

May 2, 2024

The Honorable John Duarte
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Subject: **Support for the State Route 41 South Expressway Project**

Dear Congressman Duarte:

I am proud to support Madera County's State Route 41 South Expressway Project, requesting \$6,000,000 in funding under the Community Project Funding (CPF) for Fiscal Year 2025. This project addresses critical transportation challenges faced by our region and aligns with the overarching goals of enhancing mobility, safety, and sustainability for our communities.

The State Route (SR) 41 Expressway project is a vital lifeline connecting rural eastern Madera County to major urban centers and serving as a conduit for commerce, commuting, and tourism. However, the current two-lane configuration leads to congestion, safety hazards, and delays, especially during peak hours and tourist seasons. These challenges not only impede efficient traffic flow but also pose risks to public safety and hinder economic growth.

The Madera SR-41 South Expressway Project presents a comprehensive and forward-looking solution to these pressing issues. By constructing a divided four-lane expressway, enhancing intersection safety, and implementing smart traffic management systems, the project aims to improve safety by eliminating unprotected left turns, widening shoulders, and adding separated medians. It also seeks to invest in disadvantaged communities through substantial financial allocations to Disadvantaged Business Enterprises and job creation opportunities for local residents. Furthermore, it supports smart growth initiatives by fostering planned sustainable communities and reducing congestion through proximity-based living and working arrangements.

This project is a vital part of Madera County's long-range Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS). The Madera County RTP/SCS is a community driven planning document meant to guide Madera County towards a more sustainable future by providing all of those who live, work, or visit Madera County safe, accessible, and reliable transportation options. The Madera SR-41 South Expressway Project is able to address many goals outlined in the RTP/SCS by delivering an array of transportation strategies able to address the regions multimodal needs. Additionally, this project will advance the goals outlined by Madera County's Active Transportation Plan and Zero-Emission Vehicle Readiness and Implementation Plan.

The project addresses climate risks through reduced Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), improved air quality, promotion of non-motorized transportation options, and innovative stormwater management practices. It enhances traffic management capabilities with advanced Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) infrastructure, paving the way for future autonomous vehicle integration. The project also promotes zero-emission vehicles by installing signage directing travelers to Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Stations along SR-41 and ensures resiliency against wildfires by establishing a reliable evacuation route for residents during large-scale wildfire events, a critical need given recent wildfire occurrences in the region.

This project is not just about improving infrastructure; it's about building a safer, more equitable, and sustainable future for our communities. With \$6,000,000 in funding support, we can kickstart construction in 2025 and work towards completing this transformative project by 2028. I urge your strong consideration and support for this crucial initiative, which aligns closely with our shared goals of promoting regional development, resilience, and prosperity.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and I look forward to the positive impact the Madera County SR-41 South Expressway Project will bring to our constituents and the broader community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patricia Taylor', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Patricia Taylor
Executive Director
Madera County Transportation Commission