

SR-86 Transportation Concept Summary April 2011

CORRIDOR PURPOSE

The primary purpose of SR-86 is to provide north-south access for interregional, intra-regional, and international travel. SR-86 is the primary north-south route for interregional travel throughout Imperial County. SR-86 provides for intercity travel between several of the region's largest cities: Mexicali, Calexico, El Centro, and Brawley in Imperial County, and Indio in Riverside County.

SR-86 is the primary travel corridor for the movement of goods being shipped into the Los Angeles area from the Imperial Valley. SR-86 also serves as a connection to distribution centers and consumers throughout the United States for goods being shipped into the United States from Mexico. SR-86 is the principal route used by Imperial Valley agricultural producers for the distribution of agricultural products, providing access for many of the area's agricultural support facilities.

CORRIDOR NEEDS

Over the last several years, a number of SR-86 expressway projects have been completed in Imperial County. The existing SR-86 four lane expressway north of Brawley is an important part of a proposed high level expressway connection between the U.S./Mexico international border and I-10 in Riverside County that has been called the "NAFTA Farm-To-Market Highway." This proposed system will consist of the SR-7 expressway, the SR-111 expressway, the SR-78/111 Brawley Bypass, and the existing SR-86 expressway north of Brawley. This system will facilitate interregional travel throughout the Imperial and Coachella Valleys, improve intercity and international travel between Baja California, Mexico and Los Angeles, and provide an improved facility for the movement of goods throughout the region. Needs and issues related to other portions of SR-86 are as follows:

From Junction SR-111 (PM R0.0) to Junction I-8 (PM 6.0), SR-86 is a conventional highway. Land adjacent to this portion of SR-86 has been rapidly changing from predominantly agricultural land uses to developed commercial and residential properties, including, hotels, fast food outlets, shopping centers, single family home subdivisions, etc. Some four-lane sections, as well as signalization and left turn pockets, have been constructed in the northern portion of this segment to accommodate traffic flow and turning moves into these properties. In this area, speeds are fairly low and SR-86 functions more like a city street than a highway. Further potential development is expected to occur within this segment.

There are no capacity improvements proposed for this portion of SR-86. However, the draft 2008 Imperial County Transportation Plan currently under development proposes a

southerly extension of Imperial Avenue from I-8 south to McCabe Road. This roadway will be located 1 mile west of SR-86 and will be constructed as a six lane prime arterial.

From I-8 (PM 6.0) to junction Adams Avenue/Imperial Avenue (PM 7.308), SR-86 is also called 4th Street and Adams Avenue as it passes through the heart of El Centro's Business District. Again, in this area, SR-86 functions more like a city street than a conventional highway due to the prevalence of signals, turning lanes and slow speeds. This four-lane conventional highway portion of SR-86 behaves operationally like a busy city street. There are numerous driveways that create significant side friction resulting in slow speeds. This portion of the route clearly does not function as an interregional transportation facility.

From junction Adams Avenue/Imperial Avenue (PM 7.308) to 0.334 mile north of Julia Avenue near Brawley (PM 20.017), SR-86 becomes a four-lane controlled access facility (expressway). Land use within the City of El Centro's sphere of influence adjacent to this portion of SR-86 consists of residential and mixed use commercial, including big box department stores such as Wal-Mart. Additional developments adjacent to this portion of SR-86 are planned for the future. This portion of SR-86 was constructed as an expressway in 1949. However, it was never added to the official Freeway and Expressway System.

From an operational viewpoint, traffic generated from additional proposed developments in this segment will further degrade the Level of Service (LOS) on the facility, which can ultimately decrease the functionality of SR-86 as an interregional facility.

The northern end of this segment from approximately Legion Road (PM 19.19) to .334 mile north of Julia Avenue (PM 20.017) is an undivided four-lane expressway. There are a number of driveways in this one mile stretch of SR-86 that cause this stretch of roadway to function more like a conventional highway than an expressway. Further studies should be pursued to determine the feasibility of converting this section of SR-86 from an expressway to a conventional highway.

From 0.334 north of Julia Avenue (PM 20.017) to Junction SR-78 (PM 20.63), SR-86 is a four-lane conventional highway fronted by commercial and residential development. It is characterized by slower speeds as traffic enters and leaves the City of Brawley.

From SR-78 (PM 20.63) to just west of Brandt Road (PM 21.78), SR-78 is a four-lane conventional highway traversing the City of Brawley.

From just west of Brandt Road (PM 21.78) to the Riverside County Line (PM 67.82), SR-86 is a four lane expressway with a small portion of 4 lane conventional highway within the City of Westmorland. The draft 2008 Imperial County Transportation plan proposes a project called the Westmorland Bypass that would allow through traffic to bypass the City of Westmorland. This four lane expressway on new alignment would extend approximately four miles from SR-86 near Andre Road and rejoin SR-86 near Lack Road.

CORRIDOR ANALYSIS

For purposes of analysis, portions of SR-86 are expressway and portions are conventional highway. Some specific issues and improvements need to be analyzed separately depending on the type of facility, however, from a corridor perspective, these issues and improvements work together to improve traffic flow throughout the entire corridor.

CORRIDOR TRAFFIC

SR-86 will be experiencing an increase in traffic in the future. In some cases, traffic is expected to double between 2006 and 2025 in certain parts of the corridor; however, the SR-86 roadway capacity in these areas will be able to accommodate the additional traffic. The following table shows existing and future traffic conditions for SR-86.

Existing and Future Average Weekday Traffic

LOCATION	2010 AADT ¹	2010 LOS ²	2025 AWDT ³	2025 LOS ²
SR-111 to Dogwood Road	6,600	B	10,000	B
Dogwood Road to McCabe Road	7,100	B	24,100	B
McCabe Rd to I-8	21,800	B	24,100	C
I-8 to Imperial Avenue	29,500	C	46,500	D
Imperial Avenue to Barioni Blvd	31,500	B	46,200	D
Barioni Blvd to Keystone	20,900	A	27,500	B
Keystone Ave to East. Junction. SR-78	18,000	A	29,000	C
East. Junction SR-78 to Fredricks Road (future Brawley Bypass)	16,100	B	18,000	A
Fredricks Road (future Brawley Bypass) to West Junction SR-78	10,900	A	17,600	B
West Junction SR-78 to South Marina	9,600	A	17,200	A
South Marina to County Line	13,800	A	22,600	B

¹ 2010 AADT's derived from Caltrans 2010 Traffic Volumes on California State Highways. In some segments, AADT's are averages. Estimated percentage of traffic volume deviation ranges from 8%-14%.

² 2010 and 2025 Level of Service (LOS) are based on sketch level planning analysis and are not to be used for design purposes.

³ 2025 AADT's are from the Imperial County Transportation Model. These numbers are estimates based on current and proposed regional growth and are subject to change based on potentially different growth estimates

RECOMMENDED CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENTS

With the exception of the proposed Westmorland Bypass 4 lane expressway, there are no mainlane capacity enhancing projects proposed for SR-86.

The following table shows proposed non-capacity projects for SR-86.

Post Mile	Location	Description	Phase
4.5	SR-86/McCabe Road	Install New Traffic Signals	PSR
15.1-15.5	0.2 mile south to 0.2 mile north of Keystone Road	Install Traffic Signal	PSE
19.1 - 20.2	0.1 mile south of Legion Road to 0.5 mile north of Julia Drive	Road widening and Access to two new public roads and one driveway	PSE
R33.3 - 43.1	0.4 mile south of Bannister Road to 0.5 mile south of North Junction SR-78	Replace PCC Pavement	PSE
35.2-65.7	Various from Deep Bridge to Shoreline Ditch Bridge	Clean and Treat Bridge Deck with Methyacrylate and replace Joint Seals	PSE
60.5	Tesla Wash	Scour Mitigation	PSR

The following table shows projects that are included in the District 11 Ten-Year State Highway Operation and Protection Plan (SHOPP) Needs Plan.

Post Mile	Location	Description	Category /Fiscal Year
0.0-20.6	Junction SR-111 to Brawley City Limits ¹	Relinquish Route	Emergency&Mandated 2010/2011
0.0 - 67.8	Junction SR-111 to Riverside County Line	Upgrade 124 Signs- Materials and Exit #s	Roadway Preservation 2017/18
	Various	Bridge Rail upgrade, rehabilitation and scour mitigation	Bridge Preservation 2013/14

¹ This description will be modified in the final 2011 10 Year SHOPP Needs list to "Junction SR-111 to 0.5 mile south of Fredricks Road".

TRANSIT SERVICE

The majority of transit service in Imperial Valley is provided by Imperial Valley Transit (ICT). ICT is an intercity fixed route system subsidized by the Imperial Valley Association of Governments (IVAG), administered by the County Department of Public Works, and operated by Laidlaw Transit Services, Inc., a private-for-profit service. ICT operates six fixed-routes which serve the communities of Brawley, Calexico, Calipatria,

El Centro, Holtville, Niland, Seeley, and Westmorland, Monday through Saturday. Additionally, ICT operates limited service to Winterhaven (each Wednesday), Bombay Beach (each Thursday), and two express round-trips to Imperial Valley College (IVC Express), which supplements the regularly scheduled service. The IVC Express offers one round trip from Niland and one round-trip from Calexico on IVC school days only. Passenger ridership currently averages 23,000 passengers a month. Several ICT routes travel on portions of SR-86.

The County also administers Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) paratransit service known as Areawide Independent Mobility (AIM) Transit. AIM Transit offers a curb-to-curb Dial-A-Ride service for the disabled who are not able to use the traditional fixed-route service. While the Dial-A-Ride service remains available to seniors over the age of 60, priority is given to those certified under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). ADA Paratransit will transport users anywhere within a $\frac{3}{4}$ mile corridor of Imperial County Transit routes.

Additional, individual agency public transit services include demand-responsive Dial-A-Ride services offered by the Cities of Brawley, Calexico, El Centro, and Imperial.

Future transit service improvements will include expanding and/or restructuring current transit service to improve efficiency and productivity, adding new services such as the El Centro Circulator Shuttle, and conducting additional Circulator Bus Feasibility studies.

NONMOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION

The County of Imperial's bicycle facilities program is designed to enhance environmental and social benefits for the citizens of Imperial County by providing an integrated network system of bicycle and pedestrian facility for the safe and efficient movement in and through the County of Imperial. This includes an integrated bicycle circulation system which includes facilities to promote the environmental and social benefits of commuter and recreational bicycling. Class II bikeways shall be planned into appropriate Prime, Major, and Secondary arterials. The County shall cooperate with other governmental agencies to provide connection and continuation of bicycle corridors. The bicycle circulation system will be integrated with auto, pedestrian, and transit systems.

The County of Imperial Bicycle Master Plan Update (September 2003) recommends implementation of a 252 mile system of bicycle lanes, routes and pathways that will link to schools, shopping, employment and future expanding residential areas. In addition, Bicycle Master Plans were developed in 2002 and 2003 for the Cities of Brawley, Calexico, El Centro, Calipatria, Holtville, Imperial, and Westmorland. In many of these plans, bicycle facilities are proposed for routes parallel to SR-86, and in some cases, bicycle facilities are proposed for portions of SR-86. Currently, bicycle travel is permissible on all segments of SR-86 in Imperial County.

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

Caltrans District 11 Development Review staff in the Planning Division review federal, state, and local planning or proposed development activity that has the potential to impact state transportation facilities or other resources under Caltrans' jurisdiction, and to recommend conditions of project approval that eliminate those impacts or reduce them to a level of insignificance. Typically, this involves the review of development proposals in which Caltrans is either a responsible (permitting) or commenting (reviewing) agency, but has no discretionary approval power over the project other than permit authority. Development Review staff work cooperatively with local lead agencies and developers in determining the type and level of mitigation needed to offset project impacts. They are also responsible for identifying other functional areas within District 11 that are affected by the proposal, and coordinating the circulation of appropriate documents with other functional areas for review and comment.

Based on the Caltrans Traffic Impact Study (TIS) guidelines, a 1,000 Average Daily Traffic (ADT) threshold size triggers the need for developers to prepare a traffic study for their project. The following information generally includes projects for which an Environmental Document, a Specific Plan or a Master Plan has been or will be prepared. There are approximately 12 potential major development projects within and adjacent to the SR-86 corridor between SR-111 and I-8 that will each generate more than the 1,000 ADT threshold. Total cumulative projected ADT from these developments is expected to be approximately 18,000. For the portion of SR-86 between El Centro and Brawley, there are 31 major development projects expected to cumulatively generate approximately 378,000 ADT. The portion of SR-86 from Brawley to the Riverside County Line is expected to see two large developments generating approximately 40,000 ADT. There may be an additional number of smaller development projects that may have additional cumulative impacts on traffic in the corridor. Because of uncertainties associated with future demographic, socioeconomic, and political climates, the scale of development may be subject to change. The development application and approval process is also subject to change. Changes in land use prompting rapid housing and commercial development growth will need to be monitored closely by all impacted jurisdictions and agencies. Appropriate traffic studies for proposed developments will need to be conducted and reviewed carefully by Caltrans staff. Land development and local capital improvement projects should also be coordinated with Caltrans projects. Further information regarding specific development projects in the SR-86 corridor can be obtained from the Caltrans District 11 Development Review Branch.

SR-111 to I-8

In 1997, Caltrans entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the City of El Centro for the portion of SR-86 from McCabe Road (PM 4.53) to I-8. An MOU between Caltrans and the County of Imperial for the portion of SR-86 between the beginning of the route at junction SR-111 (PM R 0.0) and McCabe Road was also developed in 1997, but was never finalized. Although these portions of SR-86 are not classified as an expressway, access control is still a major issue.

The purpose of the MOU's is to provide policy and procedure for the lead agencies and developers regarding specific access locations and intersection controls for sections of SR-86, therefore allowing SR-86 to function as an interregional facility. The use of the MOU for El Centro has been only modestly successful in that regard. Developers have re-subdivided properties to create more lots fronting on SR-86, arguing that each is entitled to a driveway. Other developers have argued that poor economic impacts would result from proposed limited access.

From I-8 to junction Adams Avenue/Imperial Avenue

This portion of SR-86 traverses a mostly built-out area of El Centro. No major developments are proposed for this area.

Junction Adams Avenue/Imperial Avenue to 0.334 mile north of Julia Avenue near Brawley.

Route 86 in this area is an expressway with designated access points connecting to the expressway. As development occurs, the construction of new or expansion of existing access points to SR-86 becomes problematic. From a procedural point of view, new access, including widening existing access, must follow the Department's new public road connection policy, requiring California Transportation Commission (CTC) approval to de-certify the access control. This is a lengthy process that includes development of environmental reports, a real estate value enhancement report, a Project Study Report, and traffic studies.

RELINQUISHMENT ISSUES

As indicated in the previous 10-Year SHOPP Needs table, relinquishing SR-86 from the beginning of the route at the junction of SR-111 to the Brawley City Limits is included in the "Emergency & Mandated" SHOPP category. However, the proposed relinquishment should extend from SR-111 to the logical northern terminus 0.5 mile south of Fredricks Road. This is the location where the new 4 lane expressway known as the Brawley Bypass will connect with SR-86.

Coordination with all appropriate jurisdictions and agencies, further studies, and cooperative agreements is necessary before portions of SR-86 can be relinquished. Specifically the Caltrans "Procedures for Facilitating Legislative Relinquishment of State Highways" establishes procedures for the relinquishment of State Highways by legislative enactment and defines the roles and responsibilities of Headquarters and the Districts in the process. Chapter 25, "Relinquishments," in the Project Development Procedures Manual contains additional information.

Section 73 of the Streets and Highways Code allows the California Transportation Commission (CTC) to relinquish State Highways. Types of relinquishment include: deletion of a State Highway by legislative enactment, superseding the existing State Highway by relocation, or an agreement with a local agency to accept collateral facilities that are not part of the main traveled way and are constructed by a State Highway project. Potential relinquishments by legislative enactment can be proposed by either

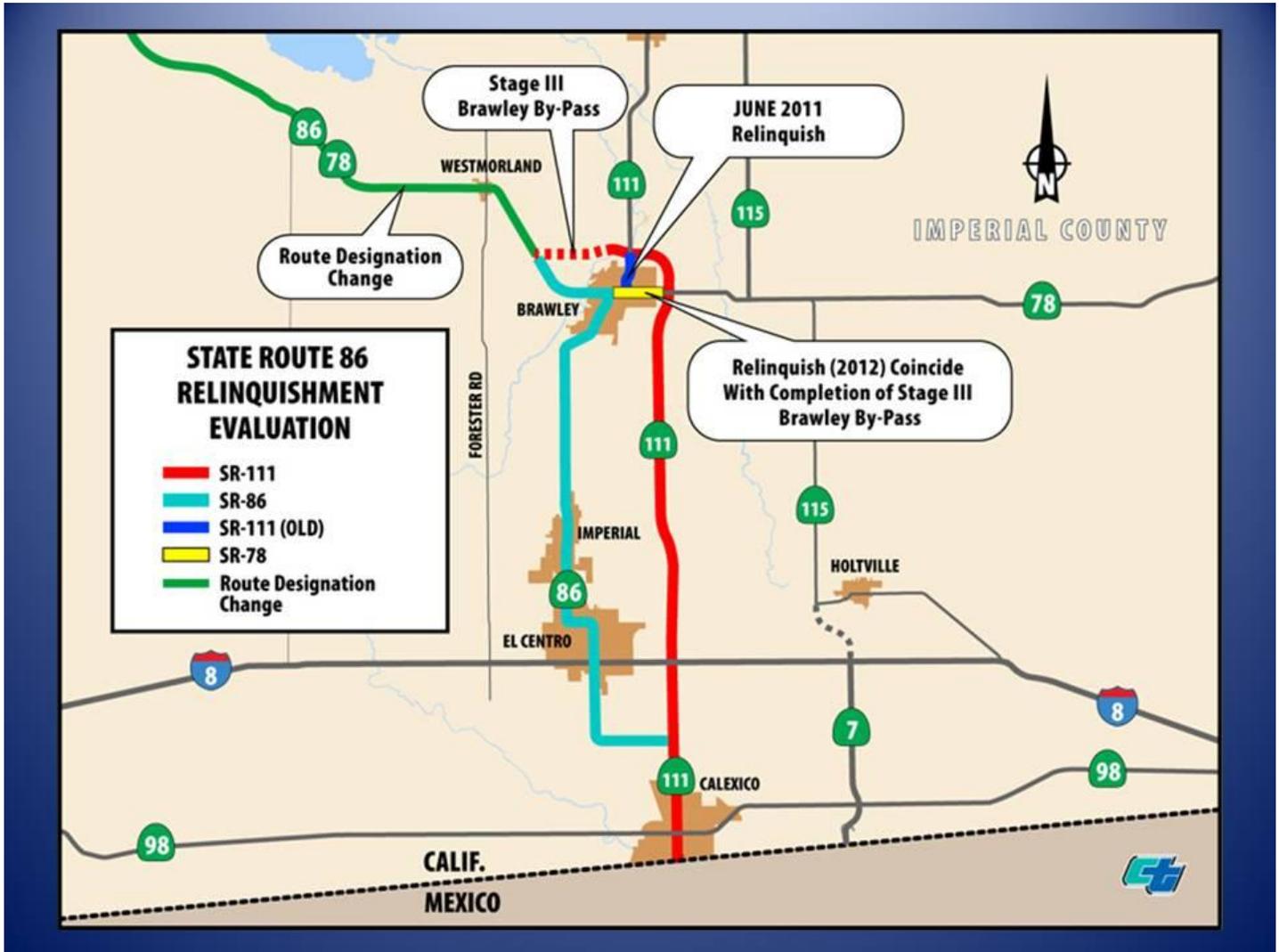
the Department or the appropriate local agency and consist of State Highway segments that do not serve regional or statewide transportation needs.

Prior to pursuing any relinquishment by legislative enactment, the District must first develop a Transportation System Analysis and Evaluation (TSAE) Report for the entire State route within the District, even if only a portion of the route is to be considered for relinquishment. This report includes approximately 25 planning oriented data items related to the potential relinquishment. The report should be in enough detail to determine the appropriateness of determining logical termini for the relinquishment from the state highway system.

District 11 has completed the TSAE for relinquishing the portion of SR-86 from SR-111 to 0.5 mile south of Fredricks Road. This report is anticipated to be approved by Caltrans Headquarters Division of Transportation Planning. Seven separate segments are analyzed in this report, however, ultimately relinquishment segments in future documents such as Project Study Report/Project Development Support (PSR/PDS), Project Scope and Summary Reports (PSSRs), and Cooperative Agreement Reports (CARs) will be based on jurisdictional boundaries.

The District will also begin working on a 2012 PSR/PDS document for the relinquishment of this portion of SR-86. In addition, PSSRs and CARs will be prepared for relinquishments to the individual jurisdictions, which include the County of Imperial, the City of El Centro, the City of Imperial, and the City of Brawley. After the relinquishments are completed, the existing portion of SR-86 from 0.5 mile south of Fredricks Road (PM IMP 23.8) to the north junction of SR-78 (PM IMP 43.6) will be redesignated as SR-78, and the Interregional Road System description for this segment will be legislative changed from SR-86 to SR-78.

There are two additional, related relinquishments in the Brawley area. The following map provides a good summary of this proposed SR-86 relinquishment, the related relinquishments, and the route redesignation:



The District is responsible for negotiating the terms of the relinquishment with the local agency that will accept ownership of the facility. This negotiation must be processed through the Relinquishment Advisory Committee (RAC).

The role of the RAC is to evaluate the District's relinquishment proposals to determine if it falls within a reasonable range of costs-to-relinquish. The Committee includes representation from Headquarters' Legal, Design, Planning, Programming, Maintenance, and Operations. As a member of the Committee, the Design Coordinator is the key link between the District and the Committee. The District must involve the Design Coordinator in the preparation of a cost-benefit analysis prior to negotiations with the Local Agency. The RAC conceptual approval of the District's proposal provides the basis for negotiations with the Local Agency.

The CTC must approve all relinquishments. There are generally two actions by the CTC to remove a highway from the State Highway System. The first action approves the removal and discusses the cost-to-relinquish the highway. The second action authorizes the funding and advertising of a capital project or authorizes the transfer of capital funds to the Local Agency. If the highway is in adequate condition and construction work is not needed then the second action by the CTC is not needed. The CTC approval process is coordinated through the Division of Design, Office of Project Development Procedures.

Additional processes described in the California Streets and Highways Code Section 256.1, Report on Deletion of Highways, must also be followed, including holding a public hearing.