

Willow Road Interchange Project

San Luis Obispo County
Department of Public Works

Next Steps

1. County is moving forward with Right Of Way acquisition
2. Caltrans reviews and approves construction plans by 2010
3. County sets up community workshop/survey to find \$12m funding gap

FAQS

1. What are the environmental impacts? *Addressed in Brochure 2*
2. What will it cost me? *Addressed in Brochure 3*

Schedule

Milestone	Date
California Transportation Commission Adopts New Connection	06/04/2009
Begin Design (By County)	10/01/2008
Project PS&E	01/15/2010
Right Of Way Certification	02/26/2010
County Advertise	03/12/2010
Approve Construction Contract	04/14/2010
Construction Begins	05/15/2010
End Project	12/01/2012

Willow Road Interchange Project

San Luis Obispo County
Department of Public Works

Brochure 1 Project Need

What Will It Look Like?

Letter to the Community

Need for the Interchange

Estimated Projected Costs

At A Glance

Benefits

Alternate Route

South County General Plan

Next Steps

FAQs

Schedule



Willow Road Interchange Project

San Luis Obispo County
Department of Public Works

What Will It Look Like?



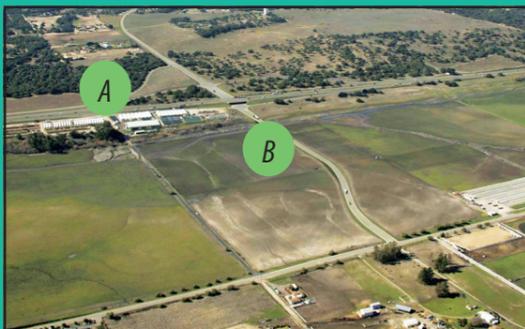
View A

Visual Simulation Looking Looking Northwest at Willow Road Extension



View B

Visual Simulation Looking West from Thompson Road at Willow Road Extension



Visual Simulation Looking Northwest at Willow Road Extension

Letter to the Community



Dear Nipomo Residents:

2009 is now upon us, and so is the final step to making Willow Road a reality. It has been long overdue and the completion of this project will definitely help improve the infrastructure that the Nipomo community needs for circulation. Congestion on Tefft Street will be reduced by providing another access to Hwy 101.

So far we have accumulated approximately \$8,000,000 from the Woodlands and \$12,000,000 from other new development in the area as well as funding in the amount of \$10,000,000 from SLOCOG and the State Transportation Improvement Program for the Willow Road project. But, we are short \$12 million to complete the project.

As we look for ways to fund the \$12 million gap, I must give a big thank you to my colleagues on the Board of Supervisors for supporting my request to put aside a \$6 million loan from County funds to use towards this shortfall. We are also pursuing federal stimulus funding to help with the gap.

The County will be holding informational workshops, which I encourage you to attend, and will also be providing updates on the financial status as the project proceeds. I hope we can gain your trust as we work to complete this project and reduce the stress on the commuting residents of Nipomo.

Sincerely,

KHATCHIK H. "KATCHO" ACHADJIAN
Supervisor District Four

Why Do We Need The Interchange?

The Nipomo area is served by three existing interchanges on Route 101, including Hutton Road (SR-166) on the south, Tefft Street in the central area, and Los Berros Road/Thompson Road on the north. Over the past decade, traffic forecasts in the Nipomo area have shown that the existing Tefft Street interchange and the existing Los Berros/Thompson Road interchange along with the local road system will be inadequate to serve projected development during peak traffic periods. This will subject the public to recurring congestion and delay as well as increasing traffic on the existing local street network. Of the three existing interchanges, only the Tefft Street interchange is located centrally to existing and planned developments. Los Berros-Thompson Road and Hutton Road (SR-166) are located at the fringe of future development, with the focus of future development being north of the existing Tefft interchange.

Estimated Project Costs

Projected Costs		Identified Secured Revenues	
Project Design	\$5 million	State Funds	\$10 million
Right of Way	\$3 million	Road Fees	\$12 million
Roadway	\$8 million	Woodlands Advance	\$8 million
Interchange	\$24 million	Total	\$30 million
Mitigation	\$2 million		
Total	\$42 million		
		Funding Gap of \$12 million	

At A Glance

Benefits

- Reduction in Traffic at Tefft Street Interchange
- Reduction in vehicle miles traveled on Mesa Road with a shorter route
- This will provide a viable truck route
- Improved emergency response

Alternate Route

- General Plan has included Willow Interchange since the 1980's
- This will be a key link to provide the capacity for West Nipomo
- This will provide an intertie between Highway 1 and Highway 101

South County General Plan

- Improvements are consistent with the general plan.

Willow Road Interchange Project

San Luis Obispo County
Department of Public Works

Environmental FAQs

- Is the project going to be used to facilitate growth on the mesa?
No, Willow Road Interchange is a planned improvement to support the General Plan since 1980.
- How will Oakwood loss be addressed?
The County will be developing a tree mitigation project, totaling 27 acres, as the project is constructed.

Mitigation Schedule

Milestone	Year
Oak Tree Mitigation Plan	2009
Oak Tree site Selection	2009
Planting of Oak Trees	2010
Breaking ground on interchange	2010
Maintenance of Oak tree Habitat	2011-2016

Willow Road Interchange Project

San Luis Obispo County
Department of Public Works

Brochure 2

Project Impacts & Mitigation

Environmental Review Process

Purpose & Need

Stewardship

Impacts & Mitigation

*Oak Tree Mitigation
Agricultural Land
Endangered Species
Visual
Water Quality
Noise*

Environmental Analysis
Avoidance

Environmental Benefit
Greenhouse Gases

Environmental FAQs

Mitigation Schedule



Department Of Public Works
Room 207 County Government Center
San Luis Obispo, Ca 93408

Paavo Ogren, Director
Dale Ramey, Project Manager
http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/PW/Willow_Rd_-_Hwy_101_Interchange.htm

Willow Road Interchange Project

San Luis Obispo County
Department of Public Works

What Will Be Included For the Environment?



Water Quality Management, Bio-swale



Tree Mitigation Site is yet to be determined. The Tree Mitigation is at 4:1 ratio.

Environmental mitigation will begin simultaneously to interchange construction.

Environmental Review Process

- Environmental studies began in 1997 to select the road alignment out of seven possible routes. Two of the routes were studied in detail under a Tier I Environmental Impact Report (EIR)
- The Board of Supervisors selected the proposed route from the EIR in 1999
- Caltrans has overseen the development and processing of the federal NEPA document for the interchange and has adopted a finding of no significant impacts in January 2009
- These documents have identified a number of potential impacts that will occur from project construction which will need to be mitigated in the project development and implementation activities
- The project can proceed now to developing final plans and conditions along with acquiring the right of way needed for construction

Purpose & Need

- Provide circulation improvements to accommodate existing and planned future growth as identified in the South County Area Plan
- Enhance emergency access to Nipomo via US 101
- Reduce the need for and extent of improvements required to improve the level of service at the US 101/Tefft Street interchange

Stewardship

- Maintain the unique Mesa habitats
- Fit project design into the site terrain
- Accommodate loss of oak woodland habitat as part of and prior to the project construction
- Provide water quality elements in design

Impacts & Mitigation

Oak Tree:

Significant loss of over 800 trees and associated habitat. The EIR calls for replacement at 4:1 ratio. County is in process of selecting and developing off-site mitigation of approximately 27 acres for oak tree habitat. This work is to be done concurrent to the development of the interchange design and construction.

Agricultural Land:

Project will reduce up to six acres of Agricultural land at the east end of the road by Thompson Avenue. The project will support use and access for agricultural operations to continue on the adjoining parcels.

Endangered Species:

Minor impacts to occur on native plants unique to the Mesa area. Significant right of way will remain from which these plant species can succeed into the future. Bat habitat is developed by converting existing equipment undercrossing below the freeway into a large bat roost.

Visual:

The design calls for an undercrossing of Willow Road below the freeway which will limit visual impacts along the Route 101 corridor and keep open the vista of the Dana foothills to travelers on both Willow Road and the freeway. Oak tree loss will be done selectively in and around the interchange to provide screening and retain the rural wood-lands appearance.

Water Quality:

Drainage will be handled by infiltration into basin and road side ditches to improve water quality and limit runoff discharge to adjoining creek.

Noise:

Increased noise levels will be introduced to rural residential areas. Project will incorporate asphalt mix designs which have been proven to reduce tire-road friction noise levels.

Environmental Analysis

Environmental Review in compliance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA).

Avoidance:

The 1999 EIR focused the route selection process on overall avoidance of impacts to Biological, cultural and socio-economic impacts and resulted in minimizing much of the potential impacts. Nonetheless, there were found to be a number of significant and unavoidable impacts.

Environmental Benefit

Greenhouse Gases:

By providing an overall shorter route to Nipomo neighborhoods and reducing congestion and delay levels at Tefft Street interchange, the project will provide a net reduction in the creation of greenhouse gases on the Mesa.

Willow Road Interchange Project

San Luis Obispo County
Department of Public Works

Willow Road Interchange Project

San Luis Obispo County
Department of Public Works

Next Steps

1. Community workshop at Nipomo High School, February 19, 2009 from 6:30-9:30 PM
2. Telephone survey to determine community support for local participation of tax to cover funding gap.
3. Voter support, move forward with Prop. 218 vote.

FAQS

1. How are taxes paid? *If the tax measure is approved they will be placed on the property tax bill.*
2. Will the tax amount change? *As more development occurs and assessed voter approval, the tax should decrease.*

Finance Alternatives Discussion Schedule

Milestone	Date
Meeting with area Service Groups	Jan 2009
First Community Workshop	Feb 2009
Community Opinion Survey	March 2009
Report to South County Advisory Council	May 2009
Report to Board of Supervisors	Summer 2009
Development of Financial Mechanism (as warranted)	Fall 2009

Brochure 3 Project Finance

- Projected Costs
- Identified Secured Revenues
- Covering The Gap
- Funding Gap Options
- Finance Options
 - Ad Valorem Tax
 - Parcel Tax
 - Assessment District
- Prop 218 Vote
- FAQs
- Next Steps
- Finance Alternatives Discussion Schedule



Willow Road Interchange Project

San Luis Obispo County
Department of Public Works

Projected Costs

Project Design	\$5 million
Right of Way Acquisition	\$3 million
Roadway Construction	\$8 million
Interchange Construction	\$24 million
Oak Tree Mitigation	\$2 million
Total	\$42 million

Identified Secured Revenues

Road Improvement Fees (Area 1)	\$10 million
Road Improvement Fees (Area 2)	\$2 million
Road Improvement Fees (Woodlands)	\$8 million
State Transportation Improvement Funds	10 million
Total	\$30 million

Funding Gap of \$12 million

Covering The Gap

Costs have escalated over the past decade for both the right of way and construction of the interchange. What was once a \$ 12 million project in the mid-1990's has grown into a \$ 42 million project. The foundation for the funding on the project has been the Road Improvement Fees, approved by the Board of Supervisors, which is assessed to each building permit issued on the Mesa. In the last ten years, those fees have increase from \$ 2000 per residential unit to over \$ 11,000 per unit. But even this increase has not offset the amount of inflation experienced in construction and land costs. Regional funding from San Luis Obispo Council of Governments has been secured in the amount of \$ 10 million from the State Transportation Improvement Program. But these funds are at risk of either further devaluating over time and being reprogrammed to other projects if not utilized in the next couple of years. The following provides an overview of the nature of the funding shortfall.

Funding Gap Options

The expected gap in funding is at \$ 12 million which we need to seek through community participation. The Board of Supervisors has directed the Department of Public Works to conduct a community workshop and survey to explore financing options available and report back to them. None of the options are easy or provide a quick fix. All will take support of the community to achieve. At stake is the viability of the project. Projects of this magnitude do not decrease in cost over time. The funding picture for the project, while not ideally, will not improve over time as the limited transportation funds will be directed to other pressing needs.

Finance Options

Voter Approval Requires a Community Decision

Public Works Department, as directed by the Board of Supervisors, is developing a community workshop to be held in Nipomo to provide information of Funding Needs and Solutions. A survey will be conducted once information and options are provided to the community. Public Works will report back to the Board of Supervisors in summer of 2009.

The Options Under Consideration Include:

Ad Valorem Tax

- Increase existing property tax assessment by 0.05%
- Potential differential in rate based on distance from interchange
- Lower tax level for long term property owners
- Requires 2/3 vote under Prop 218
- Expected for 30 year term but could be on-going to construct other projects

Flat Parcel Tax

- Creates same rate for each parcel
- No differentiation for existing conditions or proximity to interchange
- Require 2/3 vote under Prop 218
- Expect to be for 30 year term for bond payback, but may be broad to pay for other projects

Assessment District

- Define by benefit of property for Willow Road project
- Requires detailed report to establish benefit and formula for assessment
- Larger traffic generator would be taxed more
- Requires 2/3 vote under Prop 218
- Expected 30 year term on bond payback

Proposition 218 The Right to Vote On The Tax Act

Proposition 218 allows the voters of an area to decide whether or not to accept a tax on their property to fund various municipal capital projects. The County will bring to the Nipomo community a tax ballot to determine whether or not the community will support a tax to fund the shortfall in the Willow Road Interchange construction fund.

Prop 218 Vote

In order to assure necessary funding, Nipomo property owners need to agree to accept the assessment levy to pay back bonds and loans.

Willow Road Funding Sources

