State of California
Business, Transportation and Housing Agency
Department of Transportation

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POLICY MATTERS
Longer-Life Pavement Status Report

Information Item

CTC Meeting: July 19-20, 2000

Agenda Item: 4.6

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STATUS REPORT ON LONGER-LIFE PAVEMENT

A majority of the California freeway system was built between 1964 and 1974. The pavement for these freeways was designed to support the anticipated vehicle loading expected to accumulate during the 20-year period of time after they were opened to the public. However, most of these pavements, which are still in service, have supported much more loading than they were originally designed to support. Up until just recently, through pavement management techniques, the Department of Transportation (Department) has been able to manage the pavement on the freeway system so that it has performed satisfactory. However, the freeway system has aged to the point and is to the stage in its life where it is showing signs of and types of distress, especially in the urban areas, where it will require a significant amount maintenance effort (both personnel and money) to protect the public's investment. Business as usual, pavement rehabilitation strategies that extend the service life for a minimum of 10 years, will no longer satisfy the expectations of the public. The Department is faced with the dual challenge of repairing the freeways in urban areas while still trying to minimize user delays during the life of the pavement repairs.

Since late-1996, the Pavement Design and Rehabilitation Committee in the Corporate Headquarters and the Engineering Service Center, along with various Districts, has been investigating longer lasting (30 to 35-year) pavement rehabilitation strategies; especially for use in urban areas where the Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) is at least 150,000 vehicles or Annual Average Daily Truck Traffic (AADTT) 15,000 trucks per day. The added complexity of designing and constructing longer lasting pavement rehabilitation repairs, while managing traffic on freeways in the urban areas which are operating at or near capacity for many hours of the day, can be addressed through the use of current practices and new innovative approaches. The Department, the University of California at Berkeley and the pavement industry (both concrete and asphalt) have been investigating pavement design changes, changes to the bidding process, changes during construction, and changes to traffic management during the closures that will be required to perform the work that is now necessary. The goal of the presentation will be to inform the Commissioners of the development and the current status of the longer lasting pavement rehabilitation strategies being studied.

The speaker will be Kevin Herritt, Chief of the Office of State Pavement Design in Design and Local Programs.