State of California
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Business, Transportation and Housing Agency

M e m o r a n d u m

TAB 89

To: CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS

CTC Meeting: May 19-20, 2010

Reference No.: 2.3a.(1) - **REVISED**
Action item

From: NORMA ORTEGA
Chief Financial Officer

Prepared by: Timothy Craggs
Chief Division of Design
(Interim)

Subject: **ROUTE ADOPTION – CONTROLLED ACCESS HIGHWAY, 7-LA-126 PM R4.2/R6.4 RESOLUTION HRA 10-01**

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RECOMMENDATION:

Submitted for transmittal to the California Transportation Commission (Commission) are Highway Route Adoption Resolution HRA 10-01 and a route location map for State Highway Route (SR) 126. The California Department of Transportation (Department) recommends that the Commission approve the resolution and the route location map in accordance with the recommendation of the Chief Engineer. The resolution grants approval of the route adoption of SR 126 in the county of Los Angeles from Post Mile (PM) R4.2 to R6.4.

ISSUE:

The Department proposes to designate SR 126 in Los Angeles County from Castaic Creek to Route 5 west of City of Santa Clarita as a Controlled Access Highway. A Project Report was approved on June 14, 2007. An Initial Study/Environmental Assessment Report was approved on May 11, 2005. The Negative Declaration was approved on June 22, 2006, and the Finding of No Significant Impact was approved on August 22, 2006.

Recommended by: _____
RICHARD LAND
Chief Engineer

BACKGROUND:

The purpose of this route adoption is to establish a controlled access highway (expressway) designation for SR 126 from Castaic Creek to Route 5 west of the City of Santa Clarita. The proposed project includes widening of this segment of SR 126 and the construction of an interchange at the existing Commerce Center Drive intersection. During the past decade, the Santa Clarita Valley in the north Los Angeles County area has experienced a significant increase in traffic from both regional and interregional growth, as well as continuous build-up of local residential and commercial properties adjacent to SR 126. The proposed improvements will increase highway capacity, improve traffic operations, enhance driver safety and accommodate planned growth within the project area.

Adoption of the proposed segment as a freeway is not practical because it would eliminate the Fire Department required emergency entrance/exit from an adjacent property owner. Attempts to maintain the required exits would severely reduce the commercial value of the property.

SR 126 is included in the California Freeway and Expressway System. This route was signed as SR 126 in the initial 1934 State signing of highways and adopted as a conventional highway by California Highway Commission on June 3, 1938. Maintenance of SR 126 between the Santa Clarita Valley area and the Ventura County coast is critical to the economic well being of the northern Los Angeles County region, as it carries high volumes of interregional traffic, including commercial and agricultural trucking, tourist, and business traffic.

SR 126 is a major west-east route beginning at SR 101 in Ventura County and traversing eastward to Route 5 west of City of Santa Clarita, in Los Angeles County. The westernmost end of SR 126, in Ventura County, and the eastern end adjacent to SR 126/Route 5 interchange in Los Angeles County, both are in well developed urban areas and are constructed to freeway standards. The remainder of the route consists of a four-lane conventional highway in a semi-rural area with mountainous terrain.

SR 126 within the project limits is configured as a four-lane rural conventional highway with unpaved median that transitions to a six-lane urban freeway at SR 126/Route 5 interchange. There are several signalized at-grade intersections on the route including the Commerce Center Drive intersection.

Currently, SR 126/Commerce Center Drive intersection provides access to the "Commerce Center" area, a major commercial/industrial center, located in the north-west quadrant of the SR 126/Route 5 interchange. A new development, the Newhall Ranch development project, has been proposed just southwest of the SR 126/Commerce Center Drive intersection. This project proposes a master-planned community consisting of over 21,000 dwelling units and over 130 acres designated for commercial and industrial use. These developments are expected to add a total of approximately 540,000 trips per day to the area. Without capacity improvements, congestion will occur due to the expected increase in the average daily traffic and peak-hour volumes on SR 126 and the existing SR 126/Commerce Center Drive intersection. In general, traffic forecasts predict that the volume in the roadway network within the study area will triple

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over the next 20 years. Due to the increased interregional growth and the proposed developments generating additional traffic along SR 126, the proposed corridor improvements are critical.

The proposed route adoption and subsequent expressway construction for this segment of SR 126 will improve safety, reduce traffic congestion, and improve level of service for interregional traffic.

The Department's Transportation Concept Report is currently being revised to include the proposed transportation improvements due to the major developments that have occurred in recent years and to accommodate the planned developments for the near future.

The total project cost for the proposed improvements is estimated to be $40.9 million, which consists of $2.2 million for right-of-way acquisition, $8.2 million for support costs and $30.5 million for construction costs. This project is to be funded jointly by Newhall Land Development and Federal and State funding programs administered through the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

Public Meetings were held on June 15, 2005 and June 23, 2005.

An Exception to Advisory Design Standard Fact Sheet for construction of an isolated off-ramp to Henry Mayo Drive was approved on April 7, 1999. A Supplemental Exception to Advisory Design Standard Fact Sheet was approved on December 28, 2005. The Supplemental Fact Sheet was required due to insufficient spacing between future Hancock Lane and the proposed SR 126 westbound off-ramp, and between Henry Mayo Drive and the proposed westbound on-ramp ramp along Commerce Center Drive.

An Initial Study/Environmental Assessment (IS/EA) Report was approved on May 11, 2005. The Final IS/EA was prepared in accordance with Caltrans' environmental procedures as well as the National Environmental Protection Act and the California Environmental Quality Act. The Negative Declaration was approved on June 22, 2006, and the Finding of No Significant Impact was approved on August 22, 2006. The Project Report was approved on June 14, 2007. A concurrent environmental action for **route adoption** is on this month's agenda (see Resolution ~~E-10-22~~ **E-10-31**). **On October 3, 2001, the Commission approved Resolution E-02-9, which approved the initial phase of the project for future consideration of funding.**

Controlled access highway agreement (CAHA) and relinquishment agreements will be developed and executed with the County of Los Angeles following Commission approval of this route adoption. The CAHA will yield more precise information than the route adoption for purposes of land adoption planning.

Attachments:
- Resolution HRA 10-01
- Location Map
- Route Adoption Map

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CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
Highway Route Adoption Resolution
07-LA-126 PM R4.2/R6.4

Resolution HRA 10-01

WHEREAS, the California Department of Transportation (Department), with input on the project from the County of Los Angeles, has completed studies relative to the adopted State Highway Route 126, in Los Angeles County; and

WHEREAS, the Department has completed a ~~Final Environmental Initial Study/Environmental Assessment~~ **Negative Declaration** with Finding of No Significant Impact.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the California Transportation Commission (Commission) that pursuant to the authority vested in it by law, this Commission does hereby select, adopt, and determine the location of that segment of State Highway Route 126, from Castaic Creek to Route 5 west of the City of Santa Clarita, in Los Angeles County, and officially designate it as 07-LA-126, a controlled access highway, as said location is shown on the map submitted by Timothy Craggs, Acting Chief Design Engineer; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Commission has found and determined and hereby declares that such location of said State highway is for the best interest of the State.

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