BOARD COMMUNICATION: YOLO COUNTY TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT
350 Industrial Way, Woodland, CA 95776---- (530) 661-0816

Topic: Yolo 80 Managed Lanes Project: Receive Update and Authorize Staff to Solicit Technical Advisory Services	**Agenda Item#:**	**6**
	Agenda Type:	**Info/Discussion**
		Attachments: (Yes) No
Prepared By: A. Bernstein / B. Abbanat		**Meeting Date: July 11, 2022**

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive an update on the project Notice of Preparation and correspondence with Caltrans.

Authorize staff to procure professional consulting services related to highway tolling for the 80 Yolo Corridor Improvement project either via SACOG on-call consulting agreements or via Request for Proposals, for up to $115,000.

BACKGROUND:

In summer 2021, YCTD, in partnership with Caltrans, was awarded an $86 million federal INFRA grant to construct approximately 17 center-line miles of managed lanes in both directions on Interstate 80 (I-80) and United States 50 (US-50) in Yolo County and portions of Sacramento County to alleviate bottlenecks and address an increasing capacity constraint. Project components includes installation of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) elements, such as fiber optics, detection, changeable message signs, to enhance mobility conditions and incident management strategies between jurisdictions; and improved bicycle and pedestrian access and safety to the eastern and western termini of the Yolo Causeway Class I facility that includes reduced curve radius, and analyze additional crosswalk, sidewalk, lighting, and safety elements.

YCTD is the sponsor of the $86 million INFRA grant and Caltrans District 3 is the lead agency for design, environmental review and construction. In March 2022, YCTD also submitted a $16.5 million grant application to the California Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) for transit-supportive elements of the project.

Update on CEQA Notice of Preparation

In August 2021, Caltrans took the first major step in the environmental review process when it released a Notice of Preparation (NOP) that defines the project description as well as purpose and need.

In December 2021, the Board adopted eight project goals based on both best practices in highway capacity management and Yolo County values including preventing induced vehicle miles traveled (VMT), increasing transit ridership, advancing transportation equity by preventing disproportionate burdens on under-resourced communities, and improving active transportation connectivity, while also addressing the critical traffic congestion that occurs throughout the week. (See Attachment 1).

A key focus area of our conversations has been the CEQA process. In particular, YCTD staff are working to ensure that the project description under CEQA reflects the Board-adopted goals for the project. The Ad Hoc Committee believes that the current project description, as reflected in the Notice of Preparation (NOP) issued by Caltrans in August 2022, is overly broad and does not identify a preferred project alternative. Experience

throughout the state, supported by empirical analysis on the effects of highway expansions on vehicle miles traveled (VMT), concludes that tolled lanes paired with investments in transit are best positioned to achieve the Board's project goals . This should be reflected in the baseline project description. (See Attachment 2)

YCTD has expressed concerns that the project as described in the NOP is inconsistent with YCTD's goals, as well as the State of California's goals, particularly around climate and equity. YCTD and Caltrans have been meeting regularly since October 2021 to work toward alignment. These concerns were shared in a letter to Caltrans dated May 4, 2022. (See Attachment 3)

On June 23, 2022, Caltrans responded in a letter addressed to YCTD Board Chair Don Saylor. In their response, Caltrans committed to modifying the NOP to "reflect comments from YCTD regarding the use of tolling language in the project description and elsewhere in the document as appropriate." The letter also noted Caltrans' support for a "network of priced managed lanes." The letter from Caltrans is included as Attachment 4.

The YCTD Ad Hoc Committee and staff met with District 3 leadership, as well as SACOG representatives, on Friday, June 24. During that meeting, YCTD and District 3 agreed on a series of next steps to coordinate on the revisions to the NOP language prior to its public release.

Need for Specialized Technical Assistance

Earlier this year, the YCTD Ad Hoc Committee directed staff to identify a pathway and steps to make tolling a viable option for this corridor. Staff began this process by outreaching and meeting with experts, including agencies with direct experience in tolling (such as MTC and LA Metro), as well as consulting firms who specialize in toll lane development.

A key first step in establishing a toll lane is to prepare a Traffic and Revenue Report (T+R Report), whose purpose is to estimate travel demand on the freeway, forecast how an additional lane may change that demand, and estimate toll revenue that would potentially be generated.

In parallel with a T+R Report, agencies also develop a Concept of Operations that details the toll facility itself: number of lanes, entry and exit points, hours of operation etc. Taken together, the Concept of Operations and T+R Report comprise a high-level feasibility study that can help agencies determine whether a tolling facility is worth pursuing.

In spring 2022, YCTD staff learned that Caltrans had completed, but not yet publicly released, just such a study. Prepared by Fehr & Peers, the *Interstate 80/U.S. Highway 50 Managed Lanes Traffic and Revenue Report* (I-80 Managed Lanes T+R Report), an internal draft was completed in November 2021. This study provides a planning-level forecast of the weekday demand and revenue associated for three tolled alternatives proposed as part of the I-80/US Managed Lanes Project.

Staff conclude the I-80 Managed Lanes T+R Report provides valuable insight into the feasibility of tolling for the corridor. However, to better understand the report's findings, specialized transportation expertise is necessary. Traffic and revenue forecasts for highway expansions is a highly specialized field, one in which YCTD staff lacks expertise.

Similarly, specialized expertise is necessary to advise YCTD Board and staff on toll lane operations, governance and management in order to provide meaningful partnership with Caltrans and oversight of the $86 million INFRA grant and any other funds, such as TIRCP, that YCTD may receive as part of this project.

Scope of Work for Proposed Consulting Services

YCTD staff have identified the broad outlines of the scope of work from field experts:

1. **Peer review of the Interstate 80/U.S. Highway 50 Managed Lanes Traffic and Review Report (November 2021) prepared by Fehr and Peers.** A peer review from field experts is needed to provide independent analyses of Caltrans-generated reports and studies related to the project to ensure that YCTD, as the INFRA grant recipient and Yolo County Congestion Management Authority, makes well-informed decisions regarding the project scope.
    - Evaluation of study methodology, consistency with industry standards
    - Evaluation of assumptions and model inputs
    - Interpretation of findings
    - Recommendations for additional study
    - Recommended next steps

2. **Ongoing Professional Technical Advisory Services for I-80 Managed Lanes Project.** Additional studies and reports are anticipated for which technical expertise will be needed during this process. Staff seek ongoing technical expertise to review and advise the YCTD and Board on Caltrans-generated decision-making documents and reports related to the project, including transportation-focused sections of the anticipated draft environmental document (NEPA/CEQA), tolling feasibility studies and subsequent (Level 2 or 3) traffic and revenue reports, as directed. Consultants will also be asked to provide support for any other aspects of the project.

Consultant Selection

Staff will either select a consultant from SACOG's on-call consulting bench or, if more timely, release a Request For Proposals.

Cost

Staff estimates for project cost follow:

Scope of Work	**Cost**
Scope of Work Item #1:	$75,000
Scope of Work Item #2:	$40,000
Total Cost:	**$115,000**

Funding	**Amount**
FY 2022/23 Budget (MM-02)	$150,000
SACOG Regional Funding	$15,000
Less Obligated Legal Funding	-$25,000
Less Scope of Work Items #1 - #2	-$115,000
Remaining Funds (MM-02):	**$25,000**

Staff estimates the cost for Scope of Work Item #1, above at approximately $75,000. Costs for Item #2 will be incurred on a time and material basis are estimated not to exceed $40,000. Combined costs for Items #1 and #2 will not exceed $115,000 without prior Board authorization.

$150,000 was included in the Board-approved FY 2022/23 budget under MM-2 80 Managed Lanes Advisory, Legal & Technical Services. $25,000 for legal services was approved by the YCTD Board on 6/6/2022. The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) has also committed $15,000 in regional for this effort funding.

Recommendation

The attached resolution authorizes the Executive Director to procure professional consulting services and execute agreements and/or task orders up to $115,000 for Scope of Work Items #1, and #2 above. Costs exceeding this amount will return to the Board of Directors for authorization.

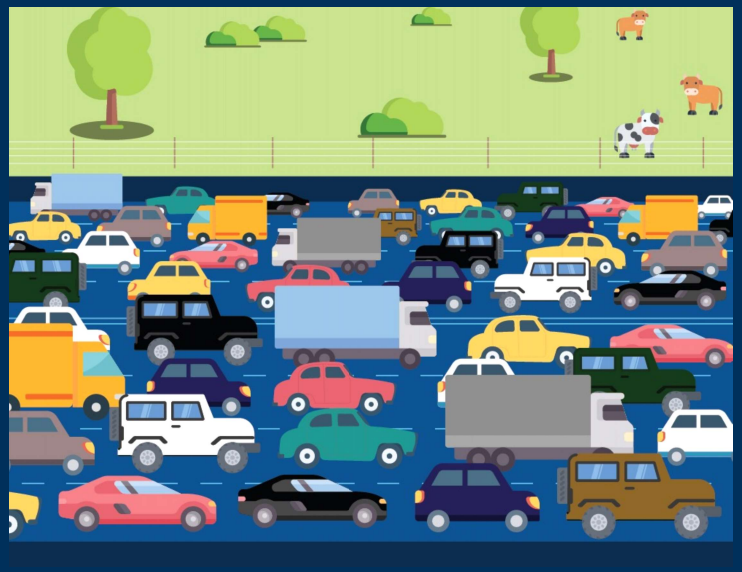
Attachments

1. 80 Managed Lanes Project Goals
2. UC Davis Institute of Transportation Studies: Highway Expansion & Induced Travel
3. YCTD Letter to Caltrans: May 4, 2022
4. Caltrans Letter: June 23, 2022

80 Managed Lanes Project
YCTD Goals
Adopted Dec 14, 2021

Support achievement of state and regional climate goals by limiting VMT increases and maximizing VMT reduction strategies	Increase transit ridership and mode share.	Increase safety and ease of bicycle travel on the existing Causeway bicycle path, including connecting routes in West Sacramento and Davis.	Advance transportation equity by minimizing project burdens and maximizing project benefits for low-income communities.
Improve peak hour travel time on I-80 while reducing the use of local streets and roads for regional trips.	Increased coordination with Solano County, Caltrans D4 and MTC on interregional trips	Improve traffic flow by utilizing Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) technologies such as ramp metering.	Establish a highway management system that can be replicated and integrated regionwide.

HIGHWAY EXPANSION & INDUCED TRAVEL



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January 10, 2022

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RUN OF SHOW

- Induced Travel Primer
- Evidence from the Research
- Examples from California
- How to Apply Induced Travel Research

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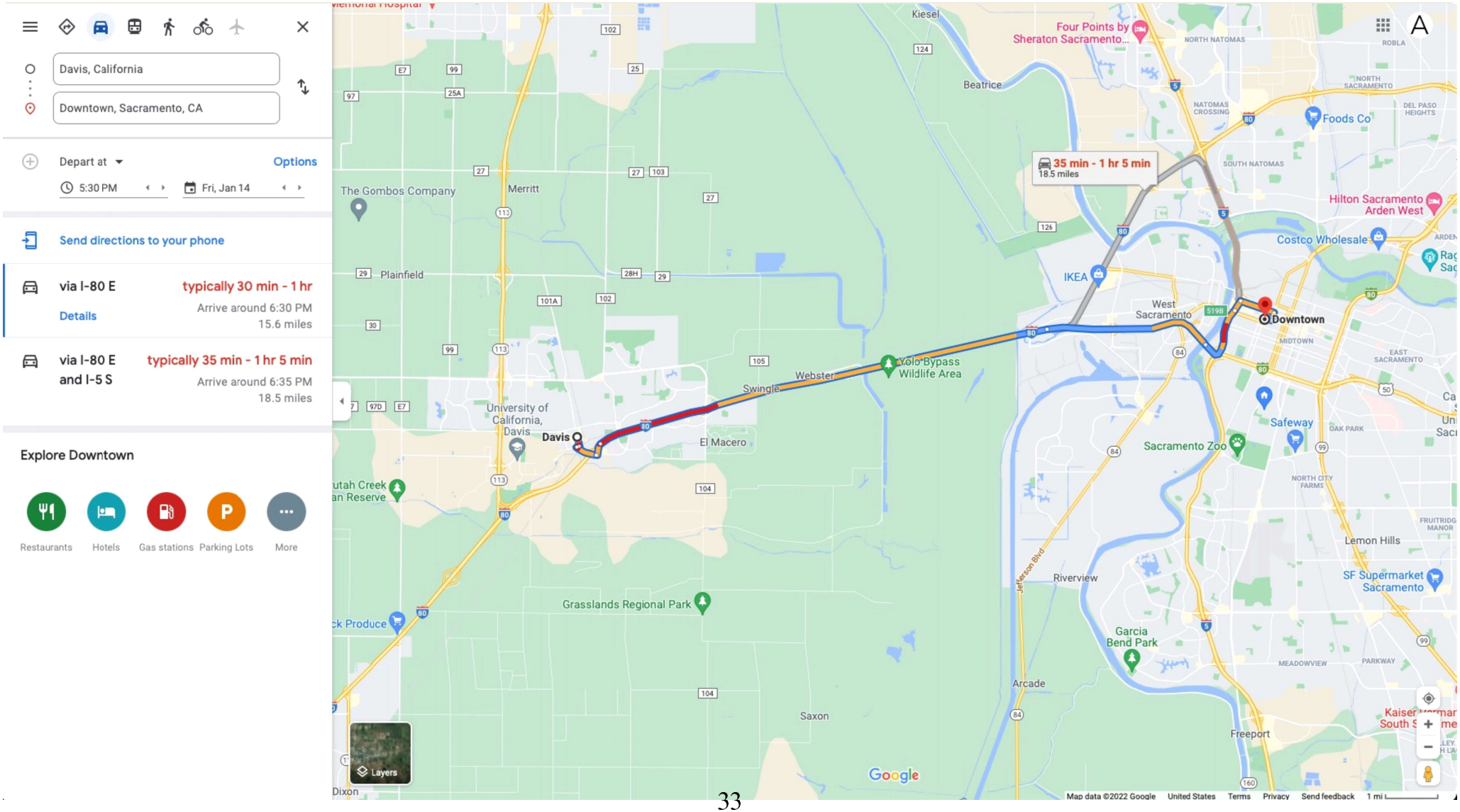
INDUCED TRAVEL PRIMER



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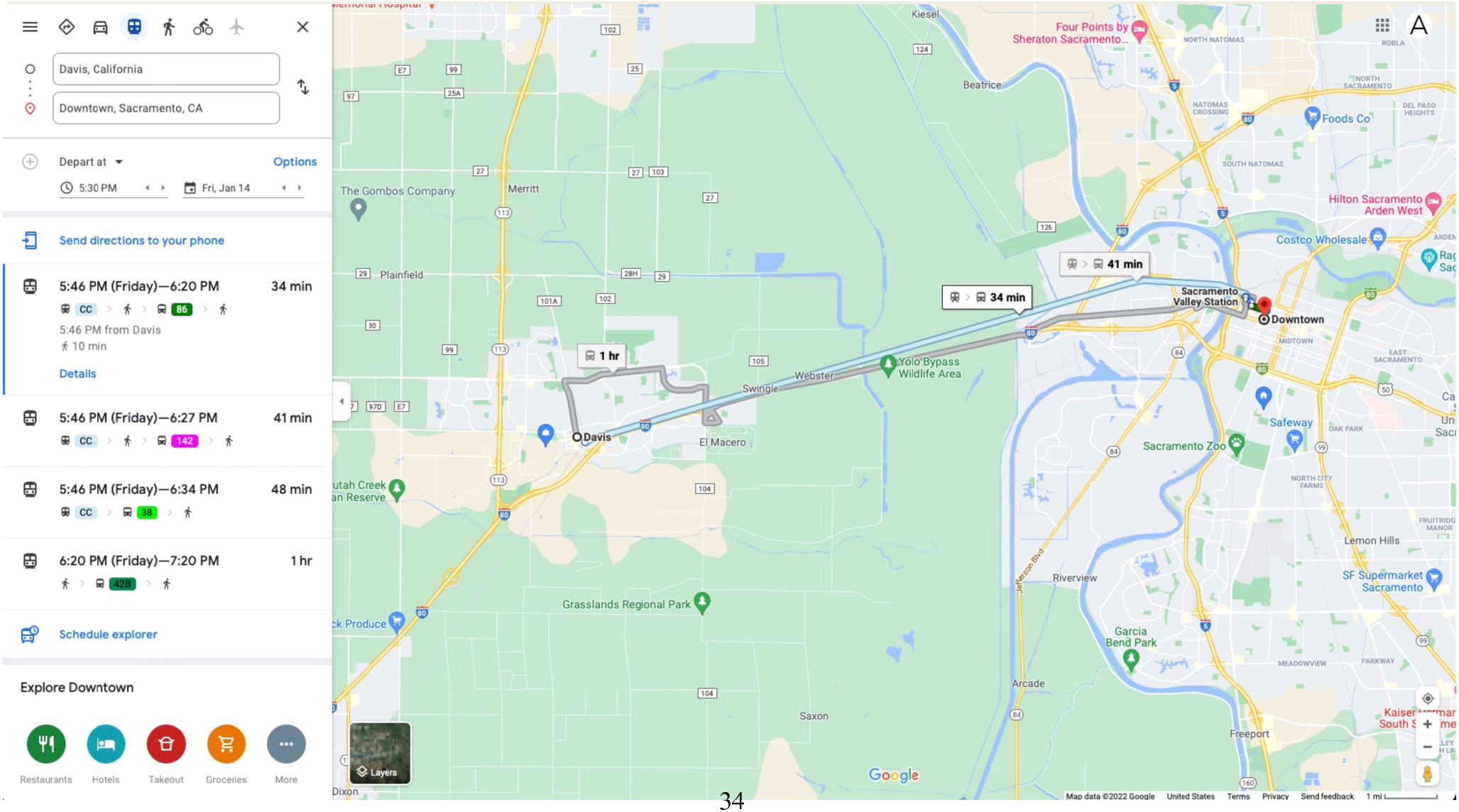

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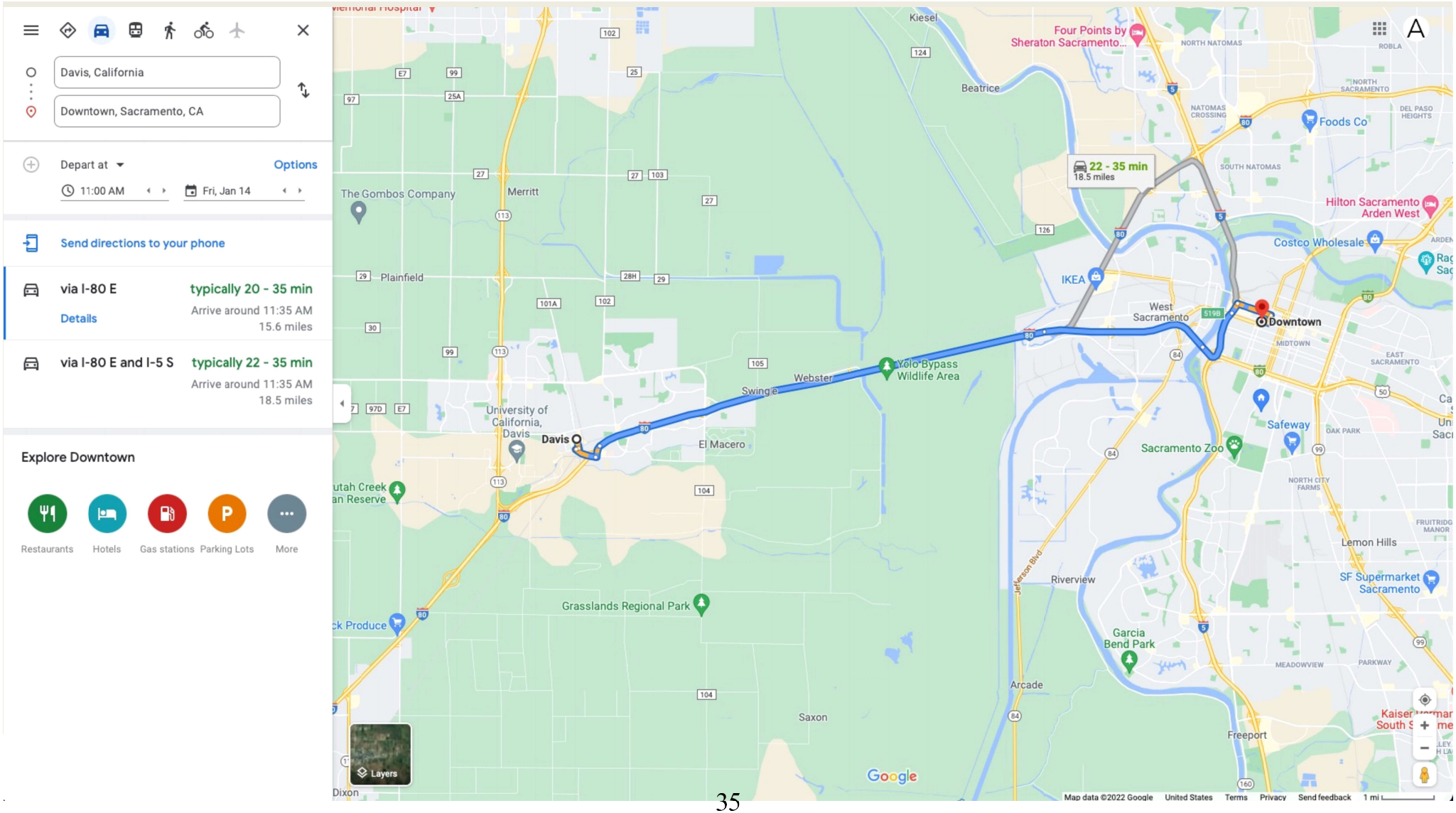
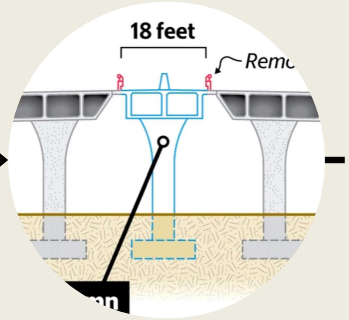


HISTORICAL APPROACH TO CONGESTION

Congestion & Air Quality Problems



New Roadway Capacity

Faster Speed, Shorter Times, Less Congestion

New Driving

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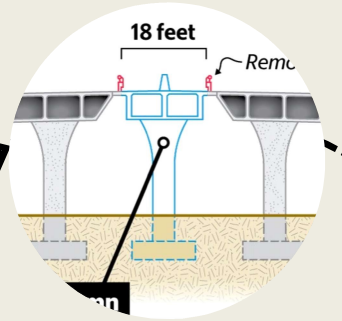
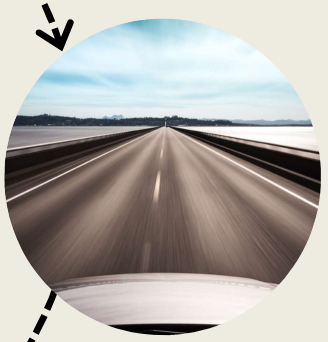
HISTORICAL APPROACH TO CONGESTION



New Roadway Capacity



Faster Speed, Shorter Times, Less Congestion

New Driving

Congestion & Air Quality Problems

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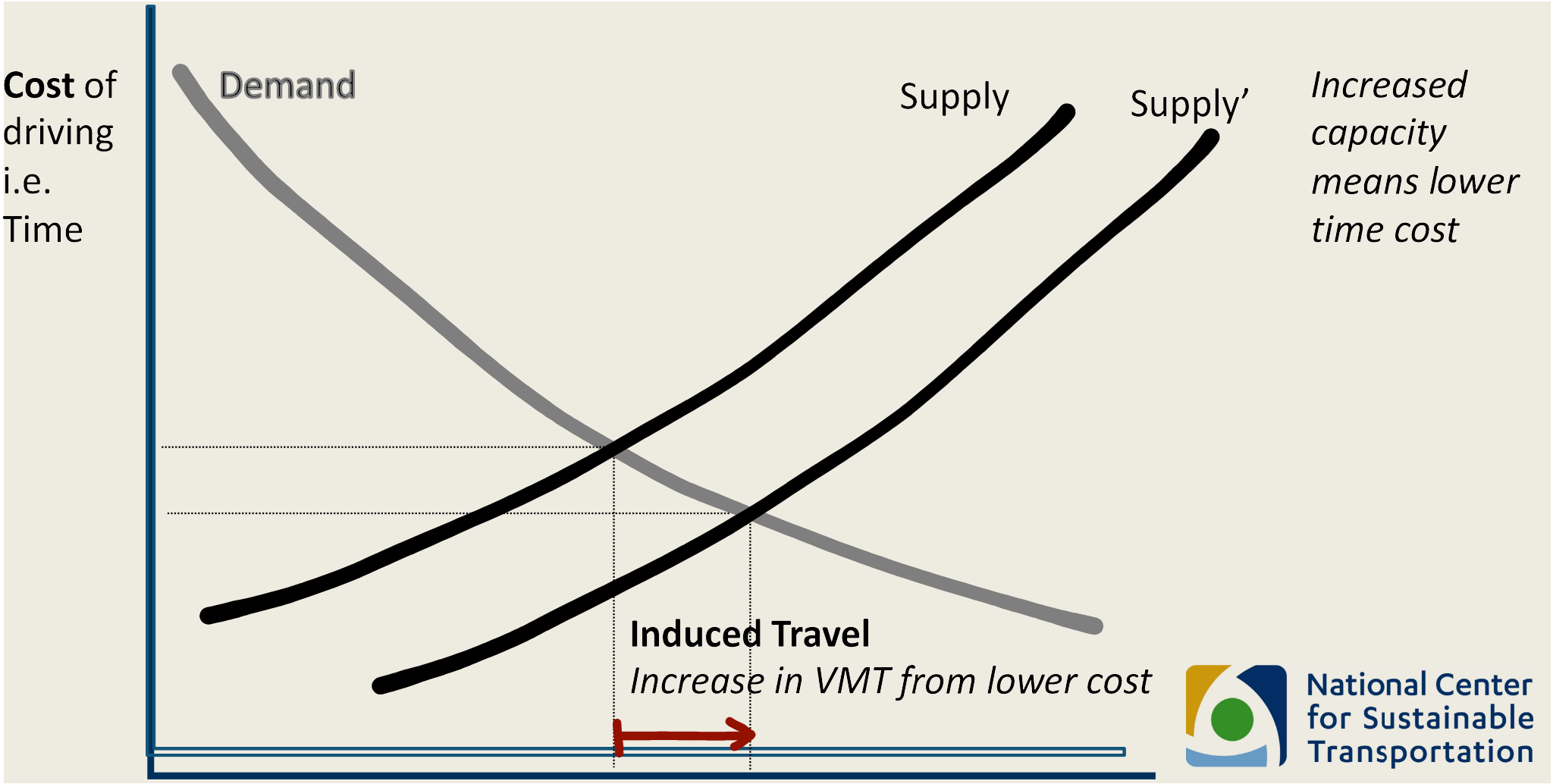
INDUCED TRAVEL EFFECT: SHORT RUN



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INDUCED TRAVEL EFFECT

- Both short- and longer-term behavioral changes
  - Longer trips
  - More frequent trips
  - Mode shifts
  - Route shifts
  - Household and business relocation throughout the metro area (sprawl, etc.)
  - Induces migration to the area, which increases demand

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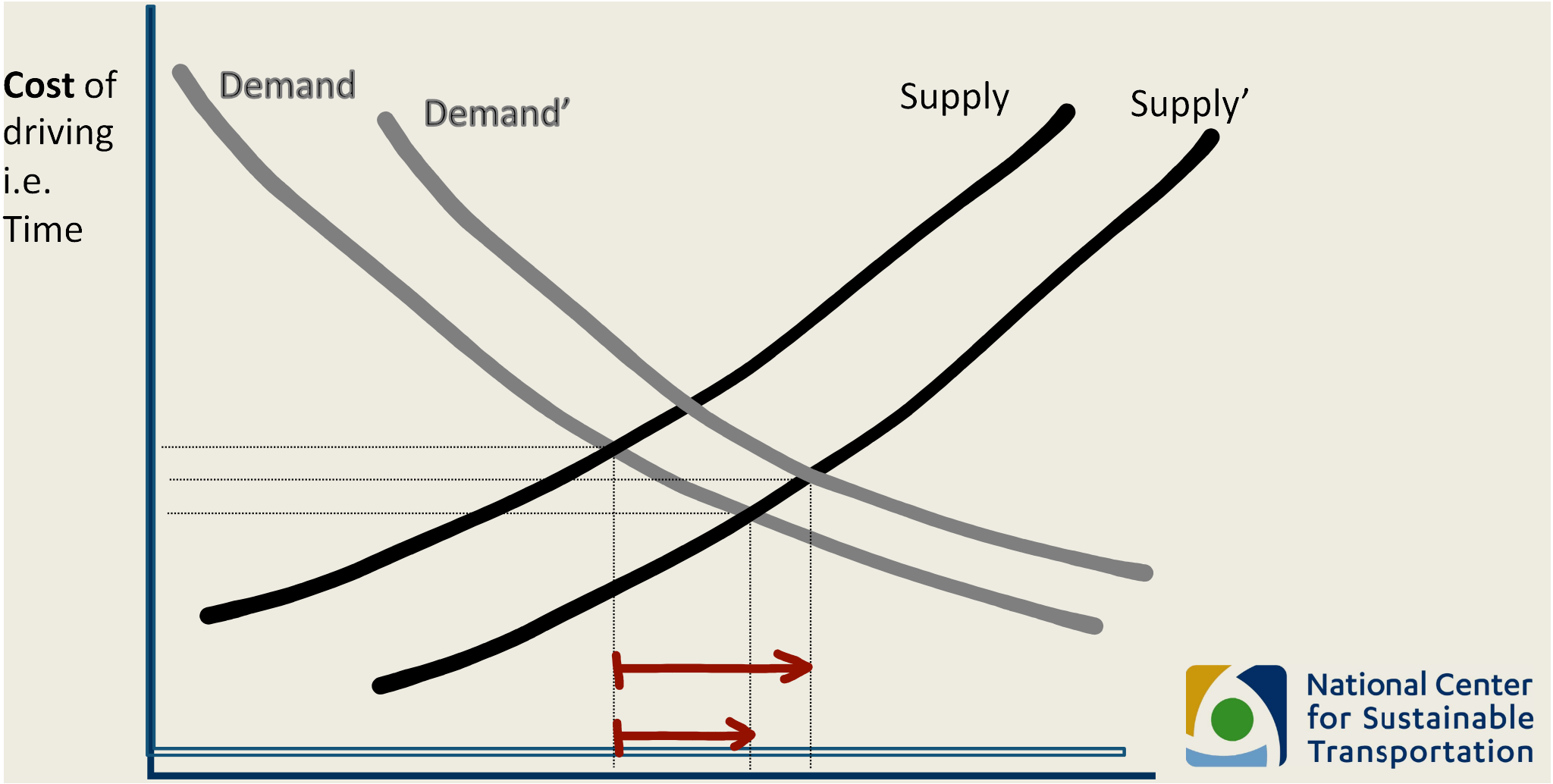
INDUCED TRAVEL EFFECT: LONG RUN



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MEASURING INDUCED TRAVEL: EVIDENCE FROM RESEARCH

Authors	Elasticity	Roadway Types	Methodology (Estimator)	Study Location	Study Years
Duranton & Turner (2011)	**1.03** (10 year)	Interstates	2-stage least squares regression with instrumental variables	United States (metropolitan statistical areas)	1983–2003
	0.67–0.89 (10 year)	Other highways, arterials, and collectors	Pooled ordinary least squares		
Melo et al. (2012)	**0.98** (~10 year)	Arterials	Generalized method of moments	United States (urbanized areas)	1982–2010
Graham et al. (2014)	**0.77** (~10 year)	Freeways and arterials	Propensity score	United States (urbanized areas)	1985–2010
Hymel (2019)	**0.89–1.06** (5 year)	Freeways and other limited-access roads	2-stage least squares regression with instrumental variables	United States (urban areas)	1981–2015

MEASURING INDUCED TRAVEL: EVIDENCE FROM RESEARCH

- "A capacity expansion of 10% is likely to increase vehicle-miles-travelled by 3% to 6% in the short-run and 6% to 10% in the long-run"
- Relationship is about 1-to-1

- Congestion and its effects?
  - Generally, net effect in the long-run is no decrease in congestion
  - Driving increases along with capacity

October 2015

National Center for Sustainable Transportation

Increasing Highway Capacity Unlikely to Relieve Traffic Congestion

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POLICY BRIEF

Issue

Reducing traffic congestion is often proposed as a solution for improving fuel efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Traffic congestion has traditionally been addressed by adding additional roadway capacity via constructing entirely new roadways, adding additional lanes to existing roadways, or upgrading existing highways to controlled-access freeways. Numerous studies have examined the effectiveness of this approach and consistently show that adding capacity to roadways fails to alleviate congestion for long because it actually increases vehicle miles traveled (VMT).

An increase in VMT attributable to increases in roadway capacity where congestion is present is called "induced travel". The basic economic principles of supply and demand explain this phenomenon: adding capacity decreases travel time, in effect lowering the "price" of driving; and when prices go down, the quantity of driving goes up.[1] Induced travel counteracts the effectiveness of capacity expansion as a strategy for alleviating traffic congestion and offsets in part or in whole reductions in GHG emissions that would result from reduced congestion.

Key Research Findings

The quality of the evidence linking highway capacity expansion to increased VMT is high. All studies reviewed used time-series data and sophisticated econometric techniques to estimate the effect of increased capacity on congestion and VMT. All studies also controlled for other factors that might also affect VMT, including population growth, increases in income, other demographic factors, and changes in transit service.[2]

Increased roadway capacity induces additional VMT in the short-run and even more VMT in the long-run. A capacity expansion of 10% is likely to increase VMT by 3% to 6% in the short-run and 6% to 10% in the long-run. Increased capacity can lead to increased VMT in the short-run in several ways: if people shift from other modes to driving, if drivers make longer trips (by choosing longer routes and/or more distant destinations), or if drivers make more frequent trips.[3,4,5] Longer-term effects may also occur if households and businesses move to more distant locations or if development patterns become more dispersed in response to the capacity increase. One study concludes that the full impact of capacity expansion on VMT materializes within five years[6] and another concludes that the full effect takes as long as 10 years.[7]

Capacity expansion leads to a net increase in VMT, not simply a shifting of VMT from one road to another. Some argue that increased capacity does not generate new VMT but rather that drivers simply shift from slower and more congested roads to the new or newly expanded roadway. Evidence does not support this argument. One study found "no conclusive evidence that increases in state highway lane-miles have affected traffic on other roads"[8] while a more recent study concluded that "increasing lane kilometers for one type of road diverts little traffic from other types of roads".[9]

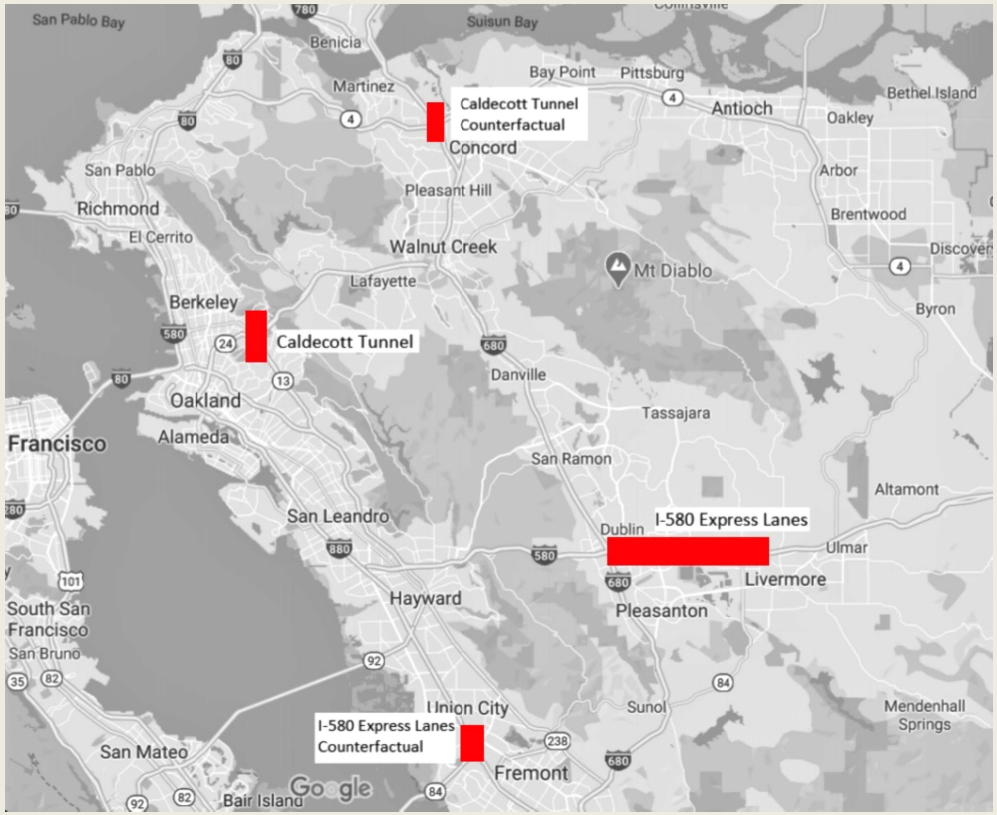
Increases in GHG emissions attributable to capacity expansion are substantial. One study predicted that the growth in VMT attributable to increased lane miles would produce an additional 43 million metric tons of CO_2 emissions in 2012 nationwide.[10]

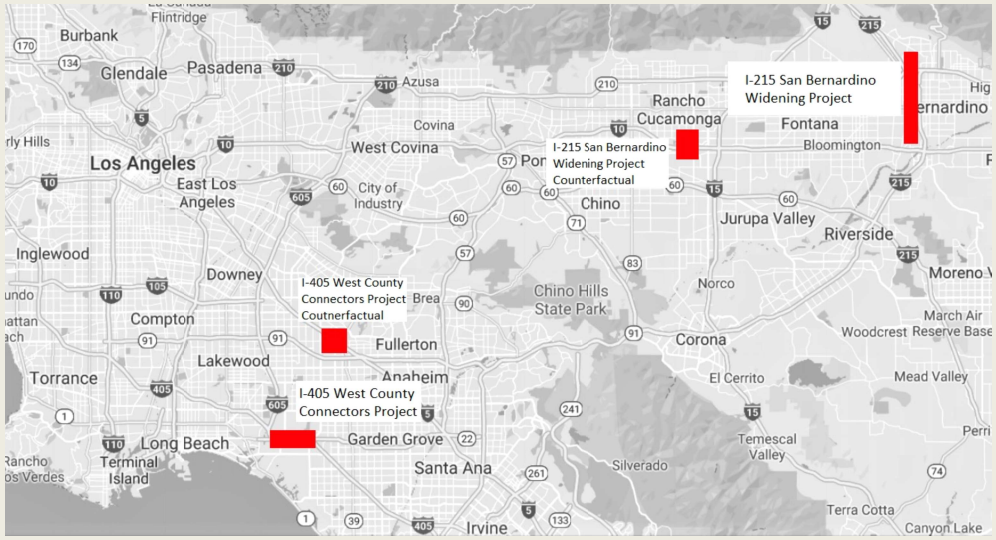
ITS UCDAVIS INSTITUTE OF TRANSPORTATION STUDIES

https://ncst.ucdavis.edu/research-product/increasing-highway-capacity-unlikely-relieve-traffic-congestion

EXAMPLES FROM CALIFORNIA

Anderson, et al. (2021):





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EXAMPLES FROM CALIFORNIA

Authors	Implied Elasticity	Facility	County	Type of Expansion	Year of Expansion
Anderson et al. (2021)	**0.152** (1-2 year)	SR-24	Alameda & Contra Costa	Two new general purpose lanes (off-peak direction)	2013
	0.334 (1-2 year)	**I-**215	San Bernardino	One new general purpose lane and one new HOV lane	2010
	0.700 (1-2 year)	**I-**580	Alameda	One new HOT lane	2016
	0.843 (1-2 year)	**I-**405	Orange	One new HOV lane and new connectors	2014

EXAMPLES FROM CALIFORNIA

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	0.843 **(1-2 year)**	I-405	Orange	One new HOV lane and new connectors	2014

EXAMPLES FROM CALIFORNIA

- "Overall, we find that the implied elasticities are similar across different types of lane expansions, and in all cases within the range of estimates from previous studies" (Anderson, et al., 2021, p. 65)

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APPLYING THE INDUCED TRAVEL RESEARCH

- NCST's Induced Travel Calculator

https://travelcalculator.ncst.ucdavis.edu

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California Induced Travel Calculator

Calculator FAQ About

Overview

This calculator allows users to estimate the VMT induced annually as a result of adding general-purpose lane miles, high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane miles, or high-occupancy toll (HOT) lane miles to publicly owned roadways, like those managed by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), in one of California's urbanized counties (counties within a metropolitan statistical area (MSA)). The calculator applies only to facilities with Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) functional classifications of 1, 2 or 3. That corresponds to interstate highways (class 1), other freeways and expressways (class 2), and other principal arterials (class 3).

How to Use

To obtain an induced VMT estimate for a roadway capacity expansion project, enter the project length (in lane miles added), the geography (MSA for additions to interstates; county for additions to other Caltrans-managed class 2 or 3 facilities), and the base year (2016, 2017, 2018, or 2019). The base year indicates which year of VMT and lane mile data will be used to estimate the induced VMT.

More about this calculator

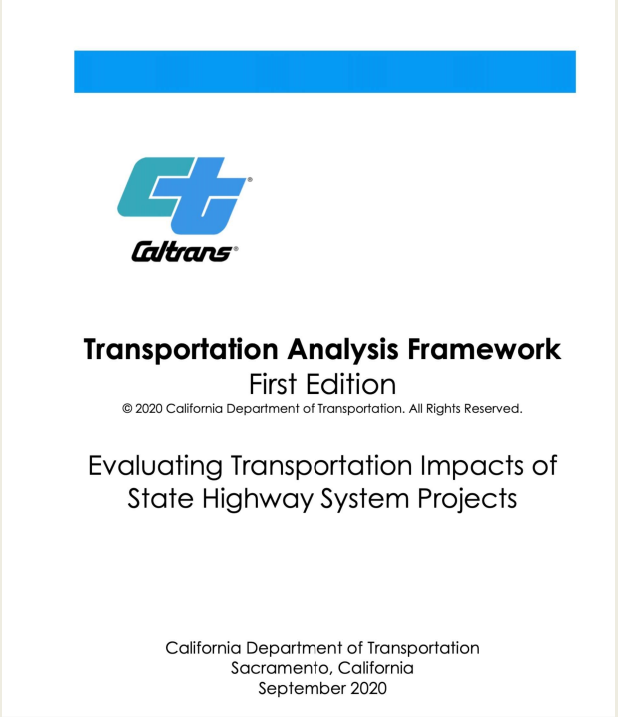
Calculator

1. Select Year

Select Year

APPLYING THE INDUCED TRAVEL RESEARCH

- NCST's Induced Travel Calculator now recommended by Caltrans



- Offshoots
  - SHIFT Calculator (nationwide)
  - RMI's Calculator for Colorado
  - Adaptation for Portland Oregon

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THANK YOU!

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May 4, 2022

Amarjeet Benipal
Director, Caltrans District 3
Delivered via email

Re: Follow Up to April 26, 2022 Coordination Meeting on Yolo 80 Managed Lanes Project

Dear Mr. Benipal:

This letter follows up on the April 26, 2022, coordination meeting for the Yolo 80 Managed Lanes Project. We appreciated the opportunity to meet with you and discuss our concerns. At the meeting, we reiterated our request to Caltrans to revise the Notice of Preparation (NOP) for this project to better reflect the goals and priorities of the Yolo County Transportation District (YCTD) and our Yolo County communities.

We remain focused on the following next steps for the project:

1. The NOP should be revised and reissued to include -
    a. An updated Project Description that explicitly references a tolled facility as the preferred alternative, with toll revenues used to support increased bus frequency and span of service on this segment of 80 and a transportation equity program to minimize negative impacts and maximize benefits to disadvantaged communities on the corridor – specifically in West Sacramento;

    b. The Project Description will be written broadly enough to consider, and provide environmental clearance for, a multi-laned facility if our joint project analysis leads us to that conclusion as the best project alternative;

    c. An updated Purpose and Need section that identifies climate change, VMT reduction, and transportation equity as key considerations, consistent with state law and policy;

    d. Infrastructure and ITS/ICM elements specifically designed to speed up and prioritize buses, including those identified in our recent funding request to the Transit and Intercity Rail (TIRCP) program.

2. A timely and collaborative process should precede the reissue of the NOP:
    a. Caltrans will provide YCTD the revised NOP for review no later than May 24, but ideally by May 16; and

    b. Caltrans and YCTD will agree on the final NOP prior to its public release.

Caltrans SB 743 guidance documents direct transportation capital projects to reduce VMT to the greatest extent feasible. YCTD understands Caltrans District 3 has hesitated to describe the project as a tolled facility apparently on the grounds that it does not want to predetermine the final project. YCTD disagrees. The project description is the defining element or starting point for every CEQA environmental document. It provides the foundation for determining whether there is the potential for

either a direct physical change in the environment or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. (See 14 CCR Sections 15378 and 15124.)

Moreover, YCTD strongly believes that public transparency demands that the project description accurately reflect the preferred project. As the Governor's Office of Planning and Research has noted, CEQA requires public agencies to "look before they leap" and consider the environmental consequences of their discretionary actions; and the analysis of environmental impacts and alternatives may result in changes to a project's design, scope, and mitigation, or even a decision not to proceed with a project. That does not mean, however, that CEQA should substitute as a decision-making tool for determining appropriate and necessary public projects.

Substantial evidence currently exists for a better-defined project description that assumes tolling. First, Caltrans' 2019 California High-Occupancy Vehicle Facilities Degradation Report and Action Plan (HOV Action Plan) concludes that HOV lanes in congested areas throughout the state feature high failure rates, including in District 3. The HOV Action Plan itself identifies pricing, and specifically tolling, as one of the solutions to address the degradation of carpool lanes.

The National Center for Sustainable Transportation (NCST) Induced Travel Calculator along with most of the peer-reviewed literature and real-world case studies (see for example Anderson 2021), illustrate that carpool lanes are just as VMT-inducing as general purpose lanes when they are not paired with substantial investments in transit. Tolling provides an ongoing source of revenue that can be used to fund increased transit frequency and span of service, along with bike lanes, mobility hubs and other multimodal infrastructure, thereby reducing the amount of VMT associated with capacity-expanding freeway projects.

Along these same lines, the 2021 Caltrans I-80 CMCP Corridor Modeling and Analysis Update concludes that HOT3+ reduces VMT growth more than HOV or HOT2+ for this segment.

Caltrans' November 2021 Interstate 80/U.S. Highway 50 Managed Lanes Traffic and Revenue Report (I-80 Managed Lanes T+R Report) for this project concludes that *an HOV-only lane would open under failed conditions during the PM Peak* (Pg. 14). *Only* tolled alternatives enable the additional lane to approach the HOV Action Plan's managed lanes performance objectives. In fact, the I-80 Managed Lanes T+R Report suggests that not only is a tolled lane needed, but that a *second* tolled lane (i.e., conversion of a general purpose lane to a tolled lane) may be necessary to achieve the project objectives due to extremely high demand.

Both statewide and regional planning documents assume user pricing such as tolled facilities and/or congestion pricing. At the state level, the California State Transportation Agency's 2021 Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure states with no ambiguity that 1) VMT reduction is required to achieve greenhouse gas emissions reductions, 2) roadway pricing will be required to achieve VMT reductions, and 3) challenges and barriers therein will require strong coordination between state, regional, and local agencies (Strategy S6). At the regional level, the 2020 SACOG MTP/SCS relies on highway pricing and reinvestment of tolling revenue in transit to meet GHG targets (Policies 9-16).

While detailed traffic and VMT analyses are not yet publicly available for the Yolo 80 Managed Lanes Project, the preponderance of evidence from both the academic literature and Caltrans' own analyses of the corridor suggest that neither a general purpose nor HOV lane will achieve the goals of CAPTI, the 2020 SACOG MTP/SCS, let alone YCTD's and Caltrans' goals.

YCTD has also learned that NOPs for several Caltrans highway capital projects in other districts were released within the past year with tolling facility project descriptions. In this regard, the I-80 Managed Lanes Project NOP would not set a new or unusual precedent. In fact, including a tolling facility in the

project description is more closely aligned with current Caltrans practices for analogous projects post-SB 743, including:

- I-405 Sepulveda Pass Express Lanes (https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/2021080037); and
- San Mateo 101 Managed Lanes Project North of I-380 (https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/2021070395).

Public and local agency expectations for this project are high. Caltrans has already decommitted from constructing a dedicated Causeway bicycle facility and community pressure is building to reduce congestion and VMT and to provide viable alternatives to driving. The YCTD Board of Directors is aligned in support of a project that minimizes harmful climate emissions and advances transportation equity for low-income communities disproportionately burdened by prior transportation projects. The project description should, therefore, reflect the alternative that best supports the goals of SB 375, SB 743, CAPTI, Caltrans' HOV Action Plan, and the SACOG MTP/SCS.

YCTD appreciates the unique partnership with Caltrans this project presents, as well as the opportunity for meaningful congestion management and equitable mobility improvements on the I-80 corridor. As a potentially forward-thinking "statement project" for the Sacramento Region, the YCTD Board is committed to advancing a project in a timely manner, while ensuring the project aligns with the goals adopted by the YCTD Board, proceeds with transparency, and engages our local community partners.

We look forward to working with you to make this possible, and we look forward to our continued conversations. As always, please reach out to us anytime at abernstein@yctd.org.

Sincerely,

Autumn Bernstein
Executive Director
Yolo County Transportation District

Don Saylor
Chair of the Board
Yolo County Transportation District

Cc:
Secretary Toks Omishakin, CalSTA
Darwin Moosavi, CalSTA
Steven Keck, Caltrans
Jeanie Ward-Waller, Caltrans
Tony Dang, Caltrans
Eric Sundquist, Caltrans
Joe Rouse, Caltrans
Chad Rinde, Yolo County
Mike Webb, City of Davis
Ken Hiatt, City of Woodland
Aaron Laurel, City of West Sacramento
Kathleen Trepa, City of Winters
Matt Dulcich, UC Davis
James Corless, SACOG

California Department of Transportation

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June 23, 2022

Don Saylor
Chair of the Board
Yolo County Transportation District
350 Industrial Way
Woodland, CA 95776

Attn: Autumn Bernstein, Executive Director Yolo County Transportation District

RE: Response to Yolo County Transportation District Letter dated May 4, 2022 regarding April 2022 Ad Hoc Meeting

Dear Supervisor Saylor:

Thank you for your letter containing Yolo County Transportation District's (YCTD) perspective regarding the April 26, 2022 coordination meeting for the Yolo 80 Managed Lanes Project. While Caltrans is the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) lead agency on the project, we will continue to coordinate and partner with YCTD as we revise the language in the Notice of Preparation (NOP) in consideration of the comments received. As discussed, the NOP will be modified to reflect comments from YCTD regarding the use of tolling language in the project description and elsewhere in the document as appropriate. The Department concurs that both parties, as partners, should make a good faith effort to agree on the contents of the NOP prior to its re-release to the public. However, as the CEQA lead agency, the Department is not permitted to delegate any of its lead agency responsibilities to YCTD.

Caltrans supports the development and implementation of a network of priced managed lanes consistent with the Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure and the 2050 California Transportation Plan. As such, the Department recognizes the Yolo 80 Managed Lanes Project provides a key opportunity to bring these solutions to the region, which allows Caltrans and its partners to move more people and goods, improve travel reliability, and provide equitable travel choices along key transportation corridors.

The letter states that the Department decommitted from constructing a dedicated causeway bicycle facility. A clarifying point is that the Executive Steering Committee, consisting of YCTD Commissioners representing Yolo County, the City of

West Sacramento, City of Davis, UC Davis, and Sacramento Area Council of Governments agreed and recommended at the July 22, 2021 meeting, that due to the environmentally sensitive areas within the project limits, a standalone causeway bicycle facility would not be included as part of the scope of the project. It was also agreed that improvements would instead be made to the existing bike and pedestrian facility at the east and west ends of the causeway. In addition, the Department will be updating the barrier and fence on the existing bike and pedestrian facility by increasing the height to improve safety.

As the project is partially funded, the Department will work with YCTD and Sacramento Area Council of Governments to fully fund the project including any project mitigation costs. The roles and responsibilities regarding toll operations and revenue collection will be subject to a separate agreement based on the funding arrangements.

Thank you for the letter. I look forward to having further discussions on the project.

Sincerely,

AMARJEET S. BENIPAL
Director

c: Toks Omishakin, CalSTA
Tony Tavares, Caltrans
Steven Keck, Caltrans
Darwin Moosavi, CalSTA
Jeanie Ward-Waller, Caltrans
Tony Dang, Caltrans
Joe Rouse, Caltrans
Suzy Melim, Caltrans