



July 1, 2021

To: Regional Planning and Highways Committee
From: Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer
Subject: Amendments to the Master Plan of Arterial Highways

Overview

The Orange County Transportation Authority administers the Master Plan of Arterial Highways, including the review and approval of amendments requested by local jurisdictions. The cities of Anaheim, Brea, and Yorba Linda have requested amendments to the Master Plan of Arterial Highways that are recommended for Board of Directors' approval. An update on pending Master Plan of Arterial Highways amendments is also provided.

Recommendations

- A. Conditionally approve the following amendments to the Master Plan of Arterial Highways:

City of Brea and County of Orange

1. Delete Tonner Canyon Road between Brea Canyon Road and the future extension of Valencia Avenue; and
2. Delete Valencia Avenue between Carbon Canyon Road and the future extension of Tonner Canyon Road.

Cities of Yorba Linda and Anaheim

3. Reclassify Yorba Linda Boulevard between La Palma Avenue and the State Route 91 westbound off-ramp from a primary (four-lane, divided) arterial to an asymmetric major (seven-lane, divided) arterial;
4. Reclassify Yorba Linda Boulevard/Weir Canyon Road between the State Route 91 westbound off-ramp and the State Route 91 eastbound on-ramp from a primary (four-lane, divided) arterial to a major (six-lane, divided) arterial;

5. Add Savi Ranch Parkway between Pullman Street and Old Canal Road as a primary (four-lane, divided) arterial; and
6. Add Old Canal Road/Pullman Street as a divided collector (two-lane, divided).

Each of the proposed amendments will become final, contingent upon the Orange County Transportation Authority receiving documentation confirming that the respective agency or agencies have amended their general plans accordingly and have complied with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act.

If a general plan is not updated within three years to reflect the proposed Master Plan of Arterial Highways amendment, the contingent amendment will expire, but can be returned to the Orange County Transportation Authority Board of Directors for reconsideration and action.

If the proposed Master Plan of Arterial Highways amendment is modified as a result of the California Environmental Quality Act and/or general plan amendment processes, the modified Master Plan of Arterial Highways amendment shall be returned to the Orange County Transportation Authority Board of Directors for consideration and action.

- B. Approve the amendment to the Master Plan of Arterial Highways to reclassify Santa Ana Canyon Road between Roosevelt Avenue and Weir Canyon Road from a major (six-lane, divided) arterial to an asymmetric primary (five-lane, divided) arterial.
- C. Direct staff to file a Notice of Exemption from the California Environmental Quality Act in support of the Master Plan of Arterial Highways amendment.

Background

In 2013, the Master Plan of Arterial Highways (MPAH) map was updated to reflect the following reclassifications approved by the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) Board of Directors (Board):

1. Tonner Canyon Road between Brea Canyon Road and the future extension of Valencia Avenue from a primary (four-lane, divided) arterial to right-of-way (ROW) Reserve for a period of nine years; and
2. Valencia Avenue between Carbon Canyon Road and the future extension of Tonner Canyon Road from a primary (four-lane, divided) arterial to ROW Reserve of a period of nine years.

ROW Reserve is a classification for facilities where there is a lack of consensus among affected jurisdictions as to whether a facility should remain on the MPAH. ROW Reserve facilities are depicted on the MPAH and in local general plans to hold the ROW, for a fixed period of time, until consensus is reached on the future of the facility. While in ROW Reserve, the planned facility is excluded from traffic and land-use planning models due to this uncertainty.

The decision to place Tonner Canyon Road and Valencia Avenue in ROW Reserve was based upon environmental issues, potential future land-use changes in the area, future traffic projections for the area, and the goals identified within the City of Brea's (Brea) general plan. At the time, the nearby Olinda Alpha Landfill was anticipated to close in 2021, and the area would be converted to passive parkland uses. The ROW Reserve period was intended to allow for Tonner Canyon Road and Valencia Avenue to be reevaluated in conjunction with post-landfill planning processes. The ROW Reserve period for Tonner Canyon Road and Valencia Avenue is expiring in November 2021, and Brea has submitted a request to delete these segments from the MPAH due to recent considerations by the County of Orange (County) to extend the use of the Olinda Alpha Landfill through 2036 (Attachment A).

Separately, the City of Yorba Linda (Yorba Linda), in coordination with the City of Anaheim (Anaheim), proposed roadway improvements in nearby Savi Ranch, a 235-acre mixed-use development. This area is the largest job center in Yorba Linda, supporting over 4,500 jobs. Congestion affects vehicular throughput along Yorba Linda Boulevard as well as State Route 91 (SR-91) ramp operations. In January 2021, the Yorba Linda City Council approved the Yorba Linda Boulevard Widening Improvement Project (Project). The Project will provide a fourth northbound lane on Yorba Linda Boulevard, including the bridge over the Santa Ana River, and improve corridor operations by extending and providing supplementary turn lanes. Additionally, the Project includes bicycle and pedestrian improvements along Yorba Linda Boulevard.

Subsequently, Yorba Linda submitted a request (Attachment B), consistent with the Project, to amend the MPAH to:

1. Reclassify Yorba Linda Boulevard between La Palma Avenue and the SR-91 westbound off-ramp from a primary (four-lane, divided) arterial to an asymmetric major (seven-lane, divided) arterial;
2. Reclassify Yorba Linda Boulevard/Weir Canyon Road between the SR-91 westbound off-ramp and the SR-91 eastbound on-ramp from a primary (four-lane, divided) arterial to a major (six-lane, divided) arterial;
3. Add Savi Ranch Parkway from Pullman Street and Old Canal Road to the MPAH as a primary (four-lane, divided) arterial; and

4. Add Old Canal Road/Pullman Street to the MPAH as a divided collector (two-lane, divided).

To maintain consistency with the Project approved by Yorba Linda, Anaheim also submitted a request (Attachment C) to amend the MPAH to:

1. Reclassify Santa Ana Canyon Road between Roosevelt Avenue and Weir Canyon Road from a major (six-lane, divided) arterial to an asymmetric primary (five-lane, divided) arterial.

All requested amendments proposed for Board consideration are illustrated in Attachment D.

Discussion

Staff has reviewed the traffic analyses provided by the cities and has concluded that the requested MPAH amendments are appropriate from a long-range planning perspective. Additionally, future traffic volumes appear to be accommodated with the proposed changes and are forecast to remain at acceptable intersection levels of service (LOS).

City of Brea and the County of Orange – Tonner Canyon Road and Valencia Avenue

Based on the Orange County Traffic Analysis Model 5.0, Tonner Canyon Road and Valencia Avenue, if constructed, are forecast to carry approximately 3,000 average daily trips (ADT). The deletion of these facilities from the MPAH do not significantly impact State Route 57 or the surrounding MPAH network. Furthermore, Brea has reiterated the difficulty in extending and constructing Tonner Canyon Road and Valencia Avenue, primarily due to its cost and potential impacts to an environmentally sensitive area.

These two planned roadway segments are located partially in Brea, as well as in the unincorporated area of Orange County, within Brea's sphere of influence. The County and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) District 12 have provided letters of support/no comment, included in Attachment A. The County is now in the process of extending the operation of the Olinda Alpha Landfill to 2036 and supports Brea's proposal to delete Tonner Canyon Road and Valencia Avenue from the MPAH.

Cities of Anaheim and Yorba Linda – Yorba Linda Boulevard, Weir Canyon Road, Savi Ranch Road, Old Canal Road/Pullman Street, and Santa Ana Canyon Road

Yorba Linda Boulevard/Weir Canyon Road straddles the border between Anaheim and Yorba Linda between SR-91 and the Santa Ana River. Yorba Linda Boulevard/Weir Canyon Road is built as a six-lane facility with an annual ADT of approximately 55,500 (2019). This far exceeds the capacity of the current primary arterial classification (30,000 ADT to maintain LOS C). As a result, Yorba Linda and Anaheim have requested that Yorba Linda Boulevard between La Palma Avenue and the SR-91 westbound off-ramp be reclassified from a primary arterial to an asymmetric major arterial (seven lanes, divided). The proposed reclassification is consistent with the cities' Project and provides sufficient capacity to accommodate forecasted traffic levels and meet LOS standards. Additionally, the cities have requested to reclassify Yorba Linda Boulevard/Weir Canyon Road between the SR-91 westbound off-ramp and the SR-91 eastbound on-ramp from a primary arterial to a major arterial. This reclassification will update the MPAH and the cities' general plans consistent with the existing condition. It also clarifies there are no plans to reduce capacity along this segment of Yorba Linda Boulevard/Weir Canyon Road.

High traffic volumes on Yorba Linda Boulevard and the turning movements at Savi Ranch Parkway associated with the SR-91 interchanges result in significant congestion at intersections in this area. Therefore, Anaheim and Yorba Linda are requesting the addition of Savi Ranch Parkway and Old Canal Road/Pullman Street to the MPAH. This will allow the cities to compete for Measure M2 Project O – Regional Capacity Program funding to provide improvements needed to help relieve congestion at these intersections.

The Project also proposes to restripe Santa Ana Canyon Road from Roosevelt Avenue to Weir Canyon Road, converting one through lane to a third left-turn lane. Based on an intersection LOS analysis, high eastbound left-turn volume for vehicles traveling to SR-91 and Savi Ranch, along with a lower eastbound through volume, justify the corresponding request to reclassify this segment on the MPAH from a major arterial to an asymmetric primary arterial (five lanes, divided). Note that this proposed configuration is consistent with the Anaheim Circulation Element's Planned Roadway Network Map that currently classifies Santa Ana Canyon Road as a scenic expressway (four to six lanes, divided). Therefore, Anaheim will not need to amend its general plan and the MPAH will be updated to reflect Santa Ana Canyon Road as an asymmetric primary arterial (five-lane, divided) contingent upon Board approval of the amendment request.

Due to the proximity of the Project to SR-91, Caltrans reviewed the Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration, and provided a letter of no comment on the requested MPAH amendments, included in Attachment B.

California Environmental Quality Act

Amendments to the MPAH are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review. As such, if the Board approves the recommendations, OCTA will file a Notice of Exemption from CEQA in support of the proposed amendment to the MPAH.

MPAH Status Update

As indicated in the status report in Attachment E, there are currently 18 pending amendments proposed for the MPAH. These pending amendments are awaiting local action to amend their respective general plans. Others are either under review, are in the cooperative study process, are pending resolution of issues with other agencies, or are awaiting refinement of development plans.

Summary

The cities of Anaheim, Brea, and Yorba Linda submitted requests to amend the Master Plan of Arterial Highways. Staff reviewed the traffic data supporting the amendment requests and concluded that the proposed changes are appropriate from a long-range planning perspective. Based upon the provided traffic analyses, the requirements of the Master Plan of Arterial Highways Guidelines have been met, and Board of Directors' approval of the reclassifications is recommended. A summary of pending Master Plan of Arterial Highways amendments is also provided for Board of Directors' review.

Attachments

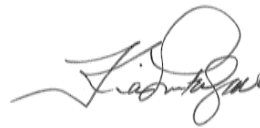
- A. Letter from Tony Olmos, P.E., Public Works Director, City of Brea, to Stephanie Chhan, Long Range Planning and Corridor Studies, Orange County Transportation Authority, dated May 24, 2021, Subject: MPAH Amendment Request for Tonner Canyon Road and Valencia Avenue
- B. Letter from Jamie Lai, P.E., Director of Public Works/City Engineer, City of Yorba Linda, to Stephanie Chhan, Orange County Transportation Authority, dated June 3, 2021, Subject: Request for Master Plan of Arterial Highways (MPAH) Amendment (Revised)
- C. Letter from Rudy Emami, P.E., Director of Public Works, City of Anaheim, to Stephanie Chhan, Orange County Transportation Authority, dated May 26, 2021, Subject: Request for Master Plan of Arterial Highways (MPAH) Amendment – Santa Ana Canyon Road Between Roosevelt Road and Weir Canyon Road
- D. Master Plan of Arterial Highways Amendment Map Requests
- E. Status Report on Pending Master Plan of Arterial Highways Amendments

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