

STAFF REPORT



MEETING DATE:	February 24, 2022
SUBJECT:	Receive Presentation on Fix 5 Cascade Gateway
AGENDA ITEM:	16
STAFF CONTACT:	Daniel Wayne, Senior Transportation Planner

SUMMARY:

In recent years the reliability of the Interstate 5 (I-5) corridor has been increasingly impacted by wildfires, major weather events, and traffic collisions. A coordinated set of improvements on the I-5 corridor through the city of Redding are being developed. Grants are being sought to fill a large funding gap. SRTA and Caltrans District 2 staff will provide a joint presentation on the project.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the board of directors receive a presentation on the Fix 5 Cascade Gateway (F5CG) Project.

DISCUSSION:

Background – In recent years, the effects of climate change have profoundly impacted the Shasta Region in the form of severe weather and wildfire events. The region's transportation system is particularly vulnerable. Northbound Interstate 5 (I-5) closures have occurred 18 to 26 times per year over the last five years – more than double historical averages. Recent closures have also become longer in duration. It is not uncommon for closures to last multiple days and for traffic to back up for ten or more miles. At such times, the I-5 corridor and multiple interchanges come to a halt and the State Route 299 East/89 detour route is blocked.

The region feels the pinch in numerous ways during I-5 closures, including increased congestion and hours of delay; additional traffic-related injuries and fatalities; and unhealthy air quality from passenger and freight vehicle emissions. These impacts affect local, state, and national economies. Because closures are frequent but not regular, and because many of the incidents cannot be eliminated but require adaptation, the solution does not lie in plain sight. A suite of complementary strategies is needed to better manage I-5 closures and attract essential funding support from state and federal partners.

Proposed improvements – The Fix 5 Cascade Gateway (F5CG) Project includes several coordinated technical and funding strategies to meet this challenge. Major project elements include the following:

- **A third through lane** will be added to northbound and southbound I-5. This will eliminate five miles of four-lane bottleneck and complete a 22-mile segment of six-lane freeway between the Shasta County cities of Anderson, Redding, and Shasta Lake.

- **Managed lanes** will be introduced on northbound I-5 for 5.2 miles through the Redding Urbanized Area. Three overhead changeable message signs, when combined with the new third lane, will enable Caltrans Traffic Operations to adjust the speed limit based on roadway conditions and dynamically assign lanes based on:
 - Trip purpose (e.g., local, detour, or through trips);
 - Vehicle type (e.g., passenger, freight, or transit vehicles);
 - Major events (e.g., collisions, extreme weather, wildfires, or maintenance); and
 - Travel demand management (e.g., high-occupancy lanes and/or toll lanes during peak traffic volumes).
- **Auxiliary lanes** will be installed to improve operations and safety, especially with slower trucks climbing and merging onto I-5 from connecting routes (State Route 44, 299 and 273).
- **Freight vehicle charging stations** will be added at the Cottonwood weigh station to support the transition to a zero-emission freight system and improve air quality along the I-5 corridor. Planning for future hydrogen fueling will also be considered.



Together, managed lanes and bottleneck removal will allow Caltrans to maintain free-flow traffic on the northbound outside lane for local and detour traffic, while also improving first responder access and corridor evacuation during an emergency. In addition, the primary causes of three collision clusters on I-5 (i.e., collisions as a result of merging, lane weave, and/or speed differential) will be remedied, further improving corridor reliability and safety.

In a separate effort, but still part of the coordinated set of I-5 corridor improvements, the Cascade State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP) project will provide pavement resurfacing on I-5 for all lanes in the project area; new median barriers and overhead signage; and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) infrastructure to support management lanes. Construction will be combined with the F5CG project for economy of scale and to minimize travel disruptions.

Another planned SHOPP-funded I-5 corridor improvement will extend the East Palisades Multi-Use Trail along the east side of I-5 in the F5CG Project area. Beginning where the East Palisades Multiuse Trail terminates at East Palisades Avenue and ending at the new Northeast Crossing Trail, this addition will connect adjacent neighborhoods to the only high-quality crossings of I-5 for three miles through central Redding (i.e., grade-separated trails located at State Route 299/Lake Boulevard and Dana Drive to Downtown). It is anticipated that this project will be constructed during the final year or immediately following the F5CG and Cascade SHOPP projects.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

SRTA and Caltrans District 2 are partners in the planning and funding of the F5CG Project. Local agency partners have been engaged in the scoping process.

FISCAL IMPACT:

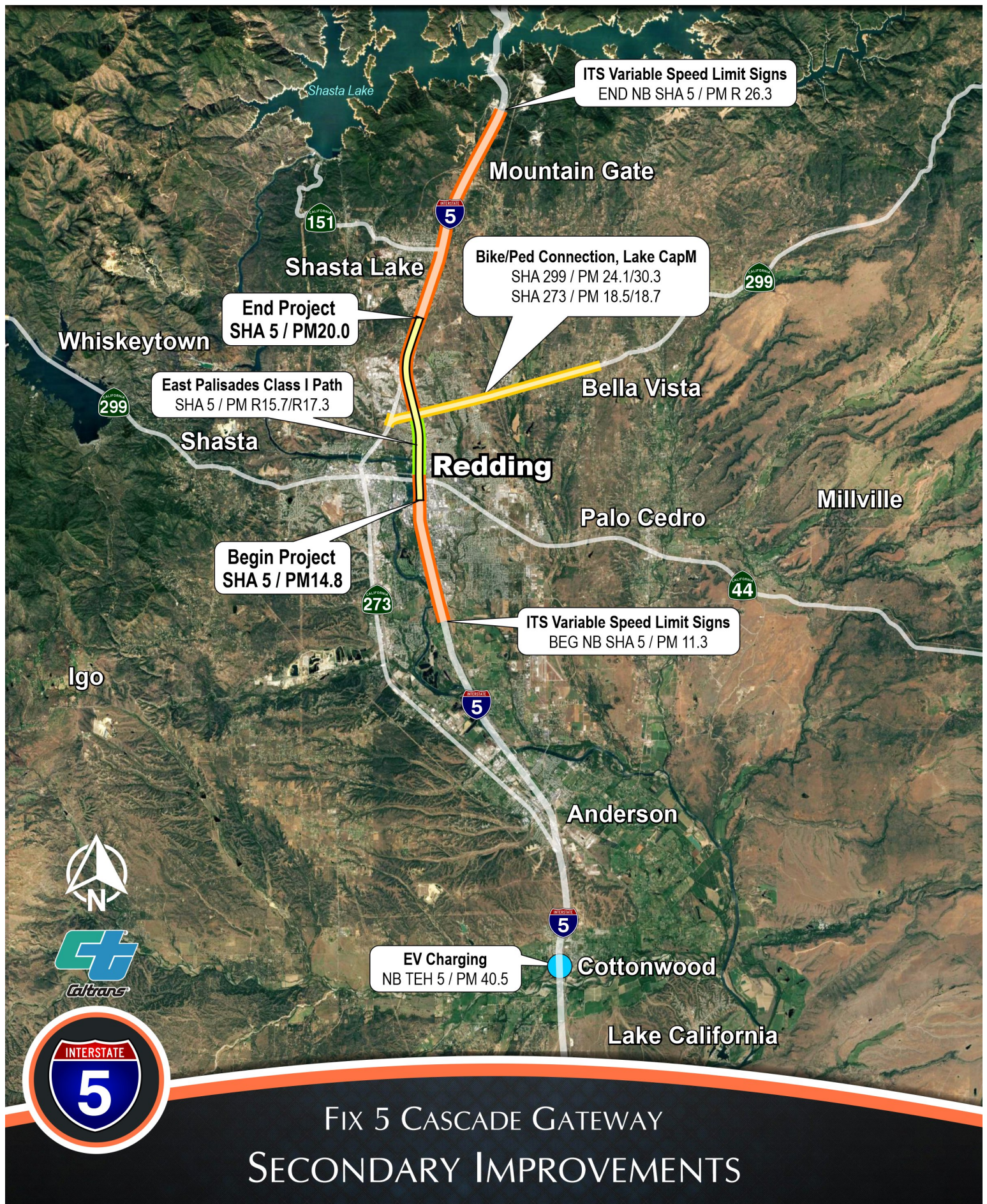
Total combined cost of the F5CG Project and Cascade SHOPP project is estimated between \$90 and \$100 million. Approximately \$9 million in state/regional transportation improvement program (STIP/RIP) funds are included in the F5CG Project budget. The balance will come from other regional funds and discretionary state and/or federal grants.



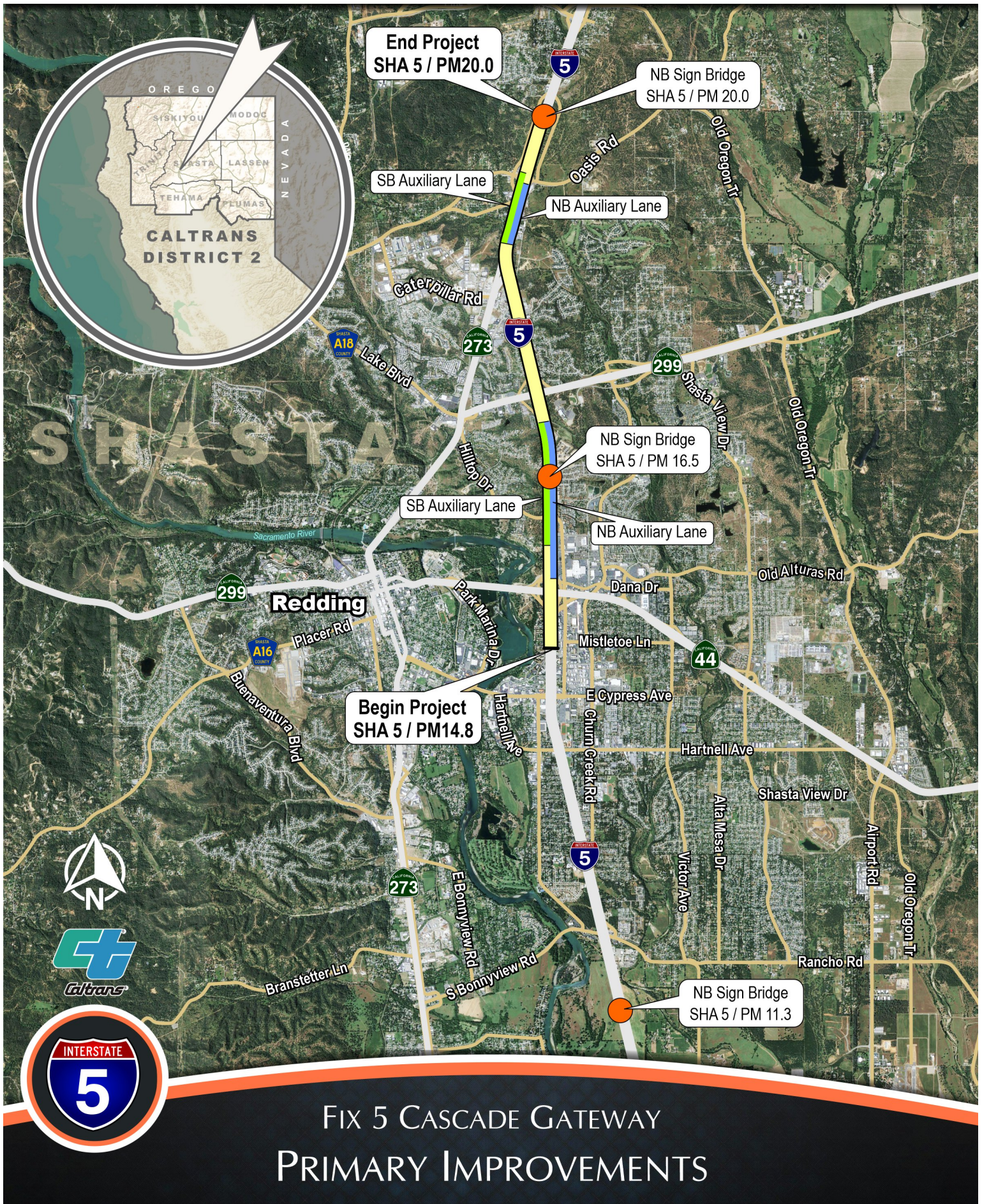
Keith R. Williams, AICP, Senior Transportation Planner

Attachments:

- A: Fix 5 Cascade Gateway Primary Improvements Map
- B: Fix 5 Cascade Gateway Secondary Improvements Map



FIX 5 CASCADE GATEWAY SECONDARY IMPROVEMENTS



FIX 5 CASCADE GATEWAY PRIMARY IMPROVEMENTS