



## **For Immediate Release**

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### **Atwater-Merced Expressway Ribbon Cutting Ceremony**

**Merced** – Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG), Merced County and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) celebrated the completion of Phase 1A of the State Route 99 (SR-99) Atwater-Merced Expressway project today with a ribbon cutting ceremony.

“As the greater Merced region continues to grow, State Route 99 must evolve and serve the needs of not only modern day motorists but future generations,” said Caltrans Director Malcolm Dougherty. “This new expressway and interchange meets that challenge by providing motorists with a safer and more efficient commute.”

The \$66 million project received approximately \$47 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. The project also received \$12 million in state transportation improvement program funds, and \$7 million in regional impact fees.

“The Atwater-Merced Expressway project is truly a transformative project for our community that is the result of an incredible partnership with MCAG, Merced County and Caltrans. It is an example of what can be done despite the odds when we all work together toward a common goal,” said Marjie Kirm, Executive Director of Merced County Association of Governments.

“This project is the fruit of a collaborative effort to improve connectivity and access amongst our communities,” said Hub Walsh, Chairman of the Merced County Board of

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Supervisors. “It’s taken a lot of persistence and determination to get to this point, and those efforts will continue as we work toward funding future phases of this project and the rest of the regional loop.”

Phase 1A of the SR-99 Atwater-Merced Expressway project broke ground in September 2013. The project closed the Buhach Road ramps and constructed an interchange to the south to provide access via a new two-lane expressway to a newly constructed Green Sands Road.

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