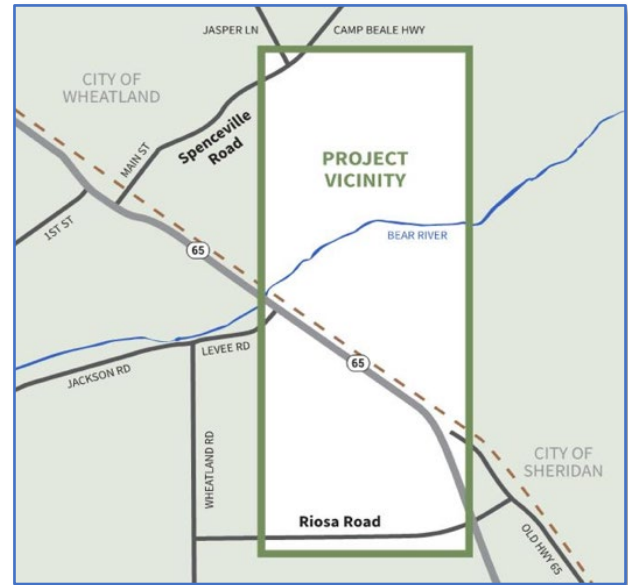


East Wheatland Expressway (EWX) Community Workshop Series Summary – Wheatland & Sheridan

Introduction

In February 2023, the South Yuba Transportation Improvement Authority (SYTIA) in cooperation with Yuba County and the City of Wheatland hosted two community workshops on the East Wheatland Expressway, wherein participants had a chance to learn about the new project and provide feedback on alignment options. The first workshop was held in Wheatland near the northmost boundary of the proposed expressway while the second workshop was held near the southmost point of the expressway in Sheridan. The Wheatland workshop, held on February 7, hosted 139 community members at the Wheatland Community Center located at 101 C Street. The Sheridan workshop, held on February 23, hosted 26 community members at the Sheridan Stewart Community Hall located at 6005 Camp Far West Road.



Project vicinity for East Wheatland Expressway

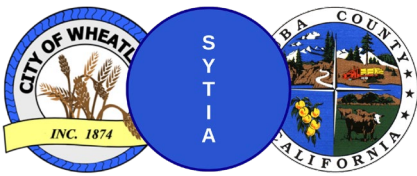
Project Overview

In 2017 Wheatland City Council adopted a resolution approving the formation of the South Yuba Transportation Improvement Authority (SYTIA). The formation of SYTIA created a means for ongoing collaboration between Yuba County and the City of Wheatland regarding key transportation improvements in south Yuba County. These key transportation improvements were studied as part of the Comprehensive Implementation Strategy (CIS) completed by SYTIA in 2022. One of the projects studied in this report was the new East Wheatland Expressway.

SYTIA is working in cooperation with Yuba County, the City of Wheatland, and Placer County to construct a new local road connecting Spenceville Road east of Wheatland to State Route (SR) 65 at Riosa Road just west of Sheridan. The Expressway is expected to include an overcrossing of SR 65 and the Union Pacific Railroad, a bridge across Bear River, and a crossing of the South Sutter Canal north of Riosa Road. Currently, the project is in the "Project Initiation" phase. Project Initiation includes developing a clear purpose and need for the project, developing viable alternatives that meet that need, and presenting alternatives to the public for engagement and feedback.

Community Workshop Purpose & Format

As the East Wheatland Expressway is in the Project Initiation phase, community awareness and input are paramount. Two workshops were offered in February 2023 to share the project and provide possible alternatives for the alignment so that the community could share feedback. The goal of these workshops was to connect with



the local communities of Wheatland and Sheridan so they can have a seat at the table during the development of this project. The workshops represent the kick-off of an ongoing community outreach campaign, including future one-on-one meetings with property owners, a dedicated project website, and project email for people to have a direct line to the project team: ewx@co.yuba.ca.us.

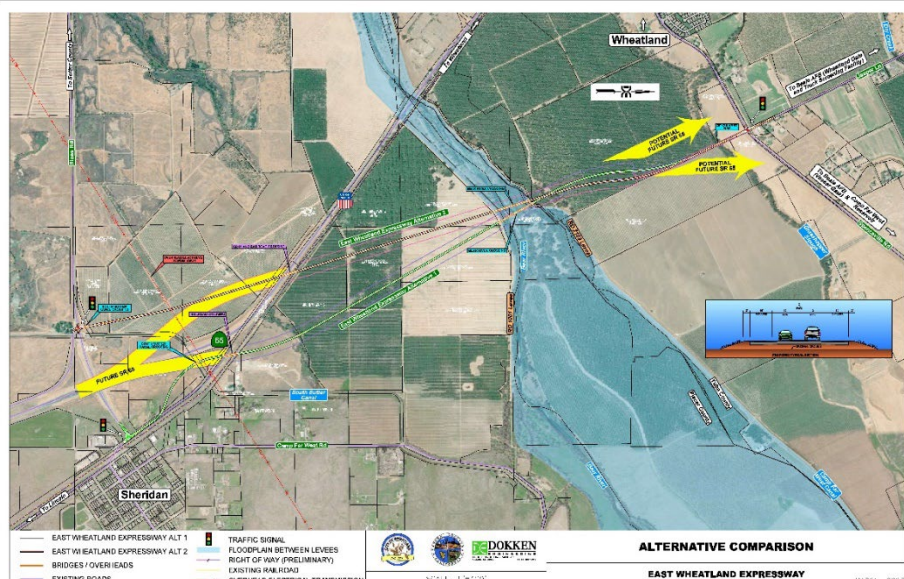
Both of the workshops consisted of a presentation, community discussion, and an open house with display boards showing possible alignments and a flow chart of the expected project process and timeline. Members from the project team were available to answer questions and receive comments.

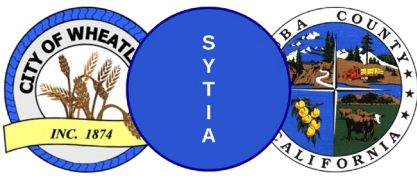
A total of 139 community members attended the first workshop and 26 community members attended the second workshop, both of which consisted of a presentation, community discussion, and an open house with display boards showing the two alignment alternatives located around the room. Members from the project team were available to answer questions and receive comments.

Presentation

To help in completing the Project Initiation phase, SYTIA has hired Dokken Engineering. Dokken provided a presentation to begin each of the public workshops. The presentation was led by Matt Griggs, Project Manager, and Lindsay Katt, Project Engineer, both from Dokken Engineering. Griggs and Katt shared background information on the East Wheatland Expressway Project, including the creation of SYTIA and the four projects that are currently being studied and will eventually be interconnected: East Wheatland Expressway, SR 65/South Beale Interchange, Plumas Lake Blvd./SR 70, and the future SR 65 realignment (the Bypass).

The team shared initial alignment concepts for the proposed project (shown below). More detailed images can be found on the project website at www.yuba.org/ewx. These concepts will evolve as information becomes available, public comment is received, environmental studies take place, and the design progresses.





The team then shared an estimated timeline, showing that the project is currently in its initial public outreach phase. The next step is to develop a project study report-project development study in late 2023, followed by the beginning of the environmental studies. The team noted that this timeline is subject to change and contingent on many factors, mostly the ability to secure funding for the project.

Community Discussion

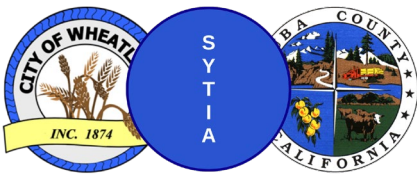
A group discussion followed the formal presentation. What follows is a summary of the discussions from both workshops, organized by key themes:

Previous Project Studies Completed: A few residents along Jasper Lane voiced concern that previous studies looking at a future SR 65 Bypass showed a "far east" alignment that would not impact their homes. These residents wanted to know why this far east alignment was no longer being considered.

A bypass has been a long-time consideration for the area, and many proposals have been shared with the community over the years. In 2000 Caltrans completed a PSR-PDS for an SR 65 Bypass of Wheatland. This report showed several potential alignments, four west of SR 65 and one east of SR 65. Ultimately the study recommended continuing with the alignment east of SR 65 and the Wheatland City Council passed a resolution supporting this east alignment in 2000. The location of the currently proposed East Wheatland Expressway alignments are consistent with this original east alignment bypass recommended in the Caltrans study, which ties into Spenceville Road near Jasper Lane. In 2006 the City of Wheatland adopted the City's current General Plan. The General plan also shows the location of the expressway east of SR 65 connecting to Spenceville Road near Jasper Lane.

The Jasper Lane residents brought up a study completed in 2019 showing a further east alignment, which is referred to here at the "far east" alignment. The team discussed this study, a Traffic Impact Fee Study completed by SYTIA in 2019. This study was completed solely to estimate the possible cost range of an expressway for the purpose of setting Traffic Impact Fees. Cost estimates were performed on two alignments, a close to town alignment and a far east alignment. These alignments were specifically chosen to produce a "high and low" possible cost and were not intended to supersede the City's General Plan. This "far east" alignment will be discussed in the PSR-PDS being prepared but will likely be rejected based on it not complying with the City General Plan, the alignment crossing Bear River at a much wider location causing significant environmental impacts and higher costs, and would result in an awkward "T" intersection at Spenceville Road reducing the circulation efficiency.

Status of and EWX impact on, the State Route 65 Bypass of Wheatland: This proposed East Wheatland Expressway is an initial step to make a long-term option of an SR 65 Bypass a reality. The cost of a bypass would be more than \$300 million that SYTIA currently does not have funding for, so there is a need to complete the overall project gradually in multiple phases.



The Expressway will be constructed on the east side of Wheatland to serve the local population. The alignment maps shared in both community workshops showed the proposed Expressway as well as potential locations of a future SR 65 Bypass. While the exact location of the SR 65 Bypass has not yet been determined and is not a part of this project, every effort will be made to design the expressway such that the maximum amount of roadway possible could be used for a future bypass.

The Beale Road interchange to SR 70 is not anticipated to impact the expressway, and SR 65 will remain as it is presently used. The alignments shared during these meetings are an initial proposal to get the conversation going, and are subject to modification.



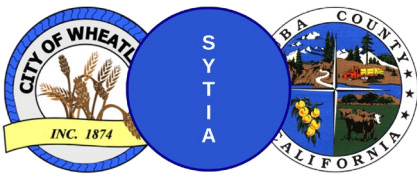
Matt Griggs and Lindsay Katt of Dokken Engineering present in Wheatland on February 7; an open discussion follows.

When will the project be built: An estimated project schedule was shared at the project meetings. It was explained that while we can give approximate timelines for the project design and environmental clearance, the construction of the project is largely dependent of funding availability (see discussion below on funding). The team estimated that the "best case scenario" for beginning construction would be 8 years.

How this project will be funded: This project will be funded through a combination of impact fees, state transportation funds, and federal transportation funds. So far, this project has been funded through developer fees to the County. There is joint power between Yuba County and the City of Wheatland, and SYTIA could ask Placer County to help fund the project as well. The decision of funding and priorities will be made by the SYTIA Board (two from Yuba County and two from the Wheatland City Council). SYTIA cannot fully fund this project on its own so the agency will be going after competitive State and Federal funding.

Traffic implications related to this project: Several comments were made regarding the current condition of traffic in the area. Residents expressed that the level of traffic has become unbearable and accidents occur frequently. Residents also expressed concern that the EWX project would not address the congestion issues.

Traffic congestion is an increasing problem in the area as South Yuba continues to experience growth, so traffic flow analysis of the broader region will be integral to the expressway project. While the proposed expressway will not immediately divert the majority of traffic from downtown Wheatland, it will relieve some congestion, allow



for future planning, and directly tie into future phases of the larger bypass project. Currently the State is more inclined to fund projects related to safety, especially for bikes and pedestrians, so securing funding for road projects is challenging. The project team encourages the community to be vocal about their traffic experience to help demonstrate how much the project is needed.

Developer Influence on Proposed Project: Some community members expressed a sentiment that this project is being moved forward only to accommodate developers. Dokken and the City of Wheatland want to be as transparent as possible on this issue. Development in the area is inevitable, development is part of the City's General Plan and will happen with or without the EWX project. The development occurring in the area is actually helping to fund this current phase of the project through the traffic impact fees collected. Without the proposed expressway, future development will only put further strain on existing traffic congestion.

How to get involved: SYTIA Board meetings are public for anyone to attend. The board consists of two Wheatland City Council members and two Yuba County members. The agenda and decisions are also made public for community review. Additionally, the project team wants to meet one-on-one with property owners and/or farmers to better explain the overall project and timeline, share the proposed alignments, and address any questions or concerns. These one-on-one meetings will occur once there has been more planning work completed on the project. Community members can stay in touch via the project website and by emailing specific questions and comments to ewx@co.yuba.ca.us.

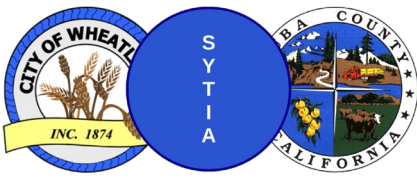
Comment Cards

In addition to the discussion above, community members were invited to complete a comment card. A total of 15 cards were submitted (nine from Wheatland and six from Sheridan). What follows is a summary of the comments:

- Six comments were in support of the project, noting that this is a great start and there is a significant need for it, so please move forward.
- Three comments had specific suggestions, such as allowing permissive left-on-red turns, widening the road, and adding a left-turn lane from Spenceville onto EWX.
- Two comments encouraged a need for traffic and accident analysis, and proposed places to explore growing congestion.
- Two comments posed questions:
 - Will sewer hook-ups be a part of this project?
 - What are some of the benefits of this project for Wheatland?
- The last two were general comments: one asking the team to keep the community in mind, and the other supporting alignment 2.

Next Steps

Feedback from both meetings will be analyzed and considered in the East Wheatland Expressway design. In the upcoming months, the team will begin scheduling some one-on-one meetings with property owners and farmers who are directly impacted by the project and will be requesting permission to enter land within the project study



East Wheatland Expressway
Community Workshop Series Summary
February 7 & February 23, 2023 | 5:00–7:00 p.m.
Wheatland Community Center & Sheridan Stewart Community Hall

area so environmental and engineering studies can commence. Comments can be submitted to the project team via ewx@co.yuba.ca.us and people can stay updated on the project via the project website at www.yuba.org/ewx.