

Thomas Roads Improvement Program

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Westside Parkway Enters Final Design Phase

The Bakersfield City Council has approved a \$6.5 million contract with DMJM Harris for final engineering design services on the Westside Parkway project (Phase 2). The engineering firm will prepare plans, specifications and estimates for all elements of the 8.1 mile parkway, including bridges, sound walls, hardscape and landscaping.

Upon completion, the Westside Parkway will carry traffic from Stockdale Highway and Heath Road to Truxtun Avenue near State Route 99. Full access interchanges are planned for Allen Road, Calloway Drive, Coffee Road and Mohawk Street. The Parkway's added capacity will significantly improve traffic flow in the west corridor and alleviate congestion on the parallel arterial streets connecting the City's Central Business District and west Bakersfield neighborhoods (i.e., Rosedale Highway, Truxtun Avenue, and Stockdale Highway).

The City of Bakersfield assumed responsibility for the Westside Parkway project from Caltrans in 2002. Since then, the City has purchased nearly all of the necessary right-of-way, acquired half of the required funding, and completed a myriad of studies – geology, air quality, water resources, vegetation, special-status species, noise and others – to complete the environmental document. The Environmental Impact Report was certified in 2006 and a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), by the Federal Highways Administration, was issued in January 2007, allowing the project to move forward into the design phase.

The majority of the Westside Parkway will be funded through the metropolitan area's share of State and Federal gas tax monies that residents pay each time they fill up their vehicles. Additional funding sources are being pursued. Engineering design is expected to take about 18 months to complete. Construction on the Westside Parkway is projected to begin in late 2008.

For more information, please contact Janet Wheeler, TRIP Public Relations, at (661) 326-3491.

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