

State of California  
Business Transportation & Housing Agency  
Department of Transportation

HIGHWAY ROUTE MATTERS  
Notice of Intention to Consider  
Rescinding Freeway Adoption  
Resolution NIU 02-01  
05-SB-135 KP 16.1/21.2 (10.0/13.2)  
CTC Meeting: July 18, 2002

Prepared by:  
Karla Sutliff  
Chief  
Division of Design  
(916) 654-3858

Reference No. 2.3a.(5)

*Original Signed By:*  
ROBERT L. GARCIA  
Chief Financial Officer  
July 1, 2001

**NOTICE OF INTENTION TO CONSIDER  
RESCINDING FREEWAY ADOPTION**

**Recommendation**

Submitted for transmittal to the California Transportation Commission (Commission) is the Notice of Intention to Consider Rescinding Freeway Adoption Resolution NIU 02-01. As requested by the City of Santa Maria and concurred with by the District, the Department of Transportation recommends the Commission approve Resolution NIU 02-01 to initiate recycling procedures to consider rescinding the freeway adoption for Route 135 in the City of Santa Maria and in Santa Barbara County, from Kilometer Post 16.1 to 21.2 (Post Mile 10.0 to 13.2).

This report describes the current status of the un-constructed freeway and the need for acquired right of way to be used for future transportation purposes. The procedures for recycling were established by the Commission in Resolution No. G-15, adopted on November 17, 1978 and amended on February 29, 1980. According to the Resolution, the recycling process cannot be initiated without consent from the Commission. With the Commission's approval of Resolution NIU 02-01, the Department will notify all affected local, regional and State agencies of the rescission proposal and ask the agencies for any additional pertinent information that might be helpful to the Commission in making a final decision. There is no excess right of way to dispose of.

Recommended by: BRENT FELKER, Deputy Director  
Project Development

## **Background**

Existing State Highway Route 135 begins in Los Alamos in Santa Barbara County at U.S. Highway 101 and runs northward 18.9 kilometers (11.7 miles) as a two lane conventional highway to its junction with State Highway Route 1. For 6 kilometers (3.75 miles) combined State Highway Routes 1 and 135 continue northward as a four lane divided highway with at grade intersections. From its northern separation from State Highway Route 1, State Highway Route 135 continues for 7.7 kilometers (4.8 miles) as a controlled access facility with a diamond interchange at Clark Avenue and at-grade intersections to Santa Maria. As State Highway Route 135 enters the City of Santa Maria it becomes a six-lane urban arterial and continues for another 7.4 kilometers (4.6 miles) through Santa Maria with full development on both sides and no access control to its northern terminus at U.S. 101. This section from State Highway Route 1 to U.S. 101 is functionally classified as a Principal Arterial and is a Federal Aid Urban Route. State Highway Route 135 is not on either the California Freeway and Expressway System (F&E System), or the California Scenic Highway System. Though not listed on the F&E System, the Commission (California Highway Commission – CHC) adopted and declared that portion of State Highway Route 135 north of State Highway Route 1 to Patterson Rd as a freeway route on September 20, 1962 and from Patterson Rd north to KP 21.2 (PM 13.2) as a freeway route on December 14, 1955. The route is part of the National Highway System (NHS) from its beginning at U.S. 101 in Los Alamo, to Clark Avenue (see EXHIBIT A), south of Santa Maria.

Over the past thirty five years, the type of connection for the approved Union Valley Parkway (UVP) has gone back and forth between an at-grade connection and a full interchange. Recently, the City of Santa Maria and Santa Barbara County have determined their direction as it relates to State Highway Route 135. Following the completion of appropriate engineering and environmental studies, the two local agencies now concur that the appropriate action is to rescind the freeway designation of State Highway Route 135 as identified in this report, and widen the existing facility to a six lane conventional highway with at grade intersections. To that end, the City of Santa Maria is currently preparing two projects on this route that assume State Route 135 is a conventional highway. The first is an at grade intersection for the proposed Union Valley Parkway, planned to connect with State Highway Route 135 at KP 17.1 (PM 10.7), ultimately providing an east-west link between US-101 and State Highway Route 1, serving current and future development as well as inter-regional mobility needs. This project is designated EA 05-41930, with a PSR approved June, 2000. The second, EA 05-45580 with PSR(PDS) circulating for approval, proposes to widen State Highway Route 135 to six lanes between Union Valley Parkway and the existing six lane facility at Santa Maria Way.

The 1986 Route Concept Report (RCR) is the current system planning document. This RCR states that the concept for this portion of State Highway Route 135 is a six-lane facility for the segment from KP 14.6 to 28.6 (PM 9.1-17.8). The City of Santa Maria's General Plan Circulation element shows this portion of Route 135 as a six lane primary arterial highway, not as a freeway. Rescission of the Freeway Adoption is consistent with the RCR and the current City and County circulation element in their general plans. State Highway Route 135 is on the list of inappropriate State routes considered candidates for relinquishment. Discussions of possible relinquishment of the route indicate the local agencies do not favor such action.

Numerous meetings and public hearings have been held with local agencies and elected officials to discuss the rescission of this portion of State Highway Route 135. The results have been an approved and signed resolution from the City of Santa Maria to the District 5 Director requesting the rescission, a letter of support from the County of Santa Barbara, and a memorandum from Acting District Director, Jim Nicholas, showing the District's support and requesting the Commission initiate the rescission process. No funds or resources have been expended by the Department on engineering or environmental studies toward the development of a freeway on the roadway portion of interest.

Rescission of the freeway route adoption is not considered controversial in the District or community. Rather, it is the possible construction of a freeway facility as described in the freeway agreements that is controversial. Construction of the freeway facility would require right of way acquisition estimated at \$2.4 million in 1998 and would take the facility close to school and park properties as well as require the closing or realignment of roadways considered essential to local circulation. While originally included in freeway agreements approximately 50 years ago, the realignment and closures are now controversial. Local residents and civic leaders concur with Project Study Reports and Environmental Documents that conclude a six-lane conventional highway with at-grade intersections would better serve the needs and desires of the community, would be approximately \$1 million less expensive, would be more sensitive to the context of the area, provide better inter-regional and local circulation, and would eliminate the need for approval of non-standard expressway intersection spacing at Union Valley Parkway.

### **Proposal**

The District proposes to rescind the freeway route adoption for 5.1 kilometers (3.2 miles) of State Highway Route 135 from the beginning of the southbound Clark Avenue off ramp at KP 16.1 (PM 10.0), to the northern terminus of the freeway adoption at KP 21.2 (PM 13.2) in the City of Santa Maria (see EXHIBIT A). This portion of State Highway Route 135 would become a conventional highway. All acquired right of way is necessary for the completion of the City's proposed six-lane widening project, therefore, there is no excess right of way to dispose of. The District proposes to retain previously purchased access rights to maintain the integrity of the system by limiting access to currently proposed levels, including the at grade connection with the proposed Union Valley Parkway.

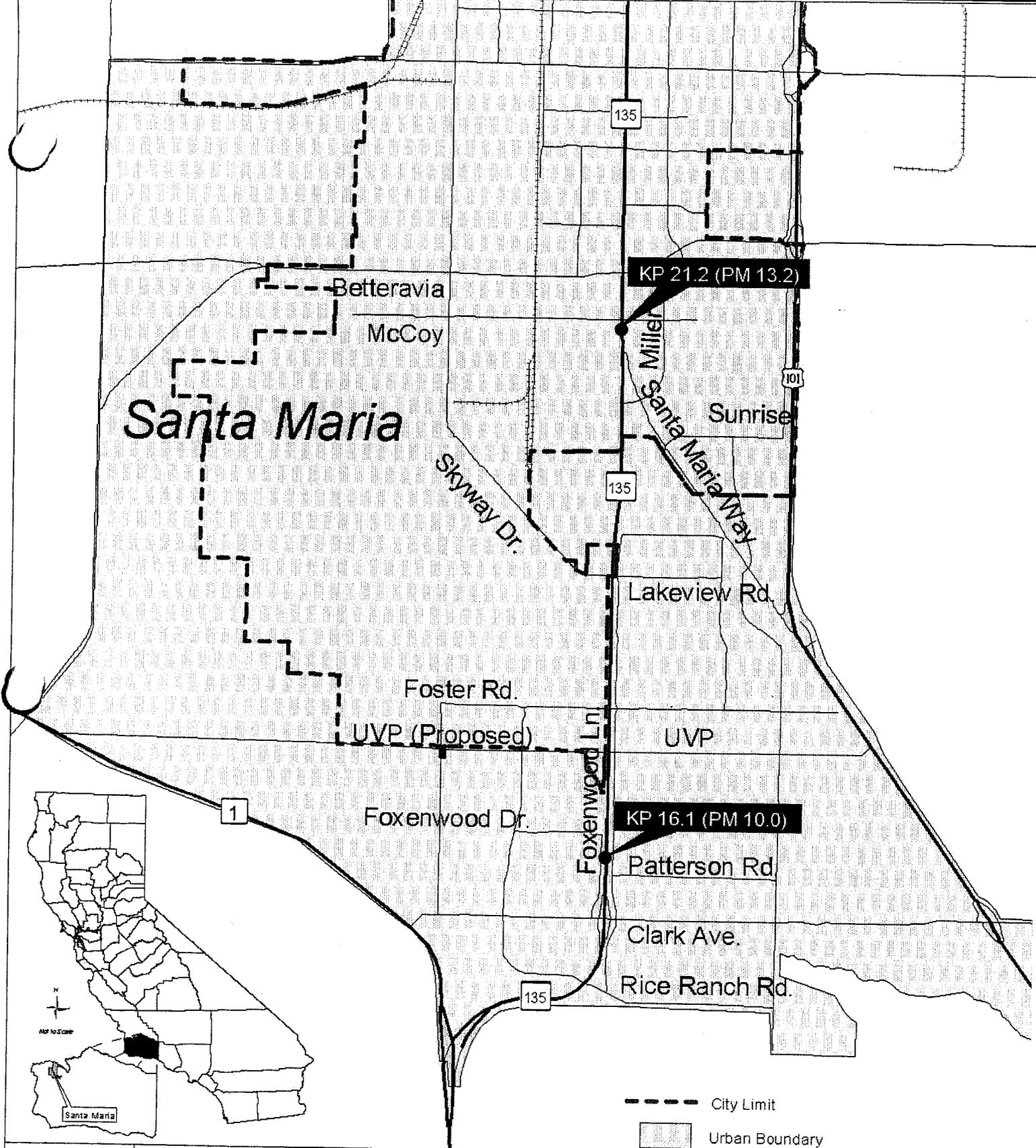
### **Coordination**

With the Commission's approval of Resolution NIU 02-01, the Department will notify all affected local and regional agencies of the rescission proposal and ask the agencies for any additional pertinent information that might be helpful to the Commission in making a final decision. The Department will also notify the State Clearinghouse so that other State agencies may be notified. Following a 60 day comment period, a follow up meeting will be scheduled with the Commission to present the Department's recommendation for final disposition.

### **Conclusions**

Local governments and citizens do not support a freeway for this portion of State Highway Route 135. A freeway designation conflicts with the local long range planning and is deemed too disruptive and insensitive to the context of the area. Local governments and the citizens feel it has been shown that the most appropriate facility designation for State Highway Route 135 is as a conventional highway to serve as an urban arterial. They have documented this position with the approved circulation plans and their choices of near term improvement projects for the highway. Construction of a freeway facility would require the closure of existing intersections, purchase of additional right of way for relocation of frontage roads, increased impacts to adjacent property owners and would require significantly increased funding to construct the grade separation of proposed intersections. It would also require the approval of non-standard interchange/intersection spacing, which has previously been denied.

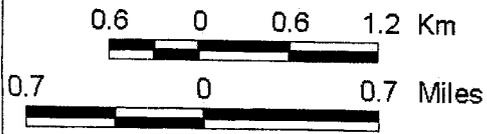
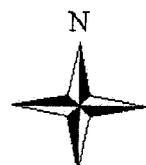
With the high costs and strong opposition, a freeway is no longer considered viable. The rescission of this portion of the State Highway Route 135 freeway adoption would conclude a 35 year highway planning issue and would allow local governments to proceed with plans to improve the facility in a manner most appropriate to the character and needs of the area.



--- City Limit  
 [Shaded Box] Urban Boundary

## Route 135 Route Inventory Report Route Rescission Map EXHIBIT A

City Limit source data: City of Santa Maria  
 Creation Date: June 25, 2002  
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**Tillmans**  
 District 5  
 System  
 Planning

CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Notice of Intention to Consider Rescinding Freeway Adoption  
5-SB-135 KP 16.1/22.7 (PM 10.0/14.1)

Resolution NIU 02-01

**WHEREAS**, a location for State highway Route 135 was previously adopted and declared a freeway on December 14, 1955 and September 20, 1962, between State Route 1 and a point “1.5 miles south of Santa Maria”, or approximately KP 21.2 (13.2); and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Santa Maria, on September 22, 2001, approved resolution No. 2001-164, requesting that the freeway adoption of Route 135 between KP 16.1 and 21.2 (PM 10.0/13.2) be rescinded to a conventional highway adoption; and

**WHEREAS**, this portion of Route 135 from Clark Avenue to Santa Maria Way is designated as a primary arterial highway and not as a freeway, in the City’s General Plan Circulation element; and

**WHEREAS**, the County of Santa Barbara, on January 7, 2002, submitted to the Department, a letter of support for the City of Santa Maria’s resolution No. 2001-164; and

**WHEREAS**, engineering and environmental studies for proposed City improvement projects on Route 135 indicate that a conventional highway is the appropriate level of State facility to serve the needs and desires of the community, its local circulation element and inter-regional traffic, and to be sensitive to the context of the community; and

**WHEREAS**, the aforementioned freeway is not likely to be constructed and retention of the freeway adoption would subject the California Transportation Commission to possible future expense for acquisition and maintenance of property or future expense for acquisition of property on a hardship basis; and

**WHEREAS**, there is no excess right of way to dispose of.

**NOW, THEREFOR, BE IT RESOLVED** by the California Transportation Commission that pursuant to the authority vested in it by law, this Commission does hereby authorize and direct the Department of Transportation to give public notice of the Commission’s intention to consider rescinding the freeway adoption of State Highway Route 135 in the County of Santa Barbara and City of Santa Maria, from 0.6 kilometer (0.4 mile) north of Clark Avenue to the northern end of said adoption at approximately 0.5 kilometer (0.3 mile) north of Santa Maria Way, Kilometer Post 16.1 to 21.2 (Post Mile 10.0 to 13.2), as shown on the Route Rescission Map, Map 2 of the May 2002 Route Inventory Report, and to give notice to local and regional agencies, and other affected State agencies, of such intention; and agencies so notified are to be requested to furnish within 60 days any additional information that the Commission should have prior to final consideration of the Route 135 Rescission.