

**CHAPTER 2 COMMENTS AND RESPONSES TO COMMENTS ON THE DEA/EIR FROM
ELECTED OFFICIALS**

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Alameda County Board of Supervisors-Keith Carson, President



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

KEITH CARSON
SUPERVISOR, FIFTH DISTRICT

July 31, 2006

Gregory C. McConnell, Senior Environmental Planner
Attention: Sheryl Dorado, Associate Environmental Planner
Dept. of Transportation, District 4, Environmental Analysis
Mail Station 8B
P.O. Box 23660
Oakland, CA 94623-0660
(510) 286-6216

Re: Comments, Draft Environmental Impact Report, Caldecott Improvement Project on State Route 24

Dear Mr. McConnell:

I am writing to offer comments to the Draft Environmental Impact Report on the Caldecott 4th Bore Project.

The project will have serious and significant impacts on residents in the Rockridge, Temescal, and Claremont-Elmwood areas in Oakland and Berkeley. I ask that CalTrans seriously consider the mitigations and expanded scope of study requested by the city of Oakland, nearby residents and bicycle access advocates. 1

More specifically, the EIR should address and mitigate upfront significant traffic impacts not just to Broadway, but should thoroughly examine impacts in Berkeley and Oakland neighborhoods nearby Highway 24 through the I-880 Interchange. I expect that the EIR will also respond to nearby residents' concerns about noise and will find ways to reduce noise through slowing of traffic, change of pavement material, and more reasonable construction hours. 2 3 4

This project should also include improved access for bicyclists and pedestrians along the corridor, since the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's adopted *Regional Policy for the Accommodation of Non-Motorized Travelers* would require sufficient access. 5

Sincerely,

Keith Carson
President, Alameda County Board of Supervisors

1- The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Caltrans as lead agency under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), respectively, have determined that there will be no significant impacts as a result of the Caldecott Improvement Project. Regarding the scope of the project please refer to the essays on “Project Limits” and “Scope of the Project” in Chapter 1.

2- Please see responses #1 and #2 in the essay on “Traffic Operations” in Chapter 1.

3- Setting of speed limits is a joint decision of the local entities within the State Route 24 corridor and the California Highway Patrol. The Caltrans does not have the authority to unilaterally set limits and cannot commit to it within this environmental document. The decision to repave the roadway with a quieter pavement will be based on the roadway surface’s need for rehabilitation, in conformance with the Caltrans' pavement rehabilitation strategy. Should the Caltrans determine that repaving is required for maintenance purposes, open-graded asphalt pavement will be considered. Regarding construction noise, please see the essay on “Construction Impacts” in Chapter 1.

4- The nature of tunnel construction necessitates around the clock construction activity to control cost and schedule. When constructing a tunnel, construction work can proceed only in limited areas. For example, tunnel excavation can only occur at one location for each portal. Because of this limitation, the cost and schedule of a tunnel project will increase dramatically if the hours of construction are limited. In addition when the advance of a tunnel is delayed, additional support measures are required to assure that the face of the tunnel remains stable. Under the current plan, which involves tunnel construction 5 days per week, 24 hours per day, these additional support measures will only be required over the weekend. However, if tunnel construction were limited to one shift per day, these additional support measures would have to be installed every day, which would have significant cost implications.

5- Please see the essay on “Bicycle and Pedestrian Access/Improvements” in Chapter 1.

Assembly California Legislature-Assemblyman Joseph E. Canciamilla

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July 6, 2006

Gregory C. McConnell, Senior Environmental Planner
Attention: Sheryl Dorado, Associate Environmental Planner
Dept. of Transportation, District 4, Environmental Analysis, Mail Station 8B
P.O. Box 23660, Oakland, CA 94623-0660.

Dear Mr. McConnell:

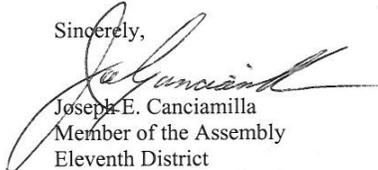
I would like to offer my support for the Caldecott Tunnel Improvement Project and the Draft EA/EIR prepared by Caltrans.

The Draft EA/EIR offers a complete and comprehensive analysis of the project and its potential impacts on the surrounding community. Furthermore, Caltrans has identified an appropriate list of project mitigations that I believe are very adequate to alleviate (mitigate) the impacts of the project on community.

The Caldecott Tunnel is an important conduit for the movement of both people and commerce traveling locally and regionally. In its current configuration, traffic backs up in the reverse-commute direction served by only one tunnel. This congestion spills over into the local neighborhood, pollutes the air and frustrates commuters. The 4th Bore will solve these problems.

Voters in the Bay Area, including Alameda County, passed Regional Measure 2 in 2004, which dedicated funds to build the 4th Bore. Voters in Contra Costa passed Measure J in 2004, which also dedicated funds to build the 4th Bore. It's time to build the 4th Bore and get our traffic moving again. I am urging Caltrans to expedite the Draft EA/EIR process so that design and construction of the 4th Bore can finally begin.

Sincerely,



Joseph E. Canciamilla
Member of the Assembly
Eleventh District

E-mail: assemblymember.canciamilla@assembly.ca.gov


Printed on Recycled Paper

Website: <http://democrats.assembly.ca.gov/members/a11/>

Thank you for your comments.

Assembly California Legislature-Assemblyman Guy S. Houston

July 12, 2006

Gregory C. McConnell, Senior Environmental Planner
Attention: Sheryl Dorado, Associate Environmental Planner
Dept. of Transportation, District 4, Environmental Analysis, Mail Station 8B
P.O. Box 23660, Oakland, CA 94623-0660

Dear Mr. McConnell,

I would like to offer my support for the Caldecott Tunnel Improvement Project and the comprehensive Draft EA/EIR prepared by Caltrans.

The Caldecott Tunnel is an important conduit for the movement of both people and commerce traveling locally and regionally. In its current configuration, traffic backs up in the reverse-commute direction served by only one tunnel. This congestion spills over into the local neighborhood, pollutes the air and frustrates commuters. The 4th Bore will solve these problems.

Voters in the Bay Area, including Alameda County, passed Regional Measure 2 in 2004, which dedicated funds to build the 4th Bore. Voters in Contra Costa passed Measure J in 2004, which also dedicated funds to build the 4th Bore. It's time to build the 4th Bore and get our traffic moving again. I am urging Caltrans to expedite the Draft EA/EIR process so that design and construction of the 4th Bore can finally begin.

Sincerely,

Guy S. Houston
Assemblyman, 15th District

Thank you for your comments.

California State Senate-Senator Tom Torlakson

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California State Senate

SENATOR
TOM TORLAKSON
SEVENTH SENATE DISTRICT



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SENATOR.TORLAKSON@SEN.CA.GOV
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June 20, 2006

Gregory C. McConnell, Senior Environmental Planner
Attention: Sheryl Dorado, Associate Environmental Planner
California Department of Transportation, District 4, Environmental Analysis
Mail Station 8B
P.O. Box 23660
Oakland, CA 94623-0660

Dear Mr. McConnell:

I was pleased to receive the Draft Environmental Assessment/Environmental Impact Report (Draft EA/EIR) for the Caldecott Improvement Project. I believe this is a high-priority project that will help my many constituents, other motorists, and emergency crews who are affected by the daily congestion on State Route 24.

I urge the Department of Transportation to approve the Draft EA/EIR, so final design and construction on this vital project can move forward as soon as possible.

The region's voters have shown that they support a fourth bore of the Caldecott Tunnel. Contra Costa County voters approved \$125 million for the fourth bore in local sales tax revenue with the passage of Measure J on November 2, 2004, and \$50 million was allocated by Bay Area voters when they approved Regional Measure 2 on March 2, 2004.

The fourth bore will reduce congestion for the reverse-direction commute, which has emerged as yet another example of the economic link between Contra Costa County, Alameda County, and the City and County of San Francisco.

Night and weekend travel will also benefit from a fourth bore, which will allow area residents to travel back and forth unimpeded for sporting events, concerts, shopping, and dining. Reverse-direction, night and weekend traffic are usually restricted to a single, two-lane bore, a situation that makes the tunnel notorious for long backups.

For these reasons, and many others, I have concluded that the economic, social, and emergency response benefits of a fourth bore provide many good reasons to start work on a fourth bore. There are no good reasons to wait any longer.



Mr. Gregory C. McConnell
June 20, 2006
Page 2

Thank you for your commitment to the Caldecott Improvement Project. I look forward to working with all interested parties on this vital improvement for the Highway 24 corridor.

Sincerely,


Tom Torlakson

cc: Will Kempton, Director, California Department of Transportation
Honorable Don Freitas, Chair, Contra Costa Transportation Authority
Honorable Larry Reid, Chair, Alameda County Congestion Management Agency

Thank you for your comments.

Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors-Supervisor Mark DeSaulnier

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dist4@bos.cccounty.us



Contra Costa County
Board of Supervisors

Mark DeSaulnier
Supervisor, District IV

Clayton, Clyde, Concord, Pacheco, Pleasant Hill
Walnut Creek

July 7, 2006

Mr. Gregory C. McConnell, Senior Environmental Planner
Attention: Sheryl Dorado, Associate Environmental Planner
Dept. of Transportation, Dist. 4, Environmental Analysis
Mail Station 8B, PO Box 23660
Oakland, CA 94623-0660

Dear Mr. McConnell:

As both MTC Commissioner and central Contra Costa County Supervisor, I write in support of the Caldecott Tunnel Project and urge Caltrans to approve the Draft Environmental Assessment/Environmental Impact Report (EA/EIR) so that the process may move forward toward construction. Whether as commuters who travel for work, business owners that attract regional clientele, or families drawn to live here for the physical environment, my constituents are greatly impacted by the course of events that unfold along State Route 24. A fourth bore for the tunnel is of great importance to them.

Contra Costans have labored diligently over the years to move this project forward. In 2004, we showed our collective commitment by reauthorizing the county's half-cent sales tax for transportation through our support of Measure "J". We are taxing ourselves to bring traffic relief to our communities. \$125 million will be allocated to the project from Measure "J" funds. As Contra Costa and Alameda are self-help counties, we have been able to create partnerships on numerous levels. Regional, state and federal funds will also be made available directly for this project.

A new tunnel would help to improve mobility for motorists, reduce delays, and decrease travel time for commuters in two of the region's largest counties. It would also eliminate the need for daily tunnel reversals and lane merges, and would enhance the safety of the traveling public and Caltrans maintenance workers. Increased capacity would also serve to strengthen and augment this thoroughfare in its function as a lifeline transportation corridor in the event of emergency or other disaster.

It is essential that the process move forward deliberately by taking into account and appropriately responding to the public's concerns and comments, but also expeditiously with the understanding that the citizenry has a great desire to see a fourth bore built to ease

congestion and to promote a growing economy. I am confident that your agency is doing everything necessary to balance the many interests involved as the EA/EIR process continues to move forward. Again, I hope the Draft EA/EIR will meet with Caltrans' approval.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mark DeSaulnier".

Mark DeSaulnier

Thank you for your comments.

Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors-Supervisor Federal D. Glover

Federal D. Glover

Supervisor, District Five
Contra Costa County
Board of Supervisors



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June 30, 2006

Mr. Gregory C. McConnell
Senior Environmental Planner
ATTN: Ms. Sheryl Dorado, Associate Environmental Planner
Department of Transportation, District 4, Environmental Analysis
Mail Station 8B
P. O. Box 23660
Oakland, California 94623-0660

Dear Mr. Connell:

As an elected representative for the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors for District V, I am writing to offer my support for the Caldecott Tunnel Improvement Project and the excellent Draft EA/EIR prepared by Caltrans.

The Draft EA/EIR offers a complete and comprehensive analysis of the project and its potential impacts on the surrounding community. Furthermore, Caltrans has identified an appropriate list of project mitigations that I believe are adequate enough to alleviate the impacts of the project on community.

The Caldecott Tunnel is an important conduit for the movement of both people and commerce traveling locally and regionally. In its current configuration, traffic backs up in the reverse-commute direction served by only one tunnel. This congestion spills over into the local neighborhood, pollutes the air and frustrates commuters. The 4th Bore will ease these problems.

Voters in the Bay Area, including Alameda County, passed Regional Measure 2 in 2004, which dedicated funds to build the 4th Bore. Voters in Contra Costa passed Measure J in 2004, which also dedicated funds to build the 4th Bore. It's time to build the 4th Bore and get our traffic moving again. I am urging Caltrans to expedite the Draft EA/EIR process so that design and construction of the 4th Bore can finally begin.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Federal D. Glover".

Federal D. Glover
Supervisor, District V

E-Mail: dist5@bos.cccounty.us

Antioch • Bay Point • Bethel Island • Oakley • Pittsburg

Thank you for your comments.

Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors-Supervisor Mary N. Piepho



County Supervisor Mary N. Piepho, District III

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East County Transportation Improvement Authority
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Local Agency Formation Commission
Library Board, Regional: South & East
San Joaquin Valley Rail Committee
State Route 4 Bypass Authority
SWAT
TRANSPLAN
TRANSPAC
Tri-Valley Transportation Council

June 9, 2006

Gregory C. McConnell, Senior Environmental Planner
Attention: Sheryl Dorado, Associate Environmental Planner
Dept. of Transportation, District 4, Environmental Analysis, Mail Station 8B
P.O. Box 23660
Oakland, CA 94623-0660

Dear Ms. Dorado,

I am writing this letter in support to the addition of a fourth Bore to the Caldecott Tunnel.

I would like to first acknowledge Caltrans for developing an excellent, comprehensive and fair DED that adequately identifies the impacts of the project, and includes an appropriate list of mitigations that will alleviate the impact of the project in the community.

As you may be aware, there is an ongoing need for the completion of the fourth Bore addition to the Caldecott Tunnel. The fourth Bore will reduce traffic and congestion, and improve the quality of life for the Bay Area Residents.

I ask that you approve the DED, so we can finish the design and begin construction on the project as quickly as possible.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact my office at (925) 820-8683.

Sincerely,

[Handwritten signature of Mary N. Piepho]

MARY N. PIEPHO
County Supervisor, District III

MNP:lc

Handwritten note: We need the 4th bore! for your effort in this regard!

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Email: dist3@bos.cccounty.us • www.co.contra-costa.ca.us/depart/dis3/index.htm

Thank you for your comments.

United States Congress-Congresswoman Ellen O. Tauscher

ELLEN O. TAUSCHER
10TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AVIATION
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HIGHWAYS, TRANSIT AND PIPELINES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER, RESOURCES AND THE ENVIRONMENT
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON TERRORISM
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Web Address: www.house.gov/tauscher

June 21, 2006

Mr. Will Kempton, Director
California Department of Transportation
1120 N Street
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Director Kempton:

Thank you for you and your agency's actions to move the Caldecott Tunnel Project forward. As you know, this project is of particular importance to my constituents as congestion on State Route 24 affects many of them on a daily basis. I urge your agency to approve the Draft Environmental Assessment/Environmental Impact Report (Draft EA/EIR) and move forward with final design and construction of the project.

First, let me thank you for holding two public comment sessions. It is important that the approved EA/EIR address constructive comments made by the public, as a project of this magnitude will have affects not only on the residents of the region, but also on the environment. All appropriate action should be taken to mitigate for these affects and I believe that the public comment sessions will help you identify possible community concerns.

The economic and social benefits of this project are enumerable. By relieving congestion along one of the most traveled routes in the Bay Area, especially during the morning and evening commutes, we will ensure the expedited movement of goods along the corridor and the free flow of commuters traveling both to and from their places of work. Beyond the economic value, are the social benefits of a project which will allow residents of Contra Costa County to spend less time in their cars and more time enjoying the benefits of living in our region.

There is strong regional support for the Caldecott Tunnel Project. As you know, voters in Contra Costa County have approved \$125 million for the fourth bore in local sales tax revenue, and the Bay Area has allocated \$50 million as part of Regional Measure 2. In addition to this commitment of regional funds, you are well aware that the State has committed \$69 million to the project and \$1.6 million has been provided directly to the project through the recent federal transportation reauthorization legislation. I would encourage the State to increase its financial commitment to the project in light of increased State transportation revenues and the over \$22 billion in federal funding provided to California through 2009.

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Thank you again for your commitment to this project. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can assist you as you work with your federal partners on this project. I look forward to working with you on this and other important Bay Area transportation projects.

Sincerely,



ELLEN O. TAUSCHER

Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Donald Freitas, Chair, Contra Costa Transportation Authority
The Honorable Larry Reid, Chair, Alameda County Congestion Management Agency
Gene Fong, Division Administrator, Federal Highway Administration

Thank you for your comments.

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