

State Route 132 West Freeway/Expressway Project: Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why isn't the project considering the use of existing State Route 132 (SR-132) (Maze Boulevard)?

A: One of the alternatives considered during the project scoping process was Alternative 5, which proposed widening existing SR-132 (Maze Boulevard) to build a multi-lane conventional highway to meet the project's purpose and need. This alternative was ultimately rejected by the Project Development Team for a number of reasons.

- Widening existing SR-132 would have substantially impacted an estimated 160 local residents, businesses, and utilities along the existing highway, including approximately 60 residential relocations. The alternative would also eliminate direct access to schools, churches, and businesses, which would require full acquisition of those parcels.
- Widening the existing highway would not have provided system connectivity between SR-132 and SR-99 because of the substantial right-of-way impacts to downtown development and the conflicts with existing SR-99 on and off-ramps.
- Widening existing SR-132 would convert considerable acreage of prime and unique farmlands with highly valuable soil.
- Realignment of SR-132 was analyzed and approved by a freeway route adoption in 1956. Consequently, much of the right-of-way within the adopted corridor was previously acquired by the State, thereby reducing the number of new real estate acquisitions, the number of residents and businesses needing to be displaced, the overall project cost, and a number of other impacts that would be borne by the local community.
- Widening the existing highway would not be consistent with numerous transportation planning documents, including StanCOG's 2014 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, Stanislaus County's General Plan, and the City of Modesto's General Plan.

Q: Why were the alternatives with the S-curve eliminated?

A: In early 2014, the Project Development Team screened out both alternatives with the S-curve because of three distinct limitations.

1. Both alternatives would have led to unnecessary environmental and community impacts, primarily by converting valuable agricultural land and prime farmlands.
2. The S-curve design would not have been a feasible design for traffic operations and potential future highway expansion to the west.
3. Both alternatives would be substantially more expensive and have far more extensive noise and visual impacts on the local community.

Q: What is included in the initial construction phase (also referred to as Phase 1)?

A: Phase 1: The initial construction phase is anticipated to begin in 2016, be completed within 12 to 15 months, and be open to traffic by 2018. Both of the project's build alternatives (Alternative 1 and Alternative 2) would be the same under Phase 1 and would involve the construction of a two-lane expressway from North Dakota Avenue on the west end of the alignment to the Needham Street Overcrossing Bridge on the east end of the alignment. At the completion of Phase 1, the expressway would have full access control, including signals or grade separations at intersections from

SR-99 to North Dakota Avenue. Full standard lane and shoulder widths are proposed (i.e., 10-foot-wide shoulders and 12-foot-wide general-purpose lanes) for a majority of the expressway. Phase 1 would also include drainage improvements, adding auxiliary lanes along SR-99, and local roadway improvements along North Dakota Avenue (adding a traffic signal), Kansas Avenue (adding an extension to replace North Franklin Street), 5th and 6th streets (improving the connection with SR-99, and Needham Street (adding an overcrossing east of the SR-132/SR-99 connection).

Q: Would the new highway be elevated, at-grade, or depressed?

A: Traveling from east to west, the new highway’s profile would begin at-grade from North Dakota Avenue until just east of Morse Road. The profile would then transition below grade (i.e., depressed) west of the North Rosemore Avenue overcrossing and continue below grade past the North Carpenter Road overcrossing. East of this overcrossing, the profile would rise above grade (i.e., elevated) to cross over the North Emerald Avenue undercrossing and would continue this way over the proposed SR-132/SR-99 interchange. Along SR-99, the profile would be at-grade to match the current profile of SR-99 (see figure below).

