

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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December 6, 2011

DEC 8 '11 AM 11:56

Mr. Matt Machado
Director
Stanislaus County Department of Public Works
1716 Morgan Road
Modesto, California 95358

Dear Mr. Machado:

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) fully supports the Stanislaus County TIGER III application for the State Route (SR) 99/SR 219 Kiernan Avenue Interchange Project (Project). Caltrans recognizes that the San Joaquin Valley is a key contributor of agricultural goods and products to the nation. California's participation in the national and global economies is highly dependent on a highway, rail, and port transportation network that promotes efficient goods movement, with connectivity and mobility throughout the San Joaquin Valley. Funding and completing this Project is key to providing these critical outcomes.

The Project will reconstruct and provide a high capacity interchange connecting SR 99 to SR 219. The interchange improvements will provide regional access to SR 99, accommodate increased traffic demands and provide continuity with the Department's SR 219 Widening Project. The Kiernan Avenue Interchange Project includes building a wider bridge with improved ramp connections, adding auxiliary lanes on SR 99 in each direction to the Pelandale Avenue Interchange, and widening SR 219 from SR 99 to east of Sisk Road.

The Kiernan Avenue Interchange Project is needed to manage commercial and residential growth in the region. Project area land use and job projections are anticipated to result in 115,500 jobs in 2020, increasing to 169,000 in 2050. Left unmanaged, this growth will result in increased traffic congestion, delay, and accidents and will deteriorate air quality. Existing operational deficiencies will be addressed by providing additional interchange capacity.

As a regionally significant component of the national goods movement network, the Project will provide the following benefits:

- Provide a high capacity interchange connecting SR 99 to SR 219
- Eliminate congestion on SR 219 at the existing SR 99 Interchange
- Increase the efficiency of the interchange to allow traffic on SR 99 to flow at an improved level of service

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- Improve the flow of goods and services for the region and the State and provide the catalyst for regional and local generation of jobs
- Improve traffic operations on adjacent roadway network
- Leverage additional benefits from the State's investment on SR 219

A TIGER III award of \$25,000,000 will leverage non-federal matching funds of \$27,800,000 to complete the total project cost of \$52,800,000. Caltrans looks forward to working with Stanislaus County to implement this Project should the U.S. Department of Transportation approve an award of National Infrastructure Investments "TIGER Discretionary Grants" (TIGER III) funds.

Sincerely,



KOP
MALCOLM DOUGHERTY
Acting Director