



AFFILIATED AGENCIES

Orange County
Transit District

Local Transportation
Authority

Service Authority for
Freeway Emergencies

Consolidated Transportation
Service Agency

Congestion Management
Agency

June 2, 2022

Ms. Jayna Harris
Associate/Senior Environmental Planner
LSA Associates
20 Executive Park, Suite 200
Irvine, CA 92614

Subject: Interstate 5 Managed Lanes Project (State Route 55 to Orange County/Los Angeles County Line) Notice of Preparation

Dear Ms. Harris:

The Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) appreciates the opportunity to review the Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the Interstate 5 (I-5) Managed Lanes Project. Although the Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has addressed some of OCTA's previously communicated comments (attached), the following additional input is provided for your consideration.

1. Caltrans and OCTA have completed construction of the Measure M2 (Orange County's half-cent transportation sales tax initiative) project to add a high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane in each direction on I-5 between State Route 55 (SR-55) and State Route SR-57 (SR-57). With two HOV lanes now operating in each direction from SR-55 to SR-57, the need to address managed lane degradation should not apply to this segment. Caltrans should consider alternatives that limit the project's southern terminus to the I-5/SR-57 interchange.
2. Conversion of HOV lanes to express lanes between SR-55 and SR-57 (Alternatives 3 and 4A/4B) would conflict with the aforementioned project which is a commitment to Orange County voters and investment of taxpayer dollars.
3. OCTA requests consideration of HOV 2+ and HOV 3+ alternatives that include added managed lane capacity between SR-57 and State Route 91 (SR-91).
4. The proposed project's capacity expansion could lead to an operational conflict with existing capacity limitations north of the I-5/SR-91 interchange and at the Orange/Los Angeles County line, which may result in new bottlenecks, operational deficiencies, and reduced travel time reliability.
5. We strongly urge Caltrans to hold monthly project development team meetings so that stakeholders such as OCTA are given the opportunity to provide meaningful input.

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6. Per prior correspondence, Caltrans does not intend to extend the NOP comment period, as previously requested by OCTA, and we appreciate Caltrans' willingness to include all comments received after the NOP comment period as part of the administrative records. However, OCTA's preference remains that Caltrans formally extend the NOP comment period to enable stakeholders to continue to be engaged in the process.
7. OCTA plans to bring this project to the Regional Planning & Highways Committee and Board of Directors meeting on June 6 and June 13, respectively. Any additional input from either of these meetings will be conveyed through subsequent correspondence. Therefore, it would be prudent for Caltrans to extend the NOP comment period for an additional 15 days.

OCTA looks forward to close communication with Caltrans throughout the Project Approval/Environmental Document process. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach me at (714) 560-5907 or dphu@octa.net.

Sincerely,



Dan Phu
Sustainability Planning Manager

DP:aa
Attachment

c: Chris Flynn, Caltrans District 12
Smita Deshpande, Caltrans District 12