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PHOENIX - A new freeway plan is in the works for an extension of the Loop 202.

The freeway would be extended around the south side of South Mountain, but the new plan would make the freeway 8 lanes instead of 10.

Robert Hazlett with the Maricopa Association of Governments says that could address some of the concerns of homeowners in Ahwatukee. "And working with ADOT, one of the recommendations that we had was maybe go back to a narrower footprint. And by doing a narrower footprint, we were not having to take as many homes."

Hazlett says the new design is similar to the San Tan 202, except it includes a carpool lane.

"The recommendation for South Mountain is kind of, get in there, get the construction done, get out and go ahead and build the HOV lanes upfront."

He hopes a slimmer roadway will save hundreds of millions of dollars.

Some Ahwatukee residents still don't like the plans for a Loop 202 extension.

Resident Jim Jochim thinks the \$2 billion price tag is too high. "I don't know if it's cost justified to build that when there's pressing needs for more improvements on I-17 and I-10."

He thinks government leaders should work out a deal to build the freeway on Indian land to the south of Pecos Road.

Jochim says the government keeps changing the plans. "They started out with a 10-lane freeway. Then they put on the table a parkway. Then they put on the table an option I'm gonna call 'The Michigan' - to make a left turn you gotta make a right turn. And now they're back to the concept of an 8-lane."

He says the road will come too close to many homes and schools like the Kyrene de los Lagos Elementary School.

He says the westbound lane "will abut the school and cause serious noise and pollution issues for the 500-plus students at this school."

The plan still needs environmental review by ADOT.

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