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April 4, 2006

Gene K. Fong
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
650 Capitol Mall, Suite 4-100
Sacramento, CA 95814

Attention: Ms. Sue Kiser

Dear Ms. Kiser:

With this letter and pursuant to the authority delegated to me, I approve the following amendment of the Merced County Association of Governments' (MCAG) 2004/05 - 2006/07 Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP):

<u>No.</u>	<u>Description</u>
9	Federal and Local Elements Adds the Hilmar/Turlock Highway 99 interchange project funded from the following: Federal High Priority Project, Section 1702, #716; Transportation Improvement, Section 1934, #18; local matching funds; and advanced local funds. See Enclosure.

I am also recommending that the Federal Highway Administration approve this FTIP Amendment No. 9 for inclusion into California's 2004/05 - 2006/07 Federal Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (FSTIP). Projects included in this FTIP, in fiscal years not within the three-year cycle of the current FSTIP, are not approved as part of this FTIP amendment and are shown for information only.

The updated programming is for project types within Table 2 and 3 - Exempt Projects, of 40 Code of Federal Regulations § 93.126 and § 93.127 that are exempt from the conformity determination requirement. Therefore, this FTIP amendment is consistent with the State Implementation Plan. The financial impacts of this amendment are compatible with anticipated revenues in the FSTIP Financial Plan and do not significantly affect the overall financial analysis.

Mr. Gene Fong
April 4, 2006
Page 2

In accordance with existing law, public involvement procedures are a part of the project selection process. The MCAG prepared this FTIP amendment under that process permitting citizens, affected local agencies, other public agencies, and other interested parties reasonable opportunity for comment.

Please address any questions on this FSTIP approval request to Cathy Gomes, of my staff, at (916) 654-3271.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ross A. Chittenden", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

ROSS A. CHITTENDEN
Chief
Division of Transportation Programming

Enclosures

c: Karina O'Connor - EPA Office of Air Planning (w/enclosure)
Jesse B. Brown - Merced County Association of Governments
Marjie Kim - Merced County Association of Governments