

Memorandum

To: CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS

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Information Item

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Subject: **SHORT-TERM MOBILITY PROJECTS – GO CALIFORNIA**

SUMMARY:

The Department has identified 27 congestion relief projects that can be constructed and in service by June 2007. These rapid implementation projects will use innovative strategies to provide significant congestion reduction. These projects will be funded from the 2006 State Highway Operations and Protection Program (SHOPP) mobility reservation.

BACKGROUND:

Consideration of near-term congestion relief was an element of the nine statewide *GoCalifornia* workshops. *GoCalifornia* was an aggressive vision that was embodied in the Strategic Growth Plan and aimed to reduce congestion in 2025 to below current levels. Traditional measures to reduce congestion require a long lead-time and take many years to deliver. As part of the *GoCalifornia* Immediate, Short-Term Congestion Relief Action Plan, the Administration asked for an assessment of something that could be done in a relatively short time frame. The Department was asked to identify:

- Projects that could be completed and open to traffic in 18 months—by the end of June 2007
- Projects that would be supported by regional transportation partners
- Projects that could be amended into the SHOPP by June 2006 or funded in first year of 2006 STIP
- Projects that could overcome environmental and engineering obstacles by June 2006

All of the strategies are designed to reduce traffic congestion in the short-term and continue to improve mobility over the long-term. By accelerating the delivery of short-term improvements to the existing transportation system, the Department aims to provide congestion relief immediately, as well as addressing the Transportation Management System (TMS) Master Plan recommended strategies for long-term system management. The Department selected projects that would give the biggest impact in the shortest period of time based on the above criteria, and has accelerated these projects to meet the deadline.

Projects include:

Signal coordination projects (7) – Coordinate traffic signals to reduce congestion and increase throughput in the corridor on major arterials. This will reduce bus travel times, encouraging transit use, and encourages short distance trips to remain on arterials instead of freeways.

Auxiliary lane projects (9) – Develop auxiliary lanes to accommodate speed changes and the lack of adequate weaving distances. These facilities balance the traffic load and maintain a more uniform level of service on the freeway. Texas Transportation Institute reports benefit-to-cost ratios for these projects are typically high, averaging around 20:1.

Ramp Modifications (3) – Modify ramps to maximize operational efficiency. Modifications to a ramp used extensively by trucks will improve access to the Port of San Diego. Two other ramp-widening projects will prevent backup onto the mainline during peak periods.

Interstate 210 corridor management project (2) – Improve traffic management in the corridor with the expanding of ramp metering while optimizing metering rates will improve traffic flow, reduce fuel consumption, reduce travel times and congestion with benefits of up to 17:1 as stated in the TMS Master Plan.

HOV operations projects (2) – Reduce congestion by converting a 3-mile HOV lane with a high violation rate back to mixed flow. Later, when the SR 54/125 corridor is complete, an HOV system corridor-wide will be proposed. The second project extends the HOV lane for storage and better operation to reduce delay on the SR 94/125 connector

Border crossing project – Create additional Secure Electronic Network For Travelers Rapid Inspection (SENTRI) lanes at the San Ysidro Border crossing. SENTRI lanes allow pre-approved vehicles to cross the border and by pass the standard lanes. Standard lane wait times are about 45-60 minutes and can be as high as 120 minutes. SENTRI lanes have wait times generally less than 10 minutes.

Detection and Changeable Message Sign (CMS) projects (3)– Expand coverage as recommended in the TMS Master Plan using CMS and closed circuit television. Comprehensive traveler information is only effective when the majority of the region is covered with detection, CMS and closed circuit television.