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## Calaveras County Department of Public Works

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memorandum

October 13, 2004

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Tim McSorley, Deputy Director

Subject: Valley Springs Benefit Basin

### ***RECOMMENDATIONS***

Public Works requests and recommends that the Board of Supervisors adopt the following actions:

1. Resolution establishing the Valley Springs Benefit Basin imposing a \$1,275 per equivalent dwelling unit fee upon all new development within the basin as defined and as necessary to fund mitigation of growth-induced traffic impacts in the Valley Springs area;
2. Resolution establishing the project priority list for the Road Impact Mitigation (RIM) Fee Capital Projects based on level of service classification contained in the RIM Nexus Study and identifying the State Route (SR) 12 and SR 26 intersection signalization project as the number one funding priority for RIM revenue; and
3. Minute Order authorizing the Chair to sign a letter to the Caltrans District 10 Director requesting that Caltrans prioritize funding for the SR12/26 intersection signalization project in recognition of our financial commitment to the project.

In addition, Public Works offers for the Board's consideration an alternate to the first resolution that would provide for interim authorization of the benefit basin and allow for immediate fee implementation.

### ***DISCUSSION***

Development activity in the Valley Springs area continues at a high level. Proposed projects that await County approval range from single-family developments to commercial and industrial activities. Each of these proposals will result in increased traffic impacts to the local road system, much of which is substandard and unable to accommodate additional traffic loads. During the study session on September 7, 2004, the Board of Supervisors considered a number of options to address three distinct issues:

1. Deal with existing deficiencies in the road system;
2. Mitigate traffic impacts resulting from new development; and
3. Develop interim measures to allow the County to continue processing both building permit and land division applications pending any resolution of issues one and two.

At that time, the Board determined that implementation of the benefit basin was necessary to mitigate the impacts from new development and to allow projects to proceed without project specific environmental impacts reports (EIR). In concluding the study session, the Board directed staff to bring back a proposal to establish a benefit basin that would allow projects to proceed and deferred the issue of existing deficiencies to a subsequent study session. In addition, the Board directed staff to take appropriate actions that would encourage Caltrans' participation in the SR12/26 signalization project.

### ***Valley Springs Benefit Basin Program***

In response to the Board's direction, staff has developed the Valley Springs Benefit Basin Program for the Board's consideration, which includes the following elements, each of which is summarized in the paragraphs that follow.

- a. Defines the benefit basin boundaries and identifies the affected parcels;
- b. Outlines a Capital Improvement Plan that identifies the necessary road improvements and provides budgetary construction cost estimates;
- c. Assigns trip rates to various designated land uses and determines the value of each trip; and
- d. Provides for an implementation plan.

*Benefit Basin Boundaries.* Parcels to be included in the proposed benefit basin are shown on Exhibit A attached to the Resolution. Boundaries of the benefit basin are readily defined by those parcels within the immediate traffic shed of SR 12 and 26 from the County line east to Toyon and bounded by Camanche and New Hogan Reservoirs and the Calaveras River. The proposed benefit basin as defined incorporates a total of 19,300 potential undeveloped parcels, which includes about 15,000 undeveloped residential parcels and 2,000 acres of undeveloped commercial property.

*Capital Improvement Plan.* The capital improvement projects included in the benefit basin have been previously identified in the Precise Plan Report prepared by Caltrans in 1996,<sup>1</sup> State Routes 12 and 26 Corridor Study,<sup>2</sup> and the current Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).<sup>3</sup> Specifically, the improvements included in this basin are the SR 26 and SR 12 corridor improvements and the "western connector" running from Rancho Calaveras to the Wallace/Burson area via Olive Orchard Road and Pettinger Road. Every effort was made to utilize existing alignments; however, a new alignment is proposed for a mile long segment of the connector is along a new alignment and thus would require acquisition of new right-of-way. The cost for new right-of-way is included in the conceptual cost estimate for the project. The corridor improvements consist mainly of turn pocket improvements with limited curve realignment. The signalization of the 12/26 intersection is not included in the benefit basin as it is a part of the RIM Program. The projects scheduled under the benefit basin are listed by priority on Exhibit B, attached to the Resolution, together with cost estimates. As shown in Exhibit B, the estimated cost for all scheduled capital improvement projects approaches \$20 million.

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<sup>1</sup> Precise Plan Report, Caltrans, February 1996

<sup>2</sup> Final Report for State Routes 12 and 26 Corridor Study, Fehr & Peers Associates, Inc., October 26, 1998.

<sup>3</sup> Calaveras County Regional Transportation Plan Update 2001, Final Report, Fehr & Peers Associates, Inc., October 1, 2001.

*Trip Generation and Value.* The Valley Springs Benefit Basin was modeled after the Copperopolis Benefit Basin and relies on the same trip generation counts for residential and commercial projects. Accordingly, each residential unit is assigned a trip generation factor of 7.5 trips per unit per day, establishing the equivalent dwelling unit (EDU), and commercial development is assigned 121 trips per acre per day. Assigning those trip generation rates to undeveloped parcels within the Benefit Basin and then allocating the cost of capital improvements on a per trip basis yields an EDU cost \$1,275.

*Implementation Plan.* Implementation of the Valley Springs Benefit Basin will be modeled after the recently adopted Road Impact Mitigation Fee with the following exception.

Consistent with Government Code 66000, the *Implementation Plan* provides for periodic review of the benefit basin. It is the intent of Public Works to commission a comprehensive review of the benefit basin within the first year of implementation and recommends outside professional consulting services to facilitate that review. To that end, Public Works will prepare a Request for Proposals (RFP) for traffic engineering services necessary to refine engineering design criteria for the proposed improvements including but not limited to defining horizontal and vertical geometries, determining roadway sections, establishing route adoption and right-of-way limits, identifying bicycle and pedestrian facilities, incorporating public input, and updating cost estimates. Additionally, Public Works will prepare an RFP for financial/economic consulting services to assist in the preparation the financial analyses for the Valley Springs Benefit basin.

### ***SR12/26 Signalization***

To encourage Caltrans' participation in the SR12/26 signalization project, two immediate actions are proposed: Board action to identify the SR12/26 signalization project as the top RIM project priority and to execute a letter to the attention of the Caltrans District 10 Director requesting priority attention to that project in recognition of local interests.

*RIM Project Priorities.* The RIM Fee Nexus Study targeted 23 projects in the "Regional Transportation Network" for improvements necessary to mitigate growth-induced traffic impacts at a cost of \$156 million.<sup>4</sup> The Nexus Study allocated 24 percent of that \$156 million, or \$37.8 million, to new development. The Nexus Study did not attempt to determine project priorities and deferred those decisions to subsequent Board action. At this time, Public Works recommends that Board establish an initial tier of project priorities by identifying those road segments in the "Regional Transportation Network" where the current level of service is unacceptable (below LOS C). Of the 23 targeted projects, only two have been found to be operating at a LOS below C: Mountain Ranch Road from SR49 to Pope Street (LOS D) and SR12/26 intersection (LOS F). Therefore, these projects are targeted for construction as soon as sufficient funds are available.

*Caltrans Priority.* With a total estimated cost of \$1.15 million, signalization of the SR 12/26 intersection has a RIM contribution of \$261,000. Since implementation of the RIM fee in April, some \$360,000 has been collected and deposited in the designated fund. With a committed funding source for signalization, we are in a better position to solicit Caltrans'

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<sup>4</sup> Road Impact Mitigation Fee Nexus Study, Economic & Planning Systems, April 28, 2004. p.17.

priority programming of the project. In this regard, staff has prepared a letter for the Board Chair's signature that requests such a commitment from Caltrans.

### ***Urgency Measure***

Government Code Section 66017 stipulates that adoption of any fee or charge upon a development project shall not become effective until 60 days following Board action unless the Board adopts, by a 4/5 vote, an urgency measure as an interim authorization to protect the public health, welfare and safety. According to code, the interim authority must contain findings describing the current and immediate threat to the public health, welfare and safety. Public Works does view the 60-day delay in fee implementation as a threat to the public welfare. Consistent with RIM implementation, we can expect building permit applications to be submitted in advance of the effective date thus avoiding the basin fee. In the months preceding the RIM effective date, building permit applications rose more than 200%, presumably to avoid the RIM fee, and deprived the RIM designated fund of more than \$745,000 in revenue, almost enough to cover the remaining cost of signalization. While the 60-day delay in basin fee implementation will be less dramatic, as the fee is lower and the affected parcels smaller, it will likely deprive the basin of nearly a year's worth of revenue.

### ***Correction of Existing Deficiencies***

Consistent with Board direction, Public Works will be scheduling a study session with the Board to review options for funding the improvements to correct existing deficiencies in the roadway system. It is anticipated that the study session will be scheduled in early November.

### ***FISCAL IMPACT***

There is no direct General Fund impact from this action. All costs for design, engineering, environmental review, construction and administration will be covered by proceeds from the proposed benefit basin. Costs for development within the benefit basin boundary will increase by an amount commensurate to the applicable basin fee.

### ***OTHER DEPARTMENT INVOLVEMENT***

Public Works has coordinated the development of the benefit basin with County Counsel's office and the Planning Department. Implementation of the benefit basin will require coordination with both the Planning Department and the Building Department.