

Memorandum

To: CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS

CTC Meeting: October 29-30, 2008

Reference No.: 2.3b.(1)
Action Item

From: CINDY McKIM
Chief Financial Officer

Prepared by: Terry L. Abbott
Division Chief
Design

Subject: **NEW PUBLIC ROAD CONNECTION, 3-NEV-20 PM R14.3**
RESOLUTION S-737

RECOMMENDATION:

The Department of Transportation (Department) recommends the California Transportation Commission (Commission) approve the attached Resolution S-737 and map authorizing a new public road connection at Dorsey Drive to State Route (SR) 20 in the city of Grass Valley.

ISSUE:

The Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) has requested approval of a new public road connection to SR 20. 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 Chief Engineer. The resolution grants approval of a new public road connection as an interchange to SR 20 in the city of Grass Valley, Nevada County, at Post Mile (PM) R14.3.

Recommended by: _____
RICHARD D. LAND
Chief Engineer

BACKGROUND:

The Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) is proposing to replace the existing Dorsey Drive overcrossing with a full interchange to address operational problems at adjacent interchanges (Idaho-Maryland Road and Brunswick Road) as well as at the local surface streets of East Main Street and the Nevada City Highway. The primary purpose for this project is to reduce local traffic burden thereby creating additional capacity for future development. This new interchange will also provide more direct access to the specific high use sites of Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital and the Sierra College Nevada County Campus.

The California Highway Commission adopted SR 20, in the project vicinity, as a freeway on June 10, 1952.

SR 20 is part of the California Freeway and Expressway System. It is an “oceans to mountains” route, traversing through Mendocino, Lake, Colusa, Sutter, Yuba and Nevada Counties. The route begins in Mendocino County at SR 1 near Fort Bragg and terminates at Route 80 near Emigrant Gap in Nevada County. SR 20 is a Federal Aid Primary Route that serves regional, commercial, agricultural and recreational traffic and interconnects with major routes such as Route 5, Route 99, Route 70, and Route 80. It connects rural population centers with Routes 16, 45, 49, and 174.

In the vicinity of the proposed Dorsey Drive interchange, SR 20 is a four-lane divided freeway. It was constructed in the late 1960’s and is located in the western foothills of the Sierra Nevada Range and within the urbanized area of the City of Grass Valley. SR 20 is a major arterial for the City of Grass Valley and Nevada City.

Dorsey Drive overcrossing is currently a two-lane collector, constructed in 1960. The proposed project will replace the overcrossing with a five-lane wide structure (including a turning lane) on a full compact diamond interchange. The interchange will be located approximately 0.64 mile east of the Idaho-Maryland Road interchange and approximately 0.53 mile west of Brunswick Road interchange. The project will also include the construction of auxiliary lanes between the proposed Dorsey Drive interchange and both adjacent interchanges to mitigate merging conflicts caused by nonstandard spacing.

Construction of the new Dorsey Drive interchange will result in a more efficient traffic flow by providing direct access to the high use sites of Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital and the Sierra College Nevada County Campus. Currently, to access either of these locations, traffic must exit SR 20 at either Idaho-Maryland Road or Brunswick Road interchange and navigate local surface streets to reach either site. Sierra College Drive (which provides direct access to the college campus) is the westerly extension of Dorsey Drive at the East Main Street intersection. The Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital complex is located in the southwest quadrant of Dorsey Drive and SR 20.

Although the collision rate at the project location is lower than the statewide average for similar facilities, the eastbound direction has had an inordinate high number of rear-end collisions, especially at the Brunswick Road off-ramp. A contributing factor to this high collision rate is thought to be that the off-ramp is located on the downgrade segment of a crest vertical curve. The

addition of a Dorsey Drive off-ramp and auxiliary lanes between Idaho-Maryland, Dorsey Drive and Brunswick Road interchanges will improve decision sight distances and is expected to reduce the number of rear-end collisions.

Traffic studies performed in 2002 predicted increased congestion as land development and growth continue in accordance with the adopted City and County General Plans. The proposed interchange will improve surface street operations by providing direct access to major destination points as well as improve the SR 20 mainline and entrance and exit ramps operations.

A Project Study Report for this project was approved on December 6, 1994. The Project Report was approved on June 30, 2006, and a Supplemental Project Report was approved on February 5, 2008. The compact diamond interchange alternative was selected and has been accepted by the NCTC and the City of Grass Valley. In order to construct this project, Commission approval is required for the new public road connection to SR 20 at Dorsey Drive.

At the completion of the project, it is proposed that the local road be relinquished to the City of Grass Valley.

The proposed improvements are accepted and supported by the community who recognizes the need for safety and operational improvements. Several public meetings were held between May 1994 and March 2006.

The current construction capital cost estimate is \$18.8 million and right of way capital cost is estimated at \$3.0 million. The project is programmed for \$16.6 million in the 2008 State Transportation Improvement Program in Fiscal Year 2009-10. Additional local funding will come from regional Traffic Mitigation Fees and local sales tax funds.

The fact sheets for Nonstandard Mandatory Design Features were approved on June 29, 2006 and February 26, 2008. The fact sheet for Nonstandard Advisory Design Features was approved on August 23, 2006.

The California Environmental Quality Act Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) was signed on June 26, 2006. Federal requirements were met with the National Environmental Policy Act determination of Categorical Exclusion (CE) signed on May 2, 2006. Re-Validation of the MND and the CE was completed on November 21, 2007. The Commission approved the project for future consideration of funding on May 23, 2008.

A Freeway Agreement was adopted by the City of Grass Valley on September 9, 2008, and will be executed by the Department after Commission approval of the new connection.

Attachments:

Resolution S-737

Location Map

**CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
Resolution Authorizing a New Public Road Connection
03-Nev-20 PM R14.3**

Resolution S-737

WHEREAS, the County of Nevada and the City of Grass Valley have requested approval of a new public road connection on State Route 20 for Dorsey Drive; and

WHEREAS, the Department has prepared an Initial Study resulting in a Mitigated Negative Declaration and Categorical Exclusion in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act and the National Environmental Policy Act; and

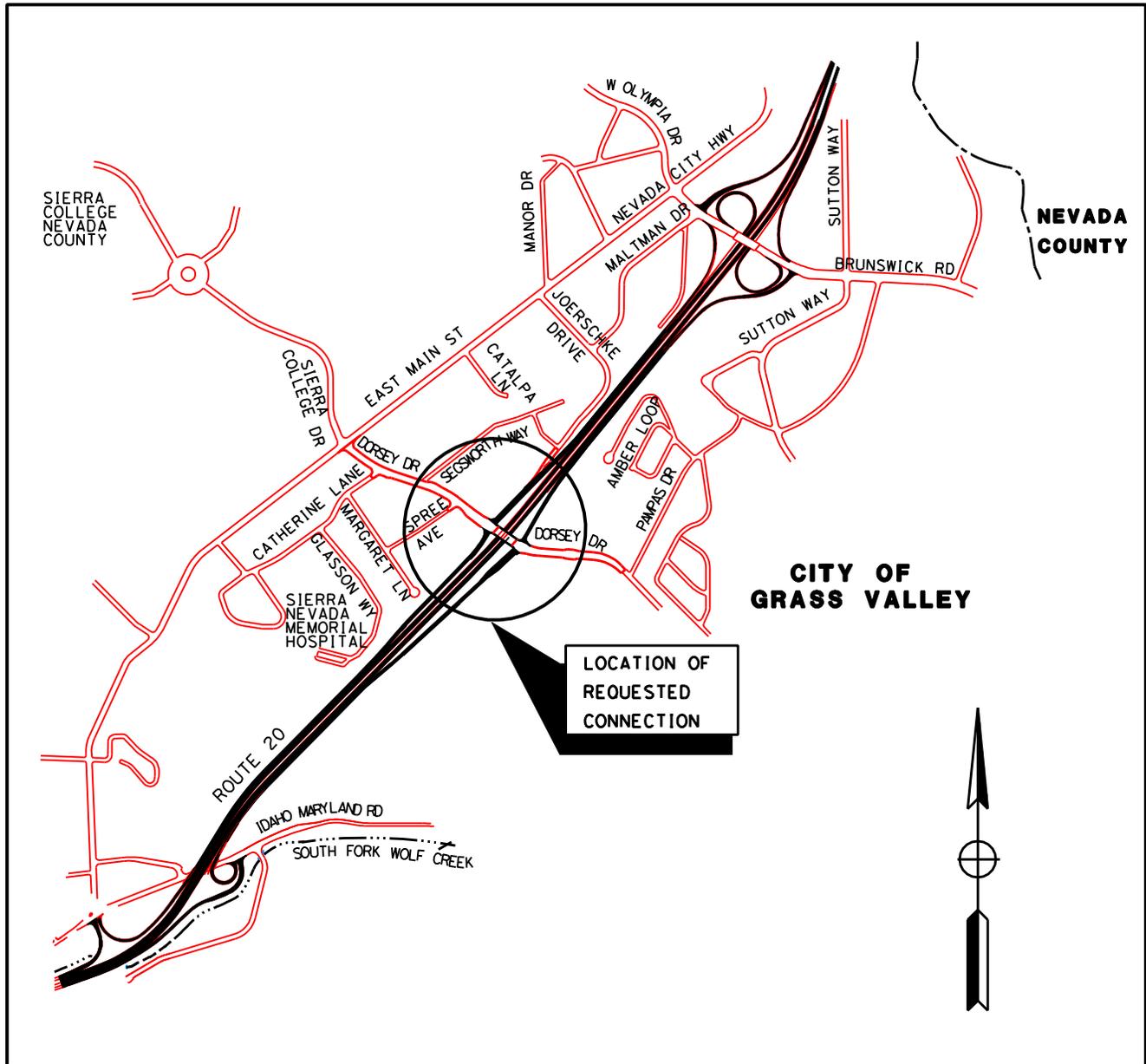
WHEREAS, a Re-Validation of the Mitigated Negative Declaration and the Categorical Exclusion was approved on November 21, 2007; and

WHEREAS, the project will have impacts on the environment that will be mitigated.

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 20 at Dorsey Drive, Post Mile R14.3, in the city of Grass Valley.



NEW PUBLIC ROAD CONNECTION 03-NEVADA-20



LOCATION MAP