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WATER, PARKS AND WILDLIFE

August 9, 2022
Tony Tavares
Director, California Department of Transportation
1120 N Street Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Request for a List of State Highway Capacity Projects

Dear Director Tavares,

We are at the beginning of a transportation renaissance that incorporates improved health and safety, equity, and the state's climate goals into decisions we make about transportation investments. I appreciate and recognize the dedicated work the department has done to incorporate these principles into state transportation funding and planning, including the Complete Streets Action Plan released in July of this year, and efforts to orient our state transportation network towards transit, walking, and biking, in order to address legacy impacts on underserved communities that have been historically segmented and harmed by our state's transportation network. Our goals are shared in this space.

We are nearly a decade after passage of SB 743 (Steinberg) Chapter 386, Statutes of 2013, and are still working on how to incentivize and better prioritize projects that more closely align with our climate, safety, and equity goals. While outcomes differ from project to project, investing in added roadway capacity, such as new or widened roadways or interchanges, often induces additional vehicle-miles traveled (VMT) and climate pollution. In order to better understand the type and magnitude of State Highway System (SHS) expansions under consideration, I would like to work with you on a list of capacity projects proposed for the SHS. This list will help to better inform policy around what is considered a capacity project, and what projects are being prioritized.

We are working towards a hearing in my Select Committee on Urban Development to Combat Climate Change for October, where this list would be very valuable to have. This hearing will focus on how projects are prioritized and funded, and why regionally and statewide, we are not achieving climate goals, and transportation remains the largest greenhouse gas emitting sector. Invitation and details to follow on the hearing date and agenda. Ideally, information in this list of projects will include the following:

- a. Purpose and need
- b. Project description, including:
 - i. Location and extent of new mainline lane-miles by length and type (auxiliary lane, general purpose lane, managed lane [specify lane-management strategy]).
 - ii. Location of any new or expanded interchanges and extent of any new through lanes (including those on non-SHS roadway in the project).

- iii. Extent of facilities for exclusive use by freight, walking, biking and transit, as well as new or expanded transit service included in the project.
- iv. Indication if right-of-way must be added, and if so, how many homes and businesses will be dislocated.
- v. Extent of any features to manage speeds and reduce fatal crashes, such as roadway narrowings or roundabouts.
- vi. Whether any part of the project will be located in a disadvantaged community as described by the most current version of CalEnviroscreen.
- vii. Types and extent of any environmental- and equity-related mitigations, including those for VMT, severe injury and fatal crashes, emissions, and noise.
- viii. Project capital cost and anticipated source of fund.
- ix. Source of funds for ongoing operations and maintenance costs.
- x. Projected project opening year.
- xi. Current project phase (initiation, environmental, design, construction).

For projects in metropolitan areas subject to Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) targets, the following additional information may be provided:

- a. Whether the project is included in the area's Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS), meaning it was part of the set of projects modeled and submitted to the Air Resources Board.
- b. For projects listed in a SCS, a citation with web link to the relevant description in the SCS.
- c. Whether the project is located within the SCS's priority development area

With each day that passes it is increasingly unlikely that California will meet its climate goals, and all of us will experience the negative consequences of inadequate actions that are being taken today. We all need to better understand how policy today may have dire consequences for decades to come. As Chair, I am dedicated to improving transportation from a land use, equity, health, and climate perspective.

I appreciate our partnership, and look forward to working on these issues together. Please do not hesitate to reach out to myself or my staff as we work towards understanding how to build a transportation system that puts people before the car.

Sincerely,



LAURA FRIEDMAN
Assemblymember, 43rd District