

APPENDIX 1

STATE PLANNING AND RESEARCH (SPR), PART I SPECIAL STUDIES PROGRAM REQUEST FORM

*****UPDATED*****

**STATE PLANNING AND RESEARCH (SPR), PART I
SPECIAL STUDIES PROGRAM REQUEST FORM
Fiscal Years 2005-06 and 2006-07**

Project Number:

Fiscal Year Requested:

***Please Note: Only Operating Expense (OE), Contract dollars available.
District/Division will need to provide 20% State Match with non-federal funds.***

Special Studies Title		Contract \$	Total OE \$
Interstate 5 Fee Program Study from Shasta Lake/Redding to Red Bluff/Corning	Federal (80%)	468,000	
	State Match (20%)	117,000	
	Total	585,000	

1. Identify Division/District and Office/Branch:

District 2 - Office of System Planning.

Application originally submitted in July 2005 and was on "pre-approved" list for 2006-07.

2. Provide a brief description of the project.

Interstate 5, the only North-South Interstate in California, is a vastly important facility to the State and Nation. Goods movement operators rely on the facility for shipping products. The military relies upon it for national security. As an interstate, it serves the traveling public as a route to travel great distances from Mexico, California, Oregon, Washington, and Canada. However, in southern Shasta County and northern Tehama County (between the cities of Shasta Lake/Redding and Red Bluff/Corning), Interstate 5 also operates as a local arterial for commuters, shoppers, and college students (average daily traffic volumes are up to three times those immediately to the north and south). Reliance on I-5 for local trips is driven by both significant development pressure along I-5 as well as the lack of alternative parallel routes.

At present, sporadic congestion is occurring during peak periods within the proposed study limits. Based on a number of studies prepared by District 2, developers and local and regional agencies, it is clear that the Level of Service (LOS) will drop to "F" during both morning and afternoon peak periods within 20 years (within ten years in certain locations). This decline will be largely due to development in the region.

The cities and counties within the proposed study area are advancing a variety of projects that will rely on the I-5 corridor. The City of Redding is preparing a specific plan ("Oasis Road Specific Plan") that will provide for several million feet of retail/commercial development near the city's northern limit. Tehama County is preparing an Environmental Impact Report for a major retirement community (including residential/recreation/commercial uses) in a currently undeveloped area to the north of the City of Red Bluff. A number of other large residential and commercial projects have also been proposed/approved in the vicinity of I-5. Other large and small developments that have been proposed/approved in the two counties and five cities within the study area will also contribute to cumulative traffic growth on I-5 in the study area. While these projects have considerable impacts to I-5, they are being conducted independently of each other and generally do not provide resources for additional mainline capacity on I-5.

District 2, in cooperation with the cities of Shasta Lake, Redding, Anderson, Red Bluff, and Corning and the Counties of Shasta and Tehama, seeks to compile existing traffic data, reports, and studies and develop supplemental data to create a comprehensive study with the following key products/outcomes:

- Public Outreach Campaign, including:
 - Pre and post project public polling.
 - Project steering committee
 - Stakeholder meetings
 - Informational/educational mediaThis campaign will be used to help develop a better understanding of the public's expectations regarding: freeway operations (LOS) and quality of life, the role of development/developers in mitigating impacts resulting from traffic growth, and the use of impact fees, sales tax and/or other funding options to provide needed transportation improvements.
- Identification of needed improvements to I-5 (interchanges and mainline).
- Prioritization of needed improvements to I-5 (interchanges and mainline).
- Cost estimates for identified improvements.
- The "fair share" responsibility that the State and respective participant agencies will have in providing necessary future capacity will also be determined.
- Potential funding programs/strategies with emphasis on Traffic Impact Fee Programs for interchange and mainline improvements.

By tying existing studies together, identifying and closing data gaps, and providing a template for collaborative studies, this project will help ensure that a stronger, more unified, *regional approach* is taken for future land use and transportation decision-making/funding.

3. What is the overall goal and benefit of the project?

The overall goal of the project is ensure that the improvements necessary to serve local, regional and interregional traffic during the next 30 years in the I-5 study corridor are identified, prioritized, funded and delivered. To achieve this, use of both existing programs and new sources of funding will be necessary. The proposed project will achieve consensus among the participant agencies and public as to priority, timing and funding strategies to be used for identified improvements.

While there are certainly numerous benefits to maintaining efficient operations of I-5 within the study area, the most significant benefit of the project will be to maintain/enhance local and State economic opportunity while augmenting existing transportation funding programs to provide necessary infrastructure for I-5. This project will also establish a framework for ongoing regional planning and decision-making that actively involves members of the public, transportation stakeholders, the development community and elected officials. Managers at District 2 and the regional agencies participating in this project recognize that it is essential that local and regional leaders be identified and engaged in the development of positive, consensus decisions that will yield long terms solutions for the study area. Meetings are currently being held with the City Managers and Chief Administrative Officers of the counties to form the Steering Committee for the project.

4. What will be the final product? How will it be used? Could it lead to further studies?

The final product will be a comprehensive funding strategy for the improvements needed on I-5 within the study area during the next 20 years. This strategy will be used to:

- Provide input to General Plans, Specific Plans and Regional Transportation Plans.
- Implement new funding programs – most likely Traffic Impact Fees.
- Provide information for the development of the RTIPs and ITIP of the involved agencies.
- Assist local agencies to efficiently and effectively implement appropriate site-specific mitigation for individual projects along I-5.
- Facilitate the active and ongoing interest of transportation stakeholders, developers, and the general public by providing tools and methods to effectively communicate the relationship that transportation and land use issues have with quality of life.

If the project to be funded by this grant is successful, it could lead to similar future studies on other key facilities within the District such as the east-west Focus Route (portions of SR 299, 44, 36) or State Route 99. This model of developing funding strategies and programs for rural areas may have applicability to other areas of the State outside of District 2.

5. Why do the goals, benefits, and purposes of this project support the spending of public funds?

Interstate 5 plays a significant role in both the regional and interregional movement of people and goods for the entire West Coast of the United States. Maintaining the efficient movement of people and goods within District 2 is important to the local, State and national economies. The use of public funds for this study will allow for the impacts associated with growth in traffic to be identified and met (at least partially) with new sources of funding, thus reducing long term reliance on existing State and Federal transportation funding programs. The public outreach component of this project is intended to communicate to the general public the impacts to their personal mobility that may result as growth occurs and encourage public discussion of possible options to reduce those impacts.

6. Which of the 6 State Transportation Goals does this project support? State briefly how the project meets the goal(s).

Goal	State briefly how the project supports the goal(s)
Safety	Proposed projects should meet current design standards and correct existing deficiencies.
Reliability	Existing travel times will be maintained to the extent practicable by providing capacity to the facility as needed.
Performance	Capacity added to the freeway will serve local trips while optimizing system throughput.
Flexibility	Multimodal options will be evaluated and may be implemented by participants.
Delivery	New source of locally generated funds will provide the opportunity for creative project development, flexibility/ease in use of funds and accelerated delivery.
Stewardship	Project will identify impacts associated with growth in the region and emphasize creation of new funding programs rather than reliance on the State Highway Account to implement solutions.

7. How does this project meet established planning criteria? Include the Federal planning guideline’s “5 E’s”- how does the project support the guideline(s)?

Guideline	State briefly how the project supports the guideline(s)
Economic	The plan will analyze the cumulative impacts of major development projects proposed along the Interstate 5 corridor to determine future project needs on the highway system. The study will also consider statewide goods movement issues. Implementation of new funding programs and transportation projects will reduce the adverse economic effect of congestion and improve local economic development opportunities.

Environmental	Developing and implementing a 20-year transportation improvement program will provide much greater opportunities to consider corridor management strategies that reduce/eliminate adverse environmental affects and also allow for development of advance mitigation strategies such as mitigation banks.
Education	A significant component of the study is to inform the public and decision-makers of the impact that land use decisions/development have on the operation of I-5, the discrepancy between the cost to mitigate impacts associated with development and existing/expected funding levels and the adverse effect of congestion on local economies.
Equity	It is important to ensure that all uses/users of the transportation system (goods movement, recreation, tourism, emergency services, commuter/local trips, etc.) continue to enjoy reasonable operating conditions on I-5 within the study area. It is also desirable to have the cost to mitigate transportation impacts borne by those creating the impacts.
Energy	The project may result in changes in land use policies to promote more use of public transportation and/or closer location of residential areas with employment opportunities.

8. Does this project meet Business, Transportation, and Housing (BTH) planning emphasis (Linking Jobs, Transportation, Housing, and Land Use)? How does the project meet the area(s)?

A major focus of this study is to inform the public and elected officials about the relationship between jobs, transportation, housing, and land-use. The analysis will look at the impacts that planned developments will have on the operation of I-5 and the cost to address those impacts. This may lead to consideration of a number of positive outcomes including closer proximity of residential and employment land uses, alternative local facilities to I-5, and improved public transportation services.

9. Does this project address the BTH's Performance Improvement Initiative (efficiency of operations, high rate of return on taxpayer investment), Program Level Action Plans (PLAP), and /or the System or Organization Performance Measures? If yes, identify the pertinent action(s). Note: contact your resource manager for additional details.

Three transportation related goals of the BT&H's Performance Improvement Initiative that the proposed projects supports are:

- *Maintain and preserve the current State Highway System – Maintaining and rehabilitating the State Highway System to preserve it for future generations.*

A major goal of this study is to facilitate decisions and development approvals that ensure the existing State Highway System is preserved and maintained. This plan will link development and goods movement to the transportation system, to not only maintain the current facilities, but to also properly plan for future needs.

- *Enhance capacity or throughput in existing corridors – Using technology and multi-modal strategies to strategically enhance capacity and reduce congestion.*

The study will look at all modal strategies to increase capacity along the Interstate 5 corridor. This includes all mass transportation modes, technological improvements, improvements on and off Interstate 5, and any other method of ensuring the corridor can effectively and efficiently handle regional and interregional needs.

- *Enhance mobility and accessibility to account for another 13 million people by 2025 – Expanding the system and enhancing modal choices and connectivity to meet the State’s future passenger and goods movement transportation demands.*

The study will consider future development demands in the state and along the corridor to ensure that transportation needs are properly addressed. It is important to provide mobility throughout the region and the State; to meet local circulation, housing, and employment needs, and; to provide access for all groups of people to goods and services. This plan will identify necessary transportation system improvements and viable funding programs to provide those improvements. Without this project, the region will continue to lack the funding, tools and active public involvement necessary to implement the transportation improvements necessary to meet current and future needs of the region and State.

10. Complete the table below by including a brief general description of each task, list each deliverable or outcome, when each task will be completed, and the estimated cost for each task. Feel free to extend the chart if necessary:

Description of Each Task	Deliverables/Outcomes	Completion Date	Estimated Cost*
Develop contract materials (including RFP) in conjunction with partners, advertise, interview, select consultant and award contract	Executed contract, consultant on board	October 2006	----
Assess existing studies to determine system deficiencies and identified conceptual improvements	List of interchanges and mainline deficiencies and conceptual improvements	December 2006	20,000
Identify and offer solutions for gaps in the existing data, plans and programs of the participant agencies	List of existing deficiencies and recommended actions to resolve them	January 2007	15,000
Determine existing public awareness/opinion	Pre-project awareness of problem/issues	February 2007	60,000
Develop project evaluation/scoring matrix and prioritize identified improvements	Prioritized list of interchange and mainline improvement projects	April 2007	60,000
Develop cost estimates for projects, including cost-indexing to proposed construction year	Cost estimates for projects (by jurisdiction and type)	June 2007	125,000
Determine “fair share” of cost for projects for each participant agency	Share of cost for each participant agency (by project and total)	July 2007	60,000
Evaluate public awareness of, and potential support for, alternative transportation funding mechanisms	Identification of relative level of support for potential funding options	August 2007	30,000
Evaluate potential funding options, including both current and potential new programs/sources	Set of potential funding strategies for implementation of identified improvements	October 2007	70,000
Determine public awareness/opinion and effectiveness of outreach/education campaign	Post-project awareness of problem/issues, level of support for identified improvements/funding	October 2007	45,000
Develop Traffic Impact Fee Program (or similar) including necessary nexus for each agency	Traffic Impact Fee Programs	January 2008	60,000

Present funding strategies and Traffic Impact Fee Program to governing bodies of agencies for adoption	Identification/approval of preferred funding strategy and Traffic Impact Fee Programs.	Spring 2008	15,000
Project Steering Committee, Stakeholder and partner agency meetings	Ongoing meetings to facilitate communication and develop consensus	Ongoing/monthly	25,000
* Contract only. Does not include District and regional/local agency support.			

11. Complete the table below by listing all other funds for this project:

Fund Source (Fed, State, Local)	Fund Amount	Fiscal Year
N/A		

12. Are the funds requested displacing other fund sources?

No other sources of funds will be displaced by this request. Both the Tehama County Transportation Commission and the Shasta County Regional Transportation Planning Agency have included staff support for this project in their 06/07 Overall Work Programs. Both agencies also provided letters of support for the original pre-approved application as well as this update (attached). In addition, the City of Corning, Shasta County Public Works Department and Tehama County Chief Administrative Officer have provided letters of support (attached).

13. What contracting process is being used (e.g., contract, interagency/cooperative agreement, fund transfer agreement, purchase order) and, how long will the contract be for (maximum is 1st year to encumber and 2 years to spend)?

The District proposes to enter into a contract for consultant services. Contract award and work is expected in fiscal year 06/07, with the contract to be completed in fiscal year 07/08.

14. How will the information from this project be shared with MPOs, RTPAs, local agencies, stakeholders, and/or private sector?

The cities, counties and regional agencies within the study area will be active participants in preparation of the study. Upon completion of the study, the participants will have an opportunity to adopt the recommended funding programs/strategies identified. If this model of public outreach is successful in leading to effective funding strategies it may have wide applicability in the State.

15. Provide your Program's Federal and/or State mandate to conduct the activities being proposed for this project.

Streets and Highways Code, Division 1: State Highways, Chapter 1: Administration, Article 3: Department of Transportation, Sections 90 and 92.

16. List a) the project manager and b) their supervisor:

- a) **Name:** Scott White **Title:** Chief, Office of System Planning
 Phone: (530) 229-0518 **E-mail:** Scott_White@dot.ca.gov

b) **Name:** Tim Huckabay
Phone: (530) 225-2564

Title: Deputy District Director, Planning and Local Assistance
E-mail: Tim_Huckabay@dot.ca.gov

17. Resource Manager Review:

Signature

Date

18. District Directors or Division Chief's Approval:

Signature

Date

Tim Huckabay, Deputy District Director, Planning and Local Assistance, District 2

Interstate 5 Fee Program Shasta Lake/Redding to Red Bluff/Corning SP&R, Part I Special Studies Request

Fact Sheet

What? Increase public awareness of transportation issues/constraints in the I-5 corridor and propose uniform development fees or similar to augment existing funding programs to enhance project delivery and mobility in the corridor.

Why? To secure adequate funding (including fair-share contributions from development) and timely delivery of improvements to Interstate 5 within District 2 to maintain the efficient movement of people and goods in support of the local, State and national economies.

How? By increasing awareness among community leaders and the general public of developing transportation issues and generating support for new regional transportation funding programs. Past studies in the corridor will be reviewed to identify needed improvements, improvements will be prioritized, cost estimates developed, "fair share" responsibility for improvements determined and potential funding programs developed and presented to local governments for action.

Products?

- Increased public awareness of transportation issues facing the region.
- Public opinion database of key stakeholders/organizations.
- Twenty-year prioritized list of transportation improvement projects.
- Twenty-year "fair share" financial plan for local and regional agencies and the State.
- New local/regional transportation funding program to augment existing programs.

Outcomes? Reduction of long-term costs to the taxpayer, timely delivery of needed transportation improvements, reduced congestion/delay, improved local and State economic opportunity.

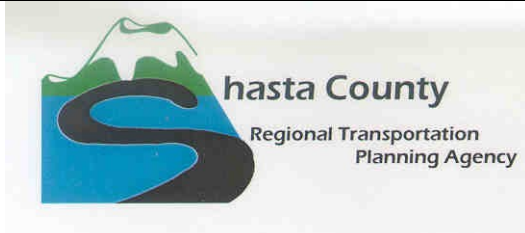
Who benefits? All transportation stakeholders.

Contact: Scott White, 8-442-0518

Submitted: July 27, 2005 **UPDATED MAY 2006**

APPENDIX 2

SHASTA RTPA FACT SHEET



SHASTA RTPA FACT SHEET

Strategic Growth Plan Bond Package

1. SB 1266 Strategic Growth Plan Bond Package
 - Proposition 1a: Prop 42 firewall – Also see SCA7
 - Proposition 1b: \$19.9 billion for roads
 - Proposition 1c: \$2.85 housing (Includes funding for Blueprint projects)
 - Proposition 1d: \$10.4 education
 - Proposition 1e: \$4 levees
2. AB 1467: Public Private Partnerships
3. AB 143 Design Build: Failed – will try again
4. AB1039 Streamline CEQA: Hung up
5. Proposition 1b Programs
 - A. \$4.5 Billion Corridor Mobility. If Prop. 1b passes:
 - RTPA Project Nominations by Jan. 15
 - CTC adopts projects March 1, 2007
 - Maybe tied to Blueprint Plans
 - Shasta Candidate Projects: Stillwater, Dana, I-5 lane additions.
 - B. \$1 Billion State Route 99
 - C. \$3.1 Billion Port Infrastructure
 - D. \$200 Million school bus retrofit
 - E. \$2 Billion STIP
 - Distributed per STIP process
 - \$11 million for Shasta
 - F. \$4 Billion Public Transit
 - \$3 Billion of which distributed by formula from state controller
 - ⇒ 50% transit based on fare box returns
 - ⇒ 50% by population
 - ⇒ RABA share unknown
 - G. \$1 Billion Transit Safety
 - Disaster response and use of buses to mobilize/evacuate people
 - H. \$ 1 Billion State Local Partnership
 - 50% local match
 - No funding for Shasta County Region without a self-help revenue source (i.e. sales tax or impact fees)
 - I. \$125 Million Local Seismic Retrofits
 - J. \$250 Million Highway Rail Crossing
 - \$100 Million allocated by CTC
 - \$150 Million distributed by existing Sec. 130 and 190 programs
 - ⇒ Passenger rail not eligible; makes Shasta more competitive
 - K. \$750 Million SHOPP
 - \$500 Million SHOPP infusion
 - \$250 Million for traffic lights and minor programs
 - Will provide a proportional benefit to our region for maintenance and operation of Caltrans facilities.
 - L. \$2 Billion Local Streets and Roads
 - \$1 Billion to cities
 - \$1 Billion to counties
 - Note: Prop. 42 firewalls will also benefit local streets and roads

APPENDIX 3

SELECTED ARTICLES



The Road More Heavily Traveled

■Deterioration, mounting traffic push the West Coast's aging Main Street to the brink. Disruptions are becoming more common -- and costly

Examining the girders that hold up Fords Bridge on the Umqua River in southwest Oregon, state inspectors noticed a gunpowder-like smell — a telltale sign of metal fatigue. Then they saw stress cracks that ran like veins through the main supports.

It was March 2001, and for the next three weeks, 2,000 big rigs a day were forced off Interstate 5 while construction crews rebuilt the bridge. Many trucks took winding detours around the Cascade Range, adding hundreds of miles to their trips.

Along the West Coast, transportation costs increased by as much as \$200 per shipment. California grocers, Oregon oil companies, Washington dairies and lumber mills in the Pacific Northwest all felt the financial pinch. The American Red Cross had to cut back on blood shipments.

Detours and disruptions on Interstate 5 are becoming increasingly common and costly. A vital commercial artery that crosses three states and links three countries, Interstate 5 is outdated, worn out and overwhelmed with traffic along much of its 1,381-mile length.

Two inexorable trends are pushing the highway toward ruin: steadily increasing traffic and relentless deterioration of its roadway, ramps, overpasses and bridges, particularly in the Pacific Northwest.

"Every bridge on the 5 in Oregon has the potential for a crisis," said Paul R. Mather, who heads a regional office of the Oregon Department of Transportation.

Transportation planners say congestion drives up shipping costs and consumer prices and discourages tourism, putting a drag on the economies of California, Oregon and Washington.

Built in sections starting in 1947, the interstate links major manufacturing and population centers on the West Coast, from Seattle to San Diego. It is the primary north-south route for trucks ferrying goods to and from Mexico, Canada and the West Coast's six primary seaports.

Interstate 5 is also an important transportation corridor for wood products from Oregon and Washington as well as produce from California's San Joaquin Valley, one of the world's richest agricultural regions.

"You can't look at California and the West Coast without focusing on Interstate 5," said former Caltrans Director Jeff Morales. "It is the backbone of the state. It is the backbone of the region."

During the last 25 years, the number of vehicles has at least doubled on most sections of the highway. Yet apart from a few short stretches, the highway has not been substantially improved or widened.

For years, traffic engineers and planners have examined the border-to-border corridor in a patchwork fashion, repaving a few miles here or adding a lane there.

Now, a new alliance of government officials, planners and transportation experts from California, Oregon, Washington and Alaska is trying to fashion broad solutions. They hope a multi-state approach will generate the political heft needed to secure federal and state funding for comprehensive improvements.

The West Coast Corridor Coalition plans to consider alternative highways, tollways for trucks, improved rail service and better highway management — including reversible lanes and staggered work hours for commuters. The improvements would cost an estimated \$50 billion.

But the effort is late. The West Coast states are far behind others that have banded together to compete for funds, said Steve Erie, a UC San Diego professor who specializes in transportation. An alliance of 14 states on the East Coast began drumming up money for improving Interstate 95 more than a decade ago.

Interstate 5 begins in San Ysidro, the nation's busiest border crossing. There are 24 lanes for northbound motorists, seven for those headed into Mexico. It is the highway's first bottleneck, the result of population growth, the North American Free Trade Agreement and the growing interdependence of Mexico and Southern California.

On weekdays, about 60,000 motorists — almost double the volume of 25 years ago — cross the border and head to Interstate 5. Most are commuting.

During morning rush hour, there can be hourlong delays to cross into the United States and more waiting once drivers hit the freeway. In the evening, it's worse. Workers regularly spend up to 90 minutes in stop-and-go traffic returning to Tijuana from Chula Vista, National City and San Diego.

"I'd rather work late, take Highway 805 or go to the gym to avoid the crush," said Mario C. Lopez, a U.S. citizen who lives in Mexico and works in Chula Vista as an aide to Rep. Bob Filner (D-San Diego).

Gary Gallegos, a former Caltrans director who heads the San Diego Assn. of Governments, said efforts are underway to build more gates at the border and improve roads in Mexico to prevent traffic from backing up onto Interstate 5.

"Traffic is expected to double in the next 20 years," Gallegos said. "The question is, how do you get more out of what we have?"

Heading north, Interstate 5 becomes an urban freeway with four to six lanes in each direction as it hugs the San Diego County coast. The narrower sections are swamped with commuters, tourists, business travelers and trucks at rush hour and increasingly on weekends.

In the last 25 years, traffic on most sections of the highway in San Diego County has at least doubled. Although work is underway to widen a three-mile stretch near Del Mar, Caltrans officials predict that by 2015 the traffic volume will have nearly doubled again, requiring 20 lanes to control congestion.

"It reminds me of what I used to encounter in L.A., only the San Diego scenery is nicer," said Baxter Scruggs, a mortgage banker whose 15-mile commute from Encinitas to his office in Kearney Mesa takes 45 minutes or more.

As it swings into Orange County, I-5 swells from 10 to 22 lanes between Ortega Highway and the Artesia and Riverside freeways, the result of recent widening and reconstruction that cost billions of dollars. The Orange County leg is the most-improved section of the entire route.

Still, congestion and backups are chronic. From 1975 to 2002, Interstate 5 traffic in Orange County doubled or tripled along many sections. At the El Toro Y — where the San Diego and Santa Ana freeways merge — the number of vehicles has jumped from 102,000 to 356,000 a day, enough to fill the Dodger Stadium parking lot more than 22 times.

In southern Los Angeles County, the highway is primitive by today's engineering standards. Between the Orange County line and downtown Los Angeles, the road shrinks to as few as six concrete lanes poured decades ago.

One of the worst pinch points is just east of downtown Los Angeles, where the great north-south artery turns from the Santa Ana Freeway into the Golden State Freeway and meets the Santa Monica, San Bernardino, Pomona, Hollywood and Long Beach freeways in a maze of interchanges and ramps. As many as 320,000 drivers a day squeeze into this two-mile bottleneck, often taking 25 minutes to get through at rush hour.

At one spot, travelers on Interstate 5 are funneled into two lanes as they merge with traffic from the Santa Monica and San Bernardino freeways, among the busiest in

California. It is the eighth-most congested length of highway in the nation.

Caltrans plans to widen I-5 to at least five lanes in each direction from the Orange County line to the Long Beach Freeway — about 15 miles. The project will cost \$800 million, but will do little to relieve the bottleneck to the north. Caltrans officials say that that money might not be available until 2009 because of the state budget crisis.

Leaving the Los Angeles Basin, Interstate 5 moves through the San Fernando Valley, where it is often transformed into a parking lot of idling vehicles during evening rush hour.

The road eventually reaches the Tejon Pass before descending into the San Joaquin Valley, the state's agricultural heartland. Though there are often only two lanes in each direction, traffic usually moves freely between Southern and Northern California, holiday weekends excepted.

Interstate 5 eventually crosses into Oregon and enters the verdant Willamette Valley on its way to Portland. The most serious problem in Oregon is not congestion, but more than 100 obsolete bridges between Klamath Falls and Portland.

Some spans have been temporarily closed to the typical tractor trailers, which weigh about 64,000 pounds. For two years, commercial rigs weighing more than 105,000 pounds — the so-called heavy haulers — have been banned from much of Interstate 5 in southern Oregon.

The restrictions have forced rigs carrying construction equipment, steel and industrial machinery to take lengthy detours. In some cases, the heaviest trucks travel east of the Cascades then dip into California before heading back north on unrestricted sections of I-5 to reach destinations in southern Oregon.

"The bridges are a huge, huge problem. If we have to go over Mt. Hood, it can cost our customers hundreds of dollars more per load," said Bob Wilhelm Jr., owner of Wilhelm Trucking and Rigging in Portland.

The state has proposed a \$4-billion bond program to repair bridges across Oregon. About \$830 million is needed to fix bridges on Interstate 5 alone.

The three-week closure of Fords Bridge over the south fork of the Umqua River in 2001 illustrated the risks of doing nothing.

"We got a glimpse of the future at Fords Bridge," said Mather, the state transportation official. "We learned just how dependent we are on the 5."

In Portland, the aging Interstate Bridge over the Columbia River is one of the highway's worst bottlenecks. The span connects Portland and fast-growing Vancouver, Wash.

State officials say the six-lane bridge, which is fed by three highways, needs to be rebuilt. There are two hours of heavy congestion each way during the morning and evening commutes, a situation aggravated by frequent lane closures due to repairs.

"I intentionally avoid the bridge at rush hour. You never know what is going to happen," said the Rev. Kathleen Verigin of Portland, who uses the span to reach her church in Vancouver. "The lanes are narrow and often wet. Truck traffic can cause problems. It has taken me an hour to go 18 miles from church to home."

In Washington, parts of the highway are two lanes in each direction. Its buttonhook exits and short on- and offramps are relics of the late 1950s. Traffic in and around Seattle now exceeds some of the busiest stretches in Los Angeles.

"It is unbelievable right now. They did not plan to become this kind of metropolis," said Lisa Nelson, of Portland, who commutes 180 miles once a week to work in Seattle. The drive can take five hours or more.

"Having driven in Los Angeles and having driven in Seattle, there is not a whole lot of difference," Nelson said.

"You can take an hour to go 10 miles on the 5, and there is really no other way to go."



Fresno, Caltrans settle suit
But some council members see double standard on enforcement of traffic fees for developers.

By Russell Clemings / The Fresno Bee

(Updated Wednesday, January 25, 2006, 5:41 AM)

The Fresno City Council signed off Tuesday on an agreement that settles a year-old lawsuit challenging the city's historic refusal to charge developers for their projects' impacts on freeway traffic.

But before the 6-1 vote, the council debated accusations that other cities were not paying their fair shares — an assertion soon contested by officials from Caltrans, the state agency that filed the lawsuit.

The agreement requires the city to collect fees for projects with serious freeway impacts and hold them in a trust account until work on road improvements is ready to begin.

It settles a lawsuit involving a 468-unit apartment project for which the city refused to assess fees for ramp work at the interchange of Ashlan Avenue and Freeway 99. The estate of the late developer Spalding Wathen agreed to pay \$170,344 as part of the settlement, a city staff report said.

Council President Jerry Duncan cast the lone "no" vote on the settlement and charged that Caltrans had singled out Fresno in its requests for freeway impact fees.

"We can ask Madera all we want to contribute an impact fee to Freeway 41, but as we all know, they'll just look at us and start laughing," he said.

However, Madera County officials, who have jurisdiction along Freeway 41 and Highway 41 farther north, have assessed fees for six development projects along that route, according to a list supplied by Caltrans officials after the council's vote.

They include almost \$14 million for the planned 5,800-home Gateway Village project near Freeway 41 and Avenue 12 and \$10.2 million for the 4,332-home River Ranch Estates on the north side of the San Joaquin River opposite Lost Lake Park. Both projects have been stalled by court challenges.

Duncan also contrasted a new shopping center on the northeast corner of Willow and Herndon avenues in Clovis with a smaller center approved last

year by Fresno on the southwest corner. Caltrans requested fees for the latter but not the former, Duncan said.

Marc Birnbaum, the state agency's district transportation planning chief, said the difference between those two projects boils down to time.

The Clovis project was reviewed in 2001 and the Fresno project in 2005. In the meantime, Birnbaum said, Fresno adopted a new general plan calling for different development patterns in the area.

"The background setting just changed entirely," Birnbaum said in an interview.

The list provided by Birnbaum's office said that several other Fresno County jurisdictions — including Selma, Kerman, Coalinga and Fresno County — have assessed fees or other forms of mitigation for impacts to the state highway system.

In Clovis, the recently approved 1,335-home Harlan Ranch development agreed to reserve land for two future Freeway 168 interchanges, said Mike Harrison, the city's development review manager.

Duncan's comments drew a response from fellow Council Member Tom Boyajian.

"We're not the first. We're the last to do it," Boyajian said, calling the agreement a "partnership that's long overdue" for improving interchanges and other state highway facilities.

During the debate, the council was briefed on plans for a regional transportation impact fee in the proposed renewal of Fresno County's half-cent Measure C transportation sales tax.

If the renewal is approved by voters in November, funds raised by the fee could be used for highway improvements identified by Measure C plans or by a study now under way of deficiencies in the region's freeway system.

Regardless of whether the Measure C renewal passes, the agreement between the city and Caltrans requires both sides to work toward adoption of a regional highway impact fee by all local cities and counties.

The agreement expires in three years, but if no regional fee is in place by then, it can be extended for two years by mutual consent.

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Development fee hike goes before council

ARI COHN - Staff Writer

A raft of fee hikes soon could add thousands of dollars to the cost of constructing new homes and commercial buildings in the city of Chico. The City Council is expected to consider the potential increases next week at its Tuesday meeting. The proposal already has received the endorsement of the council's finance subcommittee.

A September report prepared by the city's Community Services Department recommends raising development impact fees - one-time fees charged on new construction in the city limits - to pay for such things as parks, police and fire facilities, sewer system improvements, road upgrades and bikeways.

The hikes could add \$2,386 to the price of new homes and up to \$34,046 to the cost of some commercial buildings, according to the city study.

The figures are part of the 2005-2006 nexus study update. The study matches projected revenue from development fees with planned expenses for such things as capital projects that are needed to serve the city's expected build-out population of 134,000 by 2014.

The development fee increases could be lessened by the use of redevelopment funds - property taxes collected within certain areas of the city mainly to finance capital projects and affordable housing in those areas, said City Manager **Tom Lando**. Higher development fees could drive off commercial development, which generates sales tax. The city relies on sales tax revenue to pay for nearly half of its General Fund budget, he said.

"We don't want them to develop somewhere else because the fees are too high," Lando said.

Part of the fee increases can be attributed to demands by Caltrans that the city contribute \$30 million to pay for the widening of Highway 32 between Fir Street

and Yosemite Drive, and **Highway 99** from Skyway to Highway 32, as well as improvements to some interchanges.

Despite the fact that both the roads are state highways, state officials say the city is responsible for the work because those stretches serve mainly local traffic, according to an April 2004 letter from Caltrans District 3 Director Jody Jones to Lando.

"Since the need for additional capacity (more lanes) on State Routes 32 and 99 will likely be triggered by local, rather than interregional, growth, the responsibility for expanding the highway should rest with the city and the Butte County Association of Governments (BCAG) rather than the Department," Jones wrote.

Caltrans could sue the city to stop it from approving new development near the highways if city officials continue to approve construction projects without improving the roads, according to Jones.

Lando acknowledged the possibility of litigation.

"They could hold up projects or, more realistically, anybody who didn't like a project could sue us because we didn't mitigate the impacts, and they would win," he said.

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The road more traveled: 50 years ago, President Eisenhower paved the way to establish the nation's Interstate Highway System

50 years ago, President Eisenhower paved the way to establish the nation's Interstate Highway System

By T.R. Reid, The Washington Post
July 3, 2006

EXIT 275, INTERSTATE 70, Kan. -- There were no Wal-Marts in 1956, no Ramada Inns or Best Westerns. Cross-country travel most often meant the railroad, and only about two-thirds of adult Americans had a drivers license.

But that America began to change on June 29, 1956, when President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the law launching a massive new federal project that had been his dream for decades: the Interstate Highway System.

To mark the 50th birthday of one of the most ambitious and consequential engineering projects in human history, a caravan of highway figures led by Eisenhower's great-grandson has been traveling across the country by interstate and arrived in Washington, D.C., on Thursday. They have been celebrating a system that includes 47,000 miles of highway with 55,500 bridges, 104 tunnels, 14,750 interchanges and zero traffic lights.

It reaches every state -- plus 13 miles in Washington -- except Alaska; in Hawaii, the superhighways are designated by an "H" rather than an "I."

And it has spawned such basic elements of American life as the suburb, the motel, the chain store, the recreational vehicle, the seat belt, the spring-break trek to Florida, the 30-mile commute and the two-mile traffic jam.

Today, nearly nine out of 10 adult Americans have drivers licenses. The interstate system was born at a time when the word "communism" had the same emotional effect among Americans that "terrorism" has today. Eisenhower argued that the nation needed a road system that could "meet the demands of catastrophe or defense, should an atomic war come."

The atomic war never came, but the interstates -- officially known today as "The Dwight D. Eisenhower National System of Interstate and Defense Highways" -- have proven their value in catastrophic times.

But the nation has paid a social price for all that pavement.

Unsightly stretches of asphalt sprawl now surround virtually every major U.S. city. The continentwide delivery system that allows Wal-Mart, McDonald's, Gap, 7-Eleven, Blockbuster and Holiday Inn to offer identical products and services in identical stores from coast to coast has turned a richly diverse nation into a standardized single market changing the shape of towns across America.

With the number of drivers increasing much faster than highway mileage, a system designed to save travel time has become a chronic waste of time for millions of commuters. A study for the Federal Highway Administration found that drivers using interstates in and around large cities spent about 25 hours per year in traffic jams in 1982; by 2002, the annual waiting time was more than 60 hours.

On a national system, though, congestion is a relative term.



Elisha Page / Record Searchlight

HAPPENIN' ROAD: Vehicles travel south on Interstate 5 toward the Highway 44 Interchange in Redding on Saturday night. Thursday marked the 50th anniversary of the Interstate Highway System.

Still, the interstate system is a quantum leap ahead of the haphazard collection of country roads that Eisenhower set out to fix when he entered the White House in 1953.

Dan Holt, director of the Eisenhower Presidential Library in Abilene, Kan., said the president's concern about highways began in 1919, when he was part of a U.S. Army convoy traveling by road from Washington, D.C., to San Francisco. The trip took 62 days on roads so rotten the Army had to abandon nine trucks along the way.

A quarter-century later, as supreme allied commander in Europe, Eisenhower saw the influence of a modern highway system when his soldiers used the German autobahns to pursue Hitler's army toward Berlin.

"Germany had made me see the wisdom of broader ribbons across the land," Eisenhower wrote later. "After seeing the autobahns, I made a personal and absolute decision to see that the (U.S.) would benefit by it."

But Eisenhower had trouble getting his \$50 billion dream through a Democratic Congress. The Republican president proposed paying for the interstate system through tolls, but that was rejected. A giant bond issue was suggested -- and rejected, in a period when it was not considered acceptable for the federal government to run up large debts.

The late Rep. Hale Boggs, D-La., solved the impasse by proposing a dedicated highway trust fund, financed mainly by the federal tax on gasoline. This fund would reimburse the states for 90 percent of the cost of building the system.

As the states jumped at that prospect, cities and towns mounted intense lobbying campaigns to make sure the interstate came their way.

"To be left off the superhighway was almost a death sentence for a lot of rural towns," noted McNichol, author of "The Roads That Built America: the Incredible Story of the U.S. Interstate System." The fast new roads also meant commercial oblivion for towns, businesses and hotels that had flourished on existing highways. U.S. Route 1 still exists, though I-95 is the preferred roadway along the East Coast. U.S. Route 66, the storied highway to the West Coast, was decommissioned two decades ago.

Through trial and error, a uniform look and feel was devised for the national network. The red-white-and-blue shield marking an interstate highway and the white-on-green exit signs were universally adopted. Federal planners decreed that every interstate must have at least four lanes.

Following long-standing practice, east-west routes were given even numbers. North-south routes have odd numbers. Urban spurs and circumferential routes have three-digit numbers, such as the beltways around Richmond (I-295), Washington (I-495) and Baltimore (I-695).

To mark the 50th birthday, federal and state highway departments have organized a 14-day drive that reverses Eisenhower's 1919 cross-country odyssey.

With Merrill Eisenhower Atwater and other highway luminaries in the lead, a chain of cars, vans, buses, trucks and motorcycles has made its way over mountain and plain.

On Thursday, the official birthday of the interstate system, the cross-country caravan arrived at the Zero Milestone on the Ellipse in Washington, the place where Eisenhower's convoy started a journey that would have momentous implications for American drivers.

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