

is not a major aspect of the qualities which make this property eligible for the National Register. With the buffer of existing houses between the Pierce House and the freeway, the screening provided by dense landscaping, and construction of sound walls, the proximity impacts do not substantially impair the characteristics for which the Pierce House is eligible.

Riggins House. South Pasadena

The project will be adjacent to the property's southeastern corner, and is approximately 25-30 feet below grade. Proposed soundwalls will reduce noise levels. Because the setting is not a major aspect of the qualities which make the Riggins House eligible for the National Register, the addition of soundwalls will not substantially impair the significance of the property. Nonetheless, landscaping will screen them from the property's viewshed. Soundwalls will be constructed as a residential noise abatement design feature and dense landscaping will obscure the walls from view. Therefore, the proximity impacts do not substantially impair the characteristics for which the Riggins House is eligible.

Buena Vista Historic District. South Pasadena

As a result of the reduced freeway width and the addition of the Prospect Circle cut-and-cover Tunnel, the Meridian Variation Alternative Reduced and the Depressed Meridian Variation Alternative Reduced with Shift design variation moved the project 45 feet from the boundary of the District and will eliminate any use of the Buena Vista Historic District. The reduction in light of way width will result in complete avoidance of this tiny, turn-of-the-century district of architect-designed mansions. The District was described as adversely impacted in the FEIS as a result of the partial right-of-way take from one property. The freeway will be approximately 45 feet away from the District's western edge and in a cut-and-cover tunnel, 40-45 feet below grade. The proposed soundwalls will reduce noise levels in the surrounding community and will be located along the alignment, southwest and outside the District boundaries. Because the setting is not the major aspect of the qualities which make the District eligible for the National Register, the addition of soundwalls will not substantially impair the significance of the property. Nonetheless, landscaping will screen them from the District's viewshed. Soundwalls will be constructed as a residential noise abatement design feature and dense landscaping will obscure the walls from view. Therefore, the proximity impacts do not substantially impair the characteristics for which the District is eligible.

OTHER RESOURCES NOT USED

South Pasadena High School Playing Fields

The freeway will avoid the playing fields. The Meridian Variation Alternative presented in the FEIS will be depressed 30 feet below grade in the vicinity of the high school playing fields, and a 1,160 foot cut-and-cover tunnel would have been provided adjacent to the playing fields. Any appreciable freeway-generated noise or pollutants will be negligible at this location as a result of these design features. The Advisory Committee recommended realigning Meridian Avenue westerly to provide contiguous open space with the athletic field and thereby enabling its expansion. It is concluded that with the present design and enhancement measures the project will not substantially impair the use of the high school playing field.

Orange Grove Park

The freeway is designed to avoid the park. The Meridian Variation Alternative presented in the FEIS will be depressed 30 to 40 feet below ground in the vicinity of the Park. The edge of the freeway pavement will be about 140 feet east of the Park. The ambient noise level at Orange Grove Park is 61 dBA. Without noise mitigation, noise levels at the Park are expected to increase to 65 dBA by 2015. However, with the construction of a 10-foot high soundwall, noise levels are expected to be 59 dBA. Only the top of the soundwall will be visible from the park, located well below the level of the existing multi-story buildings that will be removed for the freeway. Air pollution studies predict that neither State nor Federal air quality standards will be exceeded at the Park. Soundwalls will be constructed as a noise abatement design feature and dense landscaping will obscure the walls from view. Therefore, the proximity impacts do not substantially impair the use of the Park.

Singer Park

Singer Park is a 2.89 acre neighborhood park located along California Boulevard; it is an element of the Markham Place District, which is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. At one time, the freeway design would have encroached on this park, requiring removal of all the historic homes across the street from the park, along the east side of St. John Avenue. Subsequent adjustments and refinements as reflected in the Meridian Variation Alternative presented in the FEIS have made this taking unnecessary, and the homes will remain to provide a buffer between the Park and the freeway, which will be depressed 30 feet below ground. Ambient noise levels at the park are 55 dBA. Without noise attenuation, noise levels at the Park are predicted to rise to 64 dBA after freeway construction. A 10-foot high noise wall will reduce noise levels at the park to 58 dBA. Air quality studies indicated that there would be no exceedance of State or Federal ambient air quality standards at the park. As an enhancement measure for Singer Park, the Advisory Committee recommended a low seat wall on the Park's perimeter along St. John Avenue, constructed of concrete block, faced with arroyo stone and clinker brick. To discourage graffiti, ficus vines will be planted adjacent to the wall. Traffic volumes on St. John are expected to decrease with the proposed freeway, but those on California Boulevard are expected to increase. With the incorporation of the foregoing design and enhancement measures, the proximity impacts do not substantially impair the use of Singer Park.

Section 4(f) Conclusion

Based upon the considerations outlined in the Final Revised Section 4(f) Evaluation, FHWA has determined that there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of the eleven historic properties discussed above and the proposed action includes all possible planning to minimize harm resulting from such use. Furthermore, specific procedures for recordation, preparation of structures and fixtures for relocation, moving, storage, maintenance, re-siting and rehabilitation of the above historic buildings will be established using the Secretary of the Interiors Standards for Rehabilitation in consultation with the SHPO, ACHP and interested preservation groups.

