



PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA REPORT

MEETING DATE: FEBRUARY 8, 2010

ITEM NUMBER: VII.1

SUBJECT: FREEWAY RIGHT-OF-WAY FENCE OPTIONS

DATE: JANUARY 28, 2010

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: PETER NAGHAVI, TRANSPORTATION SERVICES
MANAGER, 714-754-5182**

DESCRIPTION

The Planning Commission, in an effort to improve the aesthetics in the vicinity of the State of California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) right-of-way, is requiring developers to replace Caltrans chain link with other, more attractive fence treatments and to install/maintain landscaping in Caltrans areas as conditions on certain projects.

RECOMMENDATION

Provide direction on the types of fence that can be installed on Caltrans right-of-way within the City of Costa Mesa.

PETER NAGHAVI

Transportation Services Manager

KIMBERLY BRANDT

Acting Development Services Director

BACKGROUND

Three major freeways travel through the City's boundaries, and thus many areas within Caltrans right-of-way are in need of landscaping and maintenance. The City, over the past several years, has implemented several transportation improvements within Caltrans' jurisdiction. These include improvements at Bristol Street/I-405 Interchange, Harbor Boulevard/I-405 Interchange, Newport Boulevard Corridor in Downtown Costa Mesa, and Fairview Road/I-405 Interchange.

In addition to the above improvements, certain private developments have undertaken landscape maintenance responsibilities within Caltrans' jurisdiction, through three-way maintenance agreements involving Caltrans, the City, and the developer. These agreements were developer-initiated aimed at installing enhanced landscaping as well as a higher maintenance standard. Caltrans does not enter into direct agreements with private entities and developers. Therefore, an agreement is entered between the City and Caltrans and, in turn, the same responsibilities are transferred to the private party by an agreement between the City and the developer.

The City's Planning Commission, in an attempt to further enhance Caltrans areas, has recently conditioned certain developments adjacent to freeways to remove or upgrade fencing, modify and enhance landscaping, and maintain Caltrans areas. These conditions require the developers to enter into maintenance agreements with the City and between the City and Caltrans. While in the past these agreements were limited to landscaping and maintenance of Caltrans areas, they now "may" include new or modified fencing within Caltrans right-of-way.

ANALYSIS

The conditions to upgrade fencing, install enhanced landscaping, and better maintain landscaping results in a two-step process. The first involves the developer obtaining an encroachment permit from Caltrans to remove the existing Caltrans fence and install a replacement fence. Removal of the standard chain link fence and its replacement with an alternative fence type requires review from various Caltrans departments including Right-of-Way, Maintenance, Design, Traffic Operations, and Permits. Upon satisfactory completion of this process, Caltrans will issue a permit to the developer to construct the fence improvements based upon permit conditions. The City will only act as a facilitator and assist where needed to expedite the process.

The second step involves the maintenance agreement. This agreement would be between the City and Caltrans to maintain the new fence as well the landscape improvements. The City will then enter into a similar agreement with the developer transferring the same responsibilities to the developer. The City will require the developer to review and accept the Caltrans agreement prior to the City's execution.

While the Planning Commission had, in the past, incorporated conditions to replace chain link fencing, no specific alternative for variation of kinds of fencing was included. Several fence options available for consideration are briefly discussed below:

Typical Chain Link Fence:

This is the standard fence installed by Caltrans along their right-of-way and is shown in Attachment 1. Caltrans will replace and repair damaged or broken fence along their right-of-way with standard fence. This fence does not require extensive setbacks and is the most economical of all fence types. Typically, it is installed without a top rail. Recently, for the Susan Street/I-405

Offramp Project, the standard chain link fence without a top rail was replaced by chain link fencing with a top rail (Attachment 2) at the developer's expense.

Type 7 Chain Link Fence:

This is also a Caltrans standard fence typically installed at bridge crossings. The fence is vinyl coated and generally includes a top rail. Pictures of Type 7 fence are shown in Attachment 3. The cost of Type 7 fence is higher than the typical standard fence. Similar to standard fencing, this type of fence would not require extensive setbacks for installation.

Wrought Iron Fence:

Attachment 4 shows a wrought iron fence that is more attractive; however, has a higher cost. Due to rigid nature of this fence, Caltrans may require designated setbacks for their installation. Alternatively, Caltrans may require treatments such as guard rails between the fence and the roadway.

Wrought Iron Fence with Pilasters:

Attachment 5 shows a wrought iron fence with pilasters, adding decorative concrete pillars at specific intervals. Similar to wrought iron fencing, installation of this type of fence will require a significant setback from the roadway or treatments such as guard rails between the fence and the roadway.

Block Wall:

Attachment 6 shows Caltrans standard block wall. These are typically installed along freeways as soundwalls. The applicability of such walls is limited to midblock freeway locations adjacent to residential properties. Adjacent to ramps, block walls situated near the roadway may impact sight distance and, therefore, could not be installed. In addition, block walls are not suitable adjacent to commercial properties, as they block visibility.

Fence Recommendation

Staff seeks Planning Commission consideration and priority of various fence options that could be implemented by property owners at Caltrans right-of-way. Once this priority list has been established, staff will meet with Caltrans to review the top-ranked options and obtain their input and feasibility of their installation.

ALTERNATIVES

The Planning Commission may select one or more of the fence types for consideration along properties with freeway frontage. The Planning Commission may also suggest other fence options not mentioned above for staff's discussion with Caltrans.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

There is no environmental action with this report.

CONCLUSION

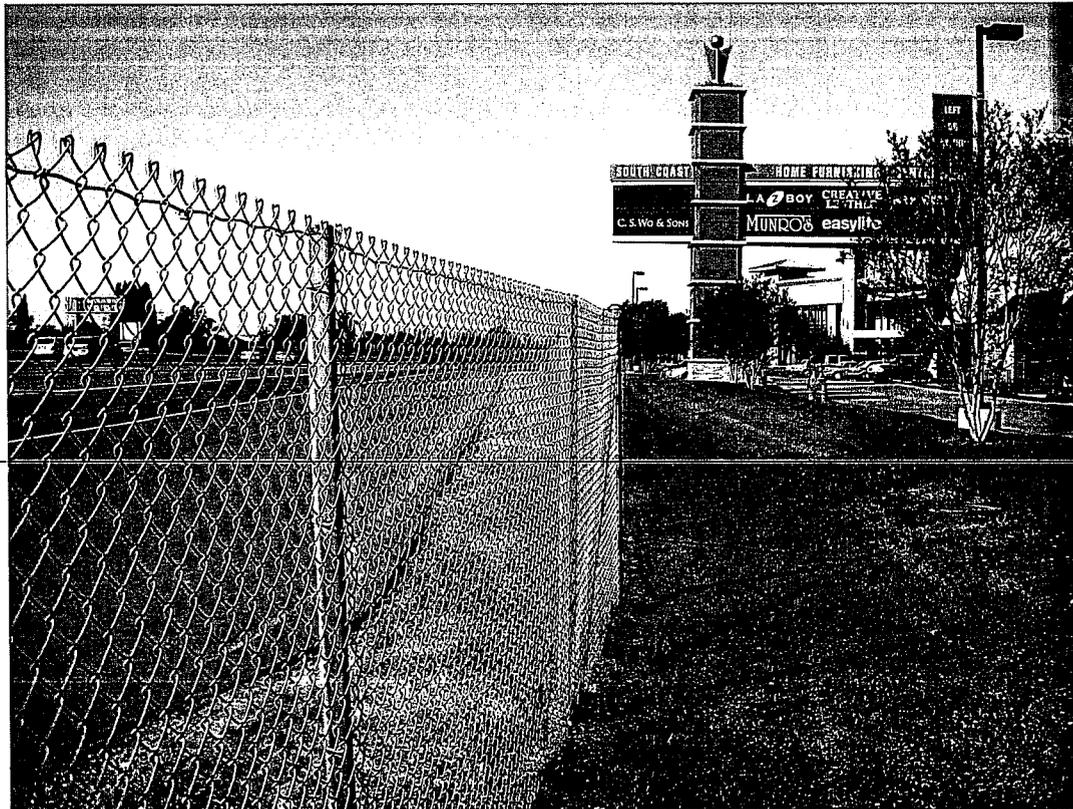
The Planning Commission, in order to improve the appearance of certain Caltrans areas, has directed staff to include conditions for improved landscaping, as well as potential installation of decorative fencing. This report identifies various fence types that could be installed within Caltrans right-of-way. Staff requests Planning Commission consideration and priority of types of fencing that can be presented to Caltrans to further discuss potential utilization in this right-of-way adjacent to certain developments within the City.

- Attachments:
- 1 - Standard Chain Link Fence
 - 2 - Standard Chain Link Fence with Top Rail
 - 3 - Type 7 Vinyl Coated Fence
 - 4 - Wrought Iron Fence
 - 5 - Wrought Iron Fence with Pilasters
 - 6 - Block Wall

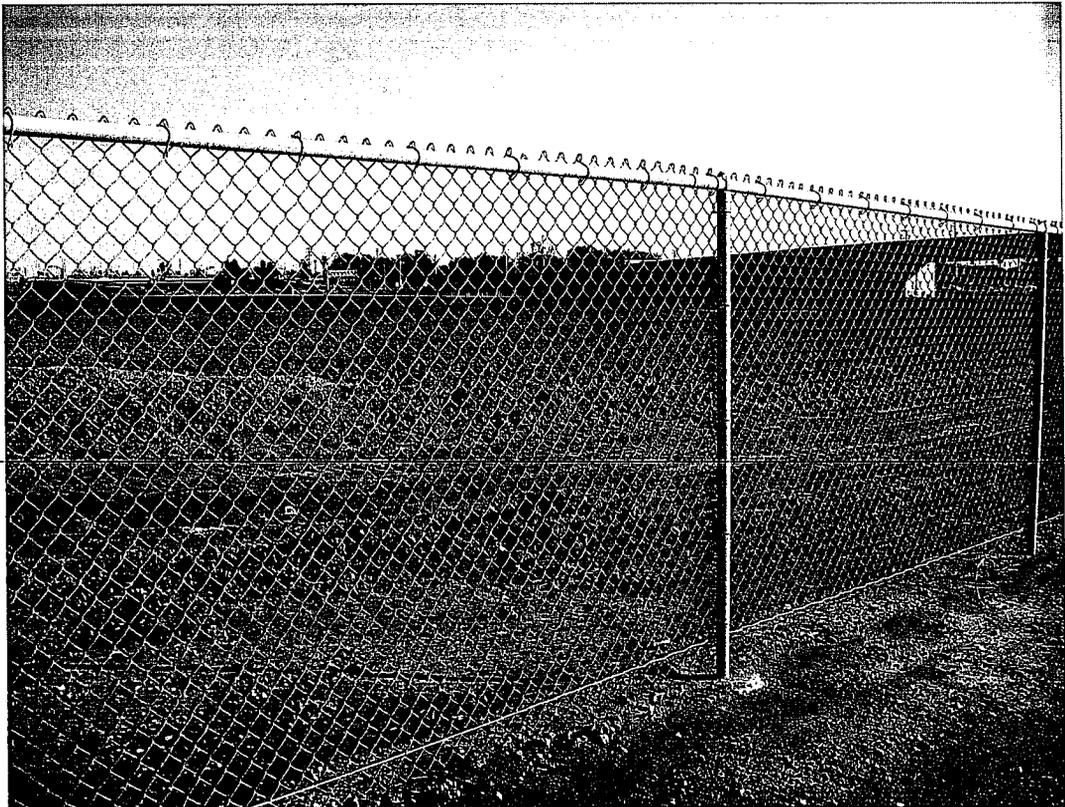
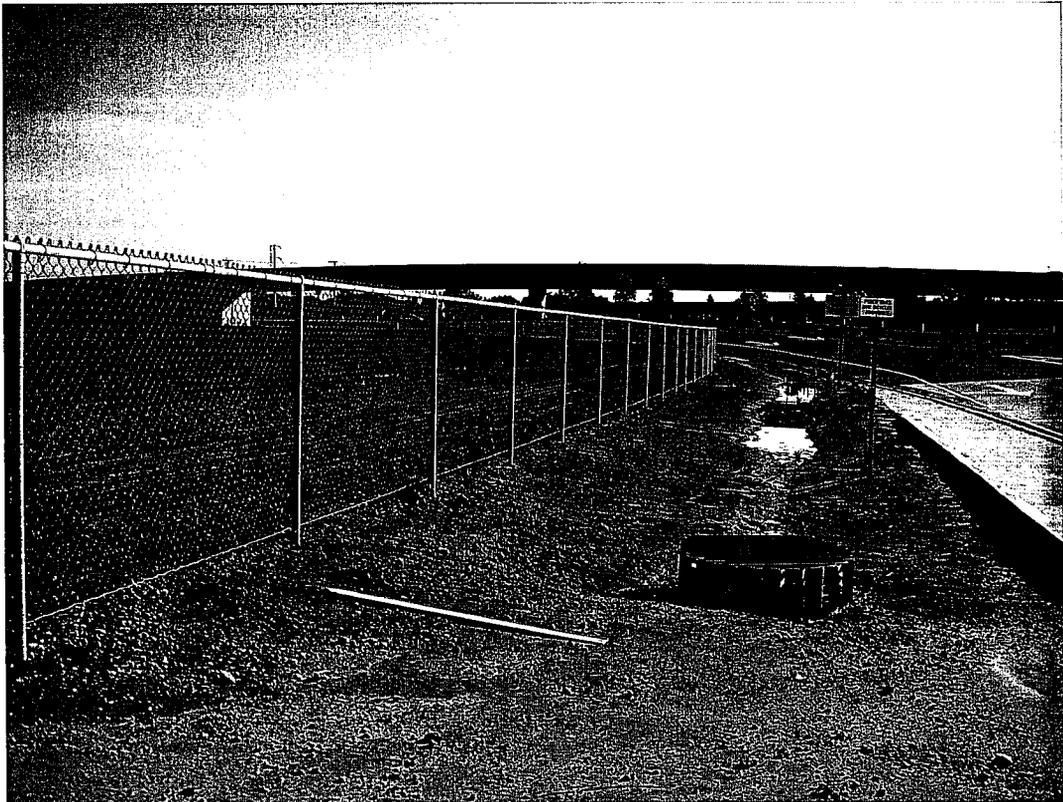
Distribution:

- City Manager
- Assistant City Manager
- City Attorney
- City Engineer
- Transportation Services Manager
- Staff
- File

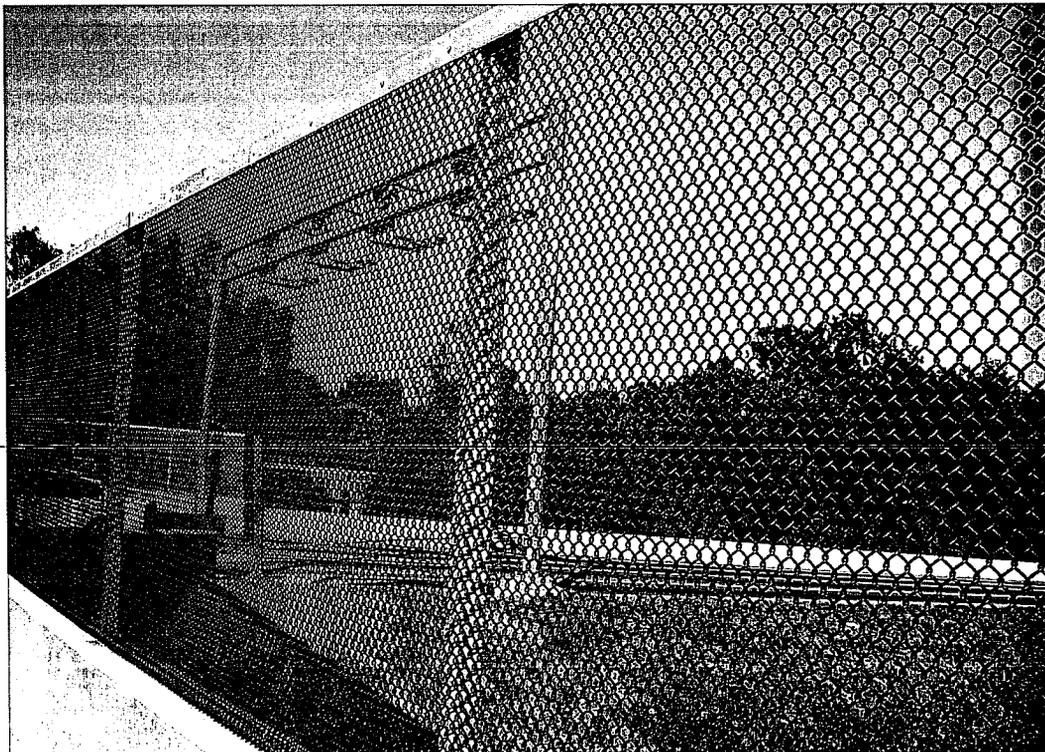
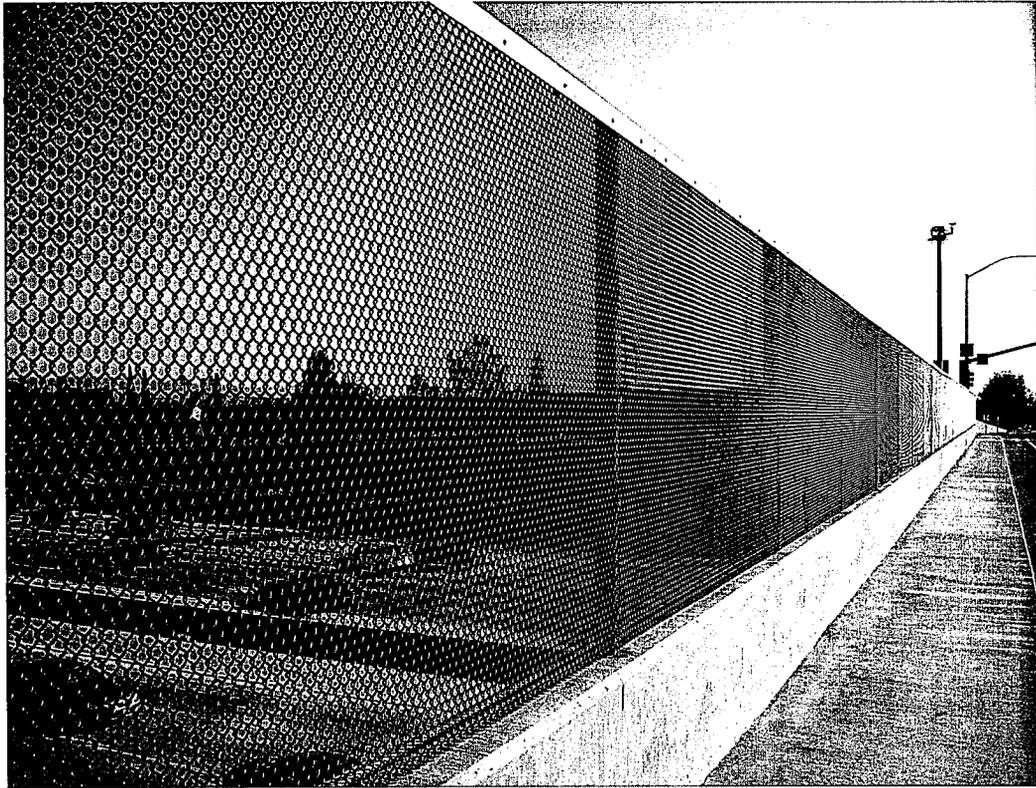
STANDARD CHAIN LINK FENCE



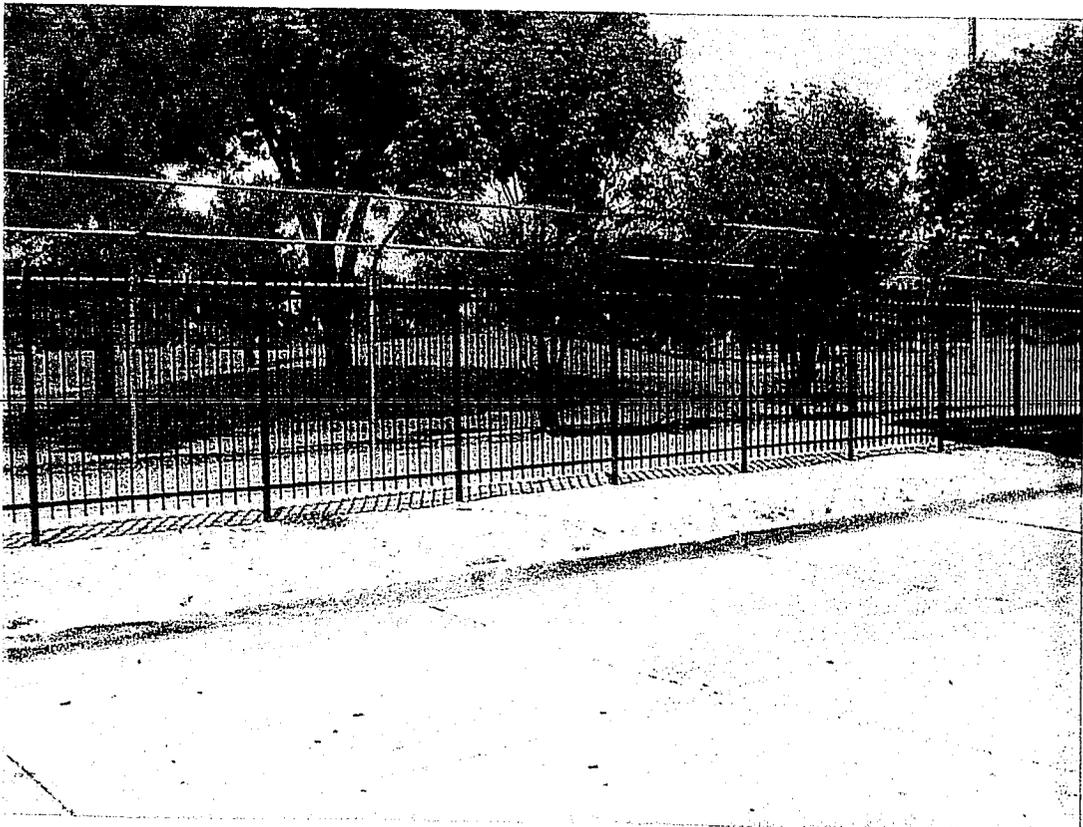
CHAIN LINK FENCE WITH TOP RAIL



TYPE 7 CHAIN LINK FENCE (VINYL COATED)

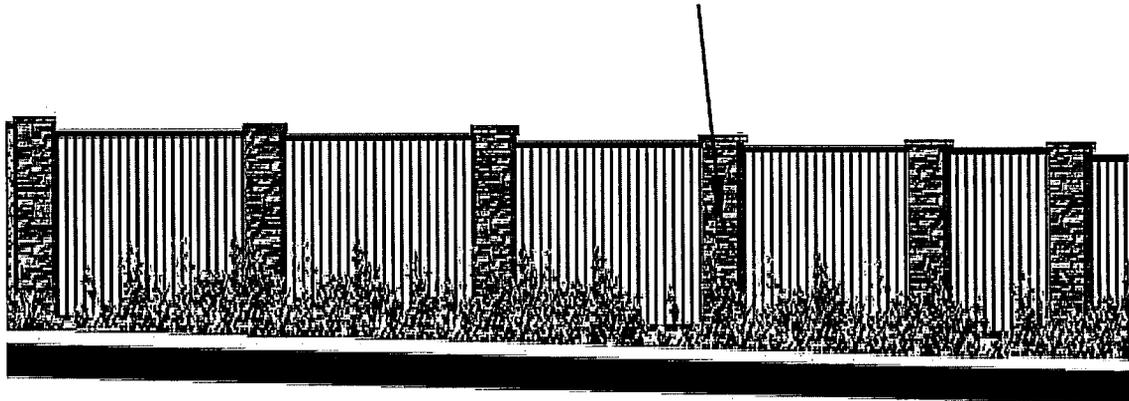


WROUGHT IRON TYPE-A (SOLID)



WROUGHT IRON FENCE W/ PILASTERS

Wrought Iron Fence w/ Pilasters



BLOCK WALL (SLUMPSTONE)

