

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DISTRICT 3 – SACRAMENTO AREA OFFICE
2800 GATEWAY OAKS DRIVE, MS 19
SACRAMENTO, CA 95833
PHONE (916) 274-0635
FAX (916) 263-1796
TTY 711



*Flex your power!
Be energy efficient!*

June 22, 2009

09YOL0013
03-YOL-Various PM Various
Yolo County 2030 Countywide General Plan
Draft Environmental Impact Report
SCH # 2008102034

Mr. David Morrison
Yolo County Planning and Public Works Department
292 West Beamer Street
Woodland, CA 95695

Dear Mr. Morrison,

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the Yolo County 2030 Countywide General Plan's Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR). The Yolo County 2030 Countywide General Plan Draft EIR provides guidance for growth and development within unincorporated Yolo County including Capay Valley, Clarksburg, Dunnigan, Esparto, Knights Landing, Madison, Monument Hills, Yolo, Zamora, and a number of other community areas. State Highway System facilities such as Interstate 5 (I-5), State Route (SR) 16, SR 45, Interstate 80 (I-80), SR 84, SR 128, SR 113, and Interstate 505 (I-505) are located within the unincorporated County. Our comments on both the Circulation Element and the Draft EIR are as follows:

Circulation Element

- CSMPs. Page CI-3, State Transportation Planning. To further characterize the long range planning efforts for State Highways, Caltrans recommends that this section reference the Corridor System Management Plans (CSMP) for I-5 and I-80. It is recommended that the following text be added:

“In addition to the concept report, a Corridor System Management Plan (CSMP) has been developed for Interstate 80 and Interstate 5 which addresses portions of the routes in Yolo County. CSMPs are intended to provide for the integrated management of travel modes and roadways to facilitate the efficient and effective mobility of people and goods within California's most congested transportation corridors.”

The information regarding Caltrans System Planning threshold standards for State Highway improvements and facility plans should be modified based on the new Corridor System Management Plans for both the I-5 and I-80 corridors. Whereas Caltrans has traditionally prepared a Transportation Concept Corridor Report (TCCR) as the long range planning document for all State Highways, as indicated in the Circulation Element, the development of the more comprehensive CSMP has eliminated the need for a separate TCCR. Each CSMP now serves as the TCCR for the segment of the State Highway within the CSMP boundaries and includes information regarding the future facility needed to maintain an acceptable LOS. This is expressed in terms of "Concept LOS" and "Concept Facility" to reflect the minimum level or quality of operations acceptable for each route segment within the 20-year planning period and the highway facility needed in the next 20-years to maintain the Concept LOS. The County may set a higher LOS threshold standard consistent with community wishes and other local concerns. However, since the Caltrans Concept LOS defines the minimum acceptable level of service established by Caltrans as the owner and operator of the facility, the threshold standard LOS established by the County should not be lower than the Caltrans Concept LOS.

Copies of both CSMPs are enclosed for your reference. In addition, we are also enclosing a spreadsheet which extracts the System Planning information for I-5 and I-80 for your reference. This information should be used to modify the draft Circulation Element and Draft EIR with regard to service thresholds and facility needs for both Interstate 5 and Interstate 80.

- Page CI-3, State Transportation Planning. Caltrans recommends updating text in the SR 16 section to reference the May 2009 Draft Environmental Impact Report for the SR 16 Safety Improvement Project which has been released for public review. Additionally, the last sentence in the SR 16 section should state "The Safety Improvement Project will not (rather than 'is not anticipated to') provide capacity-enhancing improvements.
- Circulation Diagram. Page CI-5, Local Planning. The Circulation Diagram figures should reflect the State Highway System including I-5, SR 16, SR 45, I-80, SR 84, SR 128, SR 113, and I-505. The planned I-80 Bus/Carpool Lane project between Davis and West Sacramento which is included in the SACOG Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) 2035 should be shown on the figures. The County should consider also showing the I-5 Bus/Carpool Lane project between the Sacramento International Airport and Woodland that is listed in the "Vision Budget" (unconstrained) for the SACOG MTP 2035.
- Planned Roadway Improvements. Page CI-3. Using language from the Caltrans Corridor System Management Plans and/or Transportation Corridor
"Caltrans improves mobility across California"

Concept Reports, all the State Highway System facilities in Yolo County, including I-5, SR 16, SR 45, I-80, SR 84, SR 128, SR 113, and I-505 should be discussed.

- SR 16 Consistency. Policy CI-3.1. Caltrans long range planning document and our communication with community members in Yolo County remains consistent: Caltrans has no plans to construct additional lanes on SR 16 to widen it to a four lane facility. The ongoing Safety Improvement Project on SR 16 from I-505 through the Capay Valley to the town of Brooks will only add shoulders, turn pockets, and a clear recovery zone to the facility. The purpose of this project is to improve safety and provide a facility that can remain open during a 100-year flood event. If the County pursues adding lanes (capacity) to the facility as it assumes in this policy, Caltrans will not be the lead agency or provide funding for the project. The policy language should be updated accordingly.
- LOS Consistency. Policy CI-3.1. Please note that some heavily congested route segments have a Concept LOS “F” because the improvements required to bring the LOS to “E” are not feasible due to environmental, right of way, financial, and other constraints. However, with the implementation of operational strategies and key capital projects, the severity and the duration of the traffic congestion can be significantly reduced. Accordingly, Caltrans disagrees with the assertion in Policy CI-3.1 that LOS F is “acceptable” for Interstate 5 from the Woodland City Limit to Sacramento County line and on Interstate 80 from the Davis City Limit to West Sacramento City Limit. We recommend that the policy statement be rewritten to indicate the need to implement strategies and projects, as indicated in the CSMPs and in other planning documents, to reduce the severity of congestion, even though the LOS “F” is “anticipated”.
- Acknowledge Responsibility. Policy CI-1.4. To reflect, for instance, how the planned growth in Dunnigan may trigger the need for improvements to the State Highway System, Caltrans recommends the following language be added to the existing policy language, “The County will coordinate and participate with Caltrans, incorporated cities, and/or communities on roadway improvements that are shared by the jurisdictions to improve operations. The County shall assist Caltrans in implementing improvements to State Highway facilities that are required due to new growth.”
- Fees. It is recommended that “the State Highway System” be added to Policy CI-3.11 and CI-3.12 in Goal CI-3 to reflect the role of the SHS in the County’s

transportation network. These policies require new development projects to mitigate their direct and cumulative transportation impacts, and the language should include highways and freeways which are a key component of the County's transportation network.

- **New/Improved Access.** It is recommended that a policy be added to Goal CI-1 that states, "Any new/improved access to the State Highway System, such as interchanges to serve new development, shall be locally funded."
- **Setbacks.** It is recommended that a policy be added to Goal CI-1 that states, "Setbacks and/or buffers shall be required along State Highway System facilities and based upon State standards."
- **Policy CI-3.6 Complete Streets.** Caltrans applauds the County's incorporation of the Complete Streets concept into the design of rural and community roadways to ensure that the needs of bicyclists and pedestrians are addressed. Caltrans Deputy Directive 64, "Accommodating Non-Motorized Travel", was signed in October 2008 and formalizes our consideration of bicycle and pedestrian modes in all of our projects. Caltrans will consider the needs of bicycle and pedestrian modes in design and construction of large and small highway projects.
- **Policy CI-3.1 Level of Service.** The County should use the Level of Service forecasts for individual State Highways as they are shown in Caltrans Corridor System Management Plans or Transportation Corridor Concept Reports. The list in the General Plan does not address SR 45, SR 84, or SR 128 but those should be included in the General Plan discussion.
- **Policy CI-3.3 Objectives to Consider when Expanding or Modifying the State Highway System.** Consultation with Caltrans is needed to determine how the objectives would be weighted or otherwise brought into the project development process. Though this Policy is a mitigation measure for Dunnigan Specific Plan Area development it will also be applied to the entire State Highway System in the unincorporated County. Caltrans priority projects for the unincorporated County are for bus/carpool lanes and traffic operations improvements.
- Caltrans applauds the consideration of policies supporting goods movement through the Port of Sacramento and protecting airport operations from incompatible activities.

Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR)

The document identifies the roadway configuration assumptions used in the Level of Service calculations and mitigation measures for the State Highway System.

- The County may set a higher LOS threshold standard consistent with community wishes and other local concerns. However, since the Caltrans Concept LOS defines the minimum acceptable level of service established by Caltrans as the owner and operator of the facility, the threshold standard LOS established by the County should not be lower than the Caltrans Concept LOS.
- Caltrans applauds Mitigation Measures CI-1 and CI-1b which requires a new policy for Specific Plan Areas, including the Dunnigan Specific Plan area, to achieve a maximum of 44 Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT) per household per weekday.
- Caltrans applauds Mitigation Measure CI-1c which implements Land Use Mitigation Measure 4c that addresses the importance of creating, maintaining and monitoring a jobs/housing balance in Specific Plan Areas. Many of the planned Yolo County Specific Plan Areas are in outlying areas and a jobs/housing balance, especially one that links job salaries with cost of housing, can help reduce the number of long distance commute trips generated by new development. We recommend that the language in this mitigation measure be revised to require (rather than “strive”) a match of overall wages to home prices.
- Caltrans applauds Mitigation Measure CI-1e which requires a new policy establishing mode split goals for walking, bicycling, and transit trips within Specific Plan Areas.
- Table II-1, Impact CI-2 Additional Vehicle Trips and Cumulative Level of Service (LOS). The Mitigation Measure is Policy CI-3.1 which outlines Level of Service targets and improvements necessary for segments of State Highway facilities. The text should be modified to reflect the following:
 - I-5. Caltrans recommends the following language be used, “Level of Service targets will be consistent with the Caltrans Corridor System Management Plan and Transportation Corridor Concept Report for I-5. The County will require a fair share contribution towards the highway improvements that are required due to new development as identified in Traffic Impact Studies prepared for the Dunnigan Specific Plan, Elkhorn Specific Plan area, and other projects.” The improvements in the Dunnigan

area should not be limited in the General Plan mitigation to an additional auxiliary lane.

- I-80. Caltrans recommends the following language be used, “Level of Service targets will be consistent with the Caltrans Corridor System Management Plan and Transportation Corridor Concept Report for I-80. The County will require a fair share contribution towards the highway improvements that are required due to local development as identified in Traffic Impact Studies.” LOS F is not “acceptable” but is “anticipated” between Davis and West Sacramento.
- SR 16. Caltrans recommends the following language be used, “Level of Service targets will be consistent with the Caltrans Transportation Corridor Concept Report. The County will require a fair share contribution towards the highway improvements that are required due to new development as identified in Traffic Impact Studies prepared local development projects.” Caltrans long range planning document and our communication with community members in Yolo County remains consistent: Caltrans has no plans to construct additional lanes on SR 16 to widen it to a four lane facility. The ongoing Safety Improvement Project on SR 16 from I-505 through the Capay Valley to the town of Brooks will only add shoulders, turn pockets, and a clear recovery zone to the facility. The purpose of this project is to improve safety and provide a facility that can remain open during a 100-year flood event. If the County pursues adding lanes (capacity) to the facility as it assumes in this mitigation and policy, Caltrans will not be the lead agency or provide funding for the project. The mitigation and policy language should be updated accordingly.
- SR 113. Caltrans recommends the following language be used, “Level of Service targets will be consistent with the Caltrans Transportation Corridor Concept Report. The County will require a fair share contribution towards the highway improvements that are required due to new development as identified in Traffic Impact Studies prepared local development projects.” LOS F is not “acceptable” between the Yolo/Sutter County Line to County Road 102 and a parallel facility should be developed if improvements to the existing facility are not feasible. The mitigation and policy language should be updated.
- SR 128. Caltrans recommends the following language be used, “Level of Service targets will be consistent with the Caltrans Transportation Corridor Concept Report. The County will require a fair share contribution towards the highway improvements that are required due to new development as identified in Traffic Impact Studies prepared local development projects.”

- SR 45. SR 45 should be addressed in the policy and mitigation. Caltrans recommends the following language be used, “Level of Service targets will be consistent with the Caltrans Transportation Corridor Concept Report. The County will require a fair share contribution towards the highway improvements that are required due to new development as identified in Traffic Impact Studies prepared local development projects.”
- SR 84. SR 84 should be addressed in the policy and mitigation. Caltrans recommends the following language be used, “Level of Service targets will be consistent with the Caltrans Transportation Corridor Concept Report. The County will require a fair share contribution towards the highway improvements that are required due to new development as identified in Traffic Impact Studies prepared local development projects.”
- I-505. I-505 should be addressed in the policy and mitigation. Caltrans recommends the following language be used, “Level of Service targets will be consistent with the Caltrans Transportation Corridor Concept Report. The County will require a fair share contribution towards the highway improvements that are required due to new development as identified in Traffic Impact Studies prepared local development projects.”
- Table II-1. Mitigation Measure Land Use-1b amends Policy CC-3.5 of the Draft General Plan Land Use and Community Character Element in regards to the need to identify interchange improvements on I-5. Section E of Policy CC-3.5 states, “E. Plan future land uses to direct majority of new trips onto the County Road 6/I-5 interchange, instead of the County Road 8/I-5 interchange. This works to buffer the interchange of I-5 and I-505, keeps dense and intense land uses close to existing downtown and makes the most efficient use of transportation infrastructure funds, since the County Road 6 interchange will require improvements regardless of the mix of land uses planned for Dunnigan.” Caltrans suggests that the following language be included as part of CC-3.5: “The need for ramp intersection, ramp, interchange improvements, or mainline improvements on the State Highway System shall be identified within the Traffic Impact Study for the Dunnigan Specific Plan.”
- The growth rate used in the EIR for Interstate 80 between the Solano County Line to U.S. 50 is low. The EIR uses 20 year growth factors between 1.04% and 1.18%. Caltrans used a 20 year growth factor of 1.55% in this area.
- The existing AM and PM traffic volumes listed on Table IV-4, (page 252 and page 256) for Interstate 505 are 20-25% lower than Caltrans counts.

Mr. David Morrison

June 22, 2009

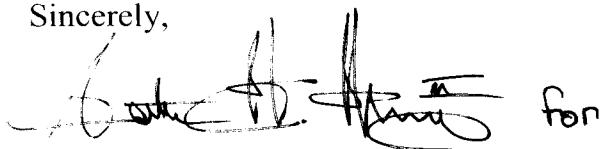
Page 8

Implementation Program

- Action CI-A2. Caltrans would like to coordinate with Yolo County as it develops and adopts transportation impact guidelines that define the need for transportation impact studies, analysis methodology, and CEQA significance criteria. Caltrans requests that its current guidelines for transportation studies and definition of significant impacts be used as a starting point for analysis of State facilities.
- Action CI-A6. Caltrans applauds the requirement for a transit plan to be developed within Specific Plan Areas. The Transit Plan will include future targets for transit ridership and measurable steps to achieve the targets.
- Action CI-A13. If the County pursues adding lanes to the facility as it assumes in Policy CI-3.1, Caltrans will not be the lead agency or provide funding for the project. The language in this action item should be updated accordingly. Caltrans recommends the following language be used, "Level of Service targets will be consistent with the Caltrans Transportation Corridor Concept Report. The County will require a fair share contribution towards the highway improvements that are required due to new development as identified in Traffic Impact Studies prepared local development projects."
- Action CI-A16. It is recommended that State Highway System improvements be included in the agreements that establish what circulation improvements will be constructed by new development.

We look forward to meeting with Yolo County staff and consultants to discuss our comments on the transportation and circulation policies and technical aspects of the traffic study. Caltrans will continue to work with Yolo County to maintain mobility and improve the choice of transportation modes for its residents, employees, and visitors. If you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact Arthur Murray at (916) 274-0616.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alyssa Begley", followed by the word "for" in a simple, sans-serif font.

ALYSSA BEGLEY, Chief
Office of Transportation Planning – South

Enclosures – I-80 CSMP, I-5 CSMP, Forecast LOS table for I-80 and I-5,

cc: State Clearinghouse