

WHAT'S NEW... continued

The identification of a preferred alternative is not a final decision since final approvals must be obtained from our partner agencies. Early designation of RCTC's preferred alternative responds to requests from the public to share which alternative appears to be superior given all factors which must be considered. It also allows RCTC to review this choice in its discussions with the other public agencies involved in the decision-making process: the United States Fish & Wildlife Service, the United States Army Corps of Engineers, the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the Federal Highway Administration, the California Department of Fish and Game, and Caltrans.



THE FUTURE

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

When the environmental studies are complete and a federally approved alternative has been finally selected, then RCTC will be able to move forward to obtain permits from federal and state agencies, undertake the final engineering design for the project, and acquire the right of way needed to build the project. In addition, RCTC must identify and secure the required funding for this \$3.1 billion project. Construction would not begin until 2011 at the earliest and would likely take place in phases.

SCHEDULE

2004	2005	2006	TODAY		2009	2011 and beyond
			2007	2008		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preliminary Studies Public Meetings Identify Alternatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Value Analysis Study Public Meeting Alternative Refinement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study Alternatives Environmental Studies and Engineering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Studies and Engineering Identification of Preferred Alternative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft EIR/EIS Public Hearings Final EIR/EIS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain other environmental approvals and permits Final Design Right of way acquisition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction

WHAT IS BEING STUDIED?

EIR/EIS studies are evaluating the following factors:

- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Community Impacts
- Cultural Resources
- Floodplain Evaluation
- Geology 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 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, as well as surrounding Riverside County communities. The corridor was identified as a part of the Riverside County Integrated Project, a regionwide 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.

WHAT'S NEW WITH MID COUNTY PARKWAY?

WHY IS THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY NEEDED?

By 2030, Riverside County's population will reach 3.5 million. Today's east-west traffic, carried on I-10, SR-60, SR-91, 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 this congestion is essential to maintain and enhance the quality of life in western Riverside County.

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 and natural environment, and the early generation of possible routes. Since 2004, ongoing environmental and engineering studies, as well 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 dam engineering considerations 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, surveying more than 17,000 acres on 3,000 parcels in the area of the different alternatives, have identified the locations of sensitive wetlands, populations of sensitive plants and animals, and important archaeological sites. Project engineers have used these studies to fine tune alignments to best 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 (see the matrix inside for a comparison). Study findings on Alternative 9 and other Mid County Parkway alternatives will be presented in a Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) which will be circulated for public review in early 2008.

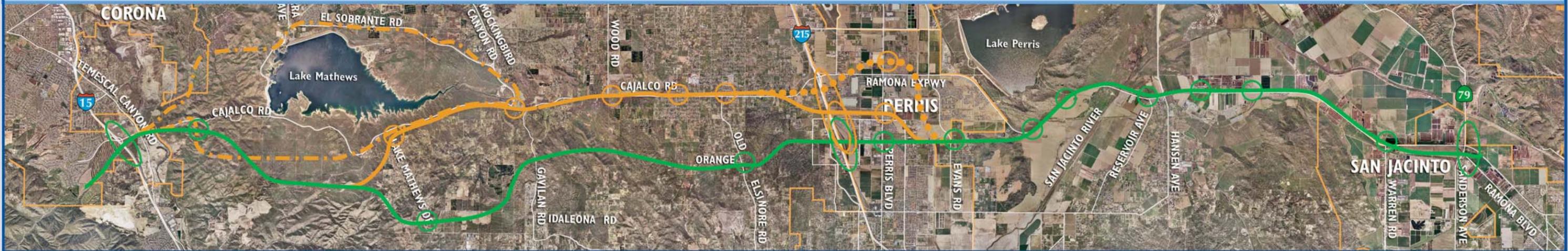
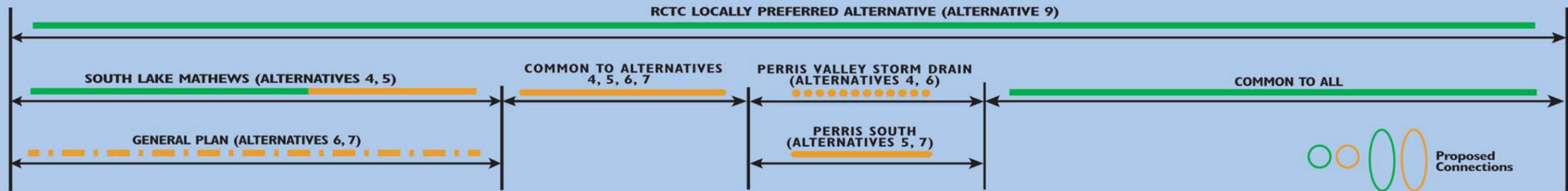
Story continued on back page

WHO CAN I CONTACT ABOUT THE MID COUNTY PARKWAY PROJECT?

If you have any comments or questions about the Mid County Parkway, call us at (951) 787-7141, email us through our website at www.midcountyparkway.org, or write us:

Cathy Bechtel, Mid County Parkway Manager, Riverside County Transportation Commission, P.O. Box 12008 • Riverside, CA 92502-2208





HOW DO THE ALTERNATIVES COMPARE?

The map on this page shows the alternatives under consideration. They are numbered alternatives 4, 5, 6, 7, and 9. Alternatives 2 and 3 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), the 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.

Criteria	Alternative 4	Alternative 5	Alternative 6	Alternative 7	Alternative 9
Cost Differential	+ \$460 million over base	+ \$150 million over base	+ \$610 million over base	+ \$310 million over base	Base Cost
Water Resources	Affects 31 acres	Affects 29 acres	Affects 34 acres	Affects 32 acres	Affects 25 acres
Threatened/Endangered Species	Affects 346 hectares of designated critical habitat	Affects 346 hectares of designated critical habitat	Affects 498 hectares of designated critical habitat	Affects 498 hectares of designated critical habitat	Affects 295 hectares of designated critical habitat
Sensitive Plant Communities	Affects 412 acres	Affects 411 acres	Affects 459 acres	Affects 458 acres	Affects 458 acres
Habitat Conservation Plans (HCP)	Affects 415 acres	Affects 415 acres	Affects 537 acres	Affects 537 acres	Affects 175 acres
Western Riverside County Multi Species HCP Criteria Area	Affects 385 acres	Affects 406 acres	Affects 646 acres	Affects 666 acres	Affects 639 acres
Parks and Recreation	Affects 1 High School	Affects 1 Park			
Cultural Resources (Based on Preliminary Data)	2 significant sites	2 significant sites	2 significant sites	2 significant sites	1 significant site
Social/Community Impacts	Affects 303 properties	Affects 243 properties	Affects 307 properties	Affects 241 properties	Affects 182 properties

