. The 401 certification/waiver is required prior to completing the Section 404 permit process.

Weldon Creek, which is the drainage that is below the I-5/ SR-14 interchange, has been modified in the following locations.

- In the area that the MTA-Metrolink tunnel and rail lines are located;
- It was modified and recontoured to original condition after the reconstruction of and seismic retrofit of the I-5 / SR-14 connectors;
- In the location of the Old Road, where it is channeled;
- It was modified and recontoured at the West Sylmar Overhead, due to the seismic retrofit construction activities; and
- Further modified when it becomes a concrete lined channel towards the southern end of the project limits.

Aerial photographs indicate the location of the streambed and isolated amounts of riparian vegetation. Since the completion of construction activities, native vegetation has begun to thrive.

1. **Air Quality**

The Federal Clean Air Act (CAA) establishes federal air quality standards known as the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and specifies future dates for achieving compliance (see Table 3-3). The CAA also mandates that the State submits and implements the State Implementation Plan (SIP) for local areas not meeting these standards. These plans must include pollution control measures that demonstrate how the standards will be met.

The California Clean Air Act (CCAA) requires all areas of the State to achieve and maintain the California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) by the earliest practical date. These standards encompass the most common varieties of airborne materials, which can pose a health hazard to the most sensitive individuals in the population. Pollutants for which ambient standards have been set are referred to as "criteria pollutants". Criteria pollutants include the following: Ozone (O_3), Carbon Monoxide (CO), Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2), Particulate Matter (PM_{10}), and lead.

The proposed project is located in the South Coast Air Basin (SCAB), which is designated as a non-attainment area for federal and state standards for Ozone, Carbon Monoxide, and Particulate Matter. Refer to Table 3-4 for Local Air Quality Levels measures at the Santa Clarita Valley Ambient Air Monitoring Station.

The adopted strategies and methods for enhancing the County's air quality are listed in the Air Quality Management Plan. These measures are implemented through conditions of approval of discretionary entitlements and the goals, policies and programs of the General Plan. In addition, an Air Quality Assessment required for Regional Transportation Plans (RTPs) is prepared by Southern California Associated of Governments (SCAG) in nonattainment and maintenance areas. SCAG has coordinated their RTP development with the Air Resources Board to insure conformity with the SIP.

The proposed project is identified in the federally approved (October 6, 2000), 2000/01 – 2005/06 RTIP prepared by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG); this document is in accordance with all applicable SIPS and is consistent with the 1998 RTP. The FY 2000/01 – 2005/06 RTIP conformity findings are based on five analyses: Consistency with the 1998 RTP; Regional Emissions Analysis; TCM Analysis; Fiscal Constraint Analysis; and Interagency Consultation and Public Involvement. Assumptions used in the FY 2000/01 – 2005/06 RTIP regarding population, travel and congestion were the most recent developed by SCAG for the 1998 RTP, and included the most recent approved planning assumptions by SCAG's Regional Council. SCAG conducted a regional emissions analysis of the FY 2000/01 – 2005/06 RTIP and used CARB emissions factors EMFAC7F.1 and EMFAC7G, to estimate the regional emissions impact from implementation of the FY 2000/01 – 2005/06 RTIP.

LOCAL AIR QUALITY LEVELS MEASURED AT THE

SANTA CLARITA VALLEY AMBIENT AIR MONITORING STATION

Table 3-4

Pollutant	California Standard	Federal Primary	Year	Maximum[1] Concentration	Days (Samples) Sate/Federal

		Standard			Std. Exceeded
CO	20 ppm for 1 hour	35 ppm for 1 hour	1996 1997 1998 1999	7 7 8 7	0/0 0/0 0/0 0/0
	9.0 ppm for 8 hours	9 ppm for 8 hours	1996 1997 1998 1999	3.9 6.8 3.4 3.6	0/0 0/0 0/0 0/0
Ozone	0.09 ppm for 1 hour	0.12 ppm for 1 hour	1996 1997 1998 1999	.17 .16 .18 .12	68/19 54/27 38/16 18/0
NO_2	0.25 ppm for 1 hour	0.053 ppm annual average	1996 1997 1998 1999	--/-- --/-- --/-- 0.10*/.0284	--/-- --/-- --/-- 0/0*
PM10[2]	50 ug/m^3 for 24 hours	150 ug/m^3 for 24 hours	1996 1997 1998 1999	91* 67 60* 75	5/0* 5/0 3/0 12/0

Notes: 1. Maximum concentration is measured over the same period as the California Standard.

1. Based on 53 samples in 1996 59 samples in 1997, 55 samples in 1998 and 56 samples in 1999.

-- = Pollutant not measured

ug/m^3= microgram per cubic meter

ppm = parts per million

* Less than 12 full months of data. May not be representative

Source: Annual Summaries California Air Resources Board.

1. **Water Quality**

The Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) developed the Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan) for the Los Angeles Region, which outlines conservation and enhancement of water resources, and establishes beneficial uses for inland surface waters, tidal prisms, harbors, and groundwater basins within the region. Beneficial uses are designated so that water quality objectives can be established and programs that enhance or maintain water quality can be implemented.

The principal outfall for surface water captured on the project is Weldon Canyon. This is within the Los Angeles River Basin boundaries. This watercourse eventually passes (but does not appear to discharge to) Lower Van Norman Reservoir, and Los Angeles Reservoir (both owned by the City of Los Angeles), as identified on the United States Geological Survey (USGS) "Oat Mountain" and "San Fernando" Quadrangle maps. Weldon Creek eventually discharges to Bull Creek which then outlets into Sepulveda Flood Control Basin. This then discharges to the Los Angeles River, which eventually outlets to San Pedro Bay.

The project is not located within the coastal zone management program area, and no coastal barriers are located within the project area.

2. **Historic and Cultural Resources**

A Historic Property Survey Report (HPSR) was conducted for the proposed project. The purpose of this report is to document the findings regarding the eligibility of the properties within the proposed project's Area of Potential Effect (APE) for the National Register of Historic Places (see Figure 3-1). The HPSR is based on regulations 36 CFR 800 for implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as it applies to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) projects and cultural resources. The Historic Property Survey Report is used to identify all historic and cultural/archaeological resources that may be affected by a proposed undertaking, evaluate the eligibility of these resources for the National Register of Historic Places, and apply the Criteria of Effect and Adverse Effect (36 CFR 800.9) to eligible properties that may be effected.

Archaeological Sites

A Negative Archaeological Survey Report (NASR) was completed for this project. The results of the NASR found that no known prehistoric or historical archaeological sites exist within the Area of Potential Effect for this project. This finding is based on information previously collected at the South Central Coastal Information Center, of the California Historical Resources Information System, formerly located on the UCLA campus. Three site visits, a field survey from January 11 to 17, 2000, a review of previous archaeological surveys in the area, and a search through other records was also conducted.

At this time, no prehistoric or historical archaeological sites were identified within the current project area that appear to be eligible to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under Criterion D.

Historic and Architectural Resources

In order to evaluate properties for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places, the Criteria for Evaluation [36 CFR Part 60.4] were applied according to the guidelines set forth in National Register Bulletin 15. These contextual guidelines illustrate the process of significance evaluation according to themes, periods of significance, property types and area.

The Historic Property Survey Report detailed the findings of various historic and architectural resources evaluated within the project's Area of Potential Effects, including one structure, twenty-one properties, and ten bridges. A historic properties search was conducted by the South Central Coastal Information Center on January 18, 2000, which included a review of the historic properties previously listed in their database that are located within a one-half mile radius of the proposed transportation project. The search resulted in:

- No properties previously listed on the National Register of Historic Places;
- Two landmarks listed on the California Historical Landmarks (1990) of the Office of Historic Preservation, California Department of Parks and Recreation;
- Five properties listed on the California State Historic Resources Inventory;
- No properties listed on the California Points of Historical Interest (1992);
- One landmark listed with the City of Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monuments.

The properties identified by the South Central Coastal Information Center do not include the one structure, twenty-one properties, or ten bridges evaluated in this report. Although the aforementioned properties are located near the project area, none of them are directly within the proposed project's APE, and therefore none would be affected by the proposed transportation project.

The Historic Resource Evaluation Report (HRER) documents the eligibility of one structure, the San Fernando Tunnel, for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The San Fernando Tunnel appears to be eligible for listing in the NRHP under Criterion A, for its association with the completion of the Southern Pacific Railroad line that connected the Los Angeles region to northern California.

The Historic Architectural Survey Report (HASR) includes the results of a field survey of twenty-one properties located within the APE for the proposed project. Sixteen of the 21 properties were evaluated and treated under the 1989 "Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Regarding Evaluation of Post-1945 Buildings, Moved Pre-1945 Buildings, and Altered Pre-1945 Buildings," updated in the interim post-1945 guidelines, of July 7, 1997 to include properties dating to 1950. These resources were either mobile trailers, constructed after 1952, or had been substantially altered. The remaining five properties were evaluated on DPR 523 Forms by a qualified architectural historian. None of the twenty-one properties appear to meet National Register criteria for historic or architectural significance.

A total of ten bridges were evaluated in this report as well. All of the bridges were constructed within the past 50 years, and therefore were previously determined ineligible for the National Register of Historic Places in the 1986 Caltrans Bridge Survey.

Caltrans has evaluated the resources and properties located within the proposed project's APE in accordance with Section 15064.5 (a)(2)-(3) of the CEQA guidelines, using the criteria outlined in Section 5024.1 of the California Public Resources Code as well. Caltrans has determined that the tunnel appears to be a historical resource for the purposes of CEQA, whereas the twenty-one buildings and ten bridges are not historical resources for the purposes of CEQA.

1. **Visual**

   A Visual Quality Analysis (VQA) was prepared for the proposed project site (January 2000). The VQA was prepared according to criteria set forth in Visual Impact Assessment for Highway Projects (USDOT, FHA, c. 1979). The visual quality of the existing project site was analyzed for each significant viewpoint (VP) in terms of vividness, intactness, and unity. Then, the same viewpoints were analyzed for the proposed

modifications using, in part, photosimulations of the new structures.

The significant viewpoints were determined to be the northbound and southbound lanes on the mainline roadways, where the bulk of motorists travel. The truck lanes location to the east and the small percentage of total traffic volume, reduces their significance as a viewpoint. Beneath the interchange, the volume of users is so low that this viewpoint is insignificant.

4. **Land Use**

The land use surrounding the project area includes mostly non-urban with a small amount of public and semi-public facilities (Land Use Policy Map, Los Angeles County General Plan, 1980). Non-urban is defined as areas not currently planned for urban use or scheduled to receive an urban level of service. Public and semi-public facilities are defined as major existing and proposed public and semi-public uses. At the project location this includes utilities, railroads, and public buildings. There are no residential areas located near the proposed project.

5. **Social and Economic**
    1. **Population**

The north Los Angeles sub-region is made up of a large land area extending from the Ventura County line on the west to the San Bernardino County line to the east and from the Kern County line on the north to the Angeles National Forest to the south. This area has experienced rapid population growth over the past several decades, facilitated by construction of a major freeway network and the gradual migration of large-scale employers into the area.

There are two major parts to this Los Angeles County sub-region: the Antelope Valley with 2,097.5 square miles and the Santa Clarita Valley with another 399.5 square miles. The cities of Lancaster and Palmdale are the two cities located in the Antelope Valley while the City of Santa Clarita is the only city found in the Santa Clarita Valley. The City of Santa Clarita has absorbed some of the nearby smaller, thriving communities in the area including Valencia, Saugus, Canyon Country, and Newhall.

As Table 3-5 illustrates, these cities contain most of the developed areas of their respective valleys and most of the population. An increasing number of unincorporated communities, however, can be found throughout this sub-region, from areas adjacent to the three cities to remote communities far removed from the urban areas. The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) baseline population projections shown in Table 3-5 show substantial population growth for these areas through the year 2020 due to the ample supply of developable land.

Table 3-5

Population

	1990[1]	1999[2]	2020[3]
City of Santa Clarita	110,642	147,000	230,585
Santa Clarita Valley	151,055	UNK	518,809
City of Lancaster	97,291	130,100	293,929
City of Palmdale	68,917	120,100	370,811
Antelope Valley	242,682	UNK	840,641

1. 1990 U.S. Census

2. California Department of Finance

3. SCAG Baseline Projections

The ethnic background of the affected communities is shown on Table 3-6 below.

Table 3-6

Ethnicity

	City of Santa Clarita	City of Lancaster	City of Palmdale
White	96,666	76,974	52,376
African American	1,714	7,225	4,416
American Indian, Eskimo or Aleut	698	1,158	625

Asian	4,444	3,475	2,823
Pacific Islander	131	217	206
Other	6,989	8,242	8,471

1990 U.S. Census

2. **Housing**

The rapid population growth occurring in the Santa Clarita Valley is expected to continue until current economic or housing conditions change. The valley is perceived as an attractive place to live. Growth in the number of housing units within the Santa Clarita Valley is supported by the goals of the Santa Clarita Area Plan and the City's General Plan, which desire to create a balance of jobs and housing. Currently, there is an imbalance of housing and jobs. Los Angeles County's Santa Clarita Area Plan includes approximately 404.6 hectares (10,000) acres of proposed new development outside the City of Santa Clarita. The majority of this land is planned for single and multiple family residences, although significant areas are planned for the needed industrial and commercial land uses.

The Antelope Valley is experiencing increasing development pressures due to the attractiveness of its high desert climate and the availability of inexpensive, developable land within commuting distance of the employment centers within the greater Los Angeles area. This extensive amount of affordable housing, providing a range of residential options and locations, has lured many former residents of the Los Angeles area to the Antelope Valley. Growth is expected to continue with several master planned communities slated for this area.

3. **Employment**

Although the Santa Clarita Valley is largely recognized as a suburban residential community, the City of Santa Clarita and surrounding development within the jurisdiction of Los Angeles County includes a diversity of employment opportunities. The largest employers in the area include Six Flags Magic Mountain, Henry Mayo Newhall Memorial Hospital, and the William S. Hart Unified School District.

Employment in the Antelope Valley has historically been rooted in the aerospace and manufacturing industries. Recently, employment has shifted toward service sector employment, due to the strong residential growth that has increased demand for support type services. Associated with the residential and commercial growth has been the creation of a strong construction industry.

Table 3-7 below details 1990 Census information regarding employment in the City of Santa Clarita and the Cities of Lancaster and Palmdale.

Table 3-7

Employment

	City of Santa Clarita	City of Lancaster	City of Palmdale
Employed Persons 16 Years and Over	61,119	42,790	30,924
Agriculture	660	322	237
Forestry and Fisheries	33	9	26
Mining	183	183	69
Construction	4,116	4,229	3,288
Manufacturing	11,681	8,116	7,063

Transportation, Communications, and Other Public Utilities	4,523	2,317	2,364
Wholesale Trade	2,923	1,452	1,003
Retail Trade	9,335	7,202	5,272
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	5,756	2,398	2,315
Services	19,431	13,359	7,815
Public Administration	2,478	3,203	1,472

1990 U.S. Census

4. **Transportation**

Existing major transportation facilities connecting both the Antelope and Santa Clarita Valleys to the Los Angeles basin are limited to the Antelope Valley Freeway (SR-14) and the Golden State Freeway (I-5). Inhabitants of Santa Clarita, Lancaster, Palmdale, and the smaller communities along Interstate 5 and Route 14 experience an imbalance of housing and jobs. This imbalance causes most of the residents of these developing corridor communities to commute long distances (see Tables 3-8 and 3-9).

Table 3-8

Means of Transportation

	City of Santa Clarita	%	City of Lancaster	%	City of Palmdale	%
Workers 16 Years and Over	59,829		42,455		30,252	
Drove Alone	47,988	80%	31,172	74%	21,309	71%
Carpool	8,130	14%	8,558	20%	7,076	23%
Public Transportation	408	1%	442	1%	271	1%
Other	3,303	5%	2,283	5%	1,596	5%

1990 U.S. Census

Table 3-9

Travel Time to Work

	City of Santa Clarita	City of Lancaster	City of Palmdale
Mean Travel Time To Work (Minutes)	30.5	27.9	40.5
Workers Traveling 45 or More Minutes	55.9	67.0	66.6

1990 U.S. Census

1. **Environmental Evaluation**

The environmental significance checklist that follows was used to identify physical, biological, social, and economic factors that might be affected by the proposed project. In many cases, available background information clearly indicates that the project would not affect a particular resource and, therefore, no environmental impacts are expected. A "NO" answer in the first column documents this determination. Where there is a need for clarifying discussion, an asterisk is shown next to the answer. If the answer in the first column is "YES", then it is known that there would be an environmental impact. A detailed discussion of the answers follows the checklist.

Several technical studies were conducted to provide background data and to assist in evaluating the environmental consequences of the proposed project.

- Geotechnical Report 12/24/99
- Visual Impact Assessment 1/14/00
- Hydraulic Study 1/26/00
- Archaeological Survey Report 1/25/00

- Air Quality Conformity Analysis 1/18/00
- Initial Site Assessment 3/97
- Noise Investigation 1/31/00
- Physical Environmental Report 5/00
- Natural Environmental Study Report 3/98
- Natural Environmental Study Report Reevaluation 3/29/00
- Historic Property Survey Report 4/00
- Traffic Projections 4/00
- Record of Public Hearing 1/01

The listed technical studies are incorporated by reference into the document and are available for review under separate cover at:

Caltrans, District 7

Office of Environmental Planning

120 South Spring Street

Los Angeles, CA 90012

Table 4-1

Environmental Significance Checklist

PHYSICAL. Will the proposal (either directly or indirectly):		**YES or NO**	**If YES, is it significant? YES or NO**
1.	Appreciably change the topography or ground surface relief features?	NO	
2.	Destroy, cover, or modify any unique geologic or physical features?	NO	
3.	Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource or locally important mineral resource recovery site, that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	NO	
4.	Result in unstable earth surfaces or increase the exposure of people or property to geologic or seismic hazards?	NO*	
5.	Result in or be affected by soil erosion or siltation (whether by water or wind)?	NO	
6.	Result in the increased use of fuel or energy in large amounts or in a wasteful manner?	NO	

7.	Result in an increase in the rate of use of any natural resource?	NO	
8.	Result in the substantial depletion of any nonrenewable resource?	NO	
9.	Violate any published Federal, State, or local standards pertaining to hazardous waste, solid waste or litter control?	NO*	
10.	Modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed of the ocean or any bay, inlet or lake?	NO*	
11.	Encroach upon a floodplain or result in or be affected by floodwaters or tidal waves?	NO*	
12.	Adversely affect the quantity or quality of surface water, groundwater, or public water supply?	NO*	
13.	Result in the use of water in large amounts or in a wasteful manner?	NO	
14.	Affect wetlands or riparian vegetation?	YES	NO
15.	Violate or be inconsistent with Federal, State or local water quality standards?	NO*	
16.	Result in changes in air movement, moisture, or temperature, or any climatic conditions?	NO	
17.	Result in an increase in air pollutant emissions, adverse effects on or deterioration of ambient air quality?	NO*	
18.	Results in the creation of objectionable odors?	NO	
19.	Violate or be inconsistent with Federal, State, or local air standards or control plans?	NO*	
20.	Result in an increase in noise levels or vibration for adjoining areas?	NO*	
21.	Result in any Federal, State, or local noise criteria being equal or exceeded?	NO*	
22.	Produce new light, glare, or shadows?	NO	
BIOLOGICAL. Will the proposal (either directly or indirectly):		**YES or NO**	**If YES, is it significant? YES or NO**
23.	Change in the diversity of species or number of any species of (including trees, shrubs, grass, microflora, and aquatic plants)?	NO*	
24.	Reduction of the numbers of or encroachment upon the critical habitat or any unique, threatened or endangered species of plants?	NO	
25.	Introduction of new species of plants into an area, or result in a barrier to the normal replenishment of existing species?	NO	
26.	Reduction in acreage of any agricultural crop or commercial timber stands, or affects prime, unique, or other farmland of State or local importance?	NO	
27.	Removal or deterioration of existing fish or wildlife habitat?	NO*	
28.	Change in the diversity of species or numbers of any species of animals (birds, land animals including reptiles, fish and shellfish, benthic organisms, insects or microfauna)?	NO*	
29.	Reduction of the numbers of or encroachment upon the critical habitat of any unique, threatened or endangered species of animals?	NO	
30.	Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan or other approved local, regional or state habitat plan?	NO	

31.	Introduction of new species of animals into an area, or result in a barrier to the migration of movement of animals?	NO	
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC. Will the proposal (directly or indirectly):		**YES or NO**	**If YES, is it significant? YES or NO**
32.	Cause disruption of orderly planned development?	NO	
33.	Be inconsistent with any elements of adopted community plans, policies or goals?	NO*	
34.	Be inconsistent with a Coastal Zone Management Plan?	NO	
35.	Affect the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area?	NO*	
36.	Affect life-styles, or neighborhood character or stability?	NO	
37.	Affect minority, elderly, handicapped, transit-dependent, or other specific interest groups?	NO*	
38.	Divide or disrupt an established community?	NO	
39.	Affect existing housing, require the acquisition of residential improvements or the displacement of people or create a demand for additional housing?	NO	
40.	Affect employment, industry or commerce, or require the displacement of businesses or farms?	NO	
41.	Affect property values or the local tax base?	NO	
42.	Affect any community facilities (including medical, educational, scientific, recreational, or religious institutions, ceremonial sites or sacred shrines)?	NO	
43.	Affect public utilities, or police, fire, emergency or other public services?	NO*	
44.	Have substantial impact on existing transportation systems or alter present patterns of circulation or movement of people and/or goods?	NO*	
45.	Generate additional traffic?	NO	
46.	Affect or be affected by existing parking facilities or result in demand of new parking?	NO	
47.	Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?	NO	
48.	Involve a substantial risk of an explosion or the release of hazardous substances in the event of an accident or otherwise adversely affect overall public safety?	NO	
49.	Result in alterations to waterborne, rail or air traffic?	NO	
50.	Support large commercial or residential development?	NO*	
51.	Affect a significant archaeological or historic site, structure object, or building?	NO*	
52.	Affect wild or scenic rivers or natural landmarks?	NO	
53.	Affect any scenic resources or result in the obstruction of any scenic vista or view open to the public, or creation of an aesthetically offensive site open to public view?	NO*	
54.	Result in substantial impacts associated with construction activities (e.g., noise, dust, temporary drainage, traffic detours and temporary access, etc.)?	NO*	

55.	Result in the use of any publicly owned land from a park, recreation area, or wildlife and waterfowl refuge?	NO	
MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE		**YES or NO**	**If YES, is it significant? YES or NO**
56.	Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number of, restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	NO*	
57.	Does the project have the potential to achieve short-term, to the disadvantage of long-term, environmental goals? (A short-term impact on the environment is one that occurs in a relatively brief, definitive period of time while long-term impacts will endure well into the future.)	NO*	
58.	Does the project have environmental effects that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? Cumulatively considerable means that the incremental effects of an individual project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects probable future projects. It includes the effects of other projects that interact with this project and, together, are considerable.	NO*	
59.	Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	NO	

The numbers in parenthesis indicate the related question from the checklist.

1. **Geology (#4)**

   A Geotechnical Report prepared in December of 1999 determined that the existing freeway is located within the confines of the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act and is located over a previously mapped fault trace of the Santa Susana thrust system. In July of 1994, Caltrans' Office of Engineering Geology conducted a detailed fault evaluation during the I-5/SR-14 interchange reconstruction following the Northridge earthquake in January of 1994. Conclusions within the report stated that no ground rupture occurred within the interchange, during either the 1994 Northridge or 1971 San Fernando Earthquakes. The damage to the bridges was caused by earthquake accelerations and evidence for an active fault at the site was not found. The location of the fault trace shown on the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault map could not be verified through the 1994 detailed geologic investigation and the ground cracking mapped in 1971 and 1994 appears to be related to dormant landslide head scarps.

   Liquefaction exists when fine silts and sands are located below the water table. The water can also be perched ground water. Liquefaction has been documented to affect soils to ± 15 meters (50 feet) deep, during prolonged periods of ground shaking. Based on a review of boring logs for previous investigations at the site, on a regional study conducted by the U.S. Geologic Survey (1985) using ground water levels measured from 1960 to 1975, the relative liquefaction susceptibility along the project area is considered to be very low.

   Ground shaking and possible associated ground rupture from a moderate earthquake along this fault or other distant earthquake faults would create the greatest potential damage to this project. The magnitude, duration, and vibration frequency characteristics would vary greatly depending upon the particular causative fault and its distance from the project.

   There are no geological or geotechnical conditions that would preclude the construction of this project. The construction of this project would not have an adverse effect on the existing environmental condition or result in unstable earth surfaces or increase the exposure of people or property to geologic or seismic hazards.

2. **Hazardous Waste (#9)**

   An Initial Site Assessment (ISA) was prepared for the proposed project in March of 1997. The ISA included a field survey and review of aerial photographs focusing on areas designated for proposed widening. The areas for proposed widening of the freeways appeared to be undeveloped and within the right-of-way of the current freeways. Aerial photographs indicated that the areas designated for the proposed widening, and properties within the designated project area were historically undeveloped, occupied by highways and roads, or developed with residential and commercial structures.

   Activities conducted at the Sunshine Canyon Sanitary Landfill located west of the search area have not attributed to the documented elevated chlorine levels detected in groundwater beneath the landfill facility. The source of volatile organic compounds (VOCs), including 1, 1-dichloroethane (0.5-6.2 micrograms per liter (ug/l)), 1,2-dichloroethane (1.8 ug/l), and dichlorofluoromethane (1.2 – 1.8 ug/l), detected in landfill monitoring well MW-10 have not been documented. Well MW-10 is located in close proximity to the municipal solid waste cell constructed along the north side of the canyon. Volatile organic compounds have not been detected in monitoring wells located in closer proximity to the search area for this report. Properties within the search area currently or historically maintaining underground storage tanks did not appear to have reported releases that may have impacted the project area.

   Two oil wells identified from review of the Division of Oil and Gas (DOG) field maps were referenced as located within the search area. The exact locations of the wells with respect to the Caltrans proposed widening could not be determined. The oil wells were referenced as "plugged and abandoned-dry hole".

   Based on review of the information obtained during the ISA, the potential for existing impacts to the project area from hazardous materials/wastes is considered low. The potential for lead impacts exists in near-surface soil adjacent to I-5 and SR-14. A lead subsurface investigation should be conducted prior to initiation of construction activities. The potential for the oil wells to be located within the area of proposed widening exists in the vicinity of the I-5/SR-14 interchange and in the southern portion of the project area adjacent to and east of I-5. A site investigation would need to be conducted prior to the Project Report phase of this project to quantify the impacts and cost of mitigation for aerially deposited lead and oil wells (see discussion in Section 3.3).

   This project would have no adverse impacts on solid waste resulting from the construction and operation of this project, however, the following measures to minimize harm would be in place:

   Measures to Minimize Harm:

HAZ-1 In the event that excavation reveals unknown potentially hazardous materials, Caltrans policy would require work to be halted in the vicinity until the area in question is investigated and proper mitigation proposed.

HAZ-2 The contractor, prior to the start of construction, would identify borrow and disposal sites. At that time, impacts from the use of such borrow and disposal sites and associated haul routes would be investigated.

3. **Modify the Channel of a River or Stream (#10)**

The proposed project crosses Weldon Canyon Creek, and depending on the type of work performed, the following permits may be required: 1601 Streambed Alteration Agreement (California Department of Fish and Game), Section 401 (Regional Water Quality Control Board), and Section 404 (United States Army Corps of Engineers).

Measure to Minimize Harm:

CH-1 Application for permits with the pertinent agencies.

4. **Floodplain (#11)**

A search of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) maps indicates that the proposed project is located in a non-flood hazard area. Therefore, a floodplain hydraulic study is not warranted (Hydraulic Study, 1/00).

5. **Water Quality (#12, #15)**

The Basin Plan of the California Regional Water Quality Control Board does not identify a regional groundwater basin beneath the project limits that is used for drinking water production. Moreover, groundwater storage and groundwater elevations beneath the project boundaries would not be changed substantially, therefore, there would be no adverse impact.

Annual stormwater pollutant loads discharged to receiving water bodies for some pollutants of concern would increase with this project. Implementation of measures to minimize harm would reduce potential impacts to the receiving water bodies. These measures would require roadway design practices, and storm water systems to meet performance standards through incorporation of source, structural, and treatment controls via Best Management Practices (BMP's) with the goal of reducing the discharge of pollutants to the maximum extent practicable (MEP). Some of the BMP's that could be employed to infiltrate or treat storm water runoff and control peak flow rates as outlined in Caltrans Statewide Storm Water Quality Practice Guidelines are:

- Vegetated swales and strips
- Oil/water separators
- Media filtration
- Detention/retention/infiltration Basins
- Constructing fill and cut slopes to 1:4 or flatter
- Stabilize disturbed areas
- Preservation of existing vegetation

As a result, potential impacts on surface water quality would be less than significant.

Overall, there would be no adverse impacts on water quality in the area of the proposed project. The proposed project would not materially change existing drainage patterns. Runoff volumes are not expected to increase significantly since there would be little increase in impervious areas for surface runoff. Water quality controls during construction of the project are specified in Caltrans' Standard Specifications.

Measure to Minimize Harm:

WQ-1 The contractor must provide a comprehensive water pollution and erosion control plan. The plan must be approved by the resident engineer and submitted for approval to the Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Quality Control Board 402 permit, National Pollution Discharge Elimination System - NPDES).

1. **Wetlands (#14)**

The Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) regulates discharge of fill into "waters of the U.S. including wetlands and non-wetlands waters that meet specific criteria. A wetland delineation was prepared for the proposed project by Caltrans. The wetland delineation study area extended approximately 61m (200 ft) upstream and downstream of the project area. The area is generally disturbed, due to connector reconstruction after the 1994 Northridge earthquake and the seismic retrofit program.

At the proposed project site, ACOE jurisdictional direct impacts to wetlands/riparian habitat are 0.07 acres of emergent wetlands and 0.24 acres of waters of the US, and 2.89 acres of permanent impacts to uplands as well as an additional 1.93 acres of temporary impacts to uplands.

Project activities include excavation, fill, construction access ramps, and pile driving which require that a United States Army Corps of Engineers Nationwide permit be applied for.

Measure to Minimize Harm:

WET-1 Application for United States Army Corps of Engineers Nationwide 404 Permit.

**Additional measures to minimize harm are listed under sections 4-9.*

2. **Air Quality (#17, #19)**

Air Quality Conformity

The Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAAs) of 1990 require that transportation plans, programs and projects which are funded by or approved under Title 23 U.S.C. or the Federal Transit Act conform to state and federal air quality plans. In order to be found in conformance, a project must come from approved transportation plans and programs such as the State Implementation Plan (SIP), the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), or the Regional Transportation Improvement Plan (RTIP). This project, as proposed, is identified in the 1998 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) adopted on April 16, 1998 by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). SCAG's 1998 RTP was approved by FHWA/FTA on June 9, 1998. In addition, the proposed project is identified in the 1997 Los Angeles County Congestion Management Program/Capital Improvement Program (CMP/CIP) prepared by the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA). The proposed project is also listed in the LACMTA July 1999 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) "Call for Projects" listing.

The proposed project falls under the lump sum FHWA funding category of the existing 1998-99/2004-2005 RTIP for Preliminary, Right of Way, and Construction Engineering (Various counties & Highways, 245). This document was approved by the United States Department of Transportation (FHWA/FTA) on July 31, 1998. In addition, the proposed project is identified in the Draft 2000/01 – 05/06 RTIP for "Right of Way" only. This document is currently undergoing public review and comment. Based upon the projects inclusion in the 1998 RTP and the projects inclusion under the FHWA lump sum category of funding in the 1998/99 – 04/05 RTIP, the project, as proposed, conforms to the requirements of the federal CAAA's of 1990.

CO Hotspot Analysis

To determine if the proposed project needs a detailed analysis to evaluate the air quality impacts, the procedures and guidelines provided in the Transportation Project-Level Carbon Monoxide Protocol (herein referred to as the CO Protocol) were followed.

This protocol is to evaluate the potential local level carbon monoxide (CO) impacts of the project. These procedures and guidelines comply with the following regulations without imposing additional requirements: Section 176(c) of the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments, federal conformity rules, state and local adoptions of the federal conformity rules, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) [Cal. Code Regs., tit.21, § 1509.3 (25)].

The procedures and guidelines described in the Protocol are intended to replace the procedures for determining localized concentrations (hotspot analysis) that are given in 40 CFR § 93.131. The CO Protocol methodologies have been approved by the U.S. EPA Region as an appropriate analysis. The procedure outlined in Section 3 of the CO Protocol Figure 1 (pp. 3-2) was followed and it was determined that a local impact examination is required. The project level analysis procedure outlined in Section 4 of the CO Protocol was followed for the Qualitative Analysis Application.

The proposed project is located in a non-attainment area for CO with an approved CO attainment plan, therefore, Caltrans proceeded to Level 2 Figure 3 (pp. 4-10) to determine if this project is satisfactory. All of the following conditions must be met for the project to be satisfactory without additional quantitative analysis:

1. Project does not significantly increase cold start percentage.

2. Project does not significantly increase traffic volumes.

3. Project improves traffic flow.

4. Project does not move traffic closer to a receptor site.

A qualitative screening has been performed to check each of the above conditions. If all conditions are met, the project does not require additional air quality analysis.

Condition 1: *Does any current build alternative have at least 2% more traffic operating in cold start mode than the no-action alternative?*

No. All build alternatives are within the same developed area as the no-action alternative with no adverse increases in nearby activities because of the build alternatives. None of the build alternatives would cause an increase in vehicles operating in cold start mode that is 2% or greater than the no-action alternative.

Condition 2: *Does any current build alternative significantly increase traffic volumes above the no-action volumes?*

No. None of the traffic volumes are significantly higher for the build than the no-action alternatives.

Condition 3: *Does any current build alternative improve traffic flow?*

Yes. Both build alternatives would improve traffic flow, reduce delays and alleviate traffic congestion.

Condition 4: *Does any current build alternative move traffic closer to a receptor site?*

No. The proposed project would not move traffic closer to a receptor site. There are no nearby sensitive receptors in the area adjacent to the project.

Summary of CO Analysis

All conditions of the Level 2 analysis are satisfied, therefore, the project does not require quantitative analysis. This project does not create new violations or cause an increase in the number or the severity of any existing violations at any receptor site. This project improves the air quality by improving traffic flow and decreasing traffic delays.

PM10 Qualitative Hot Spot Analysis

FHWA currently requires qualitative PM_{10} analysis for all non-exempt projects, in PM_{10} non-attainment areas that must have localized impact analysis. This project is located in a PM_{10} non-attainment area, therefore, a qualitative PM_{10} analysis is required. For the qualitative analysis Caltrans used the PM_{10} Air Quality Summaries for years 1997-1999 published by the Air Resources Board, South Coast Air Quality Management District for the Santa Clarita monitoring station. The summaries showed no monitored violations of the federal standards during this three-year period. This monitoring station is the closest to the proposed project. Studies performed by Caltrans and UC Davis indicate that this type of project is unlikely to cause or experience a localized PM_{10} problem. This type of project is an insignificant contributor to localized PM_{10} emissions. There is no data to support the fact that this project would contribute in a hot spot fashion to any known violations. Regional conformity already accounts for PM_{10} emissions from regional vehicle miles traveled (VMT).

Summary of PM10 Analysis

The qualitative PM_{10} analysis shows that the proposed project would not cause or contribute to new localized PM_{10} violations or increase severity/frequency of existing violations of the air quality standards in the area substantially affected by the project. It would reduce emissions and improve air quality by improving traffic flow and decreasing traffic delays.

Construction Air Quality

There would be no adverse air quality impacts due to construction activities associated with the proposed project. Fugitive dust and particulate matter, including particulate matter less than ten microns in size (PM_{10}) and emissions generated during project excavation and filling would be controlled by the contractor in accordance with the provisions in the State of California Department of Transportation Standard Specifications, Section 7, "Legal Relations and Responsibilities", specifically, 7-1.01F titled "Air Pollution Control." The contractor would control the construction equipment and off-site vehicles used for hauling debris and supplies to minimize the production of construction emissions. The pollutants of primary concern include fugitive dust, PM_{10}, reactive organic gases, oxides of nitrogen, CO, and to a lesser extent, sulfur dioxides. Project construction would be conducted in accordance with all federal, state, and local regulations that govern construction activities and emissions from these vehicles.

While emissions from construction activities and equipment are an unavoidable consequence of project construction, they are temporary. Following the measures to minimize harm listed below would serve to minimize impacts to ambient air quality and the nuisance impacts to the public in proximity to the project corridor.

Measures to Minimize Harm:

AQ-1 Stabilize construction roads and dirt piles with water and/or chemicals twice daily.

AQ-2 Limit speeds on unpaved construction roads to 15 mph.

AQ-3 Daily removal of dirt spilled onto paved roads.

AQ-4 Cease grading and excavation activities when wind speeds exceed 25 miles per hour and during extreme air pollution episodes.

AQ-5 Require covering of all haul trucks.

AQ-6 Phase grading to minimize the area of disturbed soils.

AQ-7 Phase construction activities to minimize daily emissions.

AQ-8 Proper maintenance of construction vehicles to maximize efficiency and minimize erosion.

AQ-9 Prompt re-vegetation of roadsides.

1. **Noise (#20, #21)**

The Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol contains Caltrans noise policies, which fulfill the highway noise analysis and abatement/mitigation requirements stemming from the following State and Federal environmental statutes:

- California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
- Title 23 United States Code of Federal Regulations, Part 772 "Procedures for Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise and Construction Noise: (23 CFR 772)
- Section 216 et seq. Of the California Streets and Highways Code

Policies, procedures and practices are provided in this Protocol for use by agencies that sponsor new construction or reconstruction transportation projects. The Protocol is designed to evaluate the potential traffic and construction

generated noise impacts, and determines reasonable and feasible noise abatement/mitigation for the project.

For Type I projects traffic noise must be analyzed for all alternatives under consideration, and traffic noise impacts identified. A Type I project is defined by 23 CFR 772 as follows: *a proposed Federal or Federal-aid highway project for the construction of a highway on a new location, or the physical alteration of an existing highway which significantly changes either the horizontal or vertical alignment, or increases the number of through-traffic lanes.* If traffic noise impacts are identified, noise abatement must be considered, and feasible and reasonable abatement measures included in the draft environmental document.

After a field visit on January 31, 2000, it was determined that there are no receptors within the project limits that would result in potential noise impacts from the proposed project. Although there are some commercial sites, Caltrans' current policy is not to provide soundwalls at these locations. It is therefore, unnecessary to perform a formal, preliminary noise impact analysis. As part of Caltrans' Best Management Practices, however, the following measures to minimize harm would be in place.

Measures to Minimize Harm:

NOI-1 Construction contractors would comply with all Caltrans and local noise ordinances that are applicable to construction activities.

NOI-2 Internal combustion engines used for construction would be equipped with the type of mufflers recommended by equipment manufacturers.

NOI-3 To the maximum extent feasible, the noisiest construction operations would be scheduled to occur together in the construction program to avoid continuing periods of greater disturbance to wildlife and to humans in the vicinity of construction activities.

1. **Vegetation and Wildlife (#23, #28)**

As part of the reevaluation of the March 1998 Natural Environmental Study Report (NESR) for the proposed project, general biological surveys were conducted. The purpose of these surveys was to identify any additional habitat that may have developed since the original report, and to see if they have the potential of supporting the sensitive species addressed in the NESR. The surveys of the project site were conducted February 28, April 20, and May 8, 2000. These surveys consisted of observing the biological resources present in the areas of project impact. The observations made during surveys were found to be consistent with the findings of the previously written NESR.

Vegetation

The sensitive plant species addressed in the original NESR (Slender mariposa lily, Plummer's mariposa lily, San Fernando Valley spineflower, and Santa Susana tarplant) were not observed in the project area during the general surveys conducted on February 28, April 20, and May 8, 2000. Additional species that were surveyed for include Slender-Horned spineflower (*Dodecahema leptoceras*), Palmer's grapplinghook (*Harpagonella palmeri*), Nevin's barberry (*Berberis nevinii*), and California orcutt grass (*Orcuttia californica*). These plant species were not found in the project area during general surveys nor are they expected to be in the project area due to lack of habitat suitable for their existence.

Wildlife

San Diego Desert Woodrat

The general surveys conducted confirm the absence of the San Diego desert woodrat (*neotoma lepida intermedia*) from the project area. Although some suitable habitat may exist this species or its presence was not observed during the general surveys. In addition, no new occurrences have been listed in the CNDDB for the area of the project. It is unlikely that the San Diego desert woodrat would be impacted by this project.

San Diego Horned Lizard

Most of the area to be impacted lacks the open flat sandy areas, washes, floodplains, and in particular the friable soils preferred by this species. Previous surveys for this species at the I-5/SR-14 interchange have not revealed a presence of this species in the area. This species is not expected to be impacted by this project.

Monarch Butterfly

Due to the absence of Eucalyptus groves, which the butterflies use for winter roosting, the monarch butterfly is not expected to be on site.

Least Bell's Vireo and Southwestern Willow Flycatcher

The general surveys verify the conclusions made about the least Bell's vireo (*vireo bellii pusillus*) and the Southwestern Willow Flycatcher (*empidonax traillii extimus*) in the original report. The riparian habitat in the project area did not have enough riparian vegetation to support either the least Bell's vireo or southwestern willow flycatcher. The least Bell's vireo prefers nesting in a dense understory of herbaceaous and shrubby riparian vegetation, this type of habitat was not found in the project area. The southwestern willow flycatcher nests primarily in willow thickets in riparian zones which was not found in the project area. In addition, these species have had no historical occurrences listed in the California Natural Diversity Database listing of the area.

California Gnatcatcher

The NESR indicated that the California Gnatcatcher (*polioptila californica*) was not likely to be present at the project area. The focused surveys conducted for the NESR included an extensive area covering ¼ mile outside of the project impact area and included all habitat within this area having the potential to support this species. This study was

extended to cover suitable areas that were bisected by the survey boundary even further upstream. The California gnatcatcher was not observed in any of the focused surveys conducted in the project area. Since the time of these focused surveys, new occurrences have now appeared in the CNDDB listing of the area. Although the project area has some of the vegetation preferred by this species, there is a high level of disturbance at this location, associated with a recent bent inspection project (Caltrans EA 4G3300), active railroad tracks in the immediate vicinity, and highway traffic on all sides. The lack of historic occurrences, in addition to the disturbances found at the project site make it highly unlikely for the gnatcatcher to be present. This species was not observed during the general surveys conducted as part of this reevaluation.

Arroyo Toad

The general surveys conducted for the reevaluation indicate a lack of suitable habitat for the arroyo toad (*bufo californicus*) in the project area. The majority of the project exists on upland areas with the remaining riparian areas found directly adjacent to railroad tracks. The banks of the riparian areas were very steep, deterring access to upland areas for foraging. Due to the lack of suitable habitat at the project site, the arroyo toad is not expected to be impacted by this project.

Habitat

No major changes in habitat were observed during the general surveys of the project site. The results of the general surveys are consistent with, and support the findings of the NESR for the LA 5/14 HOV Connector dated March 1998.

Measures to Minimize Harm:

BIO-1 The following permits would be required prior to construction

- *California Department of Fish and Game 1601 Streambed Alteration Agreement*
- *U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 404 Permit*
- *California Regional Water Quality Control Board 401 Certification*

BIO-2 Bridge work on the West Sylmar Overhead would occur between September 15th and March 1st to avoid impacts to a known bat colony in the project area.

BIO-3 No gasoline or diesel equipment would be operated under the West Sylmar Overhead between March 1st and September 15th to avoid impacts to a known bat colony in the project area.

BIO-4 If bat colonies are discovered at any other bridge, beside the West Sylmar Overhead, during the course of construction, work at that bridge will cease until further instructions are obtained from the appropriate resource agencies.

BIO-5 Bird surveys will be conducted if work occurs between March 1st to September 15th. If nesting birds are present, work in that area will cease until further instruction with appropriate resource agencies is obtained.

BIO-6 The contractor would prepare a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan or Water Pollution Control Plan. This plan would be submitted to, reviewed by, and approved by the Resident Engineer and the District Biologist prior to implementation.

BIO-7 New access routes would be recontoured to the original grade and revegetated upon completion of construction.

BIO-8 All disturbed areas would be revegetated with seed collected within a 2-mile radius of the project site.

BIO-9 Exotic vegetation would be removed by either an approved EPA aquatic herbicide in streambed/riparian areas or an approved EPA herbicide for upland areas (considering the appropriate distance away from the streambed).

BIO-10 No debris (removed vegetation, trash, discarded materials, etc.) would be stored near a streambed, as defined as top of slope to top of slope.

BIO-11 No stockpiling of materials near or in a streambed, as defined as top of slope to top of slope.

BIO-12 No equipment maintenance in or near a streambed, as defined as top of slope to top of slope.

BIO-13 Protection from dust and debris would be part of the design scaffolding.

BIO-14 The revegetation plan would be approved by California Department of Fish and Game as part of the Streambed Alteration Agreement (1601).

BIO-15 Yearly monitoring of the success of the revegetation plan with monitoring reports submitted to the resource agencies.

BIO-16 No alterations should occur to the hinges of the West Sylmar Overhead to avoid impacts to a known bat colony in the project area.

1. **Removal or Deterioration of Existing Fish or Wildlife Habitat (#27)**

Minimal amounts of habitat will be lost due to the project. The areas adjacent to the project sites have all been disturbed due to various reasons (i.e. roadway construction, railway construction, and activities, and fire and slides). Approximately 2.89 acres of uplands (disturbed habitat) will be lost due to gap closures and shadow effects of the bridges and column or bent placement. Approximately 1.93 acres of uplands will have temporary impacts (i.e. haul roads, access, etc.) A total of 0.07 acres of wetlands will be impacted and 0.24 acres of waters of the US will be impacted.

See measures to minimize harm listed in Section 4.9.

10. **Community Plans, Policies, or Goals (#33)**

The Circulation Element of the Los Angeles County General Plan sets the direction for the development of a comprehensive, coordinated, and continuing transportation system for Los Angeles County. One of the goals of the Circulation Element is to support the completion of the highway and freeway routes necessary to make the system operate efficiently. To achieve this system the General Plan suggests a system of incentives and restrictions on transportation to encourage motorists to participate in alternative modes of transport. It lists one incentive as being High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes. The proposed project, therefore, is consistent with adopted community, plans, policies, and goals.

11. **Community Growth (#35, #50)**

Increasing the capacity of existing transportation facilities generally influences urban growth. The level of this influence is difficult to quantify in partially urbanized areas. Complicating any empirical analysis of the proposed projects influence on population growth are other variables such as economic trends, public policies and legislation, local plans, location image, land availability and development financing practices. The greatest potential for population growth within the areas served by the project lies in the cities of Santa Clarita, Palmdale, and Lancaster. The current land use in these areas is primarily transitioning from rural, previously undeveloped land, to an urban setting.

There are identifiable differences in the potential for growth on each alternative. The "No-Action" alternative would have no growth inducing potential. As far as the proposed project is concerned, collective factors may stimulate development in some individual locations. Residential growth in the study area may be somewhat enhanced by producing a faster, more comfortable route for commuters traveling along this route.

Growth is expected to continue in the affected communities with or without the development of this project as discussed in the General Plans for the cities of Santa Clarita, Lancaster, and Palmdale. The rapid population growth occurring in the Santa Clarita and Antelope Valley's is expected to continue until current economic or housing conditions change.

The proposed project would accommodate anticipated population and housing growth in the Santa Clarita and Antelope Valleys. Due to the fact that this project is not original construction but rather is construction within the existing infrastructure, this project would not generate the demand for additional development or open up new, currently undeveloped areas for development.

12. **Special Interest Groups (#37)**

This project has been developed in accordance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, Title 49 CFR Part 21, Executive Order 12898 regarding Environmental Justice in minority and low income populations, and related statutes and regulations that no person in the State of California shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, age, national origin, religion, or disabling condition, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity administered by or on the behalf of the California State Department of Transportation (see Appendix D).

Based on the lack of impacts to populated areas no disproportionately high or adverse impacts to minorities or low-income populations have been identified as a result of this project.

13. **Public Utilities, Police, Fire, Emergency, or Other Public Service (#43)**

Implementation of the proposed project may result in the need to relocate existing utilities. Specifically, natural gas lines run through the project area and may require relocation. Caltrans would work closely with the affected company to minimize impacts. No emergency facilities (police, fire, or hospitals) would be directly affected. There may, however, be limited short-term impacts on emergency services during construction. This is typical of any road improvement project since there may be temporary increases in traffic congestion during construction.

Measure to Minimize Harm:

UTIL-1 Coordination with Metrolink and the various utilities companies would be necessary. If any changes in utilities or Metrolink need to occur due to the proposed project, Caltrans permit and mitigation requirements are binding to the other agencies, unless they choose to prepare a separate environmental document.

14. **Affect Existing Transportation System (#44)**

A Southern Pacific Railroad track passes underneath the I-5 / SR-14 Interchange. Construction activities would have to be coordinated to minimize impact to train schedules.

Measure to Minimize Harm:

TRAN-1 Consultation and coordination will be required with Southern Pacific Railroad.

18. **Archaeological and/or Historic Sites (#51)**

Archaeological

An Archaeological Survey Report (ASR) was prepared in January of 2000 which led to a finding that no known archaeological sites exist directly within the Area of Potential Effect for the proposed project. This finding is based on a record search at the South Central Coastal Regional Information Center at the University of California at Los Angeles along with a windshield survey and walkover survey of areas that contains native and landscaped vegetation inside and outside of the state owned right of way (Archaeological Survey Report, 1/00).

Historic Structures

After intensive investigation of historic materials, it appears that one resource, the San Fernando Tunnel, meets National Register criteria for historic or architectural significance under Criterion A for its association with the development of transportation routes in California. Caltrans has also evaluated this property in accordance with Section 15064.5 (a)(2)-(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, using the criteria outlined in Section 5024.1 of the California Public Resources Code, and determined that it is a historical resource for the purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Any effects of the proposed undertaking on historic properties listed in or determined eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places must be reviewed for compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act using the rules and regulations found in 36 CFR Part 800.9 regarding criteria of effect and adverse effect. The San Fernando Tunnel was evaluated in conformance with the application of the Criteria of Effect (36 CFR 800.9 [a]), and it was determined that the proposed project would have *No Effect* on the historic resource.

The determination of *No Effect* on the National Register Eligible structure was made based on the understanding that the proposed project would not in any way diminish the integrity of the property's location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, or association. There would be no physical destruction of, or damage to all or part of the structure. There would be no alterations to the structure, nor would the structure be moved from its historic location. There may be temporary visual, atmospheric, or audible intrusions to the historic structure during the construction of the new HOV lanes, but as the new construction is to take place a sufficient distance from the historic resource, these elements are unlikely to diminish the integrity of the structure's significant historic features. The temporary introduction of vibrations caused by construction may possibly effect the San Fernando Tunnel. However, the impact of these vibrations is estimated to be less than current vibrations caused by the continuance of trains running over the tracks today. Careful consideration would need to be made in regard to the addition of shoring or other construction features that may be built over the train tracks or tunnel opening. Since the estimated impacts to the historic structure are minimal and limited to the duration of construction, it was determined that there would be *no historic properties affected*.

None of the properties or bridges located within the proposed project's APE were found to qualify for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places because they lack association with significant historic events or persons, architectural quality or rarity, or integrity. Therefore, the project would have *No Effect* upon these properties or bridges, as they are not considered historic resources for the purposes of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Measure to Minimize Harm:

CUL-1 Although the project area has been surveyed for cultural resources and no archaeological sites have been identified, subsurface deposits may exist. If during project construction cultural materials appear, work will stop in the immediate area. The Caltrans District 7 Archaeologist will be notified upon such discovery and appropriate measures will be performed to mitigate the impacts to the resource. Work may only resume with approval from the Caltrans Archaeologist.

19. **Visual (#53)**

The proposed High Occupancy Vehicle lanes at the Interstate 5/State Route 14 interchange introduce a major feature, increasing vividness of man made development, thereby reducing the vividness of landforms. The sense of encroachment is also increased, reducing intactness and unity.

For the motorist, the massive concrete structure becomes a major visual element, comparable to landform in significance. If the structure is built of standard gray concrete, its visual quality lessens the unity of the man made to natural elements, is perceived as drab and dreary and looms over the motorist oppressively. (Visual Impact Assessment, January 2000)

Measure to Minimize Harm:

AES-1 Aesthetic elements to enhance the structure would be included in project design. These elements shall include matching color to natural stone or earth and adding texture to structure supports, bridges, and rails.

20. **Construction Activities (#54)**

Implementation of the proposed HOV project would result in temporary construction impacts associated with noise and vibration, dust emissions, and traffic disruptions. Such impacts would be localized in the area surrounding construction activity and would occur over a relatively limited duration.

During the final design stage, Caltrans would work closely with the affected agencies to coordinate traffic control plans, construction schedules, and necessary detours. Caltrans would establish a Traffic Management Plan (TMP) to minimize localized congestion and travel delays during construction. Any road

closures and detours would be advertised in advance and signed to minimize adverse impacts to both the travelling public and emergency service operators. This impact is not considered adverse due to the temporary, short-term nature of the impact.

The following mitigation measures would reduce the impacts to a level of non-significance.

Measures to Minimize Harm:

CON-1 Contractors would be required to comply with all local noise regulations and ordinances as well as the State Standard Specifications restricting noise levels. In addition, vehicles and equipment would be equipped and maintained with the type of mufflers recommended by equipment manufacturers. Construction equipment would be operated and maintained to manufacturers' specifications.

CON-2 To the maximum extent feasible, the noisiest construction operations would be scheduled to occur together in the construction program to avoid continuing periods of greater disturbance to wildlife and persons in the vicinity of construction activities.

CON-3 Fugitive dust, emissions, and other pollutants normally associated with equipment and highway construction activities would be minimized to a level of insignificance by ensuring effective and rigid controls on activities during the construction phase as outlined in the Standard Specifications and special provisions. Construction vehicles and equipment would be maintained properly to minimize short-term air pollution emissions.

CON-4 Construction vehicles would be washed and cleaned as necessary to remove mud and other deposits prior to leaving the construction site.

CON-5 Construction techniques would be used to ensure the safety of construction workers and the general public. Such techniques would include the use of shoring and falsework to support structures under construction.

10. **Impacts on the Quality of the Environment (#56)**

A Natural Environmental Study Report was prepared in March of 1997. While some sensitive species are known to occur in the area, a majority of the project area has already been disturbed and habitat for sensitive species is not clearly available. One cultural resource exists within the project area (the San Fernando Tunnel), however, it would not be adversely affected by the proposed project. Consequently, it is unlikely that construction or operation of the proposed HOV lanes would have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially affect fish and wildlife habitat or populations, reduce or restrict the range of sensitive plant or animal species, or eliminate important examples of the major period of California history or prehistory.

11. **Short-term Uses of Man's Environment vs. Long-term Productivity (#57)**

Transportation improvements are based on state and local comprehensive planning which considers the need for present and future traffic requirements within the context of present and future land use development. In such a situation, one might then conclude that the local short-term impacts and use of resources by the proposed action are consistent with the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity for the state, city, county, and all others affected by the proposed project. Furthermore, all impacts associated with the proposed project would be fully mitigated as described in Section 4.0.

12. **Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources**

Implementation of the proposed action involves a commitment of a range of natural, physical, human, and fiscal resources that are identical for all build alternatives. Land used in the construction of the proposed facility is considered an irreversible commitment during the time period that the land is used for a highway facility. However, if a greater need arises for use of the land or if the highway facility is no longer needed, the land can be converted to another use. At present, there is not reason to believe such a conversion would ever be necessary or desirable.

Considerable amounts of fossil fuels, labor, and highway construction materials such as cement, aggregate, and bituminous material are expended. Additionally, large amounts of labor and natural resources are used in the fabrication and preparation of construction materials. These materials are generally not retrievable. However, they are not in short supply and their use would not have an adverse effect upon continued availability of these resources. Any construction would also require a substantial one-time expenditure of both state and federal funds that are not retrievable.

The commitment of these resources is based on the concept that residents in the immediate area, state, and region would benefit by the improved quality of the transportation system. These benefits would consist of improved accessibility and safety, savings in time, and the efficient flow of goods and services through the area. These benefits are anticipated to outweigh the commitment of the above resources.

13. **Cumulative Impacts (#58)**

Cumulative impacts are defined as two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts. The cumulative impact from several projects is the change in the environment that results from the incremental impact of the project when added to other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively considerable projects or impacts taking place over a period of time.

The proposed project is a link in the HOV system along Interstate 5 and State Route 14. A proposal to reconstruct the median on Route 14 to add High Occupancy Vehicle lanes from Route 5 to San Fernando Road is a Caltrans sponsored project that would ultimately connect with the HOV lanes proposed in this environmental document.

Additionally, a proposal to add a High Occupancy Vehicle lane in each direction in the median on Route 5 from Route 118 to Route 14 is a Caltrans sponsored project that would also connect with the proposed HOV lanes at the 5 /14 interchange described in this document.

All of these projects are being constructed in the freeway median areas. There are impacts associated with these projects but none that are cumulatively considerable. The ultimate benefit of a continuous HOV system throughout this area should alleviate some of the existing and projected freeway congestion by improving the people carrying capacity of this interchange and corridor. There would also be benefits to air quality due to improved traffic flow and a decrease in traffic delays.

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21865 E. Copley Dr.

Diamond Bar, CA 91765

Technical Support Division

California Air Resource Board

P.O. Box 2815

Sacramento, CA 95812

Executive Secretary

Native American Heritage Commission

915 Capitol Mall, Rm 288

Sacramento, CA 95814

Mrs. Beverly Folks

1931 Shadybrook Dr.

Thousand Oaks, CA 91362

Department of Cultural Affairs

Los Angeles City Cultural Heritage Comm.

433 South Spring St., 10th Floor

Los Angeles, CA 90013

Mr. Thomas F. Andrews

Historical Society of Southern California

200 East Avenue 43

Los Angeles, CA 90031

Sierra Club-Los Padres Chapter

P.O. Box 90924

Santa Barbara, CA 93910

Mrs. Linda Hoyer

Chapter Director

Sierra Club-Angeles Chapter

Mr. Fred Worthly

California Department of Fish and Game

3435 Wilshire Blvd., # 320

Los Angeles, CA 90010-1904

350 Golden Shore, Ste 50

Long Beach, CA 90801

Mr. Craig Faanes

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

2493 Portola Road, Ste B

Ventura, CA 93003

County of Los Angeles Public Library

7400 E. Imperial Hwy

Downey, CA 90241

California Native Plant Society

1722 J. Street, Suite17

Sacramento, CA 95814

California Wildlife Federation

2331 Alhambra Blvd., Ste 300

Sacramento, CA 95817

Mr. John R. Zeigler

Public Affairs

Auto Club of Southern California

3333 Fairview Rd.

Costa Mesa, CA 92626

Jim Gorley

Manager of Environmental
Field Operations

Union Pacific Railroad

833 E. 8th St.

Stockton, CA 95206

Southern California Edison Company

P.O. Box 600

Rosemead, CA 91771

Southern California Gas Company

Valencia Base - M.L. 8228

24650 Avenue Rockefeller

Valencia, CA 91355

Francisco Uribe

Public Affairs Manager

General Telephone

11333 Sepulveda Blvd.

Missiona Hills, CA 91345

Ms. Lorraine Tenerelli

35745 82nd St E

Littlerock, CA 93543-2611

Mr. Bill Deichler

16281 San Fernando Mission #228

Granada Hills, CA 91344

Mr. Jack Rolston

18911 Ringling St.

Tarzana, CA 91356

Mr. Howard Brooks

Antelope Valley Board of Trade

548 W. Lancaster Blvd., Suite 103

Lancaster, CA 93534

Barbara Wampole

Vice Chair

Friends of the Santa Clara River

28006 San Martinez Grande Road

Saugus, CA 91384

Ron Bottoroff

Chair

Friends of the Santa Clara River

660 Randy Drive

Newbury Park, CA 91320

Lynne Plambeck

Santa Clarita Organization for
Planning the Environment

PO Box 1182

Santa Clarita, CA 91386

Ms. Jodean Giese

Los Angeles Department of Water and
Power

111 North Hope St., Rm 1121

Los Angeles, CA 90012

Region 9

Federal Transit Administration

201 Mission St., Ste. 2210

San Francisco, CA 94105

Federal Railroad Administration
Office of Policy Plans

400 - 7th Street, SW

Washington, DC 20590

District Engineer

United States Army Corps of Engineers

300 N. Los Angeles St.

Los Angeles, CA 90012

Kenneth W. Holt, MSEH

Center for Disease Control and
Prevention, DHHS

National Center for
Environmental Health,
EEHS/CDB (F16)

4770 Buford Hwy., NE

Atlanta, CA 30347-3724

Executive Director

Public Utilities Commission

505 Van Ness Ave.

San Francisco, CA 94102

Haripal Vir

Office of Transportation Programs

221 N. Figueroa, Suite 500

Los Angeles, CA 90012

2. Consultation and Coordination

Public participation in the development of this IS/EA and in the selection of the final design concept occurs at several essential points in the planning process. The first input involves a Notice of Preparation (Appendix A) and a Scoping Notice (Appendix B). A Notice of Preparation was sent to all concerned Resource Agencies and a Scoping Notice was published in four newspapers supporting the surrounding communities in English and in Spanish (see Table 6-1). The Notice gave the public a chance to understand project objectives and design concepts, and to express concerns regarding the environmental effects of the project. Ten responses were received (Appendix C).

Table 6-1

Scoping Notice Publication

Newspaper	Dates Published	Translation
Newhall Signal	November 10, 1999 and November 24, 1999	English
Daily News	November 10, 1999 and November 24, 1999	English
La Opinion	November 10, 1999 and November 24, 1999	Spanish
Los Angeles Times – San Fernando Valley Edition	November 10, 1999 and November 24, 1999	English

The Initial Study/Environmental Assessment was distributed to those on the distribution list in Chapter 5 and made available to the public at the Valencia and Newhall Libraries.

Additionally, a Public hearing was held on November 28, 2000 at William S. Hart High School. Notice of the Public Hearing was published in four local newspapers servicing the surrounding communities in English and Spanish (see Table 6-2). Additionally, the Public hearing was mentioned in a Caltrans article printed in the Newhall Signal on November 28, 2000. A record of this hearing is available under separate cover. See Appendices H and I for public comments and responses to this project as well as the article printed in the Newhall Signal A Public hearing was held on November 28, 2000 at William S. Hart High School. Notice of the Public Hearing and availability of the document was published in four local newspapers servicing the surrounding communities in English and Spanish (see Table 6-2). Additionally, the Public hearing was mentioned in a Caltrans article printed in the Newhall Signal on November 28, 2000. A record of this hearing is available under separate cover. See Appendices H and I for public comments and responses to this project as well as the article printed in the Newhall Signal the day of the Public Hearing.

Table 6-2

Public Hearing Notice Publication

Newspaper	Dates Published	Translation
Newhall Signal	October 29, 2000 and November 17, 2000	English
Los Angeles Times – San Fernando Valley Edition	October 29, 2000 and November 17, 2000	English
La Opinion	October 29, 2000 and November 17, 2000	Spanish

Coordination with federal, state and local agencies has occurred throughout preparation of this environmental document. Coordination has been established with the United States Army Corps of Engineers, United States Department of Fish and Wildlife, California Department of Fish and Game, City of Santa Clarita, City of Los Angeles and Los Angeles County.

3. **List of Preparers**

IS/EA prepared by:

Cathy Wright	Senior Environmental Planner	Document Preparation
Julie Smith	Environmental Planner	Draftocument IS/EAPreparation
Christopher Carroll	Environmental Planner	Final Preparation

Contributions by:

Cesar Perez	FHWA Transportation Engineer	Document Review
Gregory Farr	Senior Transportation Engineer	Project Design
Gary Iverson	Senior Environmental Planner	Cultural Studies
Andrea Morrison	Architectural Historian	Historical Studies
Paul Yamazaki	Biologist	Natural Environmental Studies
Fouad Abdelkerim	Senior Transportation Planner	Air Quality

Laleh Modrek	Transportation Engineer	Hazardous Waste Investigation
Jerrel Kam	Hydraulics Engineer	Floodplain Analysis
Cathy Jochai	Landscape Associate	Visual Impact Analysis
Ralph Thurnstrom	Transportation Engineer	Noise Investigation
Gustavo Ortega	Senior Engineering Geologist	Geotechnical Study
Leann Williams	Transportation Planning	Air Quality Conformity
Dave Gilstrap	Transportation Planning	Traffic

4. Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACC accidents

ACC/MVM accidents per million vehicle miles

ACHP Advisory Council on Historic Preservation

ACOE Army Corps of Engineers

ADT average daily traffic

APE Area of Potential Effect

AQMP Air Quality Management Plan

ASR Archaeological Survey Report

BMP Best Management Practices

CAA Federal Clean Air Act

CAAQS California Ambient Air Quality Standards

CAAAs Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990

Caltrans California Department of Transportation

CCAA California Clean Air Act

CDFG California Department of Fish and Game

CEQA California Environmental Quality Act

CFR Code of Federal Regulations

CHP California Highway Patrol

CIP Capital Improvements Program

CMP Congestion Management Program

CNDDB California Natural Diversity Data Base

CNEL Community Noise Equivalent Level

CNPS California Native Plant Society

CO carbon monoxide

CRHR California Register of Historic Resources

CSC California species of special concern

CWA Clean Water Act

DPR Draft Project Report

DTSC California Department of Toxic Substances Control

EA Environmental Assessment

EIR Environmental Impact Report

EIS Environmental Impact Statement

EPA Environmental Protection Agency

ESA Endangered Species Act

FE federally endangered

FEMA Federal Emergency Management Agency

FHWA Federal Highway Administration

FONSI Finding of No Significant Impact

FSC federal species of concern

FT federally threatened

FTA Federal Transportation Authority

FTIP Federal Transportation Improvement Program

HASR Historic Architectural Survey Report

HOV High Occupancy Vehicle

HPSR Historic Property Survey Report

HRER Historic Resource Evaluation Report

I-5 Interstate 5

IC Interchange

IS Initial Study

ISA Initial Site Assessment

IS/EA Initial Study/Environmental Assessment

KP kilopost

km/hr kilometers per hour

LACDPW Los Angeles County Department of Public Works

LACTMA Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority

LARTS Los Angeles Regional Transportation Study

LARWQCB Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board

LOS Level of Service

m Meters

mfl mixed flow lanes

MOU Memorandum of Understanding

mph miles per hour

MTA Metropolitan Transportation Authority

MVM million vehicle miles

NAAQS National Ambient Air Quality Standards

NB northbound

NESR Natural Environmental Study Report

ND Negative Declaration

NEPA National Environmental Policy Act

NFIP National Flood Insurance Program

NHPA National Historic Preservation Act

NO_2 nitrogen dioxide

NPDES National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System

NRHP National Register of Historic Places

O_3 ozone

PM_{10} particulate matter 10 microns or less in diameter

PRC Public Resources Code

PSR Project Study Report

RCR Route Concept Report

RCRA Resource Conservation and Recovery Act

RTIP Regional Transportation Improvement Program

RTP Regional Transportation Plan

RWQCB Regional Water Quality Control Board

SB southbound

SCAB South Coast Air Basin

SCAQMD South Coast Air Quality Management District

SCAG Southern California Association of Governments

SE State Endangered

SEA Significant Ecological Area

SHELL Subsystem of Highways for the Movement of Extra Legal Permit Loads

SHPO State Historic Preservation Officer

SIP State Implementation Plan

SO_2 sulfur dioxide

SR State Route

SR-14 State Route 14

SSC state species of concern

ST state threatened

STA station

STIP State Transportation Improvement Program

STR Super Truck Route

SWPPP Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan

TASAS Traffic Accident Surveillance and Analysis System

TEA Transportation Efficiency Act

TIP Transportation Improvement Plan

TMP Traffic Management Plan

U.S.C. U.S. Code

U.S. EPA United States Environmental Protection Agency

USFWS United States Fish and Wildlife Service

UST underground storage tank

VMT vehicle miles traveled

vph vehicles per hour

VQA Visual Quality Analysis

Appendix A: Notice of Completion

SCH # _____

Notice of Completion & Environmental Document Transmittal

Mail to: State Clearinghouse, P.O. Box 3044, Sacramento, CA 95812-3044 916-445-0613

Project Title: HOV Connector From Interstate Route 5 to State Route 14

Lead Agency: Caltrans — Contact Person: Julie Smith

Street Address: 120 South Spring Street — Phone: 213-897-0444

City: Los Angeles — Zip: 90012-3606 — County: Los Angeles

Project Location:

County: Los Angeles — City/Nearest Community: Cities of Los Angeles, Santa Clarita, and the County of Los Angeles

Cross Streets: Balboa Boulevard and Sierra Highway — Zip Code: 91344 — Total Acres: _____

Assessor's Parcel No. _____ — Section: _____ Twp: _____ Range: _____ Base: _____

Within 2 Miles: State Hwy #: Interstate 210 — Waterways: California Aqueduct

Airports: _____ — Railways: Union Pacific RR — Schools: _____

Document Type:

CEQA: [ ] NOP [ ] Early Cons [ ] Neg Dec [ ] Draft EIR [ ] Supplement/Subsequent EIR (Prior SCH No.) [X] Other - Scoping Notice

NEPA: [ ] NOI [ ] EA [ ] Draft EIS [ ] FONSI

Other: [ ] Joint Document [ ] Final Document [X] Other – Scoping Notice

Local Action Type:

[ ] General Plan Update [ ] General Plan Amendment [ ] General Plan Element [ ] Community Plan

[ ] Specific Plan [ ] Master Plan [ ] Planned Unit Development [ ] Site Plan

[ ] Rezone [ ] Prezone [ ] Use Permit [ ] Land Division (Subdivision, Parcel Map, Tract Map etc)

[ ] Annexation [ ] Redevelopment [ ] Coastal Permit [ ] Other

Development Type:

[ ]	Residential:	*Units*	*Acres*		[ ]	Water Facilities:	*Type*	*MGD*
[ ]	Office:	*Sq. ft.*	*Acres*	*Employees*	[X]	Transportation:	*Type*	HOV Lanes
[ ]	Commercial:	*Sq. ft.*	*Acres*	*Employees*	[ ]	Mining:	*Mineral*	
[ ]	Industrial:	*Sq. ft.*	*Acres*	*Employees*	[ ]	Power:	*Type*	*Watts*
[ ]	Educational				[ ]	Waste Treatment:	*Type*	
[ ]	Recreational				[ ]	Hazardous Waste:	*Type*	
					[ ]	Other:		

Funding (approx.): Federal $ _____ State $ _____ Total $ $4/44.4 Million

Project Issues Discussed in Document:

[ ] Aesthetic/Visual [ ] Agricultural Land [ ] Air Quality [ ] Archeological/Historical [ ] Coastal Zone [ ] Drainage/Absorption [ ] Economic/Jobs [ ] Fiscal

[ ] Flood Plain/Flooding [ ] Forest Land/Fire Hazard [ ] Geological/Seismic [ ] Minerals [ ] Noise [ ] Population/Housing Balance [ ] Public Services/Facilities [ ] Recreation/Parks

[ ] Schools/Universities [ ] Septic Systems [ ] Sewer Capacity [ ] Soil Erosion/Compaction/Grading [ ] Solid Waste [ ] Toxic/Hazardous [ ] Traffic/Circulation [ ] Vegetation

[ ] Water Quality [ ] Water Supply/Groundwater [ ] Wetland/Riparian [ ] Wildlife [ ] Growth Inducing [ ] Land Use [ ] Cumulative Effects [X] Other – Scoping Notice

Present Land Use/Zoning/General Plan Designation: Transportation/Open Space

Project Description: The California Department of Transportation proposes to construct a two lane High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) connector from Route 5 (KP R70.9) to Route 14 (KP R40.6). All work will be done within the existing right-of-way and will include the following: widening of the roadway and bridges on the outside to provide the required widths, in the northbound (NB) direction, the truck route would be moved 3.9m (12.8 feet) to the right to provide the required width for the HOV lanes in the median, construction of a retaining wall by the right shoulder of the NB truck route, and in the southbound direction, the Balboa Boulevard overcrossing off ramp would be realigned, which would require the existing bridge be removed and reconstructed.

Key
S = Document sent by lead agency
X = Document sent by SCH
✓ = Suggested distribution

Reviewing Agencies Checklist

Resource Agency
_____ Boating and Waterways
_____ Coastal Commission
_____ Coastal Conservancy
_____ Colorado River Board
_S_ Fish and Game
_____ Forestry and Fire Protection
_____ Office of Historic Preservation
_____ Parks and Recreation
_____ Reclamation Board
_____ S.F. Bay Conservation and Development Commission
_____ Water Resources (DWR)

Business, Transportation and Housing
_____ Aeronautics
_S_ California Highway Patrol
_____ Caltrans District # _____
_____ Department of Transportation Planning (headquarters)
_____ Housing and Community Development

Food and Agriculture
Health and Welfare
_____ Health Services _____

State and Consumer Services
_____ General Services
_____ OLA (Schools)

Environmental Protection Agency
_S_ Air Resources Board
_____ California Waste Management Board
_____ SWRCB: Clean Water Grants
_____ SWRCB: Delta Unit
_____ SWRCB: Water Quality
_____ SWRCB: Water Rights
_S_ Regional WQCB # _4_ (Los Angeles)

Youth and Adult Corrections
_____ Corrections

Independent Commissions and Offices
_____ Energy Commission
_S_ Native American Heritage Commission
_____ Public Utilities Commission
_____ Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy
_____ State Lands Commission
_____ Tahoe Regional Planning Agency

_____ Other _____

Public Review Period (to be filled in by lead agency)

Starting Date: November 1999 Ending Date: December 1999

Signature _____ Date _____

Lead Agency (complete if applicable):
Consulting Firm:
Address:
City/State/Zip:
Contact:
Phone:

For SCH Use Only:
Date Received at SCH:
Date Review Starts:
Date to Agencies:
Date to SCH:
Clearance Date:
Notes:

Applicant: Caltrans
Address: 120 South Spring Street
City/State/Zip: Los Angeles, CA 90012-3606
Phone: 213-897-0444

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Governor's Office of Planning and Research
State Clearinghouse

Gray Davis
GOVERNOR

STREET ADDRESS: 1400 TENTH STREET ROOM 222 SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95814
MAILING ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 3044 SACRAMENTO, CA 95812-3044
916-445-0613 FAX 916-323-3018 www.opr.ca.gov/clearinghouse.html

Loretta Lynch
DIRECTOR

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT

DATE: November 19, 1999

TO: Julie Smith
Department of Transportation, District 7
120 South Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012-3606

RE: HOV Connector From Interstate Route 5 to State Route 14
SCH#: 99111074

This is to acknowledge that the State Clearinghouse has received your environmental document for state review. The review period assigned by the State Clearinghouse is:

Review Start Date: November 9, 1999
Review End Date: December 10, 1999

We have distributed your document to the following agencies and departments:

California Highway Patrol
Department of Conservation
Department of Fish and Game, Region 5
Department of Parks and Recreation
Department of Water Resources
Native American Heritage Commission
Public Utilities Commission
Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 4
Resources Agency
State Lands Commission

The State Clearinghouse will provide a closing letter with any state agency comments to your attention on the date following the close of the review period.

Thank you for your participation in the State Clearinghouse review process.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Governor's Office of Planning and Research

State Clearinghouse

Gray Davis
GOVERNOR

STREET ADDRESS: 1400 TENTH STREET ROOM 222 SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95814
MAILING ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 3044 SACRAMENTO, CA 95812-3044
916-445-0613 FAX 916-323-3018 www.opr.ca.gov/clearinghouse.html

Loretta Lynch
DIRECTOR

MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 17, 1999

TO: State Reviewing Agencies

FROM: Terry Roberts, Senior Planner

RE: **Correction Notice** for SCH #: 99111056
Title: HOV Connector From Interstate Route 5 to State Route 14

The State Clearinghouse incorrectly assigned SCH number 99111056 to two documents. These documents are:

(1) HOV Connector From Interstate 5 to State Route 14
(2) Southwest Clovis Redevelopment Plan

To correct this, we have assigned a new SCH# to the HOV Connector From Interstate 5 to State Route 14.

Please use SCH # 99111074 in all future correspondence regarding HOV Connector From Interstate 5 to State Route 14. (The SCH # 99111056 is the correct number for the Southwest Connector From Interstate 5 to State Route 14).

I apologize for this error, and request that you note the above information for your files.

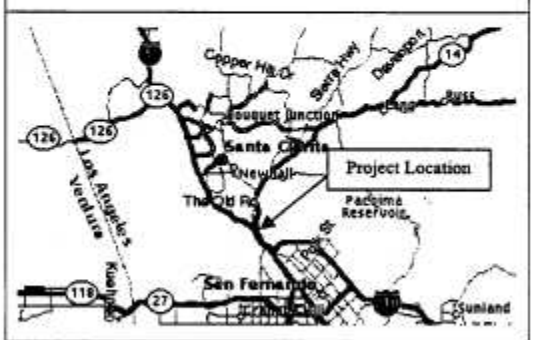
Distribution:
Resources Agency
Conservation
Fish and Game Region 5
CHP
NAHC
State Lands
Public Utilities Commission
Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 4
Parks & Recreation
DWR

Cc: Julie Smith

Appendix B: Scoping Notice

ENVIRONMENTAL SCOPING NOTICE

Seeking public comment on a proposal to add a two-lane High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) connector from Route 5 to Route 14.



WHAT'S BEING PLANNED?
The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is formally initiating studies for construction of a two-lane High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) connector from Route 5 to Route 14. This project will provide system continuity for proposed HOV lanes on Route 5 and Route 14 by providing direct connections from northbound Route 5 to northbound Route 14 and southbound Route 14 to southbound Route 5. The proposed work will be within the existing right-of-way.

WHY THIS NOTICE?
Caltrans is formally initiating studies for this project. Based on preliminary environmental studies, the resulting environmental document is anticipated to be an Initial Study/Environmental Assessment (IS/EA) leading to a Negative Declaration/Finding of No Significant Impact (ND/FONSI).

WHAT'S BEING PLANNED?
A public scoping notice is to solicit comments from public agencies, private entities, and interested individuals regarding potential social, economic, and environmental issues related to the project. The scoping notice also ensures that these parties are involved early in the environmental planning process.

Please send your written comments by December 10, 1999 to:

Mr. Ronald Kosinski, Chief
Office of Environmental Planning (LA-005-KP 70.9/73.6)
CALTRANS
120 S. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012
(213) 897-9116
Email: Cheryl Henderson@DOT.CA.GOV

Be sure to indicate the name and address of a contact person in your organization in your letter.

Appendix C: Scoping Responses

Table 3.2 Public Comment
Commercial Businesses

Method of Communication	Exhibit No.	Name and/or Organization	Comments
Phone	B-1	Howard Brooks Antelope Valley Board of Trade 661-942-9581	1. Concerned about economic effects project will have on the Antelope Valley and wants to be kept informed of project status. 2. Willing to help organize public meeting in the Antelope Valley when we get to that point. He has helped with CT public meetings in the past.
Letter	B-2	Jack W. Ralston, D. Eng., CE, GE 18911 Ringling Street Tarzana, CA 91356 818-345-9199	1. Expressed support for the project.

Table 3.3 Public Comment
Public

Method of Communication	Exhibit No.	Name and/or Organization	Comments
E-mail	P-1	Bill Deichler 16281 S. F. Mission #228 Granada Hills, CA 91344 818-464-5784 818-832-8828 Fax bdeichler@email.msn.com	1. Suggests that instead of installing HOV lanes at the interchange that we widen and straighten Highway 2 from Palmdale to Interstate 5 in between the 134 and 110. He believes this would thin the Hwy 14 traffic tremendously.
Letter	P-2	Ms. Lorraine Tenerelli 35745-82nd St. E. Littlerock, CA 93543 661-944-3913	1. Expressed strong support for the project.

Appendix D: Title VI Statement

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—BUSINESS, TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING AGENCY GRAY DAVIS, Governor

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
1120 N STREET
P. O. BOX 942873
SACRAMENTO, CA 94273-0001
PHONE (916) 654-5267
FAX (916) 654-6608

July 26, 2000

TITLE VI
POLICY STATEMENT

The California State Department of Transportation under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes, ensures that no person in the State of California shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex and national origin be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity it administers.

Jeff Morales

JEFF MORALES
Director

Appendix E: Letter of Concurrence from SHPO

STATE OF CALIFORNIA – THE RESOURCES AGENCY GRAY DAVIS, Governor
OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
P.O. BOX 942896
SACRAMENTO, CA 94296-0001
(916) 653-6624 Fax: (916) 653-9824
calshpo@ohp.parks.ca.gov

July 14, 2000

Reply To: FHWA000623E

Michael G. Ritchie, Division Administrator
U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration
California Division
980 Ninth Street, Suite 400
Sacramento, CA 95814-2724

Re: Determinations of Eligibility and Effect for Proposed I-5/State Route 14 Interchange Improvements, Santa Clarita, CA

Dear Mr. Ritchie:

You have provided me with the results of your efforts to determine whether the project described above may affect historic properties. You have done this, and are consulting with me, in order to comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and implementing regulations codified at 36 CFR Part 800.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has determined that there are no archeological sites within the APE. Thirty-two properties were identified within the APE. Sixteen of the properties qualify for treatment under the "Memorandum of Understanding Regarding Evaluation of Post-1945 Buildings, Moved Pre-1945 Buildings, and Altered Pre-1945 Buildings", and the "Interim Guidelines-Post-45 MOU". Ten bridges within the APE were previously determined ineligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) as part of the 1986 Caltrans Bridge Survey. The FHWA has also determined that the following properties are not eligible for the NRHP:

- 147478 San Fernando Road, Sylmar, CA
- 22124 Sierra Highway, San Fernando, CA
- 22117-C Sierra Highway, Newhall, CA
- 22117-B Sierra Highway, Newhall, CA
- 22127 Sierra Highway

The FHWA determined that the San Fernando Tunnel is eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A for its association with the completion of the Southern Pacific Railroad Route that connected the northern portion of the state to Los Angeles. Prior to this connection a stage route was the only means of passing over the Santa Clarita Valley. The San Fernando Tunnel helped to facilitate trade and the transportation of goods from Los Angeles to the north.

The FHWA has also determined that no historic properties will be affected by the project. According to the submitted documentation the proposed project will not diminish the integrity of the San Fernando Tunnel. There will be no alterations to the structure, nor will the structure be moved. There may be temporary visual, atmospheric, or audible intrusions to the historic structure during construction, but given the distance of the project from the resource, these elements are unlikely to diminish the integrity of the structure's significant historic features.

Appendix F: Nationwide 404 Permit Concurrence

State of California Business, Transportation and Housing Agency

Memorandum

To: Julie Smith, Environmental Planner
District 7, Office of Environmental Planning

Date: June 31, 2000

From: **DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**
Paul Yamazaki, District Biologist
District 7, Office of Environmental Planning

File: 07-LA-5/14
HOV Connector
EA: 16800K

Subject: Nationwide 404 Permit Concurrence

The United States Army Corps of Engineers was contacted on July 28, 2000 to obtain concurrence on the use of a nationwide 404 permit for the LA-5/14 HOV Connector Project. During a telephone conversation on July 31, 2000 with Mr. Aaron Allen of the Army Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles District Regulatory Branch, he concurred that this project is likely to meet the conditions for a nationwide 404 permit. In addition he mentioned that the project appeared to meet the requirements of nationwide permit #25 (for structural discharges) and nationwide permit #33 (for temporary construction access and dewatering). This concurrence is based on the preliminary plans that are currently available and a final determination will be made with the completion of the final plans of the project.

Should you have any questions regarding this letter please contact me at 7-1971.

Paul Yamazaki, District Biologist
District 7, Office of Environmental Planning

cc: Paul Caron, Lead District Biologist
File

Appendix G: Mitigation Monitoring Plan

ENV. CONCERN	MITIGATION MEASURE	TIMING OF MITIGATION MEASURE	PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE(S)	VERIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE (Provide Written Description)	RESPONSIBILITY FOR MONITORING
HAZ-1	In the event that excavation reveals unknown potentially hazardous materials, Caltrans policy would require work to be halted in the vicinity until the area in question is investigated and proper mitigation proposed.	During Construction	Incorporation of required elements into final plans and specifications, and sign-off by resident engineer during construction that no hazardous materials were unearthed, or if hazardous materials were found, documentation of notification of appropriate Caltrans divisions and Los Angeles County Fire Dept. – Health Haz. Mat. Division.		Date Completed: _____ Environmental Oversight _____ Date
HAZ-2	The contractor, prior to the start of construction, would identify borrow and disposal sites. At that time, impacts from the use of such borrow and disposal sites and associated haul routes would be investigated.	During final design	Incorporation of required elements into final plans and specifications, and sign-off by resident engineer that no impacts will occur from the use of borrow and disposal sites and haul routes or that impacts are fully mitigated.		Date Completed: _____ Environmental Oversight _____ Date
CH-1	Application for permits with the pertinent agencies.	During final design	Incorporation into final plans and specifications and sign off by resident engineer and monitoring biologist prior to construction. Monitoring coordinated in conjunction with the Office of Environmental Planning.		Date Completed: _____ Environmental Oversight _____ Date

ENV. CONCERN	MITIGATION MEASURE	TIMING OF MITIGATION MEASURE	PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE(S)	VERIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE (Provide Written Description)	RESPONSIBILITY FOR MONITORING
WQ-1	The contractor must provide a comprehensive water pollution and erosion control plan. The plan must be approved by the resident engineer and submitted for approval to the Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Quality Control Board 402 Permit, National Pollution Discharge Elimination System – NPDES).	During final design	Incorporation into final plans and specifications and sign-off by resident engineer prior to construction.		Date Completed: _____ Environmental Oversight _____ Date
WET-1	Application for United States Army Corps of Engineers Nationwide 404 Permit.	During final design	Incorporation into final plans and specifications and sign off by resident engineer and monitoring biologist prior to construction. Monitoring coordinated in conjunction with the Office of Environmental Planning.		Date Completed: _____ Environmental Oversight _____ Date
AQ-1	Stabilize construction roads and dirt piles with water and/or chemicals twice daily.	During construction	Incorporation of required elements into final plans and specifications, and sign-off by resident engineer during construction.		Date Completed: _____ Environmental Oversight _____ Date
AQ-2	Limit speeds on unpaved construction roads to 15 mph.	During construction	Incorporation of required elements into final plans and specifications, and sign-off by resident engineer during construction.		Date Completed: _____ Environmental Oversight _____ Date
AQ-3	Daily removal of dirt spilled onto paved roads.	During construction	Incorporation of required elements into final plans and specifications, and sign-off by resident engineer during construction.		Date Completed: _____ Environmental Oversight _____ Date

ENV. CONCERN	MITIGATION MEASURE	TIMING OF MITIGATION MEASURE	PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE(S)	VERIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE (Provide Written Description)	RESPONSIBILITY FOR MONITORING
AQ-4	Cease grading and excavation activities when wind speeds exceed 25 miles per hour and during extreme air pollution episodes.	During construction	Incorporation of required elements into final plans and specifications, and sign-off by resident engineer during construction.		Date Completed: _____ Environmental Oversight _____ Date
AQ-5	Require covering of all haul trucks.	During construction	Incorporation of required elements into final plans and specifications, and sign-off by resident engineer during construction.		Date Completed: _____ Environmental Oversight _____ Date
AQ-6	Phase grading to minimize the area of disturbed soils.	During final design and construction	Incorporation of required elements into final plans and specifications, and sign-off by resident engineer during construction.		Date Completed: _____ Environmental Oversight _____ Date
AQ-7	Phase construction activities to minimize daily emissions.	During final design and construction	Incorporation of required elements into final plans and specifications, and sign-off by resident engineer during construction.		Date Completed: _____ Environmental Oversight _____ Date
AQ-8	Proper maintenance of construction vehicles to maximize efficiency and minimize erosion.	During construction	Incorporation of required elements into final plans and specifications, and sign-off by resident engineer during construction.		Date Completed: _____ Environmental Oversight _____ Date

Mitigation Monitoring Program
For Interstate 5/State Route 14 High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes
EA-168000

ENV. CONCERN	MITIGATION MEASURE	TIMING OF MITIGATION MEASURE	PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE(S)	VERIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE (Provide Written Description)	RESPONSIBILITY FOR MONITORING
AQ-9	Prompt re-vegetation of roadsides.	After construction	Incorporation into final plans and specifications and sign off by resident engineer and monitoring biologist or landscape architect prior to construction. Monitoring coordinated in conjunction with the Office of Environmental Planning.		Date Completed: _____ Environmental Oversight _____ Date
NOI-1	Construction contractors would comply with all Caltrans and local noise ordinances that are applicable to construction activities.	During construction	Incorporation of required elements into final plans and specifications, and sign-off by resident engineer during construction.		Date Completed: _____ Environmental Oversight _____ Date
NOI-2	Internal combustion engines used for construction would be equipped with the type of mufflers recommended by equipment manufacturers.	During construction	Incorporation of required elements into final plans and specifications, and sign-off by resident engineer during construction.		Date Completed: _____ Environmental Oversight _____ Date
NOI-3	To the maximum extent feasible, the noisiest construction operations would be scheduled to occur together in the construction program to avoid continuing periods of greater disturbance to wildlife and to humans in the vicinity of construction activities.	During construction	Incorporation of required elements into final plans and specifications, and sign-off by resident engineer during construction.		Date Completed: _____ Environmental Oversight _____ Date

ENV. CONCERN	MITIGATION MEASURE	TIMING OF MITIGATION MEASURE	PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE(S)	VERIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE (Provide Written Description)	RESPONSIBILITY FOR MONITORING
BIO-1	The following permits would be required prior to construction • California Department of Fish and Game 1601 Streambed Alteration Agreement • U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 404 Permit • California Regional Water Quality Control Board 401 Certification	During final design, prior to construction	Incorporation into final plans and specifications and sign off by resident engineer and monitoring biologist prior to construction. Monitoring coordinated in conjunction with the Office of Environmental Planning.		Date Completed: Environmental Oversight / Date
BIO-2	Bridge work on the West Sylmar Overhead would occur between September 15th and March 1st to avoid impacts to a known bat colony in the project area.	During construction	Incorporation into final plans and specifications and sign off by resident engineer and monitoring biologist after construction. Monitoring coordinated in conjunction with the Office of Environmental Planning.		Date Completed: Environmental Oversight / Date
BIO-3	No gasoline or diesel equipment would be operated under the West Sylmar Overhead between March 1st and September 15th to avoid impacts to a known bat colony in the project area.	Prior to and during construction	Incorporation into final plans and specifications and sign off by resident engineer and monitoring biologist after construction. Monitoring coordinated in conjunction with the Office of Environmental Planning.		Date Completed: Environmental Oversight / Date

Mitigation Monitoring Program
For Interstate 5/State Route 14 High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes
EA-168000

ENV. CONCERN	MITIGATION MEASURE	TIMING OF MITIGATION MEASURE	PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE(S)	VERIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE (Provide Written Description)	RESPONSIBILITY FOR MONITORING
BIO-4	If bat colonies are discovered at any other bridge, beside the West Sylmar Overhead, during the course of construction, work at that bridge will cease until further instructions are obtained from the appropriate resource agencies.	Prior to and during construction	Incorporation into final plans and specifications and sign off by resident engineer and monitoring biologist after construction. Monitoring coordinated in conjunction with the Office of Environmental Planning.		Date Completed: Environmental Oversight / Date
BIO-5	Bird Surveys will be conducted if work occurs between March 1st to September 15th. If nesting birds are present, work in that area will cease until further instruction with appropriate resource agencies is obtained.	During construction	Incorporation into final plans and specifications and sign off by resident engineer and monitoring biologist after construction. Monitoring coordinated in conjunction with the Office of Environmental Planning.		Date Completed: Environmental Oversight / Date
BIO-6	The contractor would prepare a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan or Water Pollution Control Plan. This plan would be submitted to, reviewed by, and approved by the Resident Engineer and the District Biologist prior to implementation.	Prior to construction	Incorporation into final plans and specifications and sign off by resident engineer and monitoring biologist after construction. Monitoring coordinated in conjunction with the Office of Environmental Planning.		Date Completed: Environmental Oversight / Date

ENV. CONCERN	MITIGATION MEASURE	TIMING OF MITIGATION MEASURE	PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE(S)	VERIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE (Provide Written Description)	RESPONSIBILITY FOR MONITORING
BIO-7	New access routes would be recontoured to the original grade and revegetated upon completion of construction.	After construction	Incorporation into final plans and specifications and sign off by resident engineer and monitoring biologist after construction. Monitoring coordinated in conjunction with the Office of Environmental Planning.		Date Completed: _____ Environmental Oversight _____ Date
BIO-8	All disturbed areas would be revegetated with seed collected within a 2-mile radius of the project site.	After construction	Incorporation into final plans and specifications and sign off by resident engineer and monitoring biologist or landscape architect prior to construction. Monitoring coordinated in conjunction with the Office of Environmental Planning.		Date Completed: _____ Environmental Oversight _____ Date
BIO-9	Exotic vegetation would be removed by either an approved EPA aquatic herbicide in streambed/riparian areas or an approved EPA herbicide for upland areas (considering the appropriate distance away from the streambed).	Prior to, during and after construction	Incorporation into final plans and specifications and sign off by resident engineer and monitoring biologist after construction. Monitoring coordinated in conjunction with the Office of Environmental Planning.		Date Completed: _____ Environmental Oversight _____ Date

Mitigation Monitoring Program
For Interstate 5/State Route 14 High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes
EA-168000

ENV. CONCERN	MITIGATION MEASURE	TIMING OF MITIGATION MEASURE	PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE(S)	VERIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE (Provide Written Description)	RESPONSIBILITY FOR MONITORING
BIO-10	No debris (removed vegetation, trash, discarded materials, etc.) would be stored near a streambed, as defined as top of slope to top of slope.	Prior to, during and after construction	Incorporation into final plans and specifications and sign off by resident engineer and monitoring biologist after construction. Monitoring coordinated in conjunction with the Office of Environmental Planning.		Date Completed: _____ Environmental Oversight _____ Date
BIO-11	No stockpiling of materials near or in a streambed, as defined as top of slope to top of slope	Prior to, during and after construction	Incorporation into final plans and specifications and sign off by resident engineer and monitoring biologist after construction. Monitoring coordinated in conjunction with the Office of Environmental Planning.		Date Completed: _____ Environmental Oversight _____ Date
BIO-12	No equipment maintenance in or near a streambed, as defined as top of slope to top of slope.	Prior to, during and after construction	Incorporation into final plans and specifications and sign off by resident engineer and monitoring biologist after construction. Monitoring coordinated in conjunction with the Office of Environmental Planning.		Date Completed: _____ Environmental Oversight _____ Date

ENV. CONCERN	MITIGATION MEASURE	TIMING OF MITIGATION MEASURE	PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE(S)	VERIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE (Provide Written Description)	RESPONSIBILITY FOR MONITORING
BIO-13	Protection from dust and debris would be part of the design scaffolding.	During final design and construction	Incorporation into final plans and specifications and sign off by resident engineer and monitoring biologist during construction. Monitoring coordinated in conjunction with the Office of Environmental Planning.		Date Completed: _____ _____ Environmental Oversight Date
BIO-14	The revegetation plan would be approved by California Department of Fish and Game as part of the Streambed Alteration Agreement (1601).	Prior to construction	Incorporation into final plans and specifications and sign off by resident engineer and monitoring biologist or landscape architect prior to construction. Monitoring coordinated in conjunction with the Office of Environmental Planning.		Date Completed: _____ _____ Environmental Oversight Date
BIO-15	Yearly monitoring of the success of the revegetation plan with monitoring reports submitted to the resource agencies.	After construction	Incorporation into final plans and specifications and sign off by resident engineer and monitoring biologist or landscape architect prior to construction. Monitoring coordinated in conjunction with the Office of Environmental Planning.		Date Completed: _____ _____ Environmental Oversight Date

Mitigation Monitoring Program
For Interstate 5/State Route 14 High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes
EA-168000

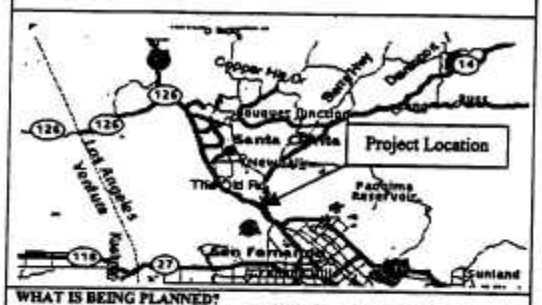
ENV. CONCERN	MITIGATION MEASURE	TIMING OF MITIGATION MEASURE	PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE(S)	VERIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE (Provide Written Description)	RESPONSIBILITY FOR MONITORING
BIO-16	No alterations should occur to the hinges of the West Sylmar Overhead to avoid impacts to a known bat colony in the project area.	Prior to, during and after construction	Incorporation into final plans and specifications and sign off by resident engineer and monitoring biologist after construction. Monitoring coordinated in conjunction with the Office of Environmental Planning.		Date Completed: _____ _____ Environmental Oversight Date
UTIL-1	Coordination with Metrolink and the various utilities companies would be necessary. If any changes in utilities or Metrolink need to occur due to the proposed project, Caltrans permit and mitigation requirements are binding to the other agencies, unless they choose to prepare a separate environmental document.	Prior to, during and after construction	Incorporation into final plans and specifications and sign-off by resident engineer after construction.		Date Completed: _____ _____ Environmental Oversight Date
TRAN-1	Consultation and coordination will be required with Southern Pacific Railroad.	Prior to, during and after construction	Incorporation into final plans and specifications and sign-off by resident engineer after construction.		Date Completed: _____ _____ Environmental Oversight Date
CUL-1	Although the project area has been surveyed for cultural resources and no archaeological sites have been identified, subsurface deposits may exist. If during project construction cultural materials appear, work will stop in the immediate area. The Caltrans District 7 Archaeologist will be notified upon such discovery and appropriate measures will be performed to mitigate the impacts to the resource. Work may only resume with approval from the Caltrans Archaeologist.	Prior to, during and after construction	Incorporation into final plans and specifications and sign off by resident engineer and cultural resource staff after construction. Monitoring coordinated in conjunction with the Office of Environmental Planning.		Date Completed: _____ _____ Environmental Oversight Date

ENV. CONCERN	MITIGATION MEASURE	TIMING OF MITIGATION MEASURE	PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE(S)	VERIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE (Provide Written Description)	RESPONSIBILITY FOR MONITORING
AES-1	Aesthetic elements to enhance the structure would be included in project design. These elements shall include matching color to natural stone or earth and adding texture to structure supports, bridges, and rails.	During final design	Incorporation into final plans and specifications and sign off by resident engineer and landscape architect prior to construction. Monitoring coordinated in conjunction with the Office of Environmental Planning.		Date Completed: _____ Environmental Oversight _____ Date
CON-1	Contractors would be required to comply with all local noise regulations and ordinances as well as the State Standard Specifications restricting noise levels. In addition, vehicles and equipment would be equipped and maintained with the type of mufflers recommended by equipment manufacturers. Construction equipment would be operated and maintained to manufacturers' specifications.	Prior to, during and after construction	Incorporation into final plans and specifications and sign-off by resident engineer after construction.		Date Completed: _____ Environmental Oversight _____ Date
CON-2	To the maximum extent feasible, the noisiest construction operations would be scheduled to occur together in the construction program to avoid continuing periods of greater disturbance to wildlife and persons in the vicinity of construction activities.	Prior to, during and after construction	Incorporation into final plans and specifications and sign-off by resident engineer after construction.		Date Completed: _____ Environmental Oversight _____ Date
CON-3	Fugitive dust, emissions, and other pollutants normally associated with equipment and highway construction activities would be minimized to a level of insignificance by ensuring effective and rigid controls on activities during the construction phase as outlined in the Standard Specifications and special provision. Construction vehicles and equipment would be maintained properly to minimize short-term air pollution emissions.	Prior to, during and after construction	Incorporation into final plans and specifications and sign-off by resident engineer after construction.		Date Completed: _____ Environmental Oversight _____ Date

ENV. CONCERN	MITIGATION MEASURE	TIMING OF MITIGATION MEASURE	PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE(S)	VERIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE (Provide Written Description)	RESPONSIBILITY FOR MONITORING
CON-4	Construction vehicles would be washed and cleaned as necessary to remove mud and other deposits prior to leaving the construction site.	Prior to, during and after construction	Incorporation into final plans and specifications and sign-off by resident engineer after construction.		Date Completed: _____ Environmental Oversight _____ Date
CON-5	Construction techniques would be used to ensure the safety of construction workers and the general public. Such techniques would include the use of shoring and falsework to support structures under construction.	Prior to, during and after construction	Incorporation into final plans and specifications and sign-off by resident engineer after construction.		Date Completed: _____ Environmental Oversight _____ Date

Appendix H: Announcement of Public Hearing

Notice of Intent to Adopt a Negative Declaration/Finding of No Significant Impact. Announcement of Public Hearing for State Route 5/14 Interchange HOV Project



WHAT IS BEING PLANNED?

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is proposing to construct a two-lane High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) connector from Interstate 5 to State Route 14. This project will provide system continuity for proposed HOV lanes on Interstate 5 and State Route 14 by providing direct connections from northbound Interstate 5 to northbound State Route 14 and southbound Route 14 to southbound Interstate 5. The proposed work will be within the existing right-of-way.

WHY THIS AD?

CALTRANS has studied the effects this project may have on the environment. Our studies show that it will not significantly affect the quality of the environment. The report that explains why it is called an Initial Study/ Environmental Assessment. This notice is to tell you of the preparation of the Initial Study/ Environmental Assessment and its availability for you to read.

A hearing will be held to give you an opportunity to discuss certain design features of the project with CALTRANS' staff before the final design is selected. The tentative schedule for construction will be discussed.

WHAT IS AVAILABLE?

Maps, the Initial Study/ Environmental Assessment and other project information are available for review and copying at the Caltrans District 7 Office located at 120 S. Spring Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012 on weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The Initial Study/Environmental Assessment is also available at:

- Valencia Library, 23743 W. Valencia Blvd, Valencia
- Newhall Library, 22704 W. 9th Street, Newhall

WHERE YOU COME IN

Do you have any comments about processing the project with a Negative Declaration and the Initial study/ Environmental Assessment? Do you disagree with the findings of our study as set forth in the proposed Negative Declaration? Would you care to make any other comments on the project? Please submit your comments in writing no later than December 11, 2000 at 4:00 pm to:

Mr. Ronald Kosinski, Chief
Caltrans Office of Environmental Planning (LA-5/14)
120 S. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Alternative E-mail address, Carlos.Montez@dot.ca.gov

If there are no major comments, Caltrans will request approval from the Federal Highway Administration and proceed with the project design.

WHEN AND WHERE

The public hearing will be held on November 28, 2000 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m at Hart High School, 24825 N. Newhall Ave, Newhall, CA. Individuals who require special accommodation (American Sign Language interpreter, accessible seating, documentation in alternate formats, etc.) are requested to contact the District 7 Environmental Planning Office at 213-897-9116 at least 21 days prior to the scheduled hearing date. TDD users may contact the California Relay Service line at 1-800-735-2929 or Voice Line at 1-800-735-2922.

CONTACT

For more information about this study or any transportation matter, please call Caltrans Public Affairs Office at 213-897-4867.

Appendix I: Comments Received from Public Officials/Agencies

SANTA CLARITA VALLEY/SOUTHI

Caltrans to hold hearing at Hart High

By Eric Ernest
Signal Staff Writer

Caltrans will host a public hearing regarding a proposal to construct a two-lane High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) connector from Interstate 5 to State Route 14. The hearing will take place from 5 to 9 p.m., Tuesday, Nov. 28 at William S. Hart High School. The school is located at 24825 N. Newhall Ave., Newhall.

The road work proposed would be part of a 14-month improvement program on the I-5 at Valencia Blvd. in Santa Clarita to widen the boulevard and make modifications for improvement.

"We're looking to add additional lanes to the bridges and overpasses also. The extra lanes will come from extending the medians on the affected areas. The project is expected to take three years from the start of construction until the completion of the project," said Caltrans information officer Joe Brazile.

High occupancy lanes are the central concept of the improvement program. The goal of HOV is moving more people instead of cars to increase freeway efficiency, cut traffic congestion and fuel consumption, according to the department's Web site.

For more information, please contact the Caltrans Public Affairs office Monday through Friday during business hours at (213) 897-4867 or (213) 897-3630.

COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM PUBLIC OFFICIALS/AGENCIES

This section of the Response to Comments includes comments received from public officials/agencies, and the accompanying responses to these comments. The following public officials/agencies provided comments on the DEIR/EA. The numbers indicate the unique number assigned to each comment letter.

Number	Elected Official/Agency	Contact/Date
I-1	State Clearinghouse	Governor's Office of Planning and Research November 15, 2000
I-1A	State Clearinghouse	Governor's Office of Planning and Research December 11, 2000
I-2	MWD	Laura J. Simonek November 20, 2000
I-3	City of Los Angeles	Haripal S. Vir December 12, 2000
I-4	County of Los Angeles	Garland Seto December 19, 2000
I-5	County of Los Angeles – Fire Department	David R. Leninger December 14, 2000
I-6	Los Angeles Department of Water and Power	Bill Jones February 7, 2001

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Governor's Office of Planning and Research

State Clearinghouse

Gray Davis
GOVERNOR

Steve Nissen
ACTING DIRECTOR

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT

DATE: November 15, 2000

TO: Mr Ronald Kosinski
Department of Transportation, District 7
120 South Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: HOV Connector From Interstate Route 5 to State Route 14
SCH#: 1999111074

This is to acknowledge that the State Clearinghouse has received your environmental document for state review. The review period assigned by the State Clearinghouse is:

Review Start Date: November 9, 2000
Review End Date: December 8, 2000

We have distributed your document to the following agencies and departments:

Air Resources Board, Transportation Projects
California Highway Patrol
Caltrans, District 7
Department of Conservation
Department of Fish and Game, Region 5
Department of Housing and Community Development
Department of Parks and Recreation
Department of Water Resources
Native American Heritage Commission
Office of Historic Preservation
Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 4
Resources Agency
Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy
State Lands Commission

The State Clearinghouse will provide a closing letter with any state agency comments to your attention on the date following the close of the review period.

Thank you for your participation in the State Clearinghouse review process.

1400 TENTH STREET P.O. BOX 3044 SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95812-3044
916-445-0613 FAX 916-323-3018 WWW.OPR.CA.GOV/CLEARINGHOUSE.HTML

I-1

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Governor's Office of Planning and Research
State Clearinghouse

Gray Davis
GOVERNOR

Steve Nissen
ACTING DIRECTOR

December 11, 2000

Mr Ronald Kosinski
Department of Transportation, District 7
120 South Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Subject: State Route 5/14 Interchange HOV Widening Project
SCH#: 1999111074

Dear Mr Ronald Kosinski:

The State Clearinghouse submitted the above named Negative Declaration to selected state agencies for review. The review period closed on December 8, 2000, and no state agencies submitted comments by that date. This letter acknowledges that you have complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act.

Please call the State Clearinghouse at (916) 445-0613 if you have any questions regarding the environmental review process. If you have a question about the above-named project, please refer to the ten-digit State Clearinghouse number when contacting this office.

Sincerely,

Terry Roberts
Senior Planner, State Clearinghouse

1400 TENTH STREET P.O. BOX 3044 SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95812-3044
916-445-0613 FAX 916-323-3018 WWW.OPR.CA.GOV/CLEARINGHOUSE.HTML

I-1A

Document Details Report
State Clearinghouse Data Base

SCH#	1999111074
Project Title	State Route 5/14 Interchange HOV Widening Project
Lead Agency	Caltrans #7
Type	Neg Negative Declaration
Description	The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has prepared an Initial Study/Environmental Assessment for construction of a two lane High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) connector form Interstate Route 5 (KP R70.9) to State Route 14 (KP R40.6). The proposed project is located at the northern end of the City of Los Angeles partially within the City of Los Angeles limits and partially within an unicorporated section of Los Angeles County.

Lead Agency Contact

Name	Mr Ronald Kosinski		
Agency	Department of Transportation, District 7		
Phone	213-897-0703	*Fax*	
email			
Address	120 South Spring Street		
City	Los Angeles	*State* CA	*Zip* 90012

Project Location

County	Los Angeles			
City	Santa Clarita, San Fernando			
Region				
Cross Streets	5/14 Interchange			
Parcel No.				
Township		*Range*	*Section*	*Base*

Proximity to:

Highways	14 & 5
Airports	
Railways	
Waterways	
Schools	
Land Use	Transportation

Project Issues	Aesthetic/Visual; Agricultural Land; Air Quality; Archaeologic-Historic; Drainage/Absorption; Economics/Jobs; Flood Plain/Flooding; Geologic/Seismic; Noise; Population/Housing Balance; Public Services; Recreation/Parks; Soil Erosion/Compaction/Grading; Toxic/Hazardous; Traffic/Circulation; Vegetation; Water Quality; Water Supply; Wetland/Riparian; Wildlife; Growth Inducing; Landuse; Cumulative Effects
Reviewing Agencies	Resources Agency; Department of Conservation; Department of Fish and Game, Region 5; Office of Historic Preservation; Department of Parks and Recreation; Department of Water Resources; California Highway Patrol; Caltrans, District 7; Department of Housing and Community Development; Air Resources Board, Transportation Projects; Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 4; Native American Heritage Commission; Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy; State Lands Commission

Date Received 11/09/2000 *Start of Review* 11/09/2000 *End of Review* 12/08/2000

Note: Blanks in data fields result from insufficient information provided by lead agency.

I-1A

Governor's Office of Planning and Research
1 - Letter dated November 15, 2000
1A – Letter dated December 11, 2000

Response		
1		Comment noted. This is an administrative letter acknowledging receipt and distribution of the environment document. No formal response is required.
1A		Comment noted. This is an administrative letter saying that no state agencies submitted comments on this project. No formal response is required.

MWD
METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Office of the General Manager

November 20, 2000

Mr. Carlos Montez
Caltrans Office of Environmental Planning
120 South Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. Montez:

Draft Initial Study/Environmental Assessment for
Interstate 5/State Route 14 High Occupancy Vehicle Connector

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (Metropolitan) has received a Draft Initial Study/Environmental Assessment (IS/EA) for Interstate 5/State Route 14 High Occupancy Vehicle Connector partially within the City of Los Angeles and partially within an unincorporated section of Los Angeles County. The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to construct a two lane Highway Occupancy Vehicle connector from Interstate Route 5 (KP R70.9) to State Route 14 (KP R40.6). This letter contains our response as a potentially affected public agency.

Our review of the Draft IS/EA indicates that the proposed project crosses Metropolitan's Foothill Feeder-Newhall Tunnel, north of Sierra Highway along State Route 14, and the Balboa Inlet Tunnel, west of Balboa Boulevard along Interstate 5. The enclosed maps show these facilities in relation to the proposed project. It will be necessary for Caltrans to consider these facilities in its project planning.

In order to avoid potential conflicts with Metropolitan's right-of-way, we request that any preliminary engineering design drawings or improvement plans for any activity in the area of Metropolitan's pipelines and rights-of-way be submitted for our review and written approval. You may obtain detailed prints of drawings of Metropolitan's pipelines and rights-of-way by calling Metropolitan's Substructures Information Line at (213) 217-6564. To assist you in preparing plans that are compatible with Metropolitan's facilities and easements, we have enclosed a copy of the "Guidelines for Developments in the Area of Facilities, Fee Properties, and/or Easements of The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California." Please note that all submitted designs or plans must clearly identify Metropolitan's facilities and rights-of-way. 1

700 N. Alameda Street, Los Angeles, California 90012 • Mailing address: Box 54153, Los Angeles, California 90054-0153 • Telephone (213) 217-6000

I-2

THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Mr. Carlos Montez
Page 2
November 20, 2000

We appreciate the opportunity to provide input to your planning process and we look forward to receiving future environmental documentation on this project. If we can be of further assistance, please contact me at (213) 217-6242.

Very truly yours,

Laura J. Simonek

Laura J. Simonek
Principal Environmental Specialist

DTF/

Enclosures

I-2

Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
Memo dated November 20, 2000

Response		
1	*UTIL-1*	Coordination with Metrolink and the various utility companies would be necessary. If any changes in utilities or Metrolink need to occur due to the proposed project, Caltrans permit and mitigation requirements are binding to the other agencies, unless they choose to prepare a separate environmental document.

FRANCES T. BANERJEE
GENERAL MANAGER

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
CALIFORNIA

RICHARD J. RIORDAN
MAYOR

DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION
221 N. FIGUEROA STREET, SUITE 500
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012
(213) 580-1177
FAX: (213) 580-1188

December 12, 2000

Mr. Ronald Kosinski, Chief
Office of Environmental Planning
Caltrans - District 7
120 South Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Attention: Carlos Montez

Dear Mr. Kosinski:

HIGH OCCUPANCY VEHICLE CONNECTOR FROM INTERSTATE ROUTE 5 TO STATE ROUTE 14 – DRAFT INITIAL STUDY/ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) has reviewed the Draft Initial Study/Environmental Assessment Report for construction of a two-lane High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) connector from Interstate Route 5 (I-5) to State Route 14 (SR-14) dated October 2000. Our staff also attended the public hearing held for this project on Tuesday, November 28 at Newhall. LADOT fully supports Caltrans efforts on this important project that will provide system continuity for the proposed HOV lanes on I-5 and SR-14, and we have the following complementary comments:

1. Widening of the southbound I-5 should extend at least two additional miles further north to allow for more efficient transition to the proposed HOV lane. Currently, the southbound I-5 is queuing up every morning due to slow-moving trucks in the two right lanes. | 1

2. Widening of the northbound I-5 should be extended to allow four travel lanes on the main line to the merge point with the northbound truck route. The transition of the proposed HOV lane from the four through lanes on northbound I-5 should begin much sooner (two miles south of the I-5/SR-14 interchange) to minimize queuing and weaving on the mainline freeway during peak hours. | 2

3. The approach lane of the transition from the southbound truck route to the 210 Freeway connector should be extended by a minimum of one mile to ease the current queuing during the AM peak hours. | 3

I-3

4. The curb lane of the southbound truck route along I-5 should be extended a minimum of two miles further south of the connector to 210 Freeway to reduce queuing and weaving during the AM peak hours. | 4

5. To further facilitate greater use of the HOV lanes, the freeway on-ramps in the vicinity of this project should be widened in order to ensure provision of permanent HOV by-pass lanes. | 5

It is our understanding that currently several HOV Projects on I-5 and SR-14 are in various stages of development. Providing continuity of HOV lanes between I-5 and SR-14 is essential for promoting the greater usage of HOV lanes on the freeway system, which in turn will help alleviate congestion at this busy interchange and provide better access for the north Los Angeles County communities to the Greater Los Angeles area.

If you have any questions, please call me at (213) 580-1190, or Vahan Pezeshkian at (213) 473-5515.

Sincerely,

Haripal Vir

Haripal S. Vir
Principal Transportation Engineer
Bureau of Project Development and Implementation

HSV:llb

c: Seventh Council District - Attn: Mark Dierking
Twelfth Council District
Michael Uyeno, LADOT
Vahan Pezeshkian, LADOT

C:\MyFiles\Kosinski-HOV15(Vir)

Los Angeles Department of Transportation
Letter dated December 12, 2000

Response		
1		The Route Concept Report for this area addresses this issue but there are no projects currently programmed.
2		HOV Lanes will be constructed in this area in 2004.
3		This is beyond the scope of the project.
4		This is beyond the scope of the project.
5		This will be considered if widening for the HOV lanes requires reconstruction of the ramps.

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
900 SOUTH FREMONT AVENUE
ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91803-1331
Telephone: (626) 458-5100

HARRY W. STONE, Director

ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:
P.O. BOX 1460
ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91802-1460

IN REPLY PLEASE REFER TO FILE: WM-2

December 19, 2000

Mr. Ronald Kosinski, Chief
Caltrans Office of Environmental Planning
District 7
120 South Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. Kosinski:

RESPONSE TO AN INITIAL STUDY/ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
INTERSTATE 5/STATE ROUTE 14 HIGH OCCUPANCY

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Initial Study/Environmental Assessment (IS/EA) for the proposed Interstate 5/State Route 14 High Occupancy. We have reviewed the IS/EA and offer the following comments:

Environmental Programs

As projected in the Los Angeles County Countywide Siting Element, which was approved by a majority of the cities in Los Angeles County in late 1997 and by the County Board of Supervisors in January 1998, a shortfall in permitted daily landfill capacity may be experienced in the County within the next few years. The construction and demolition activities associated with the proposed project will increase the generation of solid waste, and will negatively impact solid waste management infrastructure in the County. This issue should be addressed and mitigation measures provided. Mitigation measures may include, but are not limited to, implementation of waste reduction and recycling programs to divert the solid waste, including construction and demolition waste, from the landfills. 1

The existing hazardous waste management (HWM) facilities in this County are inadequate to handle the hazardous waste currently being generated. The proposed project may generate hazardous waste which could adversely impact existing HWM facilities.

Should any operation within the subject project include the construction/installation, modification, or removal of underground storage tanks and/or industrial waste control or disposal facilities, Public Works' Environmental Programs Division must be contacted for required approvals and operating permits. 2

I-4

If you have any questions regarding the above comments, please contact Ms. Aracely Cordova at (626) 458-3996.

Traffic and Lighting

The State of California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is proposing improvements to the interchange of the Golden State Freeway Interstate 5 (1-5) and the Antelope Valley Freeway State Route 14 (SR-14), located both in the City of Los Angeles and unincorporated area of Los Angeles County. The proposed improvements include the construction of an elevated two-lane High-Occupancy Vehicle direct connector within the median areas of 1-5 and SR-14, and other appurtenant work within the project area.

The two unincorporated roads of Sierra Highway and The Old Road could be impacted by traffic during the construction of these Freeway improvements. We recommend Caltrans work closely with the County and Cities of Los Angeles and Santa Clarita regarding any detour needed during the construction period of this project. 3

We recommend the Cities of Los Angeles and Santa Clarita review this document for significant impacts/mitigations within their jurisdictions.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Garland Seto of our Traffic Studies Section at (626) 300-4848.

If you have any questions regarding the environmental reviewing process of this Department, please contact Ms. Carrie Inciong at the address on the first page or at (626) 458-4346.

Very truly yours,

HARRY W. STONE
Director of Public Works

C.O.Ly
for ROD H. KUBOMOTO
Assistant Deputy Director
Watershed Management Division

SS:ro
A:\SS519.wpd

I-4

Los Angeles County Public Works
Letter dated December 19, 2000

Response		
1	*HAZ-2*	The contractor, prior to the start of construction, would identify borrow and disposal sites. At that time, impacts from the use of such borrow and disposal sites and associated haul routes would be investigated.
2	*HAZ-1*	In the event that excavation reveals unknown potentially hazardous materials, Caltrans policy would require work to be halted in the vicinity until the area in question is investigated and proper mitigation proposed.
3		Copies of the Draft Environmental Document (DED) were sent to the Cities of Los Angeles and Santa Clarita for comment. The City of Los Angeles submitted comments (Response I-3) which, along with the responses from Caltrans, are included in this appendix. Caltrans will continue to coordinate with local agencies during the construction period of this project.

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
FIRE DEPARTMENT
1320 NORTH EASTERN AVENUE
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90063-3294
(323) 890-4330

P. MICHAEL FREEMAN
FIRE CHIEF
FORESTER & FIRE WARDEN

December 14, 2000

Mr. Ronald Kosinski
Chief of Office of Environmental Planning
Attn: Calos J. Montez
California Department of Transportation, D7
120 South Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. Montez:

SUBJECT: NEGATIVE DECLARATION AND INITIAL STUDY/ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT INTERSTATE 5/STATE ROUTE 14, SCH #1999111074, 07-LA-05, KP R70.9/R73.6 (EA 168000) 07-LA-14, KP R39.9/R40.6 – (EIR #1018/2000)

We have reviewed the Negative Declaration and Initial Study/ Environmental Assessment for the Interstate 5/ State Route 14 High Occupancy Vehicle Connector. This project has been reviewed by Planning, Land Development, and Forestry Divisions of the County of Los Angeles Fire Department. The following are their comments:

Notify the County of Los Angeles Fire Department at least ten days in advance of any street closures that may affect fire/paramedic responses in the area.

Provide three sets of alternate route (detour) plans, with a tentative schedule of planned closures, prior to the beginning of construction. Traffic management plans and complete architectural/structural plans are not necessary. 1

Temporary bridges shall be designed, constructed, and maintained to support a live load of at least 75,000 pounds. A minimum vertical clearance of 13'6" will be required through out construction. 2

Disruptions to water service shall be coordinated with the County of Los Angeles Fire Department and alternate water sources shall be provided for Fire Protection during such disruptions. 3

SERVING THE UNINCORPORATED AREAS OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY AND THE CITIES OF:

AGOURA HILLS	BRADBURY	CUDAHY	HAWTHORNE	LA MIRADA	MALIBU	POMONA	SIGNAL HILL
ARTESIA	CALABASAS	DIAMOND BAR	HIDDEN HILLS	LA PUENTE	MAYWOOD	RANCHO PALOS VERDES	SOUTH EL MONTE
AZUSA	CARSON	DUARTE	HUNTINGTON PARK	LAKEWOOD	NORWALK	ROLLING HILLS	SOUTH GATE
BALDWIN PARK	CERRITOS	EL MONTE	INDUSTRY	LANCASTER	PALMDALE	ROLLING HILLS ESTATES	TEMPLE CITY
BELL	CLAREMONT	GARDENA	INGLEWOOD	LAWNDALE	PALOS VERDES ESTATES	ROSEMEAD	WALNUT
BELL GARDENS	COMMERCE	GLENDORA	IRWINDALE	LOMITA	PARAMOUNT	SAN DIMAS	WEST HOLLYWOOD
BELLFLOWER	COVINA	HAWAIIAN GARDENS	LA CANADA-FLINTRIDGE	LYNWOOD	PICO RIVERA	SANTA CLARITA	WESTLAKE VILLAGE
							WHITTIER

I-5

Should any questions arise regarding subdivision, water systems, or access issues please contact Inspector Michael McHargue at (323) 890-4243.

OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS:
The statutory responsibilities of the County of Los Angeles Fire Department Forestry Division include erosion control, watershed management, rare and endangered species, vegetation, fuel modification for Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones or Fire Zone 4, archeological and cultural resources and the County Oak Tree Ordinance. The proposed project will not have significant environmental impacts in these areas.

If you have any additional questions, please contact this office at (323) 890-4330.

Very truly yours,

David R. Leininger

DAVID R. LEININGER, ACTING CHIEF, FORESTRY DIVISION
PREVENTION BUREAU

DRL:sc

Los Angeles County Fire Department
Letter dated December 14, 2000

Response		
1		Caltrans will work closely with the Los Angeles County Fire Department to schedule any street closures so that they will have the least amount of impact to the local roadways as possible.
2		Any temporary bridges will be designed, constructed and maintained to support the required live load and vertical clearance.
3		Caltrans will work closely with the Los Angeles County Fire Department in the event there is a disruption of water service.

Carlos Montez
02/07/2001 07:41 AM

To: Chris Carre&/007/Caltrans/CAGov@DOT
cc:
Subject: Subject: The CalTrans Initial Study for the Interstate 5/State Route 14 High Occupancy Vehicle Connector.

Include these comments in FED eventhough they are late. Also include in mitigation montioring plan under utilities or publice services.
---------- Forwarded by Carlos Montez/007/Caltrans/CAGov on 02/07/2001 07:37 AM ----------

To: Carlos.montez@dot.ca.gov
cc:
Subject: Subject: The CalTrans Initial Study for the Interstate 5/State Route 14 High Occupancy Vehicle Connector.

Attention: Mr. Carlos J. Montez

Subject: The CalTrans Initial Study for the Interstate 5/State Route 14 High Occupancy Vehicle Connector.

The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power offers the following comments regarding your proposed project.

The Water Services Organization (WSO) maintains trunklines, distribution mains, services and fire hydrants within the area affected by the proposed project.

Major WSO trunklines cross the Interstate 5 freeway at Balboa Blvd. (See water service maps 228-135 and 230-135 attached)
These trunklines are vital to water system operation and outages must be planned far in advance. This makes it difficult to relocate trunklines.

Distribution mains, services and fire hydrants are located along San Fernando Road, from Balboa Blvd. to approximately 2335-feet north of Balboa Blvd. (Where Interstate 5 freeway crosses San Fernando Road). This portion of the distribution system has no other tie to other mains in the system. Therefore, relocation of portions of this distribution main may disrupt services to customers and impact fire protection. 1

Section 4.14 of the Initial Study identifies only natural gas lines that may require relocation. However, without reviewing final design plans, it is difficult to determine if WSO facilities will be impacted by either alternative.

As per telephone agreement with Mr. Ronald Kosinski on 2/6/2001, it is my understanding that you will be sending a messenger to pickup 11" X 17" copies of the attached maps.

Please contact me:
Bill Jones
Los Angeles Department of Water and Power
Corporate Environmental Services - Environmental Assessment
Room 1044
(213)-367-2612 or e-mail:
bjones@ladwp.com
(See attached file: wp228135.gif)(See attached file: wp230135.gif)

wp228135.gif

wp230135.gif

I-6

Los Angeles Department of Water & Power
e-mail dated February 7, 2001

Response		
1		Caltrans Staff believes that at this point in time there will be no need for trunk water line relocation but Caltrans will work closely with the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power if the need for relocation or disruption of services arises

Appendix J: Comments Received from the Public

COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM THE PUBLIC

This section of the Response to Comments includes comments received from the general public and the accompanying responses to these comments. The following members of the public provided comments on the DEIR/EA. The numbers indicate the unique number assigned to each comment letter.

Number	Individual/Group/ Organization	Date
J-1	Jack W. Rolston	November 4, 2000
J-2	Douglas M. Hall	December 12, 2000
J-3	Jack W. Rolston	December 30, 2000

JACK W. ROLSTON, D. ENG., CE, GE
Consulting Geotechnical Engineer
18911 RINGLING STREET
TARZANA, CA 91356
PH (818) 345-9199
FX (818) 345-5283

November 4, 2000

Mr. Ronald Kosinski, Chief
Office of Environmental Planning (LA-005-KP 70.9/73.6)
CALTRANS
120 S. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

HOV CONNECTOR ROUTE 5 TO 14

Thank you for the Environmental report dated October 2000.

I agree that HOV lanes should be interconnected at intersections of freeways. I believe this is being done in Orange County.

I am one of the single drivers on the freeways. Because of this I have to leave home much earlier during rush hours. Even so, I agree with the Diamond Lane (HOV) concept and believe it should be expanded. A few years ago I worked in an downtown office near yours. I left home at 6AM and was at my desk at 6:30 AM. I left my office at 3:30 PM and thus avoided traffic in both directions. Others could do this.

Once most of the HOV lanes are connected, busses could operate in the lanes in an efficient manner. When a number of busses begin to use the HOV lanes, special ramps for busses could be added to connect with park-and-ride lots. These ramps and lots should be at about 10 mile intervals and be located away from regular interchanges.

If the matter were put to a vote of the users, the single drivers, would probably vote to eliminate the HOV lanes as they would be in the majority. However, the goal is to get the singles into car pools and busses. If they are unwilling to car pool, travel in off peak hours, or use public transportation, then let them sit on the Freeway.

I expect that Caltrans monitors the number of vehicles using the regular lanes and those using the HOV lanes on a periodic bases. As more vehicles use the regular lanes than the HOV lanes an argument can be made that HOV lanes are not too efficient. I suggest that the number of passengers | 1

J–1

in each car be counted. In many cases their are drivers, including myself, that are eligible to drive in the HOV lanes, drive in the regular lanes. These drivers prefer to drive a little slower when the traffic permits. Once the freeway starts to become congested they will use the HOV lanes. Therefore the census should be expressed on the bases of those eligible to use the HOV lanes and those that may not use the HOV lanes. This procedure would indicate a higher usage of the HOV lanes, | 1

Sincerely,

Jack W. Rolston

J–1

Jack W. Rolston
Letter dated November 4, 2000

Response #		
1		As a matter of procedure, Caltrans conducts traffic counts for both the HOV lanes and regular lanes. Along with counting the number of vehicles, counts are also taken for the number of occupants per vehicle for the HOV lanes. These counts are done at least twice a year and are available for review.

RECEIVED
12/12/00

Mr. Ronald Kosinski, Chief
Caltrans Office of Environmental Planning
128 South Spring Street
Attention: Carlos Montez

Dear Sir,

I am in receipt of your environmental assessment concerning the proposed car pool lane connector at the route 5 and route 14 interchange. I would like you to know that, while I am in full support of widening route 5 to allow for the construction of car pool lanes within the median as suggested, I have several concerns relating to this environmental assessment and to the connector project itself. I would first of all like to apologize for my not being in attendance at your public hearing on Tuesday, November 28, 2000. Although the date and time are clearly stated on the EA, due to some misinformation on the part of one of our local newspapers, I missed that meeting. I would like to thank you for the chance to talk with you about my concerns. My concerns can be expressed mainly as 1. Traffic/Circulation during construction, 2.Environmental Concerns, and 3. Estimated Cost of the project.

My area of primary concern is the effect on traffic on Balboa Boulevard, San Fernando Road, and Foothill Boulevard during construction. Referring to item 44 of your environmental significance checklist, you state that the construction of the connector will not "have a substantial impact on existing transportation systems or alter present patterns of circulation or movement of people and/or goods". As mentioned in the environmental assessment, the construction of the car pool lane connector requires the relocation of the Balboa Boulevard

1

J-2

undercrossing. You do not state whether the existing undercrossing will be kept open during the construction of the new undercrossing. Should the construction of the new Balboa Boulevard undercrossing require the closure of the existing crossing prior to construction, traffic using the Balboa crossing to get to Foothill Boulevard will be forced to go south on San Fernando Road to Sierra Highway and turn north on Sierra Highway to Foothill Boulevard. The only other connection from Balboa Boulevard to Foothill Boulevard would be to turn south on San Fernando Road to Roxford Street and proceed east on Roxford Street to Foothill Boulevard. During the preparation of the Environmental Impact Report, the methodology of construction should include keeping the Balboa undercrossing open during the construction of the new undercrossing. 1

I also have several environmental concerns which I would like to address to you. As item nine of your environmental significance checklist, you state, that the project would not "Violate any published Federal, State, or local standards pertaining to hazardous waste, solid waste, or litter control". In your explanation of this item it is pointed out that 2 oil wells were identified from DOG field maps but you could not find the exact locations. Even though the oil wells were referenced as plugged and abandoned, the possibility still exists that the documentation could be faulty. Without knowing the exact location of these wells, the grading equipment could sever or damage these wells and cause pollution of the work site. Finding the exact location of these wells and their status is essential 2

J-2

to the safe construction of the connector.

The least of my concerns relates to the proposed costs of the 3 alternatives listed. The first alternative listed is the required no build alternative. Alternative 2, the construction of the connector in the middle of the interchange, would cost an estimated $44,400,000. Alternative 3, the construction of the connector starting on route 5 to the south of the interchange, would cost about $54,000,000. Both of these costs seem prohibitive for only gaining 2 lanes and relocating the Balboa Boulevard undercrossing. I would like to suggest to you, sir, that Caltrans, prior to any final decision on this project, consider the financial and physical feasibility of widening the existing route 5/ route 14 connectors as another project alternative. As always, I trust that you will balance these facts and suggestions and make the best decision possible. Thank you for your attention. 3

Douglas M. Hall

J-2

Douglas M. Hall
Letter dated December 12, 2000

Response #		
1		Caltrans will work closely with local agencies to schedule projects so to ensure the least amount of impact to the local roadways as possible.
2	*HAZ-1*	*In the event that excavation reveals unknown potentially hazardous materials, Caltrans policy would require work to be halted in the vicinity until the area in question is investigated and proper mitigation proposed.*
3		Comments noted.

JACK W. ROLSTON, D. ENG., CE, GE
Consulting Geotechnical Engineer
18911 RINGLING STREET
TARZANA, CA 91356
PH (818) 345-9199
FX (818) 345-5283

December 30, 2000

Carlos Montez
CALTRANS D7
120 South Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

INTERSTATE 5 / STATE ROUTE 14, HIGH OCCUPANCY VEHICLE CONNECTOR

Thank you for the Initial Study / Environmental Assessment Report, October 2000.

For future reports of this nature, I suggest that the plans in section 2 be schematic drawings rather than a print of the detail plan. It is difficult to visualize the slight changes between the two alternates. The cross sections are appropriate if a section line is shown on the schematic plan If anyone needs to view the detail plans they can go to your office .

Otherwise a good report. Don't let anyone talk CALTRANS out of the HOV lanes. I believe they should be fully developed even though most of my driving is in the regular lanes in the traffic jam. Thanks again for the report.

1

Jack W. Rolston
Letter dated December 30, 2000

Response #		
1		Comments noted.