

7260 News, 2001

Santa Monica Boulevard Construction Slated to Start in 2003

Construction work on Santa Monica Boulevard should start during the first quarter of 2003. The project already has been approved by the Los Angeles City Council. Design work currently is being overseen by the Department of Engineering.

The upgraded boulevard will stretch from the Beverly Hills City limits on the east to the San Diego Freeway on the west.

When reconfiguration of the boulevard is completed, three lanes in one direction will be separated by a landscaped, tree lined median from the three lanes in the other direction. A sidewalk pedestrian zone will be buffered from the main roadway as will bike lanes.

The landscaping will feature drought resistant, low maintenance plants and trees native to California.

Public arts works will focus on a Route 66 theme to draw attention to the boulevard's past as part of the historic Route 66.

Between Prosser and Pandora Avenues, the main roadway and south frontage road will be separated by a retaining wall up to 26 feet in height. The urban design plan proposes a "stair-step" wall design with extensive eucalyptus trees, shrubs, and ground cover. A pedestrian ramp and stairs will be erected at Thayer Avenue.

Plans call for a ramp to provide easy access from the boulevard into the Century City Shopping Center.

Drivers moving west and wishing to enter Tract No. 7260 from the boulevard will be forced to go to Beverly Glen and either turn south and then make a left on Mississippi or Dunkirk or else make a U-turn at Beverly Glen and then go east and make a south turn at either Benecia or Fox Hills.

If all goes according to MTA plans, the wait at some intersections will drop from 96 to 36 seconds at many intersections.

However, opponents contend that the increased traffic that will spill into the already congested Beverly Hills will mean longer delays at stoplights for drivers moving east.

They also claim that a similar situation will face drivers as they move beyond the San Diego Freeway.