



March 24, 2023

Tony Tavares  
Director, California Department of Transportation  
1020 N Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Request for State Route 99 Investments in the 2024 Interregional Transportation Improvement Program**

Dear Director Tavares,

The Madera County Transportation Commission (MCTC), the Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG), and the Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG) write to urge the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to **include support for vital projects on State Route 99 (SR 99) in the development of the 2024 Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (2024 ITIP)**. SR 99 is a critical corridor for moving the San Joaquin Valley's bountiful ag goods up and down the state on their way to feed people across the nation. It is a connector of people and jobs, of students and education, of people and opportunity. State Route 99 is a quality-of-life corridor and an economic engine for the San Joaquin Valley and beyond. And yet, State Route 99 remains unfinished.

In October 2021, MCTC, MCAG, TCAG and a coalition of statewide, regional, and local stakeholders – including business, labor, health care, and agricultural interests – asked the State to close the remaining eight gaps on SR 99 with a 10-year funding strategy and solve critical safety, congestion, air quality, and goods movement issues. To achieve this goal, SR 99 gap closure projects need funding in the ITIP and other competitive grant programs every cycle until the projects are complete.

MCTC, MCAG, and TCAG are grateful for the 2022 ITIP funding for the South Madera and the Tulare City SR 99 projects. In partnership with Caltrans, we held an SR 99 Summit in April 2022, as required by the 2022 ITIP and are anxiously awaiting the development of the SR 99 multimodal corridor study that Caltrans is leading. Our counties are steadfast in our commitment to the State to maximize multimodal opportunities in the San Joaquin Valley and are already making great strides to invest in transit and interregional rail, the build out safe bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, new inland port facilities to support the movement of freight off the state highway system, and the development of affordable housing in existing urbanized areas that support the State's greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled goals.

Moreover, Madera and Tulare counties have already committed and spent over \$100 million from local sales tax measure funding to support SR 99 projects and Merced is ready, willing, and able to do the same to finish the gaps through their county.

At minimum, we respectfully request that the 2024 ITIP provide funding for environmental and design for the Madera Avenue 17-21 1/2 project. Additionally, depending on the outcome of the 2022 Trade

Corridor Enhancement Program grant awards, the Tulare Delano to Pixley project may require 2024 ITIP funding for right-of-way. Both projects will improve safety, reduce congestion, increase connectivity, and improve travel-time reliability of time-sensitive goods on SR 99.

Finishing SR 99 throughout the San Joaquin Valley is a critical part of the transportation solution. A six-lane SR 99 corridor is essential to support jobs, the economy, goods movement, farm-to-market needs, reduce air quality and climate impacts, and most importantly – to protect the lives and livelihoods of the traveling public and the 4.4 million Californians that call the San Joaquin Valley home. For these reasons, we urge the inclusion of funding for the next phases of these critical projects and for Caltrans to commit to a 10-year funding strategy to finish SR 99.

Sincerely,



Stacie Guzman  
Executive Director  
Merced County Association of Governments



Ted Smalley  
Executive Director  
Tulare County Association of Governments



Patricia Taylor  
Executive Director  
Madera County Transportation Commission

Attachments: SR 99 Safety and Goods Movement North Madera Avenue 17-21 ½ Project Fact Sheet  
SR 99 Safety and Goods Movement Tulare Delano to Pixley Project Fact Sheet

cc: The Honorable Melissa Hurtado, California State Senate  
The Honorable Anna Caballero, California State Senate  
The Honorable Marie Alvarado-Gil, California State Senate  
The Honorable Shannon Grove, California State Senate  
The Honorable Juan Alanis, California State Assembly  
The Honorable Vince Fong, California State Assembly  
The Honorable Devon Mathis, California State Assembly  
The Honorable Jim Patterson, California State Assembly  
The Honorable Esmeralda Soria, California State Assembly  
The Honorable Toks Omishakin, Secretary, California State Transportation Agency  
The Honorable Waseem Ahmed, Chair, Madera County Transportation Commission  
The Honorable Matt Serratto, Chair, Merced County Association of Governments  
The Honorable Amy Shuklian, Chair, Tulare County Association of Governments  
Tanisha Taylor, Chief Deputy Director, California Transportation Commission  
Diana Gomez, Director, District 6, California Department of Transportation  
Dennis Agor, Director, District 10, California Department of Transportation



## MCTC – PROPOSED SJV INTERREGIONAL PRIORITIES

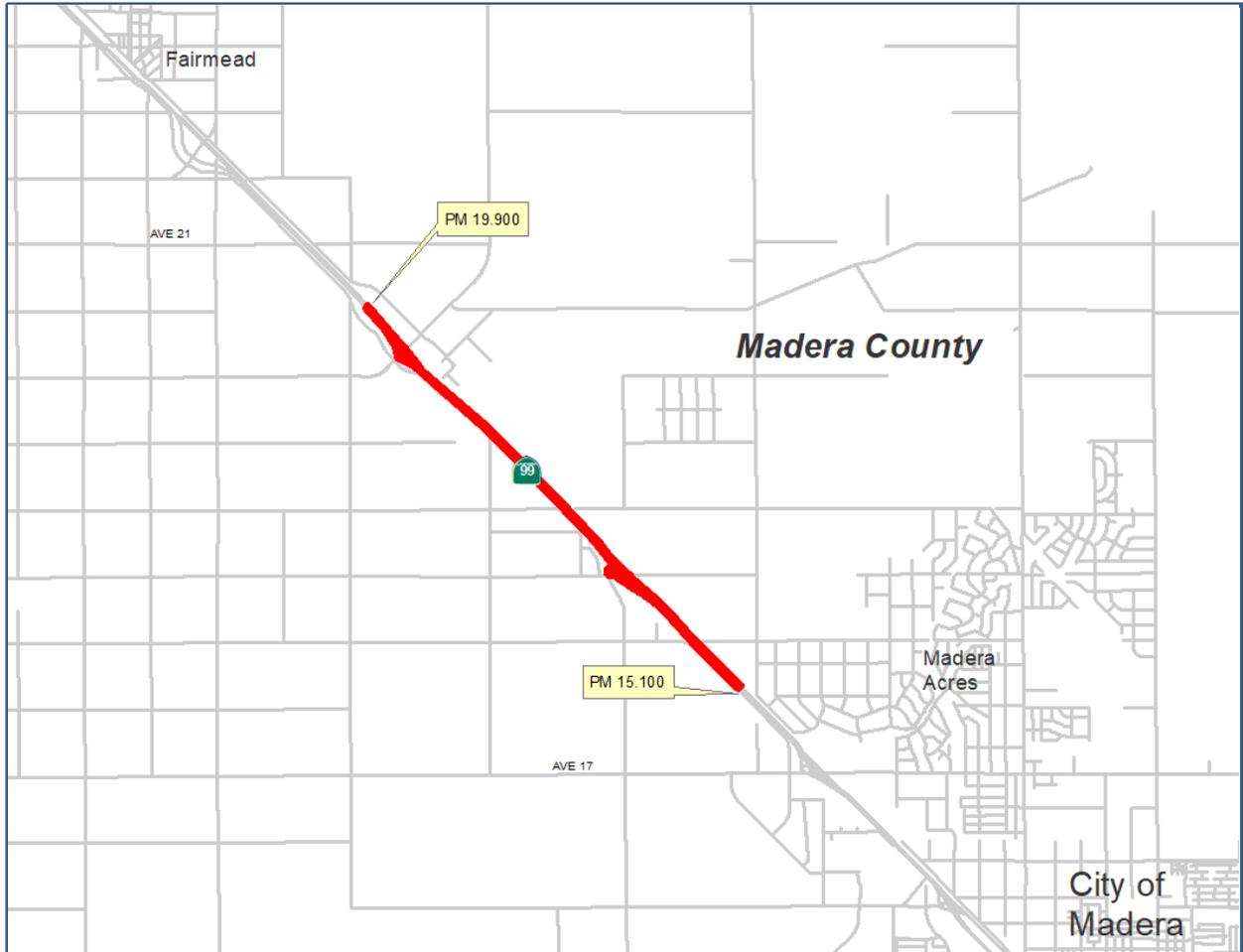
<b>Project:</b>	SR 99 Safety & Goods Movement, North Madera Avenue 17 - 21 1/2
<b>Request:</b>	\$144.5 million (Environmental through Construction)
<b>Current Status:</b>	CEQA Clearance: No NEPA Clearance: No PS & E completion date: TBD Construction start date: TBD The timing of this project is dependent on future funding.
<b>Description:</b>	The Project is located along SR 99, from 0.5 miles north of the Avenue 17 overcrossing to 1.0 mile south of Avenue 21 ½ overcrossing in Madera County (4.5 miles). This project will improve goods movement and passenger travel by completing SR 99 to 6 lanes to the north of the City of Madera.
<b>Interregional Significance:</b>	This Project will increase safety, reduce congestion, increase connectivity, improve travel-time reliability of time-sensitive goods, and preserve acceptable facility operation on SR 99. The 2020 annual daily truck traffic is 22% of total traffic and the number of truck trips is expected to nearly double within 20 years. Traffic projections indicate current capacity will be exceeded within 15 years, resulting in greater delay, congestion, and safety issues.



*SR 99 at the Avenue 18 ½ Overpass  
(North of the City of Madera)*



*SR 99 at the Avenue 20 ½ Overpass  
(North of the City of Madera)*



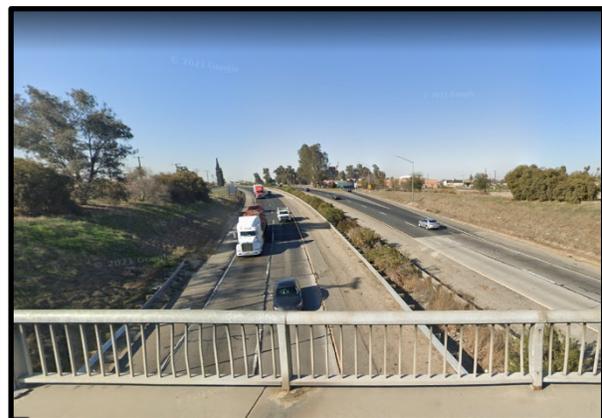


## TCAG – PROPOSED SJV INTERREGIONAL PRIORITIES

<b>Project:</b>	SR-99 Safety and Goods Movement, Delano to Pixley
<b>Request:</b>	Fully funded (\$98.8m for construction)
<b>Current Status:</b>	The environmental analysis is due to be completed by May 2023. Project design and ROW are expected to be completed and ready to list for construction by May 2024.
<b>Description:</b>	The project is located along SR-99, from the City of Delano in Kern County to Pixley in Tulare County (13.5 miles in Tulare County, 1.1 miles in Kern County). The project was originally a SHOPP pavement rehabilitation project which required temporary travel lanes within the existing median of SR-99. Converting the temporary travel lanes to permanent lanes results in over \$80 million in savings versus the SHOPP project and widening project being completed separately. Non-SHOPP funding such as SR-99 Prop 1B and CRRSAA are being used for the capacity increasing portion of the project.
<b>Interregional Significance:</b>	This Project will increase capacity which will increase safety, reduce congestion, increase connectivity, improve travel-time reliability of time-sensitive goods, and preserve acceptable facility operation on SR-99. The 2020 annual daily truck traffic is 24% of total traffic and the number of truck trips is expected to nearly double within 20 years. Traffic projections indicate current capacity will be exceeded within 15 years, resulting in greater delay, congestion and safety issues.



*Armstrong Ave (Ave 48) Overpass  
Earlimart*



*Court Ave Overpass  
Pixley*

