

## Venice Dual Force Main Project Frequently Asked Questions

- *How was this alignment chosen?*

Alternative alignments and construction methods were studied in the EIR. The three routes analyzed for the northern part of the alignment include: 1) Dockweiler Beach, 2) Pacific Avenue, and 3) Via Marina.

The Via Marina alignment was chosen for the following reasons:

1. **Agency Input** – In consultation regarding the Draft EIR, the California Coastal Commission (CCC) submitted letters urging the City to choose a route that avoided the beach and minimized disruption of public access to and use of the beach. Concerns related to the rising sea level and increased coastal erosion over the life of the sewer were also cited. Potential impacts to the endangered California Least Tern nesting area caused concern as well. In consideration of the Final EIR, representatives of the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission, Santa Monica Baykeeper and the Department of Public Works Bureau of Sanitation testified before the LA City Council Public Works Committee that a spill on the beach would be much more difficult to contain. Placement of the sewer as far as possible from the beach and other waterways would minimize risks to human health and water quality.
2. **Proximity to the existing sewer line** - Co-locating the new sewer alongside the old sewer diminishes the benefit of redundancy for system reliability and adds the risk that a threat to one sewer could also cause a failure in the nearby second sewer. As the existing force main is located on the beach, constructing an additional line some distance away from the existing one was considered prudent in the event of a natural disaster, such as an earthquake or tsunami event.
3. **Traffic** - While all of the alternatives have traffic impacts, the Via Marina route was the only option that allowed through traffic at all times and maintained access to driveways of residences and businesses. With the narrower Pacific Avenue alignment, some private driveways would have been blocked, full closure of two intersections would have occurred, and extensive detours would have been required, adversely affecting school buses and public transit.
4. **Cost** – The Final EIR found that the large-diameter tunnel method along the Pacific Avenue alignment from the Venice Pumping Plant to the LAX dunes was the environmentally superior alternative, with the least impacts to environmental resources and reduced impacts during the construction phase. However, this alternative was not selected because of its significantly greater cost (\$68 million in 2008 dollars). The construction cost of the current project is approximately \$55 million.
5. **Hazards** - The Via Marina corridor contains the fewest soil contamination sites and oil/gas wells, therefore the Via Marina alternative has the lowest risk of accidental hazardous material spills.

6. **Overall considerations** – The City’s reasons for selecting the Via Marina alternative are explained in the Venice Dual Force Main EIR Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations and Addendum and are based on consideration of all potential environmental impacts along with economic, legal, social, and technological benefits.

- *Didn’t the County of Los Angeles sue the City of Los Angeles to halt this project?*

In February 2010 the County of Los Angeles sued the City of Los Angeles to halt the project. In general, the County asserted that the City did not have the legal right to construct a sewer within a County street without the County’s permission when another equally feasible alternative that is entirely within City boundaries is available, and that the City’s approval of the project violated the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The County claimed the route under Pacific Avenue was the superior alignment.

The trial court agreed that the City had not justified locating the project through County unincorporated territory and enjoined the City from using County streets for the Project. The City appealed and in March 2013 the Court of Appeal reversed the trial court’s ruling and remanded the case to the trial court for further proceedings. On remand, the trial court denied the County’s writ petition in December 2013 and entered judgment in February 2014. The County did not appeal and the decision became final in April 2014, meaning the City has the right to use the Marquesas Way/Via Marina alignment for this project, subject to obtaining applicable construction and coastal development permits from the County.

For more information about this lawsuit and the final decision, please visit:

[http://appellatecases.courtinfo.ca.gov/search/case/mainCaseScreen.cfm?dist=0&doc\\_id=2043572&doc\\_no=S210152](http://appellatecases.courtinfo.ca.gov/search/case/mainCaseScreen.cfm?dist=0&doc_id=2043572&doc_no=S210152)

The Los Angeles Superior Court case number is BS124959 and the California Supreme Court case number is S210152.

- *When will construction begin and how long will it last?*

Once the final permits are issued, it is expected that construction will begin approximately 12 to 15 months later (a winter 2016 timeframe is expected). While construction is anticipated to be completed within 36 months, the duration will be re-evaluated once the permitted working hours throughout the alignment are known and a construction contractor has been selected and consulted. Initially, the portion of the project in Marina del Rey was expected to be completed within 20 months. However, with the proposed LA County CDP permit restrictions on working hours, the construction duration could likely be extended an additional four (4) to six (6) months or more. The project specifications require the construction contractor to

use two microtunneling machines concurrently in order to minimize the time needed to construct the sewer.

- *What are the construction impacts?*  
During construction, the public should expect the following impacts related to traffic, noise, and aesthetics:

**Traffic:** For the County portion of the alignment, traffic impacts include lane closures on Via Marina although one lane of access in each direction will be available at all times. Southbound left turn pockets will also be included on Via Marina at Marquesas Way, Tahiti Way, Bora Bora Way and NW Passage.

Temporary parking reductions at County Lot 13 will occur and 73 of the 136 spaces will remain available. To clarify, County Lot 13 will remain open and available for parking to the public during construction. Large trucks will be visible on the road conveying construction materials, equipment, and soil removed from the construction sites and shall follow a designated haul route. Pedestrian and bike access will be maintained although alternative routes may be identified by signage. A few public transit stops (five) will be relocated within .25 miles of the original location.

**Noise:** Noise from construction equipment and activities will occur. Many mitigation measures related to noise control will be applied including equipment, hours, working methods, and the use of temporary sound wall barriers at shaft sites. The on-site construction supervisor shall be responsible for responding to and resolving noise complaints and signage containing hotline contact information to address noise concerns shall be posted at work sites.

**Visual/aesthetics:** The project requires the removal of five trees (three Italian stone pine and two paper bark) in County Lot 13. The trees will be replaced with 48-inch box specimens of the same species upon completion of construction. No trees elsewhere along the alignment, including the Silver Strand area, will be affected. Aesthetic impacts also include the use of tall noise barriers (that will look similar to walls of plywood) around construction shafts to dampen construction noise.

- *Will I feel any vibration in my home or business during the microtunneling process? What will the impact of the microtunneling method be on my home or business? How deep below the surface will the construction and the microtunneling work occur?*

The microtunneling work for the entire alignment will occur 40 to 65 feet below the surface. Under the Marina and Ballona Creek Channels, the microtunneling will occur approximately 50 feet below the bottom of the channels.

Residents and businesses should not feel any vibration or movement during the microtunneling process. As the project is located within the public right of way, it

does not pass below or near building foundations. To reduce any vibration that may occur related to the creation of the construction shafts, “press-in” or drilling pile drivers shall be used, as opposed to impact or vibratory pile-drivers.

Furthermore, as part of the environmental review and design process, geotechnical studies have been conducted to ensure microtunneling construction activities would be safe.

- *Was a geotechnical study performed for this project and if so, what were the findings?*  
As the northern part of the project passes through the abandoned Playa del Rey Oil Field, geotechnical investigations were conducted in 2008 and 2014 to evaluate the potential for encountering any abandoned oil wells along the project alignment. Based on information from these studies and consultation with the California Division of Oil, Gas and Natural Resources, City staff adjusted the project alignment to avoid known and potential wells during construction. A sealed construction method shall also be used during microtunneling to prevent the release of any gases that may be naturally occurring or related to prior oil field operations.

- *The project has been on hold for the last five years. Does the City need to recertify the EIR? Why or why not?*  
The project has been on hold for the last five years because the County of Los Angeles sued the City of Los Angeles over issues related to the project alignment. After decisions made by the California Supreme Court and lower trial courts, with the most recent one in February 2014, the City is now moving forward with permitting the alignment on Via Marina.

The Final EIR was adopted in 2010 and remains valid. There have been no major changes to the project design as described in the approved EIR and adopted Findings, Statement of Overriding Considerations, and Addenda. As the project moves through the permit phase, any additional environmental concerns related to construction activities shall be addressed through construction best practices and regulatory permit restrictions.

- *What are the construction hours? If you’re tunneling underground 50 or more feet deep, can you work 24 hours and on weekends to complete the project early? Why or why not?*  
Mitigation measure NOI-1 in the certified EIR included the working hours of Monday - Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. and Saturdays, 8:00 a.m. – 6p.m., in compliance with the City of LA Noise Ordinance. No work is permitted on Sundays or legal holidays. Based on feedback during the City’s CDP process, construction hours in the City of LA portion of the alignment (south of the Marina del Rey and Ballona Creek Channels) will likely be Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. and Saturday, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

LA County CDP permitted construction hours in the County portion of the alignment north of the Marina del Rey Channel shall be Monday through Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. with no work on Sundays or legal holidays. The City of LA understands that these hours are typical of County of LA public works projects. Using this standard, the duration of construction in the County portion based on these hours is expected to be 24 to 26 months or more. If construction work hours were extended to match the City of LA hours of 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, the duration of construction activities may be reduced by four (4) to six (6) months.

The exception to these work hour restrictions is for microtunneling operations under the Marina del Rey and Ballona Creek Channels where it is possible that the contractor could request to work 24 hours (round the clock) to avoid greater environmental risks. The City would only allow these work hours to occur at Pits 4 and 5 (those closest to the channels) if requested by the contractor, and only for underground microtunneling activities. All hauling and excavating activities at these locations would need to occur within the normal working hours. LA County Staff have designed a deviation process to consider and evaluate the City's request should extended working hours need to occur while tunneling under the Channels.

The analysis in the approved EIR does not support 24 hour construction operations throughout the entire alignment.

- *How will emergency services operate?*

Before construction activities begin, the City shall coordinate with emergency service providers (police, fire, ambulance and paramedic services) to provide advance notice of lane closures, construction hours, and changes to local access routes for pedestrians, bikes and vehicles.

In the Via Marina portion of the alignment, south of Marquesas Way, traffic control design provides a minimum of one lane in each direction. Emergency vehicles will have access to the opposing lane of traffic if needed, but also to closed sections of the roadway in case there are vehicles in the opposing lane. The areas available for emergency vehicle access are notated in blue on the project's traffic control exhibits.

- *What is the impact during construction to the fueling dock on Bora Bora Way?*  
None. Fueling trucks will have access during construction and the ability to make turns on Via Marina as needed.
- *Will my home or business have unimpeded access?*  
Yes, access to homes and businesses will be maintained throughout construction. Access to driveways will be maintained at all times.

- *What type of public outreach has been done to support the coastal development permitting process?*

Since September 2014 the City of LA has:

- Hosted public project briefings/open houses during evening hours at the Burton Chace Park Community Room in Marina del Rey, the Westchester Senior Center, and the Venice Library;
- Provided direct mail notices of these events to more than 5000 owners and occupants along the project alignment including those on mole roads in Marina del Rey that are beyond 500 feet of the project;
- Sent notices to individual units and not just managers of the various residential buildings;
- Placed newspaper notices of the events in the local paper, the *Argonaut* and supplemented these notices with email reminders to available addresses;
- Conducted the City CDP hearing near the project site during evening hours; and
- Presented at more than ten (10) project briefings with stakeholder groups including the Small Craft Harbor Commission, Design Control Board of the Small Craft Harbor Commission, Marina del Rey Lessees Association, The Shores and Marina Harbor Apartments, The Marina City Club, the Marina Affairs Committee of the LAX Coastal Chamber of Commerce and three City of LA local area neighborhood councils.

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