

Project Description/Background Information
 SR-163 Transportation Enhancement (TE) Project

SR-163 / Balboa Park Transportation Enhancement Project

Project Description and Background Information

Introduction

The proposed project will provide for the restoration, replacement and enhancement of 0.6 miles (Park Blvd. to 6th Ave. OC) on I-5 and 2.7 miles (between “A” Street to 0.2 mile north of the 6th Ave. Undercrossing) of the SR-163 segment through Balboa Park. Much of these areas were recommended for rehabilitation in the SR-163 Corridor Management Plan, SR-163 CMP (See Attachment M). The SR-163 Corridor Management Plan was the culmination of years of development with input from the San Diego Community and Caltrans functional units. The extent of the SR-163 CMP begins at “A” Street, the south end and the beginning SR-163 north to the 6th Avenue Undercrossing (UC). The plan evaluated the condition of the infrastructure of the corridor and made recommendations as to the highway needs and repairs. Since the Cabrillo Historic Parkway is one of two historic parkways in the State of California, a request for Transportation Enhancement (TE) money was applied for and obtained under the Transportation Equity Act for Century 21, TEA-21 (now SAFETEA-LU).

The project will restore and rehabilitate approximately 30.9 acres of existing planting, replacement of the existing irrigation within the project limits, replacement of approximately 1,750 feet of fencing, replacing in kind an existing crib wall, shore up and re-grade around an existing brow ditch, pave eroding slopes under bridges at the I-5/SR163 interchange, provide a soil treatment which matches existing soil along the inside shoulder next to the grassy median, pave selected gore points outside the Historic District, provide a rock blanket at the NW quadrant of I-5/SR-163 Interchange, stain existing concrete barriers, restore the grassy median, prune trees, and install 3 maintenance vehicle pullouts. Many of these items were a part of the 1947 highway construction and the 1950 planting installation. Additional elements were mentioned and evaluated in the SR-163 Corridor Management Plan. Some of these elements listed in the SR-163 CMP that have historic significance within the Parkway require immediate attention to help in its preservation. Other elements in the SR-163 CMP are not a part of this TE. These are; some walls, bridge railings, Traffic Monitoring Stations (TMS), and Maintenance Paths. These items require structural review and maintenance funding.

Programmed Construction	2012/2013
Total Programmed Funds	\$5,246,000.00
Project Schedule:	Project Report – January 2012
	Construction Plans - December 2012
	Construction – June 2013

Project Description/Background Information
SR-163 Transportation Enhancement (TE) Project

Background

A. Previous Planting Work

- This portion of SR-163 (old U.S. 395) roadway was built in 1947 and opened in February 1948.
- In 1947 the fencing and lighting standards along the route were installed.
- In the early 1950's the entire route was fully landscaped including the grassy median, the median at the north end of the highway, and Right-of-Way from Ash Street to just north of Washington Street.
- In 1962, new planting was put in with the construction of the I-5 and old U.S.395 Interchange.
- A proposal to increase the capacity of U.S. 395 by adding two more lanes making it a 6 lane freeway was considered at this time. However, due to public opposition, the project was rejected and only an abandoned ramp remains.
- When the route changed to State Route 163 in the mid 1970's, many smaller projects occurred along the route.
- A raised, planted barrier was installed at the south end of SR-163 just north of I-5 in 1982.
- In 1999, a Type 60 concrete barrier was installed to replace damaged metal beam guardrail that extended from the grassy median to Interstate 8. Between Robinson Avenue and University Avenue, at the Pascoe Street Overcrossing column, a raised concrete planted barrier was installed.
- In late 2002 a Minor B project provided planting within the quadrants of Robinson Ave. and University Ave. Overcrossings. This area was cleaned of trash and dead trees and shrubs were removed.
- Another Minor B project in 2003 planted trees along the corridor, however many of those trees died due to the lack of irrigation.
- In 2004/2005 the first SR-163 Corridor Management Plan project was installed. This project included a Steel-Backed Timber Guardrail, which was installed on both sides of the median to prevent cross-median accidents and errant vehicles from hitting the trees (considered fixed objects). For Environmental Mitigation of the Guardrail project, the median was reseeded and additional trees were planted (project is currently in plant establishment). Additionally, as part of the mitigation for the Guardrail, in the summer of 2005, with coordination between Caltrans and the City of San Diego, 544 trees were planted in Balboa Park on the southeast side of Laurel Street (Cabrillo) Bridge and SR-163.

Project Description/Background Information
 SR-163 Transportation Enhancement (TE) Project

Additional work included the restoration of the south and north raised median barrier planters.

- In 2005, on the east side of the Right of Way between Quince Street and Richmond Street, the invasive plant German Ivy was removed and new planting and irrigation were installed. This was the second project listed in the SR-163 Corridor Management Plan to be completed.
- Repair work conducted on the Laurel Street Bridge in 2004 and 2005 impacted the existing irrigation and planting around the bridge footprint (columns and abutments). This area has since been restored with new planting, irrigation, and fencing.
- In 2010, the installation of Phase 1A of the Transportation Enhancement (TE) project was being constructed. This projects limit is from Richmond Street to 0.2 mile past the 6th Ave. Undercrossing. Plant establishment is scheduled to end in 2014.
- In 2010 a median tree pruning Minor B project to prune 55 trees completed

Project History

This section of SR-163 has been designated as a State of California Scenic Highway (1992) due to its unique location through Balboa Park. In addition to the Scenic Highway Designation, the Cabrillo Freeway historic significance is evident in that it has been designated as a California Registered Historic District (1996) which includes most of the 1947 Cabrillo Freeway project limits. Additionally, because of the California Historic District designation, it was found that it is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. In September 2000, the Cabrillo Freeway was listed as a City of San Diego Historic Landmark (listing number #441). In March of 2002, the roadway from "A" Street to the 6th Avenue on ramp was designated an official Historic Parkway by the California State Legislature (AB 3025). This makes it one of two such parkways in the State of California. The other Historic Parkway is the Arroyo Seco Historic Parkway (Pasadena Freeway) in Los Angeles.

In April 2003, District 11 adopted the State Route 163 Corridor Management Plan R-163 CMP. The purpose of the Management Plan was to develop a coordinated program approach for safety improvements and roadside vegetation management of this historic roadway and landscape to meet the Secretary of the Interior *Standards for Historic Preservation*. This Transportation Enhancement project will help implement portions of the plan by restoring and replacing the old and declining plantings, upgrading existing irrigation (some of which has been turned off due to its age), replacing in kind fencing material, and upgrading and replacing the light standards with historically representative types.

Project Description/Background Information
 SR-163 Transportation Enhancement (TE) Project

Need and Design Proposal

Need

The highway through Balboa Park is the third oldest freeway/parkway in the state. Its infrastructure is aging and at places, rehabilitation is needed to repair and replace elements determined to be in a state of decline. The planting and irrigation along this segment of SR-163 has been bandaged many times over the 64 years of its existence.

- The plant material along the route is at its climax stage and is in a state of decline. Trees, original from the original plantings, require pruning for their health and scenic qualities.
- Likewise much of the irrigation is either not functioning or is in need of replacement. Water management equipment will be installed to provide the ability to manage use .
- Though much of the fencing has been replaced in previous projects there are several sections that still need to be replaced.
- Add up lighting to the Laurel Street (Cabrillo) Bridge (If the City of San Diego maintains the lights)
- There are several bridge slopes under I-5 and on SR-163 where erosion has occurred. Additionally, some of these areas have attracted homeless encampments. These slope locations have been scoped out and will receive historically correct and colored paving.
- 2 gore points outside the historic parkway limits cannot be irrigated due to their configuration. Therefore, an acceptable and consistent texture paving material will be placed in these.
- Add an acceptable soil treatment along the inside shoulder from the edge of pavement to behind the Steel Backed Timber Guardrail posts. This will curtail the need to weed and lessen the traffic exposure for maintenance workers.
- An area at the NW quadrant of the I-5/SR-163 interchange has had some major homeless issues due to this site being relatively level and planted with turf. This location is separated from the roadside by three ramps. The proposal is to install rock cobble within the center of this area to discourage transient use. This area is outside the historic district.
- A crib wall that was installed in the original highway construction has deteriorated significantly. This crib wall will be replaced in kind.
- A deteriorating Brow Ditch will be shored up to temporarily contain water until a resolve is made for the poor slope conditions existing at that site.
- Three maintenance vehicle pullouts will be installed within the SR-163 corridor. One will be within the Historic District. Three access gates will also be installed along the corridor.

Preliminary Design

The proposed project design is to restore the character of the Historic Parkway. This plan has 10 major elements proposed for

Project Description/Background Information
SR-163 Transportation Enhancement (TE) Project

evaluating condition, restoring features as needed, preserving the historic elements, and rehabilitating major elements within the Parkway.

These items are;

1. Rehabilitate the existing vegetation along the route. The SR-163 Corridor Management Plan team did extensive field surveys in 2002 to determine condition of trees, shrubs, and ground covers. This document will be the base map used to rehabilitate planting by replacing trees (fallen trees and those that have been removed due to the Lerp Psyllid infestation), adding shrub masses in areas where old shrubs are in decline and were removed and replace and augment groundcover areas. Since the landscape within the Historic District is significant, the health of mature trees is essential to maintain the Parkway's character. The State Route 163 Tree Survey (June 2008) lists all trees within the whole CMP project limits. Care of the listed trees, which may include pruning, will follow the guidelines in the Survey. Additionally, the grassy median will be restored to its intended look of weed free grass. The grass species chosen will be sustainable with programmed quarterly maintenance to curtail undesirable weed and grass species. The median will also be free of gophers and other pests. If any invasive species (such as German ivy and pampas grass) are found within the project limits, they shall be removed.
2. Replacing the irrigation within the project limits. All irrigation equipment will be salvaged where appropriate or replaced. The irrigation system will be designed to accommodate Maxicom / RICS or equal, to conform to the District's Water Manager plan to manage irrigation usage.
3. Install a soil treatment along the inside grassy median edge of shoulder to behind the Steel Backed Timber Guardrail. The soil cement, or equal, will extend on both the north bound and south bound median (approximately 1.2 miles).
4. Recently, several type 60 concrete barriers have been installed within the Historic District. These new features stand out in a more weathered paved area. It is proposed to stain or acid wash the barriers to give them a more aged and subdued appearance.
5. Replace the existing fencing at locations throughout the project limits. Where necessary, the existing old fencing will be replaced with an 8 foot high 1" mesh black vinyl coated fence. The posts and fence hardware will also be black (not vinyl coated).
6. Pave the remaining unpaved slopes under the 1-5 bridge and SR-163..

Project Description/Background Information
SR-163 Transportation Enhancement (TE) Project

7. Pave 2 gore points that cannot sustain planting due to irrigation constraints.
8. Replace the existing crib wall that is adjacent to the travel way on the south bound entrance ramp at Robinson Avenue. This original crib wall has decayed over the past 65 years and has severe concrete spalling. The crib wall will be replaced in kind.
9. Repair the existing brow ditch between Robinson Ave. and the 10 Ave. entrance Ramp.
10. Stain existing concrete barriers to resemble old concrete within the Corridor.
11. Provide Maintenance Vehicle Pullouts and Access Gates.