



PRESS RELEASE

Office of the City Manager

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SARATOGA CITY COUNCIL UNANIMOUSLY APPROVES LITIGATION AGAINST CALTRANS

The Saratoga City Council has authorized Saratoga's City Attorney to initiate litigation against the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) for failure to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act in connection with the proposed State Route 85 Express Lanes Project. The May 6, 2015 vote was unanimous with Mayor Howard Miller, Vice Mayor Manny Cappello, Council Member Emily Lo, Council Member Mary-Lynne Bernald, and Council Member Rishi Kumar in agreement.

Saratoga is the first city to formally announce litigation against Caltrans concerning the proposed State Route 85 project.

"This issue is of paramount importance to our community," Mayor Miller said. "The Saratoga City Council and Saratoga residents have been at the forefront of this from the beginning. We take this issue very seriously. I hope this statement reaffirms that the Council is following the process diligently, prodigiously, and aggressively."

Saratoga Council Members and residents have voiced concerns about potential impacts that the project, which would convert approximately 27 miles of existing high-occupancy vehicle lanes to toll lanes, will have on the Saratoga community. The City expressed its concerns and those of its residents in a detailed comment letter to the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) and Caltrans in February 2014. Since then, the City has also continued to urge VTA Board Members and staff to address concerns about the project.

According to documents on file with Santa Clara County, Caltrans approved the Negative Declaration on April 24, 2015 with a finding of "no significant impact." Caltrans provided no advance public notice of the approval and did not allow for public input on its responses to over 370 comments on the draft environmental document. Upon review of the responses, the Council deemed that Caltrans failed to address the City's concerns.

The City has maintained a comprehensive webpage to ensure Saratoga residents stay informed and up-to-date about the project: www.saratoga.ca.us/highway85.

For questions or additional information, please contact Mayor Howard Miller at (408) 802-4034 or hmiller@saratoga.ca.us.