

Request: Assistance with funding of **Atwater-Merced Expressway Phase 1B**.

Description: The Atwater-Merced Expressway (AME) is a multi-phase project to improve access to State Route 99 for Atwater, Merced, Castle Commerce Center and the University of California at Merced.



Completed: Phase 1A was completed in 2016. It replaced the Buhach Road ramps with a modern interchange, upgraded a mile of SR-99, and constructed Green Sands Avenue and the first portion of the AME as a two-lane facility. It cost \$66 million, including \$19 million from MCAG impact fees and regional transportation funds, and \$47 million for construction from California’s 2006 bond.

Next: Phase 1B will construct the AME to Santa Fe Drive including an overpass over the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway. This will provide a direct connection between SR-99 and Castle Commerce Center. The latest estimate is \$79 million, including environmental, design, right-of-way, and construction. Environmental and design are in progress.

Future: Phase 2 will extend the AME to SR-59 and further via Bellevue Road. Phase 2 will provide an expedited connection to UC Merced. Phase 3 will connect SR-99 south to SR-140. AME phases 2 and 3 complete the western section of the long-term “Loop” project, a beltway around the City of Merced. The eastern section is the Campus Parkway, scheduled to be complete in 2023.

AME Phases		
Phase 1A	Complete	\$66 million
Phase 1B	Request	\$79 million
Phase 2	Future	\$84 million
Phase 3	Future	\$90 million

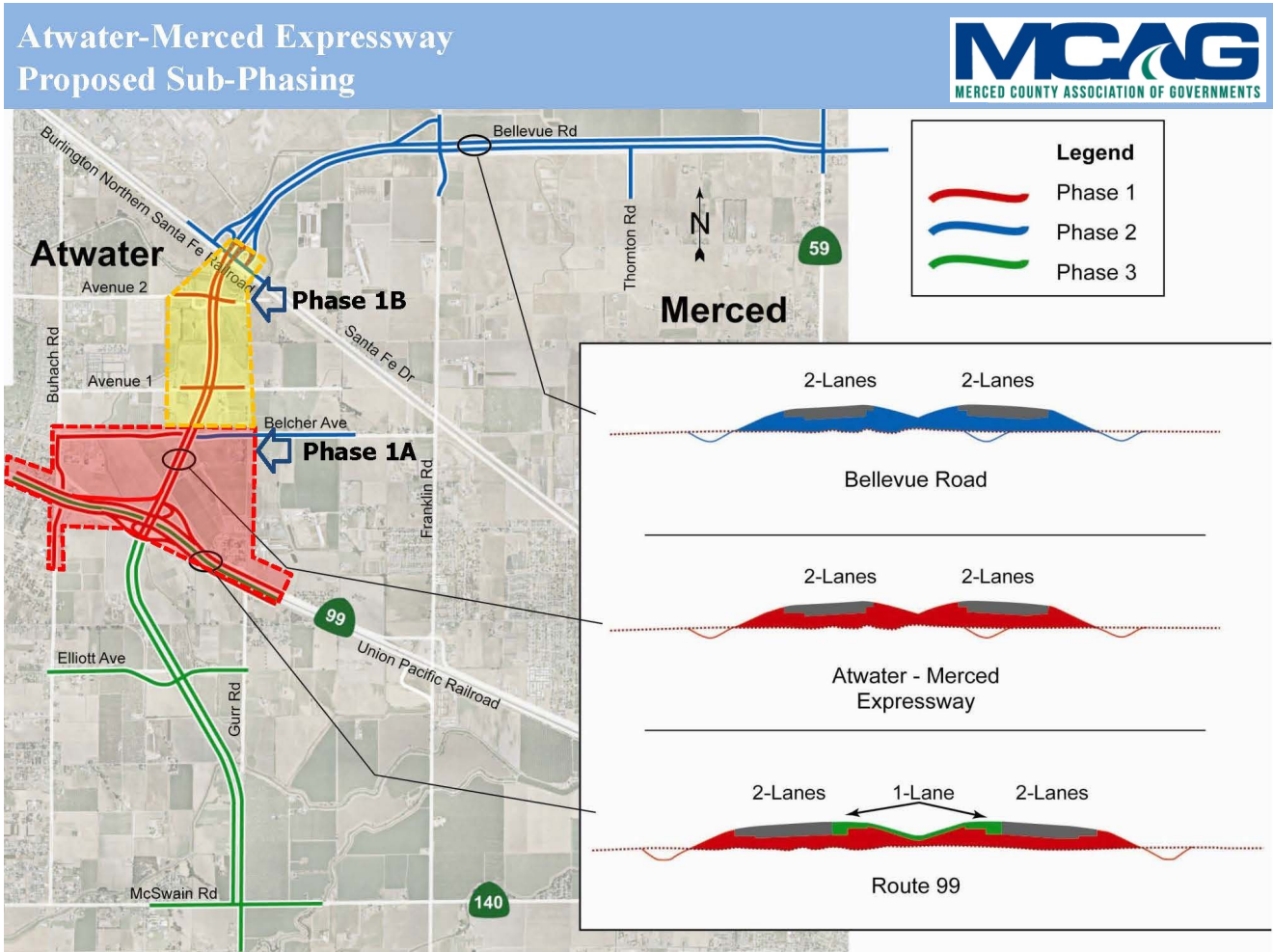
Necessity: The Atwater-Merced Expressway will connect major destinations to the state highway system and alleviate heavy freight and commuter traffic through congested areas in Atwater and Merced. The AME provides a direct connection between SR-99, Castle Commerce Center, and the UC Merced. Completion of the expressway will lead to future economic development of Castle Commerce Center, North Atwater, and North Merced.

Castle Commerce Center is a key multimodal freight transportation hub with air, ground, and rail connections. Castle Airport (IATA: MER) can service aircraft weighing up to one million pounds with enough fuel to fly non-stop to Asia. The Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway operates a spur into Castle Commerce Center. The center is also part of Foreign-Trade

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Zone, No. 226 and holds a partnership with the Port of Los Angeles. The center also has many warehouses, industrial buildings, and distribution facilities to allow for development into a major manufacturing hub. The construction of the Atwater-Merced Expressway would provide the perfect freight connection to and from SR-99.

The University of California, Merced is the newest of the ten UC campuses, specializing in STEM fields. As SR-99 is the main highway for the Central Valley, direct access will provide ease of transportation to and from campus.



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