

**From:** [Chelsea Gastelum](#)  
**To:** [California.Transportation.Commission@CATC](mailto:California.Transportation.Commission@CATC)  
**Subject:** March 19, 2026 2.4d.(5), Action Item  
**Date:** Friday, March 13, 2026 11:52:42 AM

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**If there is a better way to submit Public Comment, please let me know and I will do so.**

I am writing to the California Transportation Commission to oppose the sale of the Troy Street property to the County of San Diego. I am not opposed to the project San Diego County wants to use the land for, and supported it when I knew it was a temporary lease of the land. The part of the equation I am worried about pertains to public safety in the event of a large disaster and the ability for people to easily evacuate.

The Troy Street property was originally purchased for freeway on/off ramps in the 1990's so that resident's could easily access the 125 freeway. The plans were later removed, and the parcel has been empty for decades.

The communities surrounding the proposed sale of property are communities located in wildland-urban interface areas. These areas of undeveloped wildland offer beauty, shelter for wildlife, and help clean our air for healthier living. They are loved and appreciated in our neighborhoods. However, they are also a wildfire risk. With climate change, most of California has experienced more intense, and more destructive, wildfires. This is especially true in our drought-prone area of Southern California that also experiences Santa Ana winds regularly.

We all witnessed the struggles of those trying to evacuate in the Palisades and Eaton wildfires. Studies related to evacuation issues show that 54-60% of evacuees cited traffic congestion as a major issue to getting to safety. Many people had to abandon their vehicles, so not only did they lose their homes, they lost their only modes of transportation. The Eaton Fire in Altadena was incredibly devastating. That fire destroyed working class and lower middle class households that have now lost a lot of generational wealth, and a year later we know most of the homes have not been rebuilt, and many residents of the area are not back on their feet again.

The City of Lemon Grove and the unincorporated area of Spring Valley where the Troy St. property is located are primarily working class neighborhoods. They are areas that have long been taken advantage of due to racial prejudices, with freeways driven through what were connecting neighborhoods. It is an area where many people live paycheck to paycheck, and it is easy to see why and how many people become homeless with the rising cost of living. It is also an area that is becoming more concentrated as affordable housing pushes are being made. In fact Lemon Grove is the only City in our County that met affordable housing goals in the most recent state-mandated push for more affordable housing. However, one major disaster could increase the numbers of those struggling with housing insecurity exponentially.

This Troy Street property will need to be used as a freeway access point in the near future. In

the Eaton fire, 60% of evacuees using vehicles reported difficulty evacuating due to road closures that forced higher traffic density into few evacuation routes. Transportation infrastructure that supports safe and effective evacuation is crucial. This requires forward thinking and preparation for the future safety of our residents affected by the potential loss of an emergency access point.

I am asking the California Transportation Committee to reconsider the sale of the Troy Street property and to consider future plans to once again look at Troy Street as a freeway on/off ramp area. At the very least, I am asking that more studies be conducted (studies that small communities cannot take on due to costs), and for thorough reviews of the limited studies that have come out of the recent wildfires in our state be evaluated for input.

A decision to lease the land is up to both parties interested in this parcel.

Sincerely,  
Chelsea Gastelum  
Lemon Grove Resident

<https://www.lewis.ucla.edu/research/evacuation-challenges-during-the-palisades-fire-initial-insights/>

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/18b0t4px>

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/5w85z07g#page=17>

<https://ucits.org/projects/testing-wildfire-evacuation-strategies-and-coordination-plans-for-wildland-urban-interface-communities-in-california/>

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2590198220301214>

<https://www.calfund.org/news-and-events/a-year-after-la-wildfires-most-survivors-are-still-displaced-and-struggling-financially-department-of-angels-survey-finds/>

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10694-025-01813-y>

<https://www.kqed.org/news/12076246/the-eaton-fire-ravaged-black-altadena-a-journalist-documents-its-resilience>

<https://www.marketplace.org/story/2026/01/08/eaton-fire-survivors-struggle-to-rebuild-one-year-on>

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/ng-interactive/2026/jan/07/la-wildfire-victims-toxic-homes>

**From:** [Yadi Altamirano](#)  
**To:** [California.Transportation.Commission@CATC](mailto:California.Transportation.Commission@CATC)  
**Subject:** Opposition to Troy St property sale 2.4d.5  
**Date:** Friday, March 13, 2026 3:43:46 PM

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Dear California Transportation Commission Members,



I am a 18 year resident and property owner in Lemon Grove, San Diego County, less than one mile from the aforementioned location. I am writing to respectfully request your attention regarding this Cal-Trans Owned land possibly being sold to the county for a low barrier homeless encampment.

This parcel has remained vacant for many years and is strategically located to support transportation infrastructure. When SR-125 was originally designed in the 1990s, the project included proposed ramps at Troy Street (and Palm Street). These ramps were later removed from the final plan. Since the completion of SR-125 through Spring Valley, traffic congestion in our community has increased significantly, creating ongoing safety and mobility concerns for residents, commuters, and emergency responders.

I am aware of San Diego County's intent to purchase this property for the Compassionate Emergency Solutions and Pathways to Housing (CESPH) project. While I support efforts to assist individuals experiencing homelessness, this specific site was originally identified for transportation purposes and remains critical for long-term regional mobility planning.

According to a letter dated October 21, 2025, signed by Ebony N. Shelton, Chief Administrative Officer, the San Diego County Board of Supervisors approved CESPH actions on October 19, 2021, and February 8, 2022. That same correspondence states that, if approved, construction would not begin until Summer 2026, with program launch projected for Summer 2027. I respectfully question how a six-year timeline constitutes an "emergency" response.

Additionally, in August 2025, the Federal Highway Administration denied approval of a lease of this property, determining it to be "excess land" subject to public sale under state and federal regulations. In December 2025, FHWA approved renewed negotiations, leaving the final decision with Caltrans and its partner agencies.

Once this land is sold, it cannot be replaced. Spring Valley and Lemon Grove have historically been underserved communities, and past planning decisions have resulted in limited infrastructure and long-standing traffic and safety challenges.

I respectfully urge the California Transportation Commission to consider the original transportation intent of this parcel and the long-term needs of our region by supporting the preservation of the Troy Street property for future transportation use rather than its sale.

Thank you for your time, leadership, and consideration of our community's concerns.

Sincerely,  
Yadira Altamirano  
Lemon Grove Councilmember

**From:** [Leeanna Easter](#)  
**To:** [California.Transportation.Commission@CATC](mailto:California.Transportation.Commission@CATC)  
**Subject:** Housing  
**Date:** Sunday, March 15, 2026 7:33:10 AM

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Dear, California Transportation Commission Members,



I am a long-time resident in Spring Valley, San Diego County, writing to respectfully request your attention regarding the future of Caltrans-owned land located at Troy Street and Sweetwater Road.

This parcel has remained vacant for many years and is strategically located to support transportation infrastructure. When SR-125 was originally designed in the 1990s, the project included proposed ramps at Troy Street (and Palm Street). These ramps were later removed from the final plan. Since the completion of SR-125 through Spring Valley, traffic congestion in our community has increased significantly, creating ongoing safety and mobility concerns for residents, commuters, and emergency responders.

I am aware of San Diego County's intent to purchase this property for the Compassionate Emergency Solutions and Pathways to Housing (CESPH) project. While I support efforts to assist individuals experiencing homelessness, this specific site was originally identified for transportation purposes and remains critical for long-term regional mobility planning.

According to a letter dated October 21, 2025, signed by Ebony N. Shelton, Chief Administrative Officer, the San Diego County Board of Supervisors approved CESPH actions on October 19, 2021, and February 8, 2022. That same correspondence states that, if approved, construction would not begin until Summer 2026, with program launch projected for Summer 2027. I respectfully question how a six-year timeline constitutes an "emergency" response.

Additionally, in August 2025, the Federal Highway Administration denied approval of a lease of this property, determining it to be "excess land" subject to public sale under state and federal regulations. In December 2025, FHWA approved renewed negotiations, leaving the final decision with Caltrans and its partner agencies.

Once this land is sold, it cannot be replaced. Spring Valley and Lemon Grove have historically been underserved communities, and past planning decisions have resulted in limited infrastructure and long-standing traffic and safety challenges.

I respectfully urge the California Transportation Commission to consider the original transportation intent of this parcel and the long-term needs of our region by supporting the preservation of the Troy Street property for future transportation use rather than its sale.

Thank you for your time, leadership, and consideration of our community's concerns.

Sincerely,  
Leeanna Easter  
Lemon Grove, CA

**From:** [Jessyka Heredia](#)  
**To:** [clarissa.reyesfalcon@catc.ca.gov](mailto:clarissa.reyesfalcon@catc.ca.gov); [California Transportation Commission@CATC](mailto:California.Transportation.Commission@CATC)  
**Subject:** Tab 52 Director's Deeds 2.4d (5) Public Comment  
**Date:** Monday, March 16, 2026 1:43:36 PM

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URGENT; Preservation of Troy Street Caltrans Property for Transportation Purposes

Dear Esteemed California Transportation Commission Members,

I am the Pro Tem Mayor of Lemon Grove and a long-time resident of San Diego County. I write to respectfully request your consideration regarding the future of the Caltrans-owned parcel located at Troy Street and Sweetwater Road in the City of Lemon Grove, California 91945.

This property has remained vacant for many years and was originally acquired for transportation purposes. Early planning for SR-125 in the 1990s included proposed ramps at Troy Street (and Palm Street), which were later removed from the final design. Since completion of SR-125 through Spring Valley and the south east side of Lemon Grove, traffic congestion in the surrounding communities has increased significantly, resulting in ongoing safety and mobility challenges for residents, commuters, and emergency responders.

I am aware of San Diego County's intent to purchase this property for the Compassionate Emergency Solutions and Pathways to Housing (CESPH) project. While I support efforts to assist individuals experiencing homelessness, this site remains strategically important for long-term transportation and regional mobility planning, particularly in historically underserved communities.

According to correspondence dated October 21, 2025, signed by Ebony N. Shelton, Chief Administrative Officer, CESPH actions were approved by the San Diego County Board of Supervisors in October 2021 and February 2022. That correspondence further indicates that construction would not begin until Summer 2026, with program operations anticipated in Summer 2027. I respectfully question how this timeline aligns with the designation of the project as an emergency response.

Additionally, in August 2025, the Federal Highway Administration denied approval of a lease for this property, determining it to be excess land subject to public sale under applicable regulations. While renewed negotiations were approved in December 2025, the final determination remains with Caltrans and its partner agencies.

Once sold, this land cannot be replaced. Spring Valley and Lemon Grove have long faced infrastructure limitations and persistent traffic and safety concerns resulting from past planning decisions. I respectfully urge the Commission to consider the original transportation intent of this parcel and the long-term needs of the region by supporting preservation of the Troy Street property for future transportation use rather than its sale.

Thank you for your time, leadership, and consideration of our community's concerns.

Sincerely,  
Jessyka Heredia  
Pro Tem Mayor, City of Lemon Grove  
619-971-4247

This correspondence reflects my personal views and should not be interpreted as speaking on behalf of the City Council.

Sincerely,  
Jessyka Heredia  
Lemon Grove Mayor Pro Tem

“Dear California Transportation Commission Members,  
I am a longtime resident of Lemon Grove, San Diego County, writing to respectfully request your attention regarding the future of Caltrans-owned land at Troy Street and Sweetwater Road.

This parcel has remained vacant for many years and is strategically located to support transportation infrastructure. When SR-125 was originally designed in the 1990s, the project included proposed ramps at Troy Street (and Palm Street). These ramps were later removed from the final plan. Since the completion of SR-125 through Lemon Grove and Spring Valley, traffic congestion in our communities has increased significantly, creating ongoing safety and mobility concerns for residents, commuters, and emergency responders.

I am aware of San Diego County’s intent to purchase this property for the Compassionate Emergency Solutions and Pathways to Housing (CESPH) project. While I support efforts to assist individuals experiencing homelessness, this specific site was originally identified for transportation purposes and remains critical for long-term regional mobility planning.

According to a letter dated October 21, 2025, signed by Ebony N. Shelton, Chief Administrative Officer, the San Diego County Board of Supervisors approved CESPH actions on October 19, 2021, and February 8, 2022. Those same correspondence states that, if approved, construction would not begin until Summer 2026, with program launch projected for Summer 2027. I respectfully question how a six-year timeline constitutes an “emergency” response.

Additionally, in August 2025, the Federal Highway Administration denied approval of a lease of this property, determining it to be “excess land” subject to public sale under state and federal regulations. In December 2025, FHWA approved renewed negotiations, leaving the final decision with Caltrans and its partner agencies. Once this land is sold, it cannot be replaced. Lemon Grove has historically been an underserved community, and past planning decisions have resulted in limited infrastructure and long-standing traffic and safety challenges.

I respectfully urge the California Transportation Commission to consider the original transportation intent of this parcel and the long-term needs of our region by supporting the preservation of the Troy Street property for future transportation use rather than its sale.

Thank you for your time, leadership, and consideration of our community’s concerns.  
Sincerely,

Rev Daniel Brunner, BA, MDIV, MA, MEd  
Lemon Grove, CA



# MONICA MONTGOMERY STEPPE

SUPERVISOR, FOURTH DISTRICT  
SAN DIEGO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

March 17, 2026

Chair Clarissa Falcon  
California Transportation Commission  
1120 N Street, MS 52  
Sacramento, CA 95814

## **Re: Request to Approve Conveyance of the Troy Street Parcel for Temporary Emergency Housing in San Diego County**

Dear Chair Falcon and Commissioners,

I respectfully urge the California Transportation Commission to approve the conveyance of the Troy Street/Lemon Grove parcel to the County of San Diego (the County) to repurpose the property into a tiny home community serving individuals experiencing homelessness. This approval represents an important opportunity for the State and County to work together to transform underutilized public land into a tangible housing solution that moves people off the streets and into stability.

In 2023, Governor Gavin Newsom called on local jurisdictions to advance innovative homelessness solutions and offered millions of dollars to support the development of tiny homes on available Caltrans property. When the parameters of that program later changed, the County withdrew amid significant public pressure. The Governor's office responded by emphasizing that urgency and accountability must guide local responses to the homelessness crisis. Rather than allowing progress to stall, I stepped forward and volunteered the Troy Street parcel, a pre-identified, analyzed, and viable site in my district, District Four. Since then, my office has remained committed to advancing this project and ensuring that the site can be used to deliver meaningful housing solutions.

The County has engaged the public on homelessness strategies for many years, including extensive discussions about the Troy Street site over the past two years. The County stands ready to move forward with a thoughtful and well-managed program that balances community input with the urgent need to provide safe shelter and services for those living unsheltered in our region.

This effort aligns directly with statewide policy. In 2019, Governor Newsom signed legislation allowing government agencies to temporarily lease unused highway land for emergency shelters or feeding programs for \$1 per month. When the pathway for that lease was denied by the Federal Highway Administration, my office worked alongside County staff to ensure the project could proceed. Those efforts resulted in federal approval for the County to purchase the land, demonstrating both the feasibility of the project and the County's determination to deliver solutions.

The need for additional shelter capacity remains urgent. While recent data shows modest progress in reducing homelessness in our region, thousands of individuals across San Diego County remain unsheltered each night. The Troy Street project would provide safe, dignified shelter and supportive

services for approximately 60 individuals on any given night. Tiny home communities across California have shown that small-scale, service-rich environments can provide effective bridge housing that helps people stabilize and transition toward permanent housing.

Repurposing the Troy Street parcel is also a responsible use of public land. The State has made clear that underutilized land should be leveraged to help address the homelessness crisis, and this project represents exactly that kind of partnership between state and local government.

Governor Newsom has repeatedly called for urgency and accountability from local jurisdictions when it comes to addressing housing and homelessness. The County has taken those expectations seriously by identifying a viable site, engaging the community, navigating red tape and bureaucracy, and preparing a project that will deliver real results.

Approval from the California Transportation Commission represents the final step needed to move this effort forward. While 60 tiny homes alone will not solve the homelessness crisis, they will represent more than 60 lives moving from the streets and sidewalks into strong support. That is real progress for our community and a meaningful step toward the broader solutions our region urgently needs.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Commission to approve the conveyance of the Troy Street parcel so the County of San Diego can move forward with this critical project and demonstrate that when state and local leaders work together with urgency and purpose, real solutions to homelessness are possible.

Sincerely,



Vice Chair Monica Montgomery Steppe  
County of San Diego Board of Supervisors, Fourth District

**From:** [Pat Sexton](#)  
**To:** [California.Transportation.Commission@CATC](mailto:California.Transportation.Commission@CATC)  
**Subject:** Attention Commissioners  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 17, 2026 4:26:14 PM

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I am very concerned about the potential of the sheds being planned for the Troy/Sweetwater Rd. intersection in Spring Valley CA.

Here's the reality of what is already located at this intersection, and nearby; Liquor store/gas station/car wash, Message Parlor, school near by, bridge over 125 freeway. There are no other businesses to benefit the homeless in the nearby area. They will be dumped into a part of the area that's pretty desolate, ie nothing for them to do day or night. No other shelters, no food sources, NOTHING....

Here are my concerns 1) Any resident with addiction/alcohol problems is a few steps away from getting a fix either buying "shorts" at the liquor store or buying/selling drugs. FYI, the liquor store owner is very upset about the negativity of the homeless residents milling around his business, harassing his customers for money, and the potential for violence. 2) Predators waiting and watching the kids walking to and from a grade school on Troy AKA Palm, on the other side of the freeway and next to the apt. building between the school and the bridge, and a high school on Sweetwater Rd. 3) I assume they won't have money to spend at the message parlor, but will the employees be safe from the homeless residents? 4) This parcel backs up to single family resident homes on Sweetwater Rd., those homeowners are not happy, and it will devalue their property, with this eye-sore and loiterers hanging out. There's also a mobile home park across the street, nearby on Sweetwater Rd. I would expect they would start having burglaries of cars and homes, and hopefully it would not start assaults, that's what usually happens when someone needs money 5) With the freeway so very close to the parcel you're looking at, to put a homeless overnight shelter, will the depressed homeless be jumping off it onto the 125 Freeway traffic lanes?

Please do NOT put this type of business on that corner. It will not be good for the surrounding homes, or businesses, and certainly will not be a good location for the homeless, to be so isolated.

Pat Sexton a Spring Valley homeowner on Sweetwater Rd.