

Memorandum

To: CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS
CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

CTC Meeting: May 23, 2011

Reference No.: 2.3b.(3)
Action Item

From: NORMA ORTEGA
Chief Financial Officer

Prepared by: Terry L. Abbott
Chief
Division of Design

Subject: **NEW PUBLIC ROAD CONNECTION, 03-ED-50 PM 16.5**
RESOLUTION S-753

RECOMMENDATION:

The Department of Transportation (Department) recommends the California Transportation Commission (Commission) approve the attached Resolution S-753 and map authorizing a new public road connection at Ray Lawyer Drive to State Route (SR) 50 in the city of Placerville.

ISSUE:

The City of Placerville has requested approval of a new public road connection to SR 50. Pursuant to Section 100.2 of the Streets and Highways Code, no local road shall be connected with any freeway until the Commission adopts a resolution consenting thereto. It is recommended that the Commission approve the resolution in accordance with the recommendation of the Acting Chief Engineer. The resolution grants approval of a new public road connection as an interchange to SR 50 in the county of El Dorado, in the city of Placerville, at Ray Lawyer Drive at Post Mile (PM) 16.5.

Recommended by: _____
ROBERT PIEPLOW
Acting Chief Engineer

BACKGROUND:

Due to projected growth and congestion in the western area of the City of Placerville (City), the City is proposing to construct a new interchange on SR 50 at the existing Ray Lawyer Drive overcrossing location, east of the Placerville Drive/Forni Road interchange. This new interchange is part of a much larger project known as the Western Placerville Interchanges Project. The purpose of the project is to address current and projected regional and local traffic demand, improve traffic circulation and emergency access, and relieve overall congestion in the area.

SR 50 is part of the California Freeway and Expressway System and it runs west to east traversing the counties of Sacramento and El Dorado to the Nevada State line. It is a major and historic thoroughfare through El Dorado County to Lake Tahoe and beyond to Nevada. SR 50 is access controlled freeway from Sacramento County to the community of Pollock Pines in El Dorado County, east of the proposed project location. It is the primary route of travel for goods and services through El Dorado County. In the project area, SR 50 was designated as freeway by the California Highway Commission in 1957.

This segment of SR 50 is classified as a principal arterial, federal aid primary route. It is a four-lane divided freeway with a 22 feet wide median, 12-foot lanes, and inside and outside shoulders that vary in width to a maximum of 8 feet. In the area of downtown Placerville, SR 50 serves as an expressway with three at-grade signalized intersections and several right in/out access points and off ramps. From the eastern Placerville city limit, SR 50 serves as a 4-lane expressway with multiple access points and unprotected left turn movements.

Ray Lawyer Drive is a two-lane roadway with left turn channelization at major intersections or points of access to local businesses.

In 1993, the Department approved a Project Study Report for the Government Center Interchange, now known as Ray Lawyer Drive Interchange. In 1995, the Department approved a Project Report to construct the Ray Lawyer Drive overcrossing as Phase 1 of the interchange. Now, it is proposed to construct new on and off ramps (eastbound and westbound) at this location in concert with the overall Western Placerville Interchanges project.

The overall Western Placerville Interchanges project will consist of replacing the existing Placerville Drive/Forni Road overcrossing to meet vertical clearance standards and provide sufficient width for future SR 50 widening; constructing new on and off ramps at Ray Lawyer Drive overcrossing; widening of eastbound ramps at Forni Road/Placerville Drive; and widening and overlay portions of Forni Road, Placerville Drive, and Fair Lane. This project also proposes construction of new eastbound auxiliary lanes from Forni Road to Ray Lawyer Drive and westbound from Ray Lawyer Drive to the Placerville Drive interchange; Ray Lawyer Drive will be widened and extended 820 feet south; Forni Road will be realigned and widened and will terminate at a new signalized intersection at the new Justice Center Driveway/Ray Lawyer Drive intersection.

The project also includes Class II bike lanes on both sides of Placerville Drive, Forni Road and Ray Lawyer Drive. Sidewalks are included along at least one side of all of the local streets except for Fair Lane. These improvements will provide safer routes for pedestrian and bicycle travelers.

Traffic studies for the design year 2045 No-Build Alternative predicts that the intersections of Placerville Drive/Fair Lane/SR 50 westbound, Placerville Drive/Forni Road and the Forni Road/Lo-Hi Way/SR 50 eastbound would operate at Level of Service (LOS) F during peak hours. The study also predicts that queues at these intersections would spill back into adjacent intersections and onto the freeway mainline in both directions resulting on LOS F along SR 50. Once the proposed project improvements have been constructed, including the new SR 50/Ray Lawyer Drive interchange, all study intersections would operate at LOS C or better and all freeway facilities would operate at LOS D or better during peak hours.

Some exceptions to mandatory design standards were approved by the Department on April 2001. Recently, additional non-standard features have been identified. Therefore, a supplemental fact sheet for exceptions to mandatory design standards is required and is expected to be approved by the Department by May 17, 2012. Updated Traffic studies were completed in April 2012.

Public Meetings for this proposed project were held on January 7, 2004, June 29, 2005, and October 21, 2005.

The City of Placerville has been the California Environmental Quality Act lead agency for this project and certified the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) on November 22, 2005.

A Project Study Report was developed by El Dorado County Transportation Commission (EDCTC) and approved by the Department on June 2001. The Draft Project Report was developed by the City of Placerville and approved by the Department on September 2005. The Project Report was approved by the Department on January 15, 2008.

The City of Placerville passed Resolutions in support of this New Public Road Connection at its March 13, 2012 meeting. EDCTC has programmed funding in support of this project. The County of El Dorado is in full support of this project. The Western Placerville Interchanges Project is specifically listed in the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) Metropolitan Transportation Plan for 2025 and the SACOG Regional Transportation Improvement Program.

The estimated project cost for the Ray Lawyer Drive improvements is estimated to be \$10,800,000. The City is seeking \$5,330,000 in Congestion Mitigation Improvement Account funds for the westbound on-ramp (Phase 1A) project scheduled for construction summer of 2012. The project is considered for programming in the 2012 Regional Transportation Improvement Program in the amount of \$5,542,000. The remaining project costs will be programmed as available and applicable from local funds, Traffic Impact Mitigation Fees, Regional, State, and Federal transportation sources.

Unless the proposed improvements are undertaken, future planned development and background regional growth will increase traffic volumes such that all intersections in the vicinity of the Forni Road/Placerville Drive/SR 50 interchange will operate with severe congestion during both the morning and afternoon peak hours resulting in congestion on SR 50 from backups at the off-ramp intersections. This congestion would affect both local traffic on Placerville Drive and Forni Road and regional traffic on SR 50.

The Commission accepted the FEIR and Findings of Fact and approved the Western Placerville Interchanges Project for future consideration of funding on April 25, 2012 under Resolution E-12-16.

A Superseding Freeway Agreement was approved for signatures by the Placerville City Council on March 13, 2012, and will be executed by the Department after Commission approval of the new connection.

Attachments

Resolution S-753
Location Map

**CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
Resolution Authorizing a New Public Road Connection**

03-ED-50 PM 16.5

Resolution S-753

WHEREAS, the City of Placerville has requested approval of a new public road connection on State Route 50 for Ray Lawyer Drive; and

WHEREAS, the City of Placerville has completed a Final Environmental Impact Report in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act; and,

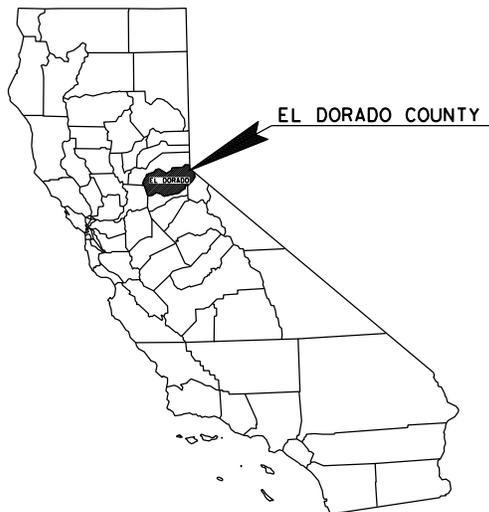
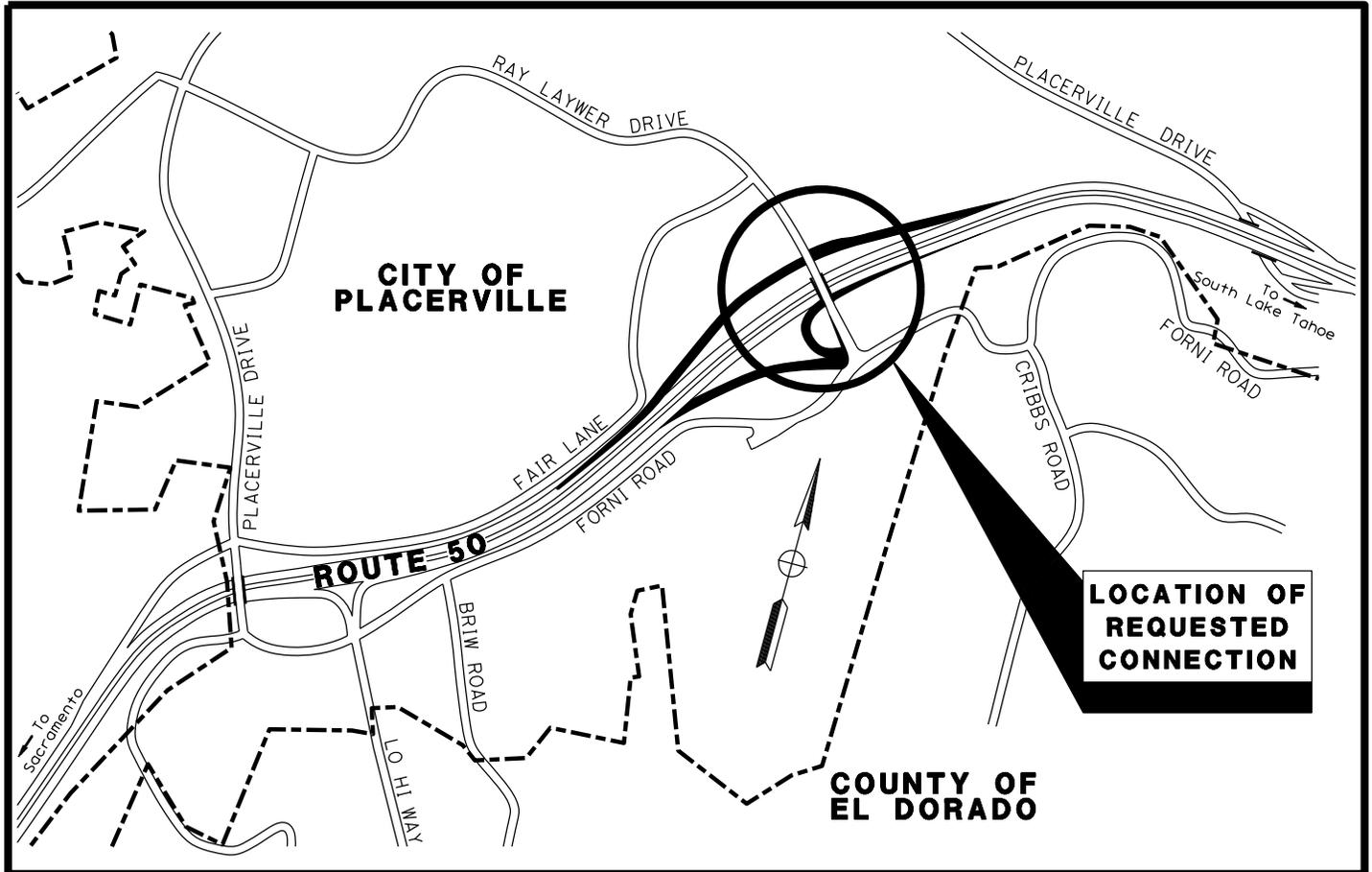
WHEREAS, the project will have impacts on the environment that will be mitigated to the maximum extent practicable.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the California Transportation Commission that pursuant to the authority vested in it by law, this Commission does hereby authorize one new public road connection on State Route 50 at Ray Lawyer Drive, Post Mile 16.5, in the county of El Dorado.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the cost of construction and right of way shall be borne by others.



NEW PUBLIC ROAD CONNECTION 03-ED-50 PM 16.6



LOCATION MAP