

Memorandum

To: CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS

CTC Meeting: October 27-28, 2004

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

From: CINDY MCKIM
Acting Chief Financial Officer

Prepared by: Mark Leja
Chief
Division of Design

Ref: **ADOPTION OF LOCATION FOR STATE HIGHWAY AS A CONTROLLED ACCESS
HIGHWAY, 09-INY-395 KP 114.6/117.2 (PM 71.2/72.8),
RESOLUTION HRA-04-03**

RECOMMENDATION:

Submitted for transmittal to the California Transportation Commission (Commission) are Highway Route Adoption Resolution HRA-04-03 and a route location map for the State Highway Route 395. The Department of Transportation recommends that the Commission approve the resolution and route location map in accordance with the recommendation of the Chief Engineer. This resolution adopts 2.6 kilometers (1.6 miles) of Controlled Access Highway for Route 395 from 2.9 kilometers (1.8 miles) south of Mazourka Canyon Road to 0.3 kilometers (0.2 mile) south of Mazourka Canyon Road in Inyo County.

A Project Report was approved on June 25, 2004. The Negative Declaration documenting compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) were approved on June 22, 2004.

Recommended by: J. Mike Leonardo, Chief Engineer, Acting

BACKGROUND

U.S. Highway Route 395 (Route 395) is a high emphasis route in the Interregional Road System and, due to its association with State Route 14, is a major element of the transportation corridor connecting the Eastern Sierra Region and Western Central Nevada to the Southern California Region. This transportation corridor has been identified in previous California planning studies as one of five major recreational corridors serving all of Southern California. Route 395 has been designated a 'larger truck' route by the Federal Surface Transportation Assistance Act (STAA) and is included in the Subsystem of Highways for the Movement of Extra Legal Permit Loads (SHELL). The corridor is vital to the economy of the Eastern Sierra Region for the shipment of goods and materials, where virtually all food, clothing and other goods are imported. The corridor also adds a major recreational component to the economy with almost 70 percent of all non-commercial traffic being recreation oriented. Thirty-six percent of all traffic originates in the Southern California Region, with over 16% of all traffic composed of trucks, busses and RV's, compared to a statewide average of 10%. The purpose of the proposed route adoption is to pave the way for the approved four-lane construction project to increase capacity, improve safety and the flow of traffic and provide route continuity.

Currently, this segment of Route 395 is a two-lane conventional highway crossing generally level terrain. Cross-section consists of two standard 3.6 m (12 ft) lanes with predominantly non-standard 1.2 m (4 ft) shoulders, where 3 m (8 ft) is standard. At the southern limit of the adoption, the route will connect to the recently approved Manzanar four-lane divided section (Resolution HRA-04-02 approved August, 2004). This segment south of Independence was not included in the Manzanar adoption, as it was an integral part of a possible Independence bypass alternative and subject to various alignment considerations. This bypass alternative had less than a 3% approval at public hearings and was ultimately rejected for the recently approved 4-lane improvement project through Independence. Current and twenty year projected Level of Service (LOS) for the existing facility is 'D', congested. The current and twenty year LOS for the proposed project is 'A', free flowing. The majority of the property through which this segment of the route passes is owned by the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, with little development adjacent to the existing or proposed right of way south of Independence.

The proposed route adoption and associated project are consistent with the District System Management Plan and its goal to continue upgrading the Route 14/395 corridor to a four-lane facility. They are also consistent with the May 2000 U.S. Route 395 Transportation Concept Report designating a four-lane expressway as both the concept and the ultimate roadway for this segment of Route 395.

PROPOSAL

The route adoption proposes a controlled access highway on predominantly existing alignment from the northern end of the Manzanar four lane section adopted in August, 2004, to a point 0.3 kilometers (0.2 miles) south of Mazourka Canyon Road, at Independence. A related Environmental Resolution for funding approval can be found in reference 2.2c of the Commission meeting agenda. The project was programmed in the 1998 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) at approximately \$4.2 million in capitol support costs, all from Interregional Improvement Program funds. Current ~~unprogrammed~~ **programmed** estimated construction capital cost is \$12.5 million, with Construction Support estimated at ~~\$1.9~~ **\$2.03** million, and approximately ~~\$1.2~~ **\$1.36** million for Right of Way **and Right of Way Support**. Construction is currently scheduled for ~~FY 2007-08~~ **FY 2008-09**, based on programming in a 2004 STIP.

COORDINATION

A Project Report was approved on June 25, 2004. Three public hearings, each with strong turnout, were held between 1997 and 2000 to gather input on a range of alternative projects. These hearings and the final public hearing on the Draft Environmental Document lead to the rejection of the bypass alternative and the selection of the preferred alternative providing the route adoption alignment proposed here. The Final Environmental Document (FED) for NEPA, a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and the Negative Declaration for compliance with CEQA were approved on June 22, 2004. The Commission, as the lead agency, has considered a funding resolution under reference 2.2c, concurrent with this item. A Controlled Access Highway Agreement between the Department and Inyo County has been prepared for execution pending the approval of this resolution.

CONCLUSION

The proposed route adoption for this segment of State Highway Route 395 is needed to reduce traffic congestion, maintain interregional mobility, and improve safety. For these reasons the adoption of the proposed route as a Controlled Access Highway is in the best interest of the public.

Attachments: Resolution HRA-04-03, Route Adoption Map