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NEWS

Environmental report approved on connector project

General alignment plan to be selected next month

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After certifying their recently finalized environmental document at a meeting last week, the Capital Southeast Connector Joint Powers Authority (JPA) is planning to select a general alignment plan for the Elk Grove area's future expressway at its meeting next month.

The JPA board met on Aug. 12 to certify the two-volume Program Environment Impact Report (PEIR), completing the first [step](#) in a two-step process.

A pair of JPA board members, Elk Grove City Council Member Pat Hume and Sacramento County [Supervisor](#) Don Nottoli, whose district includes Elk Grove, both said after the meeting that certifying the document is a great and important milestone for the project.

"It's advanced the proposed connector to the next step," Nottoli said.

The second step is to select a general alignment for the proposed connector that is set to be a 35-mile stretch that will provide a major transportation route between Interstate 5 and El Dorado County.

From Interstate 5, the route would run along Kammerer and Grant Line roads in Elk Grove toward and into El Dorado County.

By certifying the PEIR, the JPA board has verified that the document meets state environmental requirements, was reviewed and considered by the board, and represents the board's independent judgment.

However, board members including Hume noted that judgment might be slightly cloudy, as some regulatory agencies still have not provided comments on the PEIR. JPA Executive Director Tom Zlotkowski and staff said that is partly because the general alignment is still to be selected.

"We have to make an up or down decision," Hume said regarding next month's discussion. "Part of the process with this programmatic EIR was to get input."

Hume said he felt the people who should have provided input were not forthcoming with information, but Zlotkowski said more information should be available next month.

Zlotkowski, who said at the July 20 meeting that nearly 4,000 postcards were mailed out to announce the availability of finalized PEIR, said on Aug. 12 that [email blasts](#) will be sent to between 2,000 and 3,000 people regarding the upcoming selection of the general alignment.

Staff said all five JPA board members should be at the September meeting because of the importance of what will likely be the main item on the agenda.

The date and time of that meeting are still being worked out due to potential conflicts.

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