



PRESS RELEASE

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District: District 6 – Bakersfield
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TRIP BEGINS PRELIMINARY SCREENING OF PROPOSED CENTENNIAL CORRIDOR ALTERNATIVES

Bakersfield - The Thomas Roads Improvement Program (TRIP) has announced that the Centennial Corridor Project Development Team will begin the screening process on proposed alternatives. The project seeks to develop a connection of State Route (SR) 58 with the Westside Parkway and, ultimately, Interstate 5. The purpose of this connection is to reduce congestion, improve the flow of goods movement into and out of the region, provide direct benefits to the regional and national economy and support the continued economic growth of the Southern San Joaquin Valley.

Among the alternatives to be considered are five initially proposed by Caltrans and several submitted by the public. In this preliminary screening process, the Project Development Team will determine which alternatives are "reasonable" to carry forward for full environmental studies. Reasonable alternatives include those that are practical or feasible from a technical and economic standpoint, rather than those simply desired by the Federal Highways Administration, Caltrans or local agencies.

One test for reasonableness is: Does the alternative meet the project's purpose and need? Each alternative is compared to each specific objective in the "Purpose and Need" statement. Only those alternatives that fulfill the major objectives will pass this test of reasonableness. Other reasonableness tests include operational and safety concerns, cost, available funding, etc. The Project Development Team will determine the criteria to be used for the screening process. The team includes representation from Caltrans; the City of Bakersfield; County of Kern; Parsons, the City's program management consultant; and HNTB, the project consultant.

This screening process is only the preliminary review and elimination of alternatives. Potential adverse impacts are evaluated only in general terms; impacts to specific resources are not considered. Later in the process, each individual resource and the potential impact the project could cause to it will be evaluated. This task occurs once alternatives that do not meet the criteria have been screened out and the environmental study process has moved forward.

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Centennial Corridor is one of a dozen transportation projects moving forward under TRIP, which is a unique collaboration between Caltrans, the City of Bakersfield, County of Kern, and Kern Council of Governments. The organization was created to manage the freeway-type projects designated for funding in the 2005 Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). It is named in honor of former Congressman William M. Thomas, who successfully earmarked \$630 million in federal transportation funds for Metropolitan Bakersfield.

Listed below are the screening criteria to be used for all alternatives under consideration:

1. Does this alternative satisfy the legislative mandate for this project, as outlined in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), Section 1302?
2. Does this alternative satisfy the purpose and need for the project?
3. Does this alternative avoid severe operational and safety problems?
4. Can this alternative be completed within funding reasonably available to the project?
5. Does this alternative avoid unacceptable adverse social, economic or environmental impacts that would cause it to be rejected without further environmental evaluation?
6. Is this the first time this alternative has been considered in a screening process? If no, did it successfully pass through the prior screening process?
7. If any of the above criteria were answered with a "No": Does this alternative warrant further studies to determine whether the criteria failure (No) results in a fatal flaw to the project?
8. If two or more criteria were answered with a "No": Does this alternative warrant further studies to determine whether the combination of criteria failures (No's) result in a fatal flaw to the project?

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