ATTACHMENT J-6

NEWSLETTERS

This attachment contains copies of newsletters and brochures distributed by RCTC over the course of the project to provide the public information on the project and the status of the technical studies and the environmental process. (22 pages)
WHAT IS THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY?

The Mid County Parkway is being pursued under the historic Cajpelo-Ramona Corridor NEPA Partnership agreement between RCTC, the County of Riverside, the United States Department of Transportation, the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the US Army Corps of Engineers, Caltrans, and the California Department of Fish and Game. This agreement means that all projects partners have pledged to employ streamlined procedures that will help ensure timely traffic relief for western Riverside County residents. Nevertheless, the project is expected to take at least three years before final engineering and right of way acquisition can begin. Construction can begin after all right of way has been obtained and utility conflicts have been resolved.

WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY?

Right now RCTC is studying the location of alternative routes for the Mid County Parkway. In order to move forward, the following steps must be completed:

1. Route Evaluation: Possible routes will be identified and evaluated for feasibility by engineers and environmental agencies.
2. Environmental Studies: Environmental studies to determine the potential impacts of the alternative routes will be completed including a draft EIR/EA. These studies will measure impacts to biological resources, water resources, geology, air quality, cultural resources, paleontology, noise, socioeconomic, land use, public services and utilities, aesthetics, traffic and circulation, and public safety.
3. Alternatives Narrowed: The results of the public input process, environmental studies, and the input of other transportation and environmental agencies will narrow down the choice of possible routes for the Mid County Parkway.
4. Preferred Alternative Selection: RCTC will choose the locally preferred alternative from those studied in the Draft EIR/EA. If approved, the preferred route will move forward for design and construction.

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY?

Meetings will be held at the following times and locations:

- 9/21/04 (Tuesday) - 6:30 pm Valley Wide Recreation & Park District
- 9/20/04 (Wednesday) - 6:30 pm Verde Unified School District
- 9/20/04 (Thursday) - 6:30 pm Eagle Glen Golf Course

The Mid County Parkway will provide concurrency in the study area.

Q&A MID COUNTY PARKWAY

The Mid County Parkway is one of the projects identified for transportation planning by an agency responsible for transportation planning in Riverside County and the administrator of Measure A, Riverside County's 1/2% sales tax for transportation.

WHY IS THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY NEEDED?

By 2030, the County's population is projected to double to 2 million. Today, over 85% of trips within the County is on State Routes 60, 91, and 74. These corridors, which link western Riverside County to San Bernardino County and the Coachella Valley to the east and Los Angeles Orange counties to the west, are already experiencing significant congestion. The new route, in addition to relieving congestion in essential in order to maintain and enhance quality of life in western Riverside County.

Such a route was identified as a high priority in the Riverside County Integrated Projects' transportation element, called the Community and Environmental Transportation Accessibility Process (CEATAP). In July 2002, a draft Environmental Impact Study/Environmental Impact Report (EIR/EA) was published for an east-west corridor identified as the "Cajpelo to Ramona Like Bifurcate Corridor," While RCTC studied several alternatives for the corridor, a route roughly following Cajpelo Road and the Ramona Expressway was eventually identified as a preferred route to relieve congestion and provide future mobility.

The new name for this Cajpelo-Ramona route is the Mid County Parkway.

The project received national recognition when it was identified by the White House under Executive Order 13274 for environmental streamlining, one of only seven transportation projects in the nation so far to receive this designation.

In order to move forward, it is necessary to study the corridor in detail and identify a specific route. Economic and environmental factors are also important. The next step for the Mid County Parkway is to move forward with the study process to identify the specific route and begin construction.

Thomas P. Campagna, P.E.
Chief Operating Officer
WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY?

The Mid County Parkway will offer a variety of benefits to residents, commuters, property owners and businesses throughout western Riverside County. For the General Public, the Mid County Parkway will provide a faster, more reliable route to and from the I-15/I-215 interchange, reducing travel time and congestion. For Businesses, improved mobility provided by the Mid County Parkway will stimulate the movement of goods and services across western Riverside County, enhancing the local economy. Reduced travel times across western Riverside County and improved mobility will bring residents and businesses substantial savings in transportation costs and improve the climate for attracting new businesses to the region. Commercial and industrial property values along the route will see an upswing in value from improved transportation access.

The Mid County Parkway will also create an express route for regional trips and public transit between the population centers of San Jacinto/ Hemet, Perris/Corona Valley and Corona/Norco.

WHERE WILL THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY BE LOCATED?

The following roadway designs are being evaluated for various segments of the Mid County Parkway:

- Roadway with Center Divider
- Divided Roadway with Drainage Facility in Median
- Divided Roadway

PROJECT STUDY AREA

Presently no specific route has been selected for the Mid County Parkway. The study area, shown here, includes a large area located on either side of the existing roadway known as Capistrano Road between I-15 and I-215 and at Ramona Expressway east of I-215. The project must provide for connections to SR 79 in the east, I-215 in the center, and I-15 to the west.

HOW WILL THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY BE FUNDED?

The preliminary design and environmental studies for the Mid County Parkway will be funded through a Federal Streamlining Allocation and the western Riverside County Transportation Uniform Mitigation Fee or TUMF. The TUMF is paid as a part of the fees collected for development of land in Riverside County and is participated in by all I-14 cities in western Riverside County and the County of Riverside. These fees paid by new development offsets the cost of providing transportation improvements to accommodate new homes and residents.

Final Engineering Design, right-of-way acquisition and construction costs are anticipated to be funded by a combination of Measure A, Riverside County's ½¢ sales tax for transportation, TUMF fees, and state and federal dollars. KICTC is working closely with Caltrans and the Federal Highways Administration so that the proposed roadway will meet state and federal standards and be eligible for state and federal funding.
WHAT HAPPENED AT THE FIRST PUBLIC MEETINGS?

Meetings held in the San Jacinto, Perris, and Corona areas drew more than 150 people interested in the Mid County Parkway project. Residents were given the opportunity to discuss in smaller "break out" groups what they felt were potential benefits and impacts of the Mid County Parkway, as well as ask questions about the project.

Benefits identified by residents at all three meetings included:
- Traffic congestion relief
- A safer road with fewer accidents
- Traffic relief during peak periods
- Alternate east-west routes to relieve the SR-60 and SR-91 freeways
- Better connections with SR-79, I-15, and Highway 39
- "Cut through" traffic on city and neighborhood streets
- A better local economy

Congestion relief was the main issue identified in all communities. Residents were concerned that improvements on Cabalo without improvements to the SR-91 corridor might result in increasing traffic on the SR-91 bottleneck. Residents in all communities expressed concerns about air quality and a desire to see designs that minimized impacts to wildlife and habitat, property and homes, and that preserved the rural character of the area.

Some residents wanted limited access to avoid congestion and more development at intersections. On the other hand, they also wanted to ensure access is adequate. Additional conchision on the SR-15 and the SR-91 near the western terminus of the project was also a concern. Residents felt the planning and construction schedule was too long and that reducing the demand for new roadways was also supported.

Concerns identified by residents at all three meetings included:
- Timing of the project
- Impact on wildlife
- Impact on property values
- Impact on access to the corridor
- Impact on availability of housing

The Mid County Parkway technical team was asked to address these concerns and issues in the environmental studies for the project. Those who attend the scoping meetings will have an opportunity to make additional comments and requests related to the environmental study.

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY?

Attend a Public Scoping Meeting.
Meetings will be held at the following times and locations:
- 2/7/04 (Tuesday) — 6:30 pm
  - East County Library
  - 8955 Faria Avenue
  - Perris, CA 92570

- 2/12/04 (Thursday) — 6:30 pm
  - Lakeview Middle School
  - 7770 Walnut Avenue
  - Perris, CA 92570

- 2/14/04 (Saturday) — 6:30 pm
  - Yorba Linda Community Center
  - 21375 Yorba Linda Boulevard
  - Yorba Linda, CA 92886

Stay Informed: www.midcountyparkway.com

WHAT IS HAPPENING WITH THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY PROJECT?

The Mid County Parkway Project is a proposed 33-mile transportation corridor that will relieve traffic congestion for east-west travel in Western Riverside County between the San Jacinto and Corona areas and help meet future transportation needs through 2030.

Following three public meetings held in September to update residents on the project and get their input, the Riverside County Transportation Commission has moved forward with a formal notice of intent to begin the environmental review phase of the project, known as the Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR). During this phase, RCTC will gather input on the alternatives shown inside this newsletter. The specific issues to be studied in the EIS/EIR are outlined below. Continue to a meeting (see last lower left) or provide your comments in writing (see back page).

WHAT WILL BE STUDIED?

The next stage in the process is to hold public meetings to help define the scope and design of the EIS/EIR. The multi-year EIS/EIR will include studies of:

Air Quality
Regional and local air quality may be affected by the project. The air quality analysis will discuss both short-term impacts resulting from construction, as well as long-term impacts resulting from project operation.

Bibliographic Resources
Sensitivity of biological resources, such as plant life, wildlife, and their habitat may be impacted by the project. Potential impacts include direct loss of habitat from grading or other construction activities, indirect loss of animals and plants by project construction, loss or disruption of wildlife movement corridors, and habitat fragmentation. Several existing animal and plant species may be affected by the project's consistency with the recently approved Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan.

Community Impacts
A Community Impact Assessment will be prepared for the Mid County Parkway project that will address the potential community and socioeconomic impacts. The Community Impact Assessment will study impacts to existing land use, housing employment, and population conditions in the vicinity of the project alternatives.

Cultural Resources
The proposed alternatives have the potential to affect both prehistoric and historic cultural resources. Potential impacts include the direct loss of resources from grading or other construction activities, as well as indirect effects resulting from construction of the new transportation facility that may affect the historical context of a particular resource.

Floodplain Evaluation
The proposed project may affect floodplains, especially for the San Jacinto River and Temescal Wash. The existing floodplain setting will be documented in the EIS/EIR, along with an evaluation of potential floodplain impacts and encroachments.

Geology and Soils
The EIS/EIR will address the potential geologic impacts of the proposed project, with an emphasis on whether implementation of the alternatives will result in any increased impacts to persons or property, such as landslides, seismic hazards, or soil erosion.

Hazardous Waste
A hazardous waste site assessment will be prepared for the project. A records search of agency databases will be conducted to determine whether there are any known hazardous waste sites along the project alternatives. Field surveys will be conducted as necessary.

Noise
Existing noise levels in the vicinity of the project will be documented in the EIS/EIR. A noise study will be conducted to evaluate projected noise levels resulting from construction and operation of the project.
MID COUNTY PARKWAY
A project of the Riverside County Transportation Commission

WHAT ROUTES WILL BE STUDIED?

The Mid County Parkway project will complete environmental studies for seven alternative routes and a no project alternative. Of the seven alternative routes, two are county elements from the General Plan with alignments that have been developed through the study process to date. Many of the alignment alternatives share common segments but there are significant differences in the Lake Mathews and Perris areas. The yellow lines on the maps to the right show the proposed alternatives, and the blue hatched areas show areas near the alignment that are still under study to allow for adjustment of the final alignment as a result of the environmental studies.

Alternative 1: No Project/No Action

Alternative 1 represents 2030 traffic on the planned street network except for future improvements to Casajo Road and Ramona Expressway, which would remain as they exist today. The future east-west traffic described in the study area would be served by the existing Casajo Road and El Sobrante between I-15 and I-215, and by existing Ramona Expressway between I-215 and SR-78. This alternative assumes 2030 head-on conditions and implementation of planned improvements to the regional and local circulation system as accounted for in the Riverside-Center General Plan and other adopted plans and policies.

Alternative 2: North Lake Mathews/North Perris Alternative

Alignment Alternative 2 is a 6- to 10-mile limited access parkway alternative. Alternative 2 is located north of Lake Mathews and follows a northerly alignment through Perris. The alignment would be located along or near the existing El Sobrante Road for much of the area directly north of Lake Mathews and follows a new alignment west of Lake Mathews. It is located south of Ramona Expressway from I-215 to east of Evans Road. Alternative 2 would connect to system-to-system interchanges at I-15, at I-215, and at SR-79.

Alternative 3: North Lake Mathews/South Perris Alternative

Alignment Alternative 3 is a 6- to 10-mile limited access parkway alternative. Alternative 3 is located south of Ramona Expressway from I-215 to just west of Antelope Road. The alignment would be located along or near the existing El Sobrante Road for much of the area directly north of Lake Mathews and follows a new alignment west of Lake Mathews. Alternative 3 would connect to system-to-system interchanges at I-15, at I-215, and at SR-79.

Alternative 4: South Lake Mathews/North Perris Alternative

Alignment Alternative 4 is a 6- to 10-mile limited access parkway alternative. Alternative 4 is located south of Lake Mathews and follows a northerly alignment through Perris. The alignment would be located south of the existing Casajo Road west of Lake Mathews Drive and located north of Ramona Expressway from I-215 to east of Evans Road. Alternative 4 would connect to system-to-system interchanges at I-15, at I-215, and at SR-79.

Alternative 5: South Lake Mathews/South Perris Alternative

Alignment Alternative 5 is a 6- to 10-mile limited access parkway alternative. Alternative 5 is located south of Lake Mathews and follows a northerly alignment through Perris. The alignment would be located south of the existing Casajo Road west of Lake Mathews Drive and located north of Ramona Expressway from I-215 to just west of Antelope Road. Alternative 5 would connect to system-to-system interchanges at I-15, at I-215, and at SR-79.

Alternative 6: General Plan/North Perris Alternative

Alignment Alternative 6 involves the implementation of arterial improvements included in General Plan, including a 6-lane arterial north of Lake Mathews and a 4-lane arterial south of Lake Mathews, west of El Sobrante Road, and a new 6- to 10-lane limited access parkway facility east of El Sobrante Road. This alternative is the same as Alternative 2 and 4 described above east of I-215 and is located south of Ramona Expressway from I-215 to east of Evans Road. The proposed arterial improvement connects north and south of Lake Mathews and connects with the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element and generally follow the alignments shown in the General Plan.

Alternative 7: General Plan/South Perris Alternative

Alignment Alternative 7 involves the implementation of arterial improvements included in the Riverside County General Plan, including a 6-lane arterial north of Lake Mathews, a 4-lane arterial south of Lake Mathews, west of El Sobrante Road, and a new 6- to 10-lane limited access parkway facility east of El Sobrante Road. This alternative is the same as Alternative 2 and 5 described above east of I-215 and follows a northerly alignment through Perris. The proposed arterial improvements connect north and south of Lake Mathews and connect with the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element and generally follow the alignments shown in the General Plan.

Alternative 8: General Plan Circulation Element

Alternative 8 represents 2030 traffic on the planned street network according to the Circulation Element of the Riverside County General Plan. This alignment alternative is the same as Alternative 1 but includes implementation of Casajo Road and Ramona Expressway consistent with the Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element. The traffic demand modeling for the MCP would be utilized to determine the ability of the adopted General Plan improvements to Casajo Road and Ramona Expressway to meet the stated purpose and need of the MCP and to support the forecast travel demand for 2030.
WHAT IS STUDIED?

EIS/EIR studies will look at the following factors:
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Community Impacts
- Cultural Resources
- Floodplain Evaluation
- Geology and Soils
- Hazardous Waste
- Noise
- Public Services and Utilities
- Publicly owned parks, recreation areas, and wildlife areas
- Transportation/Traffic
- Visual Impacts
- Water Resources

WHAT IS THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY PROJECT?

The Mid County Parkway is a proposed 32-mile transportation corridor that will relieve traffic congestion for east-west traffic between the San Jacinto and Corona areas in western Riverside County. The corridor was identified as a part of the Riverside County Integrated Project, a regionwide environmental and transportation planning effort to ensure that Riverside County's mobility, environment, and quality of life are protected as our region continues to grow. County residents, at public meetings, helped to determine the corridor locations for future transportation projects including the Mid County Parkway. The agency studying the project is the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC), the agency responsible for regionwide transportation planning and the administration of Measure A, Riverside County's 1/2% sales tax for transportation.

WHAT HAS THE PUBLIC SAID ABOUT THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY?

Last year six public outreach meetings were held in all segments of the project area. More than 500 people have now attended meetings about the project. Benefits identified by the public include:
- Relieving traffic congestion
- A safer road with fewer accidents
- An east-west alternative to the SR-60 and SR-91 freeways
- Less cut through traffic on local streets and roads
- Better connections with SR-79 and I-215

Concerns expressed included:
- Effects on homes and businesses
- Impacts to wildlife habitats areas
- Increased traffic on I-15
- Impacts to air quality
- Access to the project from local areas
- The lengthy process to build the project

The Mid County Parkway technical team has been addressing these issues in the environmental studies for the project. As a result, additional alignments are being considered. As the study process continues, you can make additional comments by contacting RCTC (see Who Can I Contact on this page).

WHO CAN I CONTACT ABOUT MID COUNTY PARKWAY PROJECT?

We want to know what you think. If you have any comments or questions about the Mid County Parkway, call us at (951) 378-7141, email us through our website at www.midcountyparkway.org, or write us:

Cathy Bechet, Mid County Parkway Manager
Riverside County Transportation Commission
PO Box 13908 • Riverside, CA 92503-2908

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY?

A meeting on the new options will be held:
Wednesday—August 3, 2005—6:30 pm
Columbia Elementary School
21554 River Street
(Corner of Rider and Old Blythe Rd.)
Perris, CA 92570

Get Information and Updates—www.midcountyparkway.org

WHAT IS HAPPENING WITH THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY PROJECT?

Public meetings held in September and December 2004 helped determine both the Scope of the studies for the Mid County Parkway project as well as alternatives and issues that RCTC should consider during the studies.

The project is currently in the process of developing environmental reports called the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Review (DEIR/EIR). Both members of the public and public agencies concerned about the project have given their initial input regarding the potential routes under consideration.

Eight alternatives are currently being studied. They include a "No Project Alternative" to look at the consequences of not taking any action, improvements included in the Riverside County General Plan, and a series of routes that represent a menu of choices for the project.

Recently, some new options have been developed. They are being considered for addition to those already under study. They were developed for a variety of reasons including public concerns regarding possible impacts to homes and to habitat, reserve area, and engineering and environmental concerns expressed by public agencies. In addition, RCTC took the proposed alternatives to independent experts for a review called "Value Analysis." This is an important part of any roadway project that might be built with federal funds. These experts echoed the concerns of the public and the agencies and made some suggestions for other options.

The new options are called the Far South Option, located between Lake Mathews in the west and Evans Road in the east, and the Perris Storm Drain option, located just west of the Lake Perris Dam.
GIVE US YOUR INPUT ABOUT THE OPTIONS

WHY ARE WE CONSIDERING NEW OPTIONS?

Members of the public and public agencies gave us input regarding their concerns about impacts to homes, businesses, and habitat reserves. A "Value Analysis" team of independent experts examined the proposed alternatives for workability that could either stop the project from moving forward or that would add significant cost to the project if solutions were not found.

This input resulted in several new options for further consideration by the public, concerned public agencies, and study team members. From west to east, these are the new options under consideration:

New—1½ West Option:
This option would extend all of the routes west of the 1-15 Freeway to provide access to the freeway for the Corona community.

New—Far South Option:
All of the original eight alternatives affected the Lake Mathews habitat reserve. The "Value Analysis" team suggested that at least one option be developed to avoid this area to ensure the project could move forward in the event that crossing the reserve was not possible. This new option offers the possibility of avoiding the Lake Mathews habitat reserve and affecting fewer acres of Sawhill Kangaroo Run reserve. In addition, because it is so far south of Cajon Road, it has the advantage of fewer community impacts to the Max Valley area.
WHAT HAS BEEN HAPPENING WITH THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY?

ROUTE ALTERNATIVES
The Mid County Parkway has completed preliminary studies, held public meetings, and identified alternatives. During 2005 and 2006, ongoing environmental and engineering studies as well as public input have created several changes to the alternatives. Technical reviews led to a new route to the south of the original routes being added to the middle section of the project. Public input and engineering considerations led to the removal of a route North of Lake Mathews. Most recently, dam safety issues led to the removal of a route near the Lake Perris Dam.

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES
Since late 2004, RCTC consultants have been conducting field studies and analyzing the effects of the Mid County Parkway on the human and natural environment. During that time, the consultants have surveyed approximately 17,000 acres and 3,000 parcels that are in the area of the different Mid County Parkway alternatives. These surveys have identified the locations of sensitive wetland areas, populations of sensitive animal and plant species, and important archaeological sites. Project engineers have been using these environmental surveys to fine tune the alignment to best avoid and minimize impacts to people, homes, businesses and animals and plant species. In addition, RCTC has been working closely with Caltrans and FHWA on each of the alternatives to meet highway standards.

NEXT STEPS
These studies will be completed and the results included into a Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (DEIS/EIR). The draft document is expected to be finished in the fall of 2007. At that time there will be public hearings and the federal and state environmental and transportation agencies will give input on the report. These comments will then be reviewed and responses will be developed as part of the final Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (FES/EIR). The FES/EIR is expected to be completed at the end of 2008. After the FES/EIR, final permits can be obtained and final engineering design can begin on the selected alternative.

WHAT IS BEING STUDIED?

- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Community Impacts
- Cultural Resources
- Floodplain Evaluation
- Geology and Soils
- Hazardous Waste
- Noise
- Public Services and Utilities
- Publicly owned parks, recreation areas, and wildlife areas
- Transportation/traffic
- Visual Impacts
- Water Resources

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WHO CAN I CONTACT ABOUT THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY PROJECT?

If you have any questions or comments about the Mid County Parkway or want to be notified of future meetings, call us at (951) 769-3741, email us through our website at www.midcountyparkway.org or write us at:

Caltrans/Mid County Parkway Manager, Riverside County Transportation Commission, P.O. Box 11068 - Riverside, CA 92510-1068

Get Information and Updates
www.midcountyparkway.org

Q&A MID COUNTY PARKWAY

A project of the Riverside County Transportation Commission

WHAT IS THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY PROJECT?

The Mid County Parkway is a proposed 32-mile transportation corridor to relieve traffic congestion between the San Jacinto, Perris and Corona areas. It is being proposed by the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC), the agency responsible for transportation planning in the County. RCTC administers Measure A, Riverside County's gas tax for transportation.

The corridor was identified as a part of the Riverside County Integrated Project, a regionwide environmental and transportation planning effort to ensure mobility, protect the environment, and promote quality of life in our region continues to grow. Residents and businesses located along the Parkway can expect more efficient travel times and reduced congestion.

WHY IS THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY NEEDED?

By 2020, the County's population is projected to double to 3 million. Today east-west traffic within western Riverside County is carried on Interstate 10 and State Routes 60, 91 and 74. These corridors, which link western Riverside County to the Coachella Valley to the east and Los Angeles-Orange and San Bernardino counties to the west, are already experiencing significant gridlock. Another east-west route to relieve this congestion is essential in order to maintain and enhance quality of life in western Riverside County.
WHERE WILL THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY BE LOCATED?

The RTC is currently working on an environmental study called a Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (DEIR/EIR) for this project. The project begins with 8 proposed alternatives including the options in the Riverside County General Plan. Some of the public and public agencies concerned about the project, as well as the individual routes used by the routes, have given their initial input. As a result, some routes have been added and others have been dropped.

Presently, no specific route has been selected for the Mid County Parkway since we are still conducting the required analysis of the alternatives. The alignments shown in yellow and orange on the map continue to be studied to develop a possible route. The project must also provide for connections to SR 79 in the east, I-215 in the center, and I-15 to the west.

HOW DO THE ALTERNATIVES COMPARE?

The map on this page shows the routes under consideration. So far, the study has been able to compare several alternative factors like cost, engineering constraints, and environmental and social impacts. The matrix and the map compare these factors for the entire 13-mile route.
WHAT'S NEW...

The identification of a preferred alternative is not a final decision, since final approval must be obtained from our partner agencies. Early designation of RCTC's preferred alternative decision was made to secure approval of the Draft EIR/EIS. Once the Draft EIR/EIS is approved, RCTC will develop the final EIR/EIS, with public comments to be conducted with the involved federal and state agencies. Following public review, the final EIR/EIS will be completed later in 2008.

The future

Identification of a locally preferred alternative does not complete the approval process. There are still many phases of work to be completed before the Mid County Parkway can be constructed. There will be further opportunities for public review and input. The next step is the release of the Draft EIR/EIS in early 2008. At that point, public hearings will be held to obtain public comments on the document. A full review of the Draft EIR/EIS will be conducted by the involved federal and state agencies. Following public review, the final EIR/EIS will be completed later in 2008.

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WHO CAN I CONTACT ABOUT THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY PROJECT?

Carly Booth, Mid County Parkway Manager, Riverside County Transportation Commission, P.O. Box 1559, Riverside, CA 92502; (951) 373-7741, email: cbooth@rctc.org; website: www.rctc.org

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Mid County Parkway Project began in 2004 with public meetings, preliminary field studies to analyze the impact of a proposed project on the human environment, and the early identification of possible routes. Since 2004, ongoing environmental and engineering studies, and as public input, have refined the alternatives.

ALTERNATIVE REFINEMENTS

Technical reviews led to the addition of a new southern route between I-15 and I-215. Operational impacts and environmental engineering studies led to the removal of a route north of Lake Mathews. Safety issues led to the removal of a route near the Lake Perris Dam.

Ongoing environmental studies, surveys of more than 17,000 acres in 3,000 parcels in the area of the different alternatives, have identified the location of sensitive wetlands, populations of sensitive plants and animals, and important archaeological sites. Project engineers have used these studies to fine-tune alignments to meet avoid impacts to these resources as well as to people, homes, and businesses.

RCTC has been working with both Caltrans and the Federal Highway Administration to make sure each of the alternatives meets state and federal highway standards.

TODAY

The results of these studies have led to the identification of Alternative 9 (also called the Far South Alternative) as the preferred alternative by RCTC. RCTC’s decision was based on the technical studies showing that the Far South Alternative is superior to all of the others under consideration in virtually every category, including cost, social and community impacts, and impacts to the environment. Study findings on Alternative 9 and other Mid County Parkway alternatives will be included in a Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS), which will be circulated for public review in early 2008.

Why is the Mid County Parkway needed?

By 2030, Riverside County’s population will reach 2.5 million. Today’s east-west traffic, carried on I-10, SR-91, SR-73, and SR-74 are already experiencing significant congestion. Between now and 2035, the traffic on regional arterials that carry travelers in the area of the proposed Mid County Parkway will increase as much as two to five times. Another east-west transportation link to reduce congestion is essential to maintain and enhance the quality of life in western Riverside County.

Get Information and Updates

www.midcountyparkway.org or www.rctc.org

WHAT IS BEING STUDIED?

EI/EIS studies are evaluating the following factors:

- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Community Impacts
- Cultural Resources
- Floodplain Evaluation
- Geography and Soils
- Hazardous Waste
- Noise Impacts
- Paleontological Resources
- Public Services and Utilities
- Publicly owned parks, recreation areas, and wildlife areas (Section 4(f) Resources)
- Transportation Traffic
- Visual Impacts
- Water Resources

WHAT'S NEW WITH MID COUNTY PARKWAY?

The Mid County Parkway project is a proposed 33-mile transportation corridor designed to relieve current and regional traffic congestion in the Santa Ana, Perris, and Corona areas, as well as surrounding Riverside County communities. The corridor is intended to be constructed as a part of the Riverside County Integrated Project. An expanded public outreach and planning effort to ensure mobility and protect the environment and quality of life as our region continues to grow.

In addition to the Mid County Parkway Project, RCTC is also working on solutions to congestion on nearby roadways, including projects to improve mobility on SR-91, I-15, I-215, and SR-79.

WHY IS THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY NEEDED?

By 2030, Riverside County’s population will reach 2.5 million. Today’s east-west traffic, carried on I-10, SR-91, SR-73, and SR-74 are already experiencing significant congestion. Between now and 2035, the traffic on regional arterials that carry travelers in the area of the proposed Mid County Parkway will increase as much as two to five times. Another east-west transportation link to reduce congestion is essential to maintain and enhance the quality of life in western Riverside County.

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In addition to the Mid County Parkway Project, RCTC is also working on solutions to congestion on nearby roadways, including projects to improve mobility on SR-91, I-15, I-215, and SR-79.

WHAT'S NEW WITH MID COUNTY PARKWAY?

The Mid County Parkway Project began in 2004 with public meetings, preliminary field studies to analyze the impact of a proposed project on the human environment, and the early identification of possible routes. Since 2004, ongoing environmental and engineering studies, and as public input, have refined the alternatives.

ALTERNATIVE REFINEMENTS

Technical reviews led to the addition of a new southern route between I-15 and I-215. Operational impacts and environmental engineering studies led to the removal of a route north of Lake Mathews. Safety issues led to the removal of a route near the Lake Perris Dam.

Ongoing environmental studies, surveys of more than 17,000 acres in 3,000 parcels in the area of the different alternatives, have identified the location of sensitive wetlands, populations of sensitive plants and animals, and important archaeological sites. Project engineers have used these studies to fine-tune alignments to meet avoid impacts to these resources as well as to people, homes, and businesses.

RCTC has been working with both Caltrans and the Federal Highway Administration to make sure each of the alternatives meets state and federal highway standards.

TODAY

The results of these studies have led to the identification of Alternative 9 (also called the Far South Alternative) as the preferred alternative by RCTC. RCTC’s decision was based on the technical studies showing that the Far South Alternative is superior to all of the others under consideration in virtually every category, including cost, social and community impacts, and impacts to the environment. Study findings on Alternative 9 and other Mid County Parkway alternatives will be included in a Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS), which will be circulated for public review in early 2008.

Why is the Mid County Parkway needed?

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Get Information and Updates

www.midcountyparkway.org or www.rctc.org
The map on this page shows the alternatives under consideration. Alternatives 4, 5, 6, 7, and 9 are numbered. Alternatives 1 and 2 were eliminated due to potential safety and operational impacts to Lake Mathews and Lake Perris dams. Alternative 8 was combined with Alternative 1 to be renumbered as 1A, 1B (No Build Alternatives).

While many factors are being studied (see list on back page), these factors shown on this matrix are those that reveal substantive differences between the alternatives. The cells highlighted in green indicate the alternative with the least impact. This matrix shows Alternative 9 is superior in virtually every category.
PUBLIC INVITED TO REVIEW ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

The studies for the Mid County Parkway are now ready for review. The Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (Draft EIR/EIS) describes the project. It describes alternatives for the project, the existing environment that could be affected by the project, the impacts from each of the alternatives, and the proposed avoidance, minimization and/or mitigation measures for these impacts. The studies are available on-line at www.midcountyparkway.org. It is also available at a number of public libraries and government offices (see page 8).

PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETINGS:

Three Open House style public meetings will be held this month to discuss your questions. The consultants and staff who prepared the studies and the Draft EIR/EIS will be available to discuss your questions, one-on-one, about the project and the document.

Drop in anytime between 6:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. There will be no formal presentation.

Tuesday, October 28, 2008 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Eagle Glen Golf Course
1800 Eagle Glen Parkway
Corona, CA 92883

Wednesday, October 29, 2008 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Perris Senior Center
100 North D Street
Perris, CA 92570

Thursday, October 30, 2008 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Valley-Wide Recreation & Park District
Center Meeting Room
901 West Escondido Ave.
San Jacinto, CA 92583

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

Two Public Hearings on the Draft EIR/EIS are scheduled for November 6th and 12th before the RCTC Commissioners. The public is invited to make oral comments at these meetings. Written comments on the Draft EIR/EIS will be accepted through December 8, 2008, RCTC Commissioners will not be taking action on the project at these hearings. The comments received at these hearings will become part of the public record and will be addressed in the Final EIR/EIS.

Thursday, November 6, 2008 6:00 p.m.
City of Perris
City Council Chambers
101 North D Street
Perris, CA 92570

Wednesday, November 12, 2008 9:30 a.m.
Riverside County Administrative Center — Board Room
4000 Lemon Street, 7th floor
Riverside, CA 92501

WHAT IS THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY PROJECT?

The Mid County Parkway Project is a proposed 32-mile transportation corridor designed to relieve local and regional traffic congestion in the San Jacinto, Perris, and Corona areas, and surrounding Riverside County communities. The corridor was identified as part of the Riverside County Integrated Project (RCIP) (see page 2), a regionwide planning effort to ensure mobility and protect the environment and quality of life as our area continues to grow.

WHY IS THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY NEEDED?

By 2030, Riverside County’s population is expected to reach 3.5 million. All of the major transportation routes in the region are already experiencing significant congestion. While projects for each major roadway are being designed now to ease congestion and ensure future mobility, traffic in the area of the proposed Mid County Parkway is projected to double in some segments and increase as much as five times in others.

Today, east-west traffic in our region is carried on I-10, SR-60, SR-91, and SR-74. These major roadways provide links to the major north-south corridors: SR-79, I-15, and I-15.

Another east-west transportation link such as the Mid County Parkway is essential to reduce congestion and maintain and enhance the quality of life in western Riverside County. The Mid County Parkway will provide logical connections with north-south corridors including the SR-79, the I-15, and the I-15. It will also serve multimodal bus and rail facilities planned as part of the Perris Valley Line, Metrolink service that will connect Perris to Riverside.

Without the Mid County Parkway, travel times from SR-79 to I-15 will be more than an hour and a half (90 minutes) in 2035. With the Mid County Parkway, these travel times will be reduced to about 30 minutes.
The Mid County Parkway project formally began in January 2001 when the need and purpose for the project were accepted by the Federal Highway Administration, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The need for the Mid County Parkway project was identified almost five years earlier, when RRTC and the County of Riverside launched the Riverside County Integrated Project (RCIP) to evaluate future transportation needs, land use, and environmental protection measures to protect the region's quality of life and environment.

In 2000, RRTC identified four broad transportation corridors to meet future demands, including a corridor connecting the Hemet-San Jacinto area with the Lake Elsinore-Correia area. In 2000, in acknowledgment of the County’s innovative planning effort to integrate land use, environmental conservation and transportation needs, the Community Transportation Environmental Transport Acceptability Process (CETAP) was one of seven projects that received federal recognition for environmental streamlining under an Executive Order from the White House.

In June 2003, RRTC started project level studies for the Mid County Parkway. All studies and documents were completed in cooperation with participating local, state, and federal agencies under a partnership agreement for environmental stewardship.

Since January 2004, public meetings have been held at each phase of the project: to present preliminary project alternative alignments; to gather more public input on the preliminary alignment alternatives; and to get input on refinements to the alternatives. These seven outreach meetings formed the basis for the alternatives that have been studied over the past three years.

From September 2004 through April 2005, Caltrans conducted “value analysis” studies on the project. Metropolitan Department of Water Resources also conducted a study of the project. The Value Analysis process included representatives from other transportation projects with the objective to offer engineering and operational improvements. These studies led to the addition of an alternative south of those previously considered, the removal of the alternative north of Lake Mathews and relocation of the alternative near Lake Perris. These changes were presented to the public in a newsletter and at a public meeting in August 2005. The participating agencies agreed that this set of refined alternatives would undergo study in the Draft EIR/ES. From 2005 to date, all aspects of the Mid County Parkway alternatives have been subject to careful scrutiny. An important part of the studies were social and economic impacts including effects on communities, in particular the displacement of homes and businesses. Additional studies evaluated impacts on water resources, habitat reserves, parks, cultural resources, and land use. Noise, air quality, geology and other environmental factors were also evaluated for each alternative. During the course of the work, cost was also evaluated as well as engineering considerations.

The Riverside County Board of Supervisors approved the draft study on September 24, 2007, and the final study on September 30, 2007. On December 3, 2007, the Riverside County Board of Supervisors approved the Final EIR/ES for the Mid County Parkway project.

Public Information Open Houses and Public Hearings are scheduled in October and November 2008 to collect comments on the Draft EIR/ES. There will be no forum for oral comments prior to the public hearing. Written comments will be accepted. These Open Houses will be an opportunity to take one-on-one time with staff, review the document, and learn more about the project.

The Public Hearings will provide those who wish to speak an opportunity to comment before the RRTC Commissioners. Comment cards for written comments will be available at all meetings and members of the public may also comment by letter or email.

After comments on the Draft EIR/ES are received from the public and agencies, RRTC will prepare a Final EIR/ES. The Final EIR/ES will include responses to comments received on the Draft EIR/ES. The approval of the Final EIR/ES follows different processes under CEQA and NEPA. Under CEQA, after the Final EIR is complete, the RRTC Commissioners will process two separate actions: 1) to certify the Final EIR, and 2) to approve the project. This will likely occur in 2009. Following RRTC action, FHWA will then make the Final EIR available for a 30 days public review period, following the 30-day public review period, FHWA will prepare and may approve a Record of Decision, which is the final step in the NEPA process.
**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY:**

- **What happens after a Final EIR/EIS is approved?**
  If the Mid County Parkway is approved, three major tasks will need to be completed: project final engineering, buyout properties where the road will be built, and contractor selection.
  The final engineering phase will produce construction level plans that can be used to build the Mid County Parkway. The engineering phase will also more clearly identify the right-of-way required for the project.

- **Where is the proposed route for the Mid County Parkway?**
  A final route for the project has not yet been approved, but in September 2007, the Riverside County Transportation Commission selected Alternative 9 (TWG CV) as its preferred route for the parkway among five "build" alternatives within a large study area. A map of the routes is shown on pages 4 and 5.
  Studies show Alternative 9 (TWG CV) is least environmentally damaging compared to the other build alternatives in virtually every key criteria category, including cost, impacts to the environment and impacts to the community.
  Although a final route will not be selected until after certification of the Final EIR/EIS and project approval by the commission, the road will begin with the sections wrapping around Corona, Perris and San Jacinto.

- **Did RCTC’s identification of a Locally Preferred Alternative mark the final approval of the project?**
  No. The final alternative will be approved after review and comment by the public, resource agencies and local government. RCTC will consider taking action on a final alternative for the project next year.

- **What is the purpose of the Draft EIR/EIS?**
  The Draft EIR/EIS examines the Mid County Parkway’s environmental impacts including air quality; biological resources such as plant life, wildlife and their habitats; community impacts such as existing land uses, housing, employment and population conditions; cultural resources; floodplains; geology and soils; hazardous waste sites; noise; public services and utilities; parks, recreation areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges; local traffic conditions; the visual character of the project area; and water resources.

- **Where can I review Draft EIR/EIS?**
  You can review the Draft EIR/EIS at the offices of participating government agencies, numerous public libraries, at public meetings, and on the Internet at www.rctc.org. For complete list of options, see page 8.

- **How can I submit my comments or questions about the Final EIR/EIS?**
  The public comment period runs from October 10 – December 8, 2008. Written comments may be submitted during this period. In addition, the public is encouraged to attend one of the three Open House public information meetings on the project scheduled for the last week of October (see page 1). Staff will be available to discuss your questions on the project and accept written comments.
  Members of the public are also invited to make comments on the document in writing or orally at a Public Hearing. Each type of comment is treated equally in the evaluation process.

- **Why don’t you just widen existing facilities (Cajalco Road and Ramona Expressway)? Why build a new road?**
  In order to accommodate projected traffic in the area, the County’s planned improvements to widen existing Cajalco Road and Ramona Expressway, as well as new lanes with limited access like the Mid County Parkway are needed.
  The project analysis revealed that there are actually greater impacts to homes and businesses in environmental reserves associated with the Mid County Parkway Alternative located along the Cajalco and Ramona roadways due to required right of way realignment and frontage roads for local access.

- **When will construction of the Mid County Parkway begin and where?**
  Depending on the timing of RCTC Commission action, construction of the Mid County Parkway could begin in 2013. Decisions have not yet been made on whether construction would start on the east end, the west end, or the middle of the project.

- **How will the project be funded?**
  The initial phase of the project has been funded mainly by Western Riverside County’s Transportation Uniform Mitigation Fees (TUMF). The project design, right-of-way acquisition and construction costs are anticipated to be funded by a combination of local Measure “A” ½ cent sales tax, local TUMF fees, state and federal funds.

- **Isn’t the Mid County Parkway a truck route?**
  No. Although RCTC cannot designate who can use the Mid County Parkway, the overall purpose of the route is to provide a transportation parkway that will effectively and efficiently accommodate regional east-west mobility between and through Corona, Perris and San Jacinto. The Mid County Parkway will provide increased capacity and relieve regional traffic congestion. In areas with steep grades, an additional lane is planned for trucks or other slow moving vehicles.

- **What is a parkway?**
  A divided highway with full or partial access control and with grade separations or local interchanges with major local arterials. The “facility” is designed to freeway/expressway standards as defined in Caltrans Highway Design Manual (HDM).

- **What will the Mid County Parkway look like?**
  The photo below shows an example of what the parkway might look like. The number of lanes varies from two in each direction to four in each direction, depending upon the area, and includes a wide, open median.

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**Mid County Parkway**

[Image of Mid County Parkway]

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[Image of Mid County Parkway]
WHO ARE THE PARTICIPATING AGENCIES EVALUATING THE PROJECT AND WHAT ARE THEIR ROLES?

A project like the Mid-County Parkway must be evaluated by transportation agencies at all levels of government: local, state, and federal.

At the local level, RTC is the lead agency. RTC is Riverside County’s primary transportation planning agency and administers the voter-approved Measure A 1/2 cent sales tax for transportation, regional projects funded by the Transportation Uniform Mitigation Fee (TUMF), and state and federal transportation allocations to the region. Projects include roadways, major transportation corridors, transit, commuter assistance, and commuter rail.

The State of California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) are the state and federal transportation agencies, respectively.

Each agency has different responsibilities in preparing the Draft EIR/EIS. FHWA is the lead agency under the National Environmental Policy Act; RTC is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act; and Caltrans is providing oversight for the National Environmental Policy Act process. All agencies have responsibilities in the development of the studies and reports that contributed to the Draft EIR/EIS. In addition, through the agency partnership agreement for the project, Federal and State resource agencies have been involved in the development of the alternatives and review of the environmental studies. This cooperative effort meets the spirit of the Environmental Streamlining Executive Order.

WHERE CAN I REVIEW THE DRAFT EIR/EIS?

RTC
4080 Lemon Street, 3rd Floor
Riverside, CA 92501

Caltrans District 8
464 West 6th Street, 6th Floor
San Bernardino, CA 92401

Federal Highway Administration
650 Capitol Mall, Suite 4-100
Sacramento, CA 95814-4708

City of Corona
Public Works Department
400 E.Vicentia Ave., 2nd Floor, Suite 210
Corona, CA 92882-2187

Corona Public Library
650 S. Main St.
Corona, CA 92882

Hemet Public Library
300 E. Latham Ave.
Hemet, CA 92543

Perris Public Library
163 E. San Jacinto Ave.
Perris, CA 92570

San Jacinto
Public Library
500 Idyllwild Dr.
San Jacinto, CA 92583

Woodcrest Public Library
17024 Van Buren Blvd.
Riverside, CA 92504

The Draft EIR/EIS is also available for review on the Internet at:
www.midcountyparkway.org

To better accommodate the public, a copy of the Draft EIR/EIS is available for purchase at:

OCB Reprographics
4355 Main Street
Riverside, CA 92501
(951) 686-0530

For individuals with sensory disabilities, please contact us to discuss availability of the Draft EIR/EIS in alternate formats. Please call or write to:

Ms. Cathy Bedsole,
RTC
P.O. Box 12008
Riverside, CA 92502-2208
(951) 787-7141

or use the California Relay Service
1 (800) 735-2929 (TTD/TTY),
1 (800) 735-2922 (voice).
RCTC MODIFIES THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY PLANS

In response to comments received from the public on the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statements for the proposed Mid County Parkway (MCP), the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) took action on July 8, 2009 to focus the project limits to the portion between I-215 and SR-79. This newsletter provides more information on this action as well as next steps for the project.

WHY IS THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY PROJECT CHANGING?

In October 2008, a Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (Draft EIR/EIS) was released evaluating the alternatives for the Mid County Parkway, a proposed 32-mile corridor designed to stretch from San Jacinto through Perris to Corona to meet regional transportation needs through 2035. The Draft EIR/EIS compiled environmental studies analyzing the effects of the alternatives on the human and natural environment. Public information open houses and public hearings were held in October and November 2008 to collect comments on the Draft EIR/EIS.

Public and stakeholder input is a critical part of the environmental process. Comments submitted on the Draft EIR/EIS raised environmental and community concerns regarding the portion of the project between I-15 and I-215 and funding concerns about the entire project. These comments have helped us focus the project so we can make the best use of limited transportation dollars while addressing the most immediate traffic needs. The Mid County Parkway project is now a proposed 16-mile transportation corridor to relieve local and regional traffic congestion in the San Jacinto and Perris areas and surrounding Riverside County communities.

Focusing on the eastern stretch of the Mid County Parkway between I-215 and SR-79 will allow RCTC to make the best use of limited transportation dollars while providing immediate traffic and safety benefits where they are needed most. Modifying this project will allow RCTC to move more quickly to provide improvements where the need is greatest and avoid time-consuming delays tied to environmental constraints and community challenges affecting the portion of the original project proposed between I-15 and I-215.

The modified project does not eliminate the need for a future route that will one day connect I-15 to I-215, as identified as a part of the Community Environmental Transportation Acceptability Process (CETAP). RCTC is maintaining that long term vision but RCTC is focusing its near term project approval efforts on the vitally needed eastern 16 miles between I-215 and SR-79.
WHAT COMMENTS WERE RECEIVED?
Between October 10, 2008 and January 8, 2009, comments on the Draft EIR/ES were received from the public and the environmental and transportation public agencies reviewing the project. During this time, six public meetings/hearings were held: three public information meetings in late October 2008, and a first Supervisors District public meeting in December 2008. The public accepted public comment for the record at all of these meetings, along with comments sent electronically. Over 3,100 comments were received from individuals, public agencies and organizations. Key issues raised in response to the Mid County Parkway Draft EIR/ES included concerns regarding the financial viability of the project, impacts to rural communities, habitats, and consistency with the Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan, and the adequacy of measures to mitigate potential impacts.

WHAT HAPPENS ON THE WEST SIDE?
In the short term, the County of Riverside is proceeding with its plan to improve Cajalco Road. The Riverside County General Plan Circulation Element designates Cajalco Road from I-15 to I-215 as a four to six-lane major roadway.

The Mid County Parkway alternatives linking I-15 to I-215, as identified in the Draft EIR/ES released in October 2008, are no longer under consideration. Although the need for a future regional transportation corridor between I-15 and I-215 still exists, there is currently no consensus regarding the best possible route for a regional corridor in this area, nor is there immediate funding for the full parkway project. The County of Riverside plans to explore the feasibility of a future parkway project between I-15 and I-215, as identified in CETAP. When regional mobility needs prompt consideration of a new or improved link between I-15 and I-215, a new environmental process will need to be initiated.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
Will the proposed widening of Cajalco Road be sufficient to accommodate traffic through the I-15/I-215 in the future?
The County of Riverside’s planned improvements to widen Cajalco Road to four to six lanes between I-15 and I-215 should accommodate traffic demands for the next 20 years.

How will this modification to the Mid County Parkway affect the project timeline?
The timeline will be extended by approximately two years to provide time to supplement or revise the engineering and environmental technical studies for the modified Mid County Parkway. The County of Riverside plans to conduct environmental studies with agencies, reassess impacts, and release a Revised Draft EIR/Supplemental Draft EIS for public review and comment.

Will there be more public meetings and opportunity for public comment on the project?
Future public meetings and hearings will also be held once the revised draft environmental reports are completed next year, and we will be asking the public and stakeholders for their feedback on the project at that time.

Does the Mid County Parkway still have value as a transportation corridor without the section between I-15 and I-215?
Yes, focusing on the eastern stretch of the Mid County Parkway between SR-79 and I-215 will allow the project to advance where it is needed first, making the best use of limited transportation dollars while providing the most immediate traffic and safety benefits.
WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

RCTC and its partners, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Caltrans, will revise existing studies and prepare supplemental studies to address the changes to the Mid County Parkway project. A Recirculated Draft EIR/Supplemental Draft EIS will be prepared to describe the modifications to the project, summarize potential impacts and describe measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects.

The Recirculated Draft EIR/Supplemental Draft EIS will be released for a 45-day public review period. FHWA, Caltrans, and RCTC will hold additional public hearings during this review period and the public and reviewing agencies will be able to submit verbal and/or written comments in response to the modified project. Additional details on how to submit comments will be announced closer to release of the modified documents.

RCTC and its partners will review and consider all of the comments received from the public and reviewing agencies before any action on a final project is taken.

WHAT IS THE SCHEDULE FOR THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY PROJECT?

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<td>Final EIR/EIS</td>
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If you have comments or questions about the Mid County Parkway, call us at 951-787-7141, email us at our website at www.midcountyparkway.org or write to: Ms. Cathy Bechtel, RCTC, P.O. Box 12008, Riverside, CA 92502-2208.
WHAT IS THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY PROJECT?

The Mid County Parkway project is a proposed 16-mile transportation corridor designed to relieve local and regional traffic congestion between the cities of San Jacinto and Perris and surrounding Riverside County communities. The corridor was identified as part of the Riverside County Integrated Project (RCIP), a regionwide planning effort to ensure mobility and protect the environment and quality of life as our area continues to grow.

WHY IS THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY NEEDED?

In western Riverside County, another east-west transportation link such as the Mid County Parkway is essential to reduce congestion and maintain and enhance the quality of life. The Mid County Parkway will provide logical connections with north-south corridors including the SR-79 and the I-215. It will also provide more convenient access to multimodal bus and rail facilities in the city of Perris, including the new Perris Valley Line, Metrolink service that will connect Perris to Riverside.

Without the Mid County Parkway, travel times from SR-79 to I-215 are expected to be more than 44 minutes in 2040. With the Mid County Parkway, those travel times will be 15 minutes.

WHAT’S NEXT FOR THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY PROJECT?

The studies for the Mid County Parkway are now complete. The Recirculated Draft Environmental Impact Report/Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Recirculated Draft EIR/ Supplemental Draft EIS) describes alternatives for the project, the impacts from each of the alternatives, and the proposed avoidance, minimization and/or mitigation measures for these impacts. During the public circulation of the environmental document, the studies are available on-line at www.midcountyparkway.org and at a number of public libraries and government offices (see page 4).

PUBLIC HEARING:

An open house style public hearing on the Recirculated Draft EIR/ Supplemental Draft EIS is scheduled for February 20, 2013. There will be no formal presentation at this meeting, however, the public is invited to make oral comments to a court reporter. Written comments will be accepted at the meeting and throughout the public comment period ending on March 11, 2013.

February 20, 2013, 5:00 - 8:00 p.m.
Lakeside Middle School
27720 Walnut Street, Perris, CA 92571

After comments are received from the public and the participating agencies, FHWA, Caltrans, and RCTC will prepare a Final EIR/EIS. The Final EIR/EIS will include responses to the comments received on the Recirculated Draft EIR/Supplemental Draft EIS.
The alternatives for building the project all propose a divided highway with on and off ramps and three lanes in each direction. There are also freeway-to-freeway type interchanges at I-215 and at SR-79. The I-215 will also be improved in the area to avoid congestion as a result of the new connection.

All of the alternatives share a common alignment from Evans Road to SR-79, identified in green on the map above. In areas where the alignment is located on the Ramona Expressway, the Ramona Expressway is replaced by the Mid County Parkway. All of the alternatives also include two design variations: the San Jacinto River Bridge Design Variation and San Jacinto North Design Variation.

Under the San Jacinto Bridge Design Variation, a different bridge configuration is considered at the San Jacinto River in the Lakeview-Nuevo area. Under the San Jacinto North Design Variation, the route diverges from the proposed alignment near Warren Road and proceeds east approximately 1,000 feet north of the existing Ramona Expressway.

The differences in the alternatives are shown on the map in orange above and are described further below:

- **Alternative 4 Modified: North Perris (Drain)** is approximately 16.3 miles long and follows a northern alignment through the city of Perris adjacent to the Perris Drain with an approximately 1.8-mile bridge along the Perris Valley Storm Drain.

- **Alternative 5 Modified: South Perris (Rider Street)** is approximately 15.2 miles long and follows a central alignment through the city of Perris along Rider Street.

- **Alternative 9 Modified: Placentia Avenue** is approximately 14.3 miles long and follows a southerly alignment through the city of Perris along near Placentia Avenue and includes a depressed section approximately 1 mile long between Barrett Avenue and Wilson Avenue.

**MODIFICATIONS TO THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY PROJECT**

In October 2008, a Draft EIR/EIS was released evaluating the alternatives for the Mid County Parkway, originally proposed as a 32-mile corridor stretching from San Jacinto through Perris to Corona. Public information open houses and public hearings were held in October and November 2008 to collect comments on the Draft EIR/EIS. Public comments submitted on the Draft EIR/EIS raised environmental and community concerns regarding the portion of the project between I-15 and I-215.

These comments helped focus the project to make the best use of limited transportation dollars while addressing the most immediate traffic needs. In response to the comments, RCTC took action on July 8, 2009 to reduce the length of the project and focus improvements between I-215 and SR-79. The Mid County Parkway project is now a proposed 16-mile transportation corridor intended to relieve local and regional traffic congestion in the San Jacinto and Perris areas and surrounding Riverside County communities.
WHAT IS THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROCESS?

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) require agencies to prepare environmental assessments of proposed projects with significant environmental effects and to circulate these documents to other agencies and the public before making decisions. The steps for each process are shown in the charts below.

**CEQA—ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT**
- Notice of Preparation
- Scoping
- Draft EIR
- Public and Agency Review
- State Clearinghouse Review
- Final EIR
- Review of Responses by Commenting Agencies
- Agency Decision
- Findings; Statement of Overriding Consideration; Mitigation Monitoring Program

**NEPA—ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**
- Notice of Preparation
- Scoping
- Draft EIS
- Public and Agency Review
- EPA Filing; Federal Register
- Final EIS
- Public and Agency Review; EPA Filing; Federal Register Notice
- Agency Decision
- Record of Decision

DEFINITION OF A PARKWAY:
A parkway is a divided highway with on and off ramps. The “facility” is designed to freeway/expressway standards as defined in Caltrans Highway Design Manual (HDM).

The photo at right shows an example of what the parkway may look like. The number of lanes for the Mid County Parkway would be three in each direction, and includes a wide open median.

WHAT IS THE HISTORY OF THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY PROJECT?

[Diagram showing timelines and events related to the project, including meetings and milestones for public outreach and project updates.]
WHERE IS THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT AVAILABLE?

The Recirculated Draft EIR/Supplemental Draft EIS is available at the locations below and also on the internet at: www.midcountyparkway.org.

**RTC**
4080 Lemon Street, 3rd Floor
Riverside, CA 92501

**Caltrans District 8**
464 West 4th Street
San Bernardino, CA 92401

**Federal Highway Administration**
650 Capitol Mall, Suite 4-100
Sacramento, CA 95814-4708

**Moreno Valley Public Library**
25480 Alessandro Boulevard
Moreno Valley, CA 92553

**Perris Public Library**
163 E. San Jacinto Avenue
Perris, CA 92570

**San Jacinto Public Library**
500 Idyllwild Drive
San Jacinto, CA 92583

For individuals with sensory disabilities, please contact us to discuss availability of the Recirculated Draft EIR/Supplemental Draft EIS in alternate formats. Please call or write to:
Ms. Cathy Bechtel,
RTC
PO. Box 12008
Riverside, CA 92502-2208
(951) 787-7141

WHO CAN I CONTACT ABOUT THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY PROJECT?

If you have comments or questions about the Mid County Parkway, email us at our website at www.midcountyparkway.org or call Cathy Bechtel, Project Development Director for RCTC at 951-787-7141.

HOW AND WHEN WILL RCTC ACQUIRE THE PROPERTY NEEDED TO BUILD THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY?

Right of way will be acquired close to the time of construction. RCTC must follow public laws and processes to purchase the property needed for the Mid County Parkway. Appraisals will be done near the time of needed acquisition and fair market value for the land will be offered. RCTC will work with the property owner to reach a fair price.

WHO ARE THE AGENCIES EVALUATING THE PROJECT AND WHAT ARE THEIR ROLES?

At the local level, RCTC is the lead transportation agency. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the State of California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) are the federal and state transportation agencies.

Each agency has different responsibilities. RCTC is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). FHWA is the lead agency under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), in cooperation with Caltrans.

In addition, through the agency partnership agreement for the project, Federal and State resource agencies have been involved in the development of the alternatives and review of the environmental studies. This cooperative effort meets the spirit of the Environmental Streamlining Executive Order that came about as a result of the Riverside County Integrated Project (RCIP), a regionwide planning effort to ensure mobility and protect the environment.