



# NEWS RELEASE

**Today's Date:** December 5, 2014  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **CALTRANS FINISHES STATE ROUTE 99 CONSTRUCTION SEVEN MONTHS EARLY**

**MERCED COUNTY** – Caltrans today joined the Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG) in announcing that six miles of highway improvements on State Route 99 (SR-99) finished within budget and seven months early.

“The completion of this project marks a significant milestone for our community as it eliminates one of the last remaining at-grade crossings along the SR-99 corridor in Merced County,” stated Marjie Kirn, MCAG Executive Director. “The elimination of these intersections has been a high priority for MCAG for many years, so we appreciate the continued partnership with Caltrans to see that these safety improvement projects become a reality.”

The \$127 million project constructed a new interchange at Arboleda Road and upgraded SR-99 from a four-lane expressway to a six-lane freeway on an eight-mile section of roadway just south of Merced between Buchanan Hollow Road and Childs Avenue.

The average daily traffic volume on this section of the highway can surpass more than 37,500 vehicles daily and is expected to increase to nearly 80,000 by 2024.

“Caltrans is pleased to deliver this project on budget and seven months early so motorists can enjoy a safer commute this holiday,” said Caltrans Director Malcolm Dougherty. “State Route 99 is a major route in one of the most productive agricultural regions in the world, and this project ensures that the highway can accommodate the smooth movement of both goods and traffic.”

The project received approximately \$91 million from Proposition 1B, a 2006 voter-approved transportation bond. Proposition 1B authorized \$1 billion to be available specifically for safety, operational enhancements, rehabilitation or capacity improvements necessary to improve the SR-99 Corridor. Since its passage, more than \$18 billion in Proposition 1B funds have been put to work statewide for transportation purposes.

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