

## MEMORANDUM

To: CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS  
CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

CTC Meeting: June 23-24, 2021

From: STEVEN KECK, Chief Financial Officer

Reference Number: 2.3a.(2), Action Item

Prepared By: Elbert Cox, Chief (Acting)  
Division of Design

Subject: ROUTE ADOPTION, 05-MON-156 PM R1.6/T5.2  
RESOLUTION HRA 21-01

### ISSUE:

Should the California Transportation Commission (Commission) approve the attached Highway Route Adoption HRA 21-01 requested by the California Department of Transportation (Department) for a freeway alignment for State Route (SR) 156 in the county of Monterey from 0.5 mile east of SR 183 to U.S. Highway 101?

### RECOMMENDATION:

The Department recommends that the Commission approve the Freeway Route Adoption Resolution HRA 21-01 and route location map for SR 156 in the county of Monterey. The Department requests approval of a freeway route adoption of SR 156 from SR 183 to U.S. Highway 101 as a new freeway alignment as part of the Route 156 West Corridor Project that will construct a new freeway alignment with interchanges south of the existing SR 156 alignment. The Department approved the Project Report (PR) on January 31, 2013, and the Commission approved the Resolution for the Future Consideration of Funding for Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) via Resolution E-13-65 on August 6, 2013. A revalidation form, as an update to the environmental document, and a Supplemental PR were signed on October 8, 2020 and May 18, 2021, respectively. It is recommended that the Commission approve the Freeway Route Adoption Resolution HRA 21-01 in accordance with the recommendation of the Chief Engineer.

Recommended by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
JANICE BENTON  
Chief Engineer (Acting)

*“Provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment.”*

**BACKGROUND:**

The Transportation Agency of Monterey County (TAMC) and the Department are jointly proposing this route adoption to establish a freeway designation along SR 156 from SR 183 to U.S. Highway 101. This route adoption will enable SR 156 to partially fulfill its statutory designation of a freeway and expressway through this area in Monterey County, facilitate access to the nearby communities, and improve interregional traffic operations.

SR 156 is a major east-west route that begins at SR 1 near the community of Castroville and extends eastward to SR 152 through the community of Prunedale and the cities of San Juan Bautista and Hollister. This route serves as a major link between the major north-south routes of SR 1 and U.S. Highway 101 for trucks, commuters, and recreational travelers. This route also serves as a link for the Monterey Peninsula to the Bay Area and Central Valley. SR 156 allows travelers to access the Monterey Peninsula from U.S. Highway 101 during the summer season and throughout the year on weekends. Existing SR 156 begins as a freeway at the SR 1 junction to Castroville Boulevard, then becomes a two-lane conventional highway that continues east towards U.S. Highway 101 near the Prunedale community. Existing SR 156 is designated as a scenic highway and is partially within the coastal zone. The surrounding area is generally categorized as agricultural and rural residential.

SR 156 is part of the California Freeway and Expressway System in its entirety. The California Highway Commission adopted a SR 156 freeway alignment from SR 1 to 0.8 mile north of Castroville on February 19, 1957 and from 0.1 mile west of the October 25, 1961 adopted SR 183 alignment to the adopted U.S. Highway 101 alignment on June 22, 1966.

On September 18, 1975, the California Highway Commission rescinded a portion of the 1957 and 1966 freeway adoptions between 0.2 mile east of adopted SR 183 and adopted U.S. Highway 101 due to monetary and other constraints leading to the unconstructed adopted route to remain unconstructed. The following reasons were stated in the Route Inventory Report dated May 1, 1975: (1) financial constraints make the feasibility of construction in the adopted corridor questionable; (2) the Regional Transportation Plan indicates widening of the existing highway will meet traffic needs; (3) the existing facility can be widened to four lanes within the existing right-of-way.

Since the 1975 rescission, SR 156 and its surrounding communities have changed. New studies for the corridor started in 1997 to document the need for new transportation improvements. A Project Study Report (PSR) completed in 1998 evaluated widening SR 156 from 2-lane conventional highway to a 4-lane expressway without addressing the interchange at U.S. Highway 101 and SR 156. This PSR did not consider constructing an interchange at Castroville Boulevard.

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The project remained inactive due to funding constraints until 2003. A Supplemental Project Study Report – Project Development Support (PSR-PDS) document was completed in April 2006 to document the change in scope. The scope of the project changed to include a reconstruction of the U.S. Highway 101/SR 156 interchange and construction of the Castroville Boulevard and Cathedral Oak Road interchanges along SR 156. The PSR-PDS document superseded the two PSRs from 1997 and 1998.

In 2006, TAMC and the Department started the project studies for the SR 156 West Corridor Project (Project). An open house scoping meeting was held on November 15, 2006 in Castroville. On July 20, 2009, the Department held a public hearing in Castroville to present the different alternatives studied in the approved draft environmental document.

On January 31, 2013, the Department completed project studies and a FEIR/Environmental Assessment (Environmental Document) leading to a Finding of No Significant Impact. The PR was approved on January 31, 2013, recommending the construction of a new freeway alignment south of the existing alignment. The Commission accepted the Environmental Document and approved the project for future consideration of funding on August 6, 2013 with Resolution E-13-65. A revalidation under the National Environmental Policy Act was approved on October 8, 2020. A Supplemental PR was approved on May 18, 2021 to modify the Project's construction phasing to construct the Castroville Boulevard interchange first, now referred to as Segment 1. Segments 2 and 3 will complete the construction of the four-lane freeway from the new Castroville Boulevard interchange to the junction of U.S. Highway 101 and SR 156.

Existing SR 156 functions as a rural two-lane undivided highway with 12-foot lanes and 8-foot shoulders. It has no passing lanes but includes left turn pockets at intersections to improve operations. Left-turn and right-turn movements on SR 156 at the intersections between Castroville Boulevard and the junction of SR 156 and U.S. Highway 101 result in a higher than average rate of collisions statewide. The proposed SR 156 freeway will include the construction of a new interchange to improve local and interregional traffic circulation. The purpose of the project is to improve safety, operation, and local and interregional traffic circulation.

The Project will construct a four-lane freeway on a new alignment. The existing SR 156 will be converted to local frontage road. A new interchange will be constructed near the existing intersection of SR 156 and Castroville Boulevard to address traffic demand and improve safety along SR 156 in Monterey County. Improvements will be made to the connections at SR 156 and U.S. Highway 101. Due to funding constraints, the new interchange near Castroville Boulevard will be constructed first and other improvements will be constructed in subsequent phases.

The County provided a resolution supporting the route adoption on May 18, 2021.

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The existing SR 156 will be relinquished to Monterey County as a superseded-by-relocation relinquishment once the freeway construction is completed. Relinquishment agreements will be executed after the freeway route adoption is approved.

The total project cost for the Castroville Boulevard Interchange Project (Segment 1) is \$35,991,000, including right-of-way capital cost. The project is funded in 2021-2022 utilizing funds from Monterey County's Transportation Safety and Investment Plan (Measure X), Trade Corridor Enhancement Program, Statewide Transportation Improvement Program – Regional Improvement Program, and other local funds. The estimated project costs for Segment 2 and Segment 3 are \$106,225,000 and \$250,890,000, respectively.

A superseding Freeway Agreement will be executed by the Department after the Commission's approval of the freeway route adoption.

Attachments:

Resolution HRA 21-01  
Location Map  
Route Adoption Map

**CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**  
**Highway Route Adoption Resolution**  
**05-MON-156 PM R1.6/T5.2**

**Resolution HRA 21-01**

**WHEREAS**, the California Department of Transportation (Department), and the County of Monterey (City) request approval of this Route Adoption as a State Highway; and

**WHEREAS**, the Final Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment leading to a Finding of No Significant Impact was signed on January 31, 2013; and a revalidation form, as an update to the environmental document, was signed on October 8, 2020; and

**WHEREAS**, the Project Report (PR) recommending the highway route adoption was approved by the Department on January 31, 2013, and a Supplemental PR was approved by the Department on May 18, 2021.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the California Transportation Commission (Commission) that pursuant to the authority vested in it by law, this Commission does hereby select, adopt, and determine the location of that segment of State Highway Route 156, from 0.5 mile east of State Highway Route 183 to U.S. Highway 101 in Monterey County, and officially designates it as 05-MON-156, a freeway, as said location is shown on the map submitted by Laura Gordon, Chief of Central Region Project Development; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that this Commission has found and determined and hereby declares that such the location of said State highway is for the best interest of the State.

# ROUTE ADOPTION

**Beg PROJECT**  
**Rte 156 PM R1.6**

Moss Landing

Castroville

156

Prunedale

**END PROJECT**  
**Rte 156 PM T5.2**

MONTEREY BAY



183

101

Salinas

MONTEREY

Salinas River

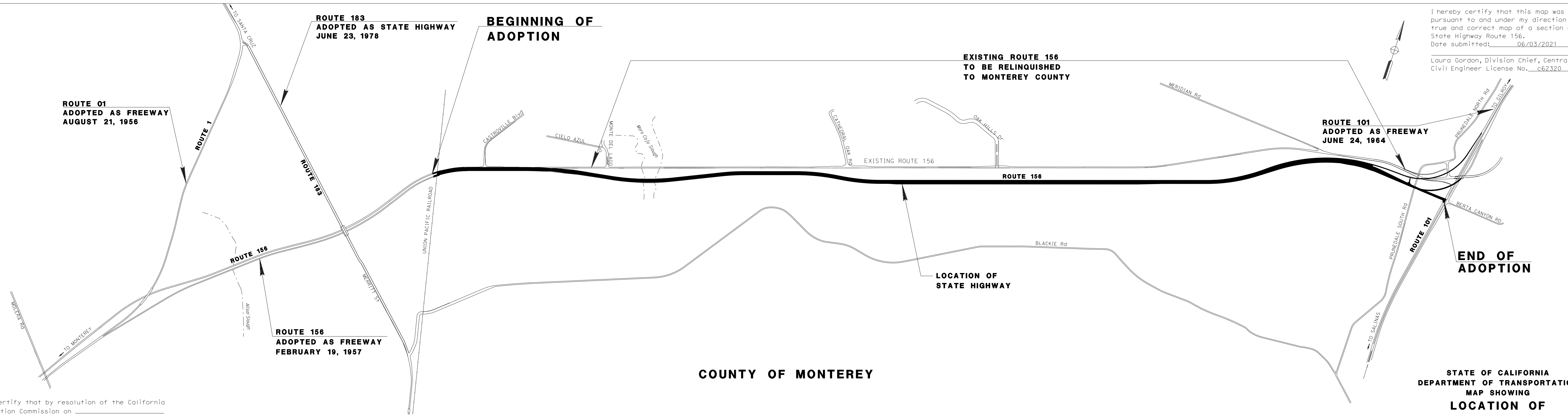
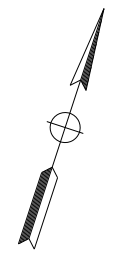
San Juan Bautista



## STATE HIGHWAY ROUTE ADOPTION LOCATION MAP

**05-MON-156**  
**PM R1.6-T5.2**

I hereby certify that this map was prepared pursuant to and under my direction and is a true and correct map of a section of proposed State Highway Route 156.  
 Date submitted: 06/03/2021  
 Laura Gordon, Division Chief, Central Region  
 Civil Engineer License No. c62320



**ROUTE 01  
 ADOPTED AS FREEWAY  
 AUGUST 21, 1956**

**ROUTE 183  
 ADOPTED AS STATE HIGHWAY  
 JUNE 23, 1978**

**BEGINNING OF  
 ADOPTION**

**EXISTING ROUTE 156  
 TO BE RELINQUISHED  
 TO MONTEREY COUNTY**

**ROUTE 101  
 ADOPTED AS FREEWAY  
 JUNE 24, 1964**

**END OF  
 ADOPTION**

**ROUTE 156  
 ADOPTED AS FREEWAY  
 FEBRUARY 19, 1957**

**LOCATION OF  
 STATE HIGHWAY**

**COUNTY OF MONTEREY**



**STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
 DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
 MAP SHOWING  
 LOCATION OF  
 STATE HIGHWAY  
 IN MONTEREY COUNTY  
 FROM 0.5 MILE EAST OF ROUTE 183 TO ROUTE 101  
 05-MON-156  
 A FREEWAY**

I hereby certify that by resolution of the California Transportation Commission on \_\_\_\_\_ the alignment indicated on this map was selected, adopted and determined as the location for a section of State Highway Route 156 and Freeway declaration

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Executive Director,  
 California Transportation Commission