

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**DISTRICT 7**

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February 24, 2010

Recreation, Culture and Arts Committee
Arroyo Seco Neighborhood Council
P O Box 42254
Los Angeles CA 90042

Attn: Martha Benedict

Dear Ms. Benedict

Construction of Median Barrier

This is our response to your queries on the freeway closures and some of the design elements with emphasis on preserving the historical features

- **CONSTRUCTION PROCESS:** *The Parkway will be divided into four segments and each one will be closed for five consecutive weekends, starting at 10:00 P.M. Friday to 6:00 A.M. Monday. Only one northbound lane will be open to traffic. That means for 20 weekends, the primary north-south artery of the region will be disrupted with detours*

While work on one of the segments is in progress, the other three segments will be open to public. It means each segment will be closed for up to 5 weekends.

- **REQUEST:** *One southbound lane must be open*

Since inside and outside shoulders are not available now, the contractor will not have sufficient space to perform the construction duties. Therefore in view of the safety of the workers and the travelling public, the southbound lanes must be closed during the 20 weekends

- **REQUEST:** *Firm dates for the week-end closures must be disclosed*

Caltrans will provide the weekend closure schedule, sixty days prior to the extended weekend closures

- **REQUEST:** *Specific weekends must be excluded from closures in cooperation with local venues*

Contractors will not be working during the major holidays and hence no closures during those weekends. The closures are not allowed from 3 hrs before to 2 hrs after any major event drawing over 35,000 attendances.

In this project, the only venue identified is the 'Rose Bowl'. 'Rose Parade' is covered in the major holiday clause. During meetings Caltrans had with representatives from the city of Los Angeles between December 17 2008 and July 29 2009, no other events or high drawing venues were identified that met the requirement for inclusion in the contract

- **REQUEST:** *Details of equipment staging area must be disclosed*

Caltrans will not permit any equipment within the state right of way (R/W). However the equipments will be parked within State R/W only during the construction window.

- **REQUEST:** *Shuttles and free Gold Line services be provided*

Caltrans in general does not provide Shuttle and free Gold Lines. We are contributing \$50,000 to the Los Angeles Department of Transportation to mitigate the impact of the closure, adjust the signal timing and to provide the traffic control officers at key intersections along the detour routes.

- **REQUEST:** *Graffiti control must not be left to the contractor as a low priority*

The contractor will be instructed to remove the graffiti as soon as possible.

- **REQUEST:** *On/Off ramps must not be capped with impermeable hardscape and must include landscaping appropriate to the area as a first priority*

Landscape at on/off ramps would be in conflict with Caltrans safety standards at these locations

- **DESIGN PROCESS:** *The project design was conducted with minimal community input. Since the Arroyo Seco Parkway, unlike other freeways, has historic significance to the area, a more meaningful design must be implemented with respect to local character.*

Caltrans recognizes its duty to act as a responsible steward of the environment, including towards the historic properties under its administration. As such, Caltrans Divisions of Project Management, Environmental Planning, Landscape Architect and Design worked together to come up with a solution to the safety and design problems posed by this project. Careful consideration was given to maintaining the historic character of the resource, as well as providing for the safety for both the traveling public and Caltrans maintenance crews. A copy of the Finding of Effect document prepared by Caltrans was submitted to the State Office of Historic Preservation who accepted it without comment, and which satisfied Section 106 obligations.

Caltrans invited representatives from several community organizations and government offices to a meeting held on August 15, 2007 to discuss this project and offer comments and opinions. The list of participants is attached. At the meeting, written comments were requested. Nicole Possert of Scenic Arroyo Seco and Glen Duncan of California Route 66 Preservation Foundation provided comments, which were considered both in the design process and the Finding of Effect document.

- **REQUEST:** *There is a specific historic light fixture standard on record for the Parkway. Caltrans must modify its plan to use that fixture.*

The specific historic light fixture included in your letter does not meet current safety standards as it is made of concrete-like materials that may shatter into flying debris if met with high speed impact. The reproduction lighting that will be used was designed based on photographs of the original lighting, and will meet the current safety standards.

- **REQUEST:** *Center median design needs to adhere to the historic style of the parkway with an articulated surface to discourage tagging and reduce noise.*

The center median design was inspired by the shape and Art Deco design of the Figueroa Street Tunnels, and was designed by Caltrans after concerns raised by Nicole Possert during the Section 106 public participation meeting regarding the original design. In addition, median barriers are less likely than side barriers to be tagged, and by their very nature cannot provide noise reduction.

- **REQUEST:** *The side barrier facing of broken concrete must adhere to the 1940s style of the Parkway with a variety of color stains.*

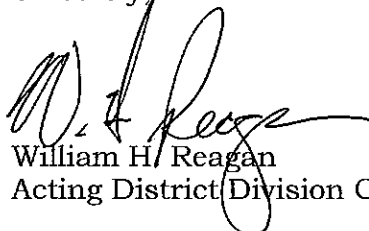
The side barrier pattern was designed for minimal visual intrusion. As the barriers are not historic, the intent was for them to reflect the original design of the Parkway, while also blending into the environment. A variety of color stains would negate that effect. Multiple colored stains could also not be maintained, as this would present a safety hazard for maintenance crews assigned to paint over graffiti.

- **REQUEST:** *Side barrier fencing must be optimized for the viewshed within the limitations of safety.*

Chain link fencing has historically been used on the Parkway, and untreated chain link fence with two-inch openings will be installed on top of the concrete side barriers. The fence will eventually develop a patina that will more fully enable it to blend into the environment.

If you do need any further clarification, please contact me at (213) 897-0362 or the Project Manager Jiwanjit Palaha @ (213) 897 9626.

Sincerely,



William H. Reagan
Acting District Division Chief, PPM

Cc: Los Angeles City Councilmember Jose Huizar
Los Angeles City Councilmember Ed Ryes
Los Angeles County Supervisor Gloria Molina
Congressman Xavier Becerra

PARTICIPANTS

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