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**PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE
November 16, 2011**

SUBJECT: HIGH DESERT CORRIDOR UPDATE

ACTION: RECEIVE AND FILE

RECOMMENDATION

Receive and file this report regarding the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/ Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR) for the High Desert Corridor (Project).

ISSUE

In May 2011, the Board received an update on the public Scoping process and subsequent community outreach efforts for the Project. This report updates the Board on the Alternatives Analysis that was recently completed for the Project and upcoming community outreach meetings.

DISCUSSION

In September 2011, an analysis of the alternatives being considered for the Project was completed. The Alternatives Analysis process was undertaken following the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) which requires evaluation of a range of reasonable alternatives that attain the basic objectives of the Project while avoiding or substantially reducing its significant impacts.

Alternatives were eliminated from consideration based on any factor that is relevant to reasonableness, including failure to satisfy the Project's purpose and need, environmental impacts, engineering and cost among others. In addition, alternatives were also added as a result of public agency and community input.

Alternatives Analysis

At the initiation of the Alternatives Analysis, there were seven alternatives and three variations under consideration. As a result of public agency and community input during the Scoping process and subsequent community outreach meetings,

one alternative and two variations will not be carried forward for further consideration. They are:

- Corridor Improvements Alternative (Avenue P-8, State Route (SR) 138 and SR 18). The environmental costs are considered too high compared to the transportation benefit that would be achieved.
- Variation B North would require acquisition and relocation for a portion of a local dairy operation and operating building would be subject to construction related noise and air quality impacts.
- Variation C would bisect the Town of Apple Valley, harming community cohesion and result in the relocation of numerous business and residential properties.

In response to community input from the Scoping and subsequent outreach meetings, one alternative and two variations were added for consideration. They are:

- Hybrid Corridor Alternative would utilize the most appropriate elements of other alternatives and be pieced together to best fit the needs of each section of the corridor.
- Variation D located near the community of Lake Los Angeles would run slightly south to reduce the number of residential relocations and the construction related impacts.
- Variation E located in the cities of Adelanto and Victorville would run south of the Federal Bureau of Prisons complex in order to reduce impacts to natural resources.

Attachment A contains a map of the Project's alternatives.

NEXT STEPS

We are currently working with Caltrans staff to coordinate the next round of community outreach meetings in January 2012. We will update the public on the on the Alternatives Analysis and the development of the Project. As the work progresses, we will provide updates to the Board on a periodic basis.

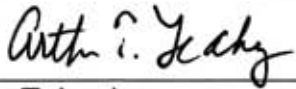
ATTACHMENT

A. High Desert Corridor Alternatives Map

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High Desert Corridor Alternatives Map

