

Public reviews specifics of SR76 East project

Construction begins in Fall; Completion in 2017

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Fallbrook area residents had an opportunity to learn about the final plan for the long-awaited State Route 76 'East' realignment project at a Construction Open House held Tuesday, Sept. 23 by various agencies at the Bonsall Community Center. A crowd of almost 100 people traveled from display to display that detailed the 5.2-mile long project, asking questions of the numerous representatives present from Caltrans, SANDAG, the San Diego County Water Authority, and County of San Diego Parks & Recreation.

"Construction is due to start mid-October," said new project manager Karen Jewell of Caltrans. Jewell received her new post a mere two weeks prior to the public meeting.

In viewing the final plan for the new four-lane highway, residents' reactions ranged from curious to confused, and positive to angry.

Gail Martin, who resides off Gird Road, was interested to see what the details of the plan revealed, but admitted she was concerned about traffic delays due to road access during the construction process.

"This is such a huge project," said Martin. "I am the grandparent of a Bonsall school student and I'm trying to figure out what the traffic is going to be like during construction. We know, however, that it will change practically every day." Caltrans confirmed that.

"Roadway work will require multiple traffic shifts during construction," representatives said.



Karen Jewell, newly appointed project manager for the 'East' portion of the State Route 76 realignment project discusses the final plan with Tom Weise at the open house event Sept. 23.

Ken Seals photo

Donna Kerwin and her daughter and son-in-law Mike and Jill Avenaim claimed noise levels were not properly measured in determining the final placement of the route and will affect quality of life around the Gird Road area.

"What [the environmental assessment report] claims is baloney," said Kerwin. "I am disputing that they actually placed microphones at certain locations to measure sound. I know whose properties they were to go on and they were never put there."

When Kerwin and her family members challenged Caltrans representatives about it, "Although the report states one thing, they are now saying it was done

as an estimate, based on a mathematical equation," Mike Avenaim said.

"In other words, they fudged it to make it all correct for Caltrans and the politicians," said Kerwin.

The SR76 'East' project stretches from South Mission Road in Bonsall to Interstate 15 and reportedly carries a price tag of \$210 million. The upgrade of the Interstate 15 intersection has already been done, which has resulted in improved ramps and a widened overpass bridge. Items like landscape remain to be done and the Park 'n Ride located at SR76 and Old Highway 395 will be the last task in the 'East' project.

An early sign of project work can be

seen just south of SR76 in the riverbed across from Sage Road, evidenced by sound walls that have been erected.

“We have already started installing the liners in the San Luis Rey pipelines,” said San Diego County Water Authority co-project manager Misha Troyan. Pipelines 3, 4, and 5 are being upgraded with the protective steel liners, which Troyan said will take until May. These pipelines carry 80 percent of the region’s water, authorities said.

In preparation for construction, a temporary haul bridge will be installed across the San Luis Rey Riverbed. It’s northern point is located between Gird Road and Monserate Hill. The bridge will allow trucks to pick up and deliver about 600,000 cubic yards of excavated soil for the project from a site on the south side of the riverbed. This provision will provide a route for the hauling trucks other than the surrounding roadways. Additional soil will be obtained as well: 135,000 cubic yards from Old Highway 395/SR76 left over from the interchange construction; 60,000 cubic yards from a property between South Mission Road and Olive Hill Road; 55,000 cubic yards from adjacent hillsides parallel to the existing highway; and approximately 150,000 cubic yards that will be imported from other areas.

Questions were plentiful for County of San Diego Parks & Recreation representative Mark Massen and primarily centered around two areas. The first is a site on Gird Road which has been owned by Bonsall and Fallbrook Union High School districts.

Massen said the County would like to put a park of some nature in that location, perhaps including sports fields, inciting concerns from residents in Sycamore Ranch relating to industrial-strength lighting, resulting noise, etc.

Some residents of Rancho Monserate County Club mobile home community questioned whether the Parks Dept. had plans to extend Dulin Road for use with the future San Luis Rey River Park. Massen indicated that it “was the plan, unless an alternate route is

found.” Residents of that community voiced concern over the cosmetic and environmental change that would likely cause in their neighborhood.

In viewing the displays, it appears some areas remain privately owned that are in the project area. “There are some property owners that Caltrans is still in negotiation with,” said Jewell. At least one of those parcels used to be a horse boarding facility.

Caltrans reported that the current traffic volume on the SR76 ‘East’ segment is about 20,000 average daily trips and that by the year 2030, that volume is expected to grow to 46,000. That estimate is based on planned growth in the area.

Construction of the project is anticipated to take three years, with completion in 2017. To follow the progress of the project, and review the details of the final plan, visit www.KeepSanDiegoMoving.com



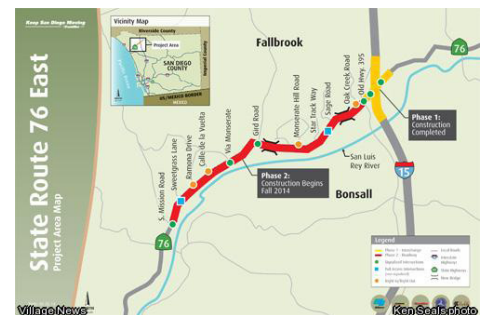
Caltrans representative Kim Smith, left, explains details about the final plan for the ‘East’ portion of the State Route 76 realignment project from Bonsall to Interstate 15 to Susan Ochs at an open house held by various agencies at the Bonsall Community Center on Sept. 23.



A group of people discuss what plans the County of San Diego Parks & Recreation Dept. has for projects in and near the State Route 76 ‘East’ segment with Mark Massen (foreground). A potential park or recreation sites on Gird Road was discussed as was the future San Luis Rey Riverpark.



Misha Troyan, right, co-project manager with the San Diego County Water Authority, explains the system planned for the relining of the San Luis Rey pipeline to Lou Buffone at an open house regarding the State Route 76 ‘East’ realignment project Sept. 23 at the Bonsall Community Center.



The map pictured above shows where intersections will be located along the SR76 ‘East’ project. Some have signals, others are called “full access,” meaning crossing opportunities without signals.