

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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October 28, 2003

CORRESPONDENCE 3
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Mr. Ray Simon
 Supervisor, Stanislaus County
 1010 Tenth Street
 Modesto, CA 95354

Dear Supervisor Simon:

The Stanislaus Council of Governments, the City of Modesto, and Stanislaus County in cooperation with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), propose to widen State Route 132 in the City of Modesto in Stanislaus County, California. The project would expand the existing two-lane conventional highway to four lanes with a median, construct a sidewalk on the north side of State Route 132, provide bike lanes, and install traffic signals at the intersections of Lincoln, McClure and Frazine/Codoni. In addition, the project would construct a drainage basin at the west end of the project and a storm drain system with the necessary inlets to drain to an existing city drainage system for the remainder of the project. The project would occur between Riverside Drive and A Street in Stanislaus County.

An Initial Study has been prepared by Caltrans. On the basis of this study, it has been determined that the proposed project would not have an adverse effect on the environment. Therefore, Caltrans proposes to adopt a Negative Declaration. The purpose of this notice is to inform you of the availability of the environmental document and to invite you to a Public Hearing. An Executive Summary is enclosed for your review.

The Initial Study will be available for review on October 29, 2003 at the Caltrans District Office, 1976 E. Charter Way, Stockton, open weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Copies of the Initial Study will also be available at the Empire Public Library, 18 South Abbie Street, Empire CA 95319; Waterford-Nora Ballard Library, 324 E Street, Waterford, CA 95386; and the Stanislaus County Free Library, 1500 I Street, Modesto, CA 95354. The public comment period ends on November 28, 2003.

The public hearing/open house meeting style will give you an opportunity to be part of the alternative selection process. Preliminary design plans and the environmental study information will be available at the meeting. Caltrans staff specialists will be available to discuss issues and answer questions. There will be no formal presentation; you may arrive at any time. The public hearing will be held on Wednesday, November 12, 2003 from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Stroud Elementary School in Modesto.

Your input on this project is welcome and you are encouraged to attend the public hearing. If you have any questions, please contact Iorzua Akuva, Project Manager at (209) 941-1958 or Lance Brangham, Environmental Planner at (559) 243-8161.

Sincerely,

Iorzua Akuva, Project Manager
 Program/Project Management

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
 2003 OCT 29 P 3:30

Executive Summary

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to widen State Route 132 in the city of Modesto in Stanislaus County, California. The project would expand the existing two-lane conventional highway to four lanes with a raised median, construct a sidewalk on the north side of State Route 132, and install signals at the intersections of Lincoln, McClure and Frazine/Codoni. In addition, the project proposes to construct a retention basin at the west end of the project and a storm drain system with the necessary inlets to drain to an existing city drainage system for the remainder of the project. The proposed construction of a sidewalk on the north side of the highway would connect segments of an existing sidewalk. The project would occur between Riverside Drive and A Street (KP 28.5/31.7 [PM 17.7/19.7]) in Stanislaus County.

The purpose of the proposed widening of State Route 132 is to reduce congestion, improve the level of service, improve safety, and create additional storage room for vehicles waiting for trains to pass. Widening this segment of State Route 132 would also provide continuity with segments of State Route 132 to the west, within urbanized Modesto.

The current capacity of State Route 132 is insufficient to manage existing or projected traffic volumes. Low level of service occurs throughout the project limits, resulting in delays during peak traffic periods. The presence of railroad tracks on the south side of State Route 132 delays drivers when trains pass. Because of industrial land uses to the south, trains use these tracks regularly. Trains cause traffic backups in both directions during peak traffic periods because they block left-turn and right-turn lanes. In addition, the observed rate of total and injury accidents in the project limit is higher than the average rate for similar roadways throughout the state.

There are three alternatives proposed for this project. Alternatives include two build alternatives, Alternative I and Alternative II, and the No-Build Alternative. The No-Build Alternative would leave this segment of State Route 132 as a variable width, two-lane conventional highway. Level of service would continue to deteriorate as traffic volumes increase and the number of accidents would continue to rise. The traffic needs of the project area would not be met.

Alternative I would convert State Route 132 to a four-lane roadway with a varying width raised median between Riverside Drive and Frazine Road/Codoni Avenue, tapering to the existing two lanes at A Street. The roadway would consist of a raised median of varying

widths from 1.6 to 6.0 meters (5 to 20 feet), two 3.6-meter (12-foot) lanes in each direction, and 1.5- to 2.4-meter (5- to 8-foot) shoulder/bike lanes on each side. Caltrans also proposes constructing a sidewalk, varying in width from 1.65 to 3 meters (5 to 10 feet), on the north side of State Route 132 and installing signals at three intersections. In addition, a retention basin would be constructed at the west end of the project and a storm drain system with the necessary inlets to drain into an existing city drainage system would be constructed for the remainder of the project. Alternative I would improve the level of service to meet guidelines of the City of Modesto and Stanislaus County General Plans, reduce congestion associated with train operations, and improve safety. Alternative I has been endorsed by Caltrans, Stanislaus Council of Governments, City of Modesto, Stanislaus County, and the Empire Municipal Advisory Council. The estimated cost for Alternative I is \$8,456,000. Implementation of Alternative I is recommended to meet the project's purpose and need.

Alternative II is the same as Alternative I except that a continuous 2-way left-turn lane/median would be constructed instead of a raised median. The roadway would consist of a continuous two-way left-turn lane/median of varying widths from 3.6 to 4.2 meters (12 to 14 feet), two 3.6-meter (12-foot) lanes in each direction, and 1.5- to 2.4-meter (5- to 8-foot) shoulder/bike lanes on each side. The estimated cost for this alternative is \$8,143,000.

Summary of Major Potential Impacts From Alternatives

Potential Impact		Alternative I	Alternative II	No-Build Alternative
Land use	Consistency with the City of Modesto General Plan	This alternative is consistent with the City of Modesto's long-range plan for State Route 132	This alternative is consistent with the City of Modesto's long-range plan for State Route 132	This alternative is not consistent with the City of Modesto's long-range plan for State Route 132
	Consistency with the Stanislaus County General Plan	This alternative is consistent with Stanislaus County's long-range plan for State Route 132	This alternative is consistent with Stanislaus County's long-range plan for State Route 132	This alternative is not consistent with Stanislaus County's General Plan
Social and Economic		No disproportionate effects on minorities or low-income communities	No disproportionate effects on minorities or low-income communities	No beneficial social and economic impacts
Relocation	Business displacements	No businesses would be displaced	No businesses would be displaced	No businesses would be displaced
	Housing displacements	One single family residence would be displaced	One single family residence would be displaced	No residences would be displaced
	Utility service relocation	Utilities would require relocation	Utilities would require relocation	No utilities would require relocation
Pedestrian and bicycle facilities		Link existing sidewalk segments within the project limits	Link existing sidewalk segments within the project limits	No consistent shoulder width or continuous sidewalk
Air quality		Some windblown dust and particulates during construction	Some windblown dust and particulates during construction	Impacts to air quality caused by increased traffic congestion
Noise		Slight increase in noise level. Temporary increased noise levels during construction	Slight increase in noise level. Temporary increased noise levels during construction	No noise impacts
Water quality		There would be no long-term impacts associated with this alternative if water pollution control standards are followed	There would be no long-term impacts associated with this alternative if water pollution control standards are followed	Water quality would not be affected with this alternative
Historic and archaeological preservation		Impact to a property determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places	Impact to a property determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places	No impact
Construction		Various short-term traffic circulation, noise, and air impacts would occur	Various short-term traffic circulation, noise, and air impacts would occur	No impact