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**Sent:** Thursday, October 22, 2015 3:40 PM  
**To:** Amy Edgett; Moonshine Ink Newspaper; Nevada City Advocates; news@yubanet.com; Rita Stevens; Steve Baker KVMR Radio; Union, The; lkellar@theunion.com  
**Subject:** Press Release: SR 20 and SR 49 to be included in Caltrans Interregional Transportation Strategic Plan  
**Attachments:** Priority Interregional Facilities.pdf; Freight Network Tiers.pdf; Feight Network AADT and Truck Volumes (f).pdf

This press release provides information regarding Caltrans 2015 Interregional Strategic Plan (ITSP). The Interregional Transportation Strategic Plan (ITSP) is a Caltrans document that provides guidance for the identification and prioritization of interregional transportation improvements to be funded in the Interregional Transportation Improvement Program (ITIP). The purpose of the ITSP is to be a guiding document for all investment in the interregional transportation system.

In past Plans, SR 49 from Auburn to Grass Valley, and SR 20 from US 101 to I-80 were listed as Interregional "Focus Routes". There were 10 such routes statewide and they were prioritized to be upgraded to their minimum facility-concept standards within 20 years. In the 2015 ITSP, focus routes have been integrated into "Strategic Interregional Corridors" and the highways in the corridors are listed as "Priority Interregional Highways". However, SR 49 from Auburn to Grass Valley and SR 20 from I-80 to I-5 had not been included in the Strategic Interregional Corridors and were therefore not listed as Priority Interregional Highways in the 2015 update of the ITSP.

On October 21, 2015, NCTC Chairman Jostes and Commissioner Carolyn Wallace Dee attended the California Transportation Commission (CTC) meeting in Oakland CA, with NCTC Executive Director Dan Landon and Transportation Planner Mike Woodman. The purpose of the trip was to request that in its adoption of the 2015 ITSP, the CTC include SR 49 and SR 20 as Priority Interregional Facilities and part of the North Coast – Northern Nevada Strategic Interregional Corridor. Following presentations by the NCTC representatives, the CTC approved NCTC's request.

In his presentation, Chairman Jostes pointed out that SR 20 and SR 49 had previously been identified as part of the ten interregional Road System corridors with the highest priority in the state for completion to minimum facility standards. He noted that funding partnerships between NCTC and Caltrans had advanced both regional and state goals, and had leveraged funding from other sources. He stated that without the priority status provided by the requested designations, acquisition of funds to complete future projects would be extremely difficult. He cited the fact that NCTC has programmed regional funds to accomplish the planning and environmental studies, and the plans, specifications, and estimates for the next phase of safety and operational improvements on SR 49 south of Grass Valley. He concluded by expressing the concern that without priority status for the corridor, future funding may be delayed and render the investment of regional as wasted or poorly utilized.

Mike Woodman stated that the segments of SR 20 and SR 49, omitted from inclusion in the 2015 ITSP, as Priority Interregional Facilities, complete the major east-west interregional connection linking, Mendocino and the North coast to Northern Nevada, and also serve as emergency detours routes to I-80. The segments omitted span five counties and serve interregional goods movement and recreational traffic traveling between the north coast, the Truckee/Lake Tahoe Region, and State of Nevada, as well as connecting Placer and Nevada County to I-80. He added that NCTC recognizes that funding constraints may, in the short-term, direct funding priorities to other corridors, but not including SR 20 and SR 49 in Strategic Interregional Corridors, as Priority Interregional Facilities, clearly leaves the improvements needed in these corridors with no realistic hope of being completed.

Commissioner Dee pointed out that SR 49 acts as a lifeline route to several communities in Nevada, Placer, and Sierra Counties, and is the major interregional state highway connecting to the Interstate 80 gateway to California. She added that to not include SR 20 and SR 49 in the North Coast-Northern Nevada Strategic Interregional Corridor will negatively

impact state and regional economies. In 2014, Caltrans estimated that I 80 is used to ship an average of \$4.7 million in commercial freight every hour, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. She also stated that when I 80 is closed between Emigrant Gap and Colfax due to accidents, construction, maintenance activities, or wildfires; the SR 20/49 corridors are used to detour truck and vehicular traffic to keep freight commerce and recreational traffic moving and that data collected by Caltrans District 3 Traffic Management Center indicates that between 2004 and 2014 there were 188 closures of Interstate 80 where truck traffic and passenger vehicles were rerouted onto SR 20 and SR 49. Commissioner Dee also referenced a letter from the California Trucking Association that supported NCTC's request.

Dan Landon referred to three graphics provided to the CTC. The first graphic shows that SR 20 and SR 49 are included in the California Highway Freight Network and are classified as Tier 3 facilities. The second graphic showed that notwithstanding their inclusion in the Highway Freight Network, the two routes were not slated for designation as part of the Strategic Interregional Corridors and Priority Interregional Facilities listed in the 2015 ITSP. The final graphic he presented showed that the volumes of automobile and truck traffic on SR 20 and SR 49 are among the highest in the north state.

Caltrans received fifty-seven (57) comment letters from legislators, regional agencies, local agencies, and the public regarding the 2015 ITSP. Nineteen (19), or approximately one-third, of those letters were in support of NCTC's requests.

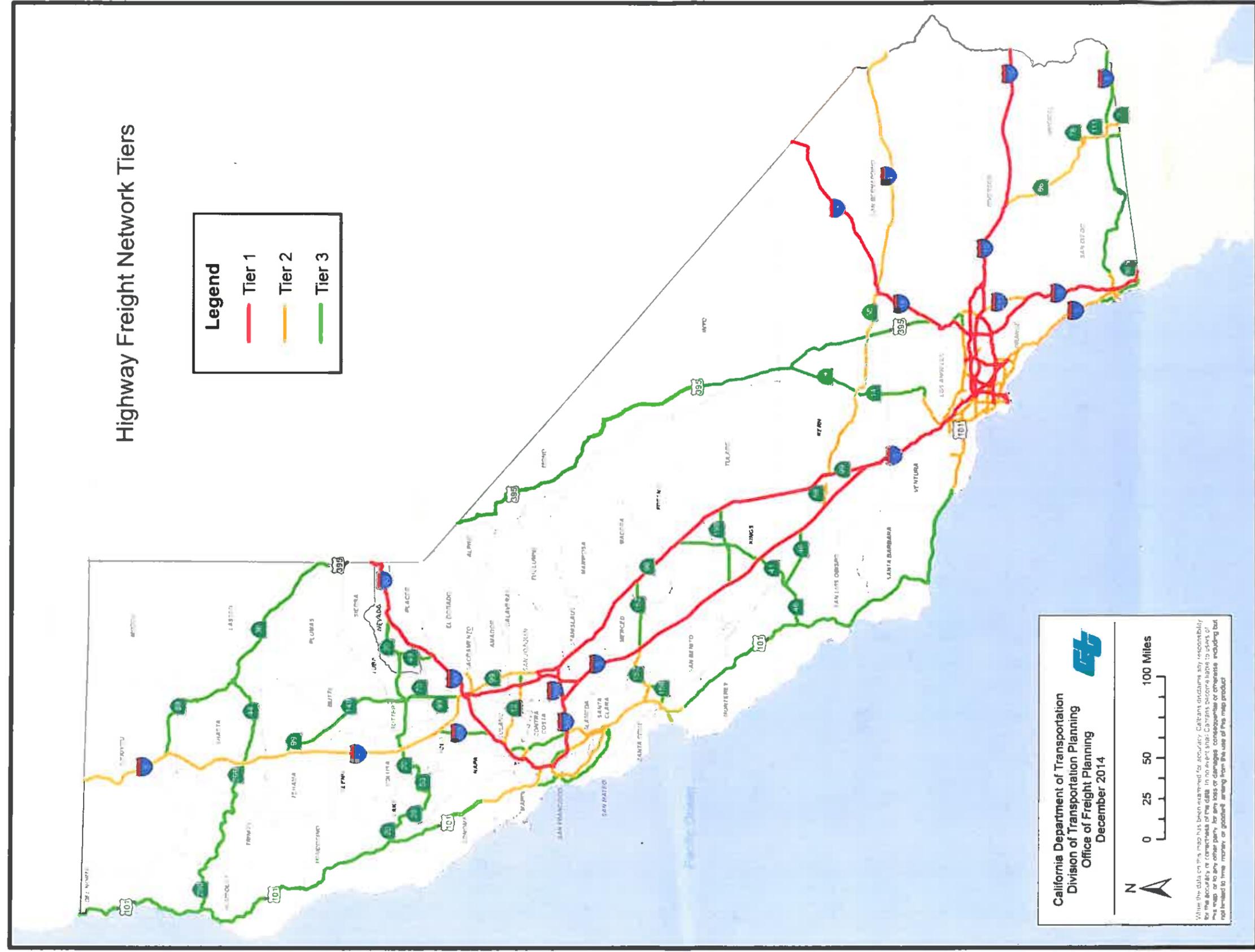


Figure 11: Highway Freight Network Tiers

# INTERREGIONAL TRANSPORTATION STRATEGIC PLAN

## Priority Interregional Facilities

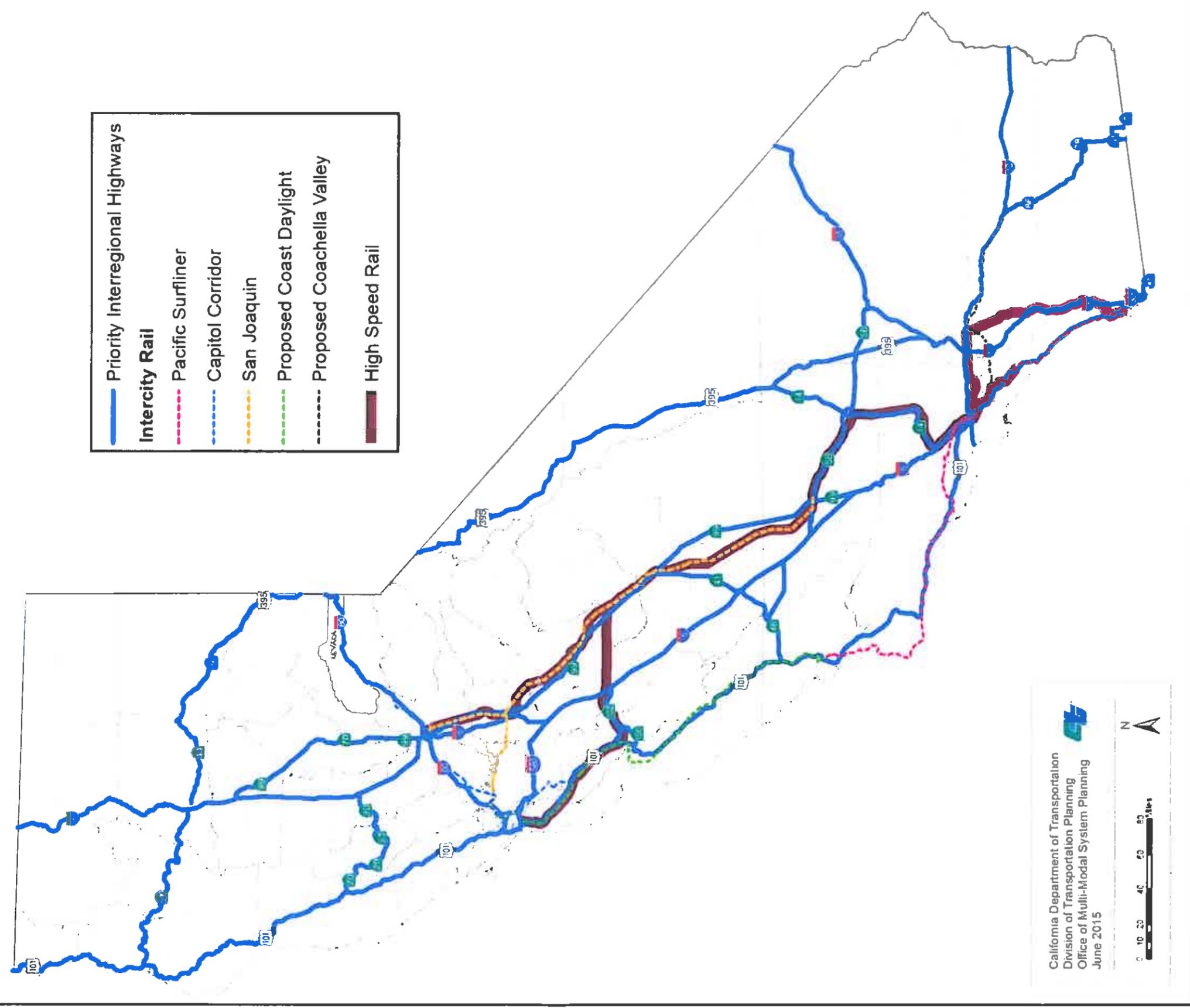


Figure 16: Priority Interregional Facilities

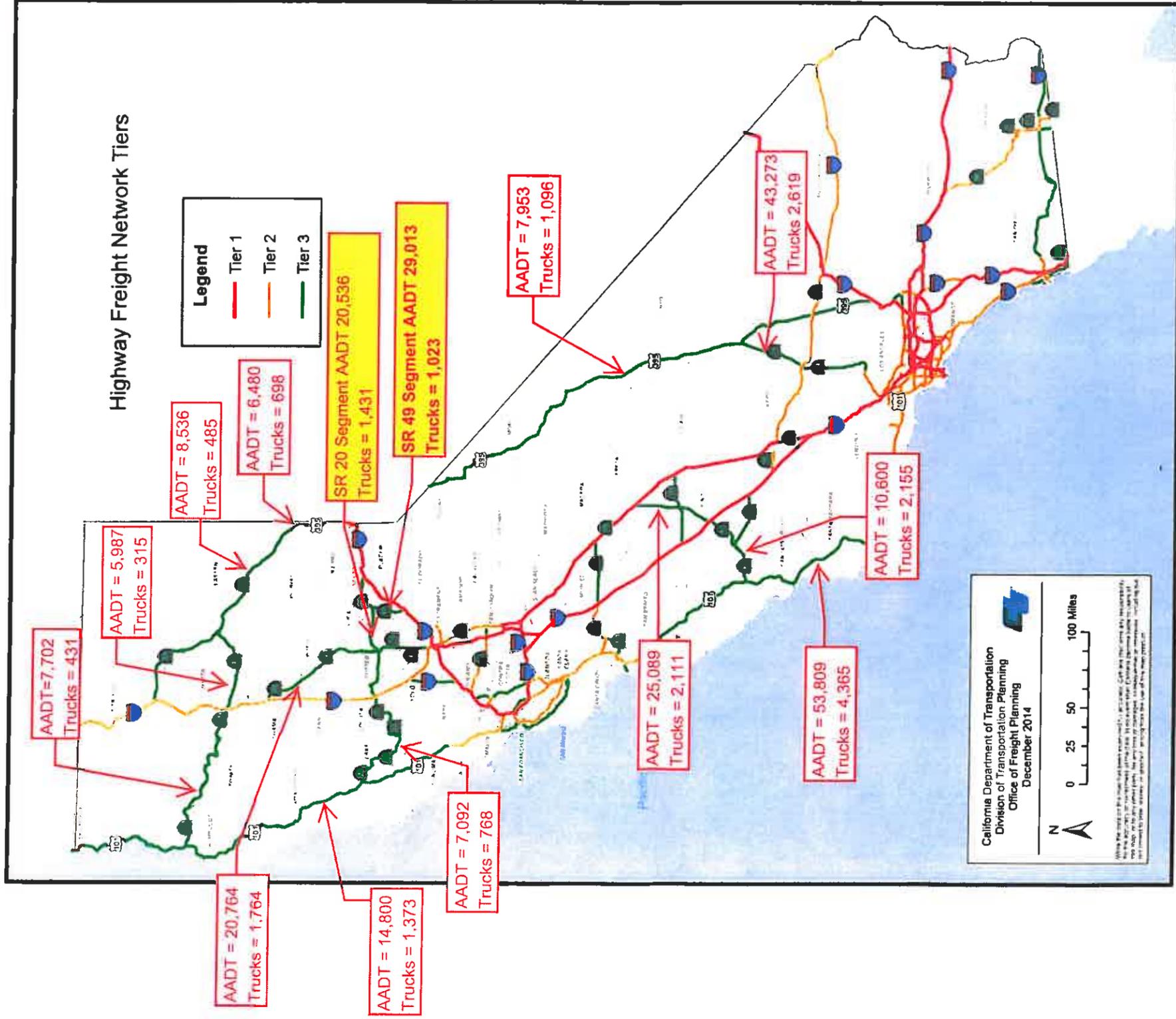


Figure 11: Highway Freight Network Tiers

Source: Caltrans Annual Average Daily Truck Traffic on CA State Highways.

Note: Volumes Shown are Averages for the Corridors