# Response BIA Comments
# 11/07/2019

The BIA has a number of incorrect assumptions that I would like to address.

The North/Cedar Interchange was part of the original Measure C Tier I list. However, the assumption that it was deleted and is being added back is incorrect. The project was never deleted from the Tier I list or the RTMF Nexus. In fact, FCOG provided Advance Project Development funds in 2018 and Caltrans is currently preparing the environmental document to make the project a candidate for the 2020 STIP.

The initial cost estimate of North/Cedar was $25 million, however that was a very preliminary number arrived at in 2004 or earlier and used to reserve a place on the 2007 ballot. On table 18 of the Original 2008 Nexus Final Report, the updated cost is given as $81.2 million. The higher cost is partly attributable to the fact that project inflation was high between 2004 and the great recession of 2007 but more realistically, the increase was simply a result of taking a serious engineering look at the project. The scope of the project has not changed. Caltrans most recent estimate is now $96 million.

The BIA is correct that future traffic impact of North/Cedar was not justified in the 2008 Nexus. However, general plans and development patterns shift and that is part of the reason we are required to revisit the Nexus every five years. Significant development has occurred in the subject area since 2008 and the City of Fresno's planning documents have evolved around this spurt in development. This is why the Technical Advisory committee agreed to incorporate the South Industrial Priority Area (SIPA) land use plan and use Synchro downstream of the FCOG traffic model as a means of refining the Level of Service analysis. Synchro identifies deficiencies related to several intersections along North Ave. that the county-wide traffic model is simply not designed to detect. Taking the analysis a step deeper in detail revealed and existing deficiency that would get much worse if the area develops according to the current plan. That's why 14% of the need to upgrade is attributed to existing traffic and 86% to future development.

The BIA is incorrect in the assumption North/Cedar has no nexus to any future deficiency associated with residential housing development. A commute trip involves a residence at one end and a workplace at the other.

The national standard practice in nexus studies attributes home-based work trips to the residential end of the trip and is based on the common-sense notion that a worker is responsible for their work trip. The flip side is, of course, that industrial and commercial development has been assessed for the existing RTMF projects which are predominately associated residential development.

The BIA points out a timing issue, however North/Cedar is a current Measure project, not a future Measure project. As discussed above, a current deficiency already exist that would be exacerbated by any new development in the SIPA area. If we limit consideration to the RTMF's current sunset date (2027), the cost of upgrading the interchange would fall only on units built in the 2020-2027 time period. Extending consideration to FCOG's long range planning horizon (2035) reduces the fee on each unit by spreading the cost over a larger number of units.

The BIA states the RTMF should not be increased to fund a project based on development likely to occur after the current Measure expires in 2027, however that goes against the very basis mitigation fee statues are on the books. The fact the Measure and RTMF expire in 2027 should not diminish the intent of mitigation fees to insure future development pays its fair share. If North/Cedar is built without RTMF then tax payers are on the hook for the cost and future development gets a free ride.