REPORT

DATE: March 6, 2008

TO: Regional Council
Transportation and Communications Committee

FROM: Rich Macias, Interim Director of Planning & Policy, (213)-236-1805; macias@scag.ca.gov
Jeffrey S. Dunn, Government Affairs Analyst, (213)-236-1880; dunn@scag.ca.gov

SUBJECT: Inclusion of Brawley Bypass in TCIF

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S APPROVAL:

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Approve the submission of a support letter to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) to include the Brawley Bypass in the TCIF.

BACKGROUND:

The Brawley Bypass project in Imperial County is a critical link helping to connect the cargo crossing at the Calexico East Port of Entry with the greater Los Angeles trade corridors in the Inland Empire region of the Coachella Valley in Riverside County. The Brawley Bypass project is contained in SCAG's Regional Transportation Plan and Regional Transportation Improvement Program, and SCAG has been advocating for this critical project for the region.

The attached support letter to the CTC sets forth the reasons for including the Brawley Bypass within the TCIF for Proposition 1B bond funding.

FISCAL IMPACT:

All work related to adopting the recommended staff action is contained within the adopted FY 07/08 budget and does not require the allocation of any additional financial resources.

Reviewed by:
Division Manager

Reviewed by:
Department Director

Reviewed by:
Chief Financial Officer

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION of GOVERNMENTS

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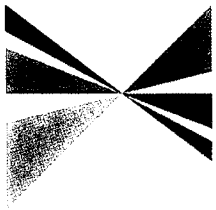
J. Dunn, 02/21/08

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA



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March 6, 2008

Mr. James C. Ghielmetti
Chair, California Transportation Commission
1120 N Street
Room 2221 (MS-52)
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Inclusion of Brawley Bypass in TCIF

Dear Chair Ghielmetti:

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) supports the inclusion of the Brawley Bypass phase 3 project in Imperial County in the TCIF.

The Brawley Bypass project is contained in SCAG's Regional Transportation Plan and Regional Transportation Improvement Program, and SCAG has been advocating for this critical project for our region. This project helps to connect the cargo crossing at the Calexico East Port of Entry with the greater Los Angeles trade corridors in the Inland Empire region of the Coachella Valley in Riverside County.

The Brawley Bypass project will yield the following benefits:

- Reduce congestion;
- Address safety concerns;
- Reduce air pollution in a non-attainment area;
- Reduce economic hardship in the City of Brawley; and
- Reduce the number of trucks using streets in the vicinity of the City of Brawley.

The Brawley Bypass phase 3 project currently has a $50 million shortfall for construction. The Brawley Bypass is an element in the Southern California Goods Movement Action Plan and is vaguely included in the current guidelines that recognize 4 major trade corridors in California, including one that is identified as "the San Diego region Port and Ports of Entry northbound to Orange and Riverside Counties". This project is a vital link for California's trade with Mexico, where in 2006, this 2-way trade from Calexico POE amounted to $8.3 billion in commerce, and 620,000 individual truck trips. 80% of these trucks are destined for shipment to points within California.

The Regional Council is comprised of 75 elected officials representing 187 cities, six counties, four County Transportation Commissions, and a Tribal Government representative within Southern California.

During the CMIA phase, the Imperial Valley Association of Governments region proposed the Brawley bypass project for funding under that segment of the proposition 1-b funding. Despite ranking among the top projects during the first staff review, and remaining high on the list of staff-recommended projects after the first CTC hearing, when the CTC made their awards in February, they deferred funding this project because....according to the minutes of that meeting... "the Brawley Bypass, met all of the criteria for CMIA but it was more suitable as a project for TCIF funding". The Governor's office has also expressed this opinion.

For these reasons, the Southern California Association of Governments urges the CTC to include the Brawley Bypass phase 3 project in Imperial County in the TCIF.

Sincerely,

Gary Ovitt, SCAG President
San Bernardino County Supervisor

cc: John F. Barna Jr.