

**TO:** Regional Transportation Commission  
**FROM:** Linda Wilshusen, Executive Director  
**RE:** Status Report on Highway 1 Projects

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**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Staff recommends that the Regional Transportation Commission accept this Status Report on activities related to the Highway 1 Project.

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**DISCUSSION**

Highway 1/17 Merge Lanes Project

Right of Way clearance is the last major activity to complete the design phase of this project. Cost estimates are being updated to reflect recent price increases in asphalt, concrete and steel. Subject to State funding issues, the project is prepared to be bid in March 2005, and start construction in August 2005. The status of funds programmed in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) should be known in a December/January timeframe. Caltrans and RTC staff have prepared the ground work to qualify the project for GARVEE Bond funding as a contingency plan to keep the project on schedule if STIP funds are not released this Winter.

A Cooperative Agreement for the Public Awareness Campaign (PAC) is under development by Caltrans. The focus of the PAC will be to provide project information to motorists, residents, businesses, and emergency services during the construction phase.

Highway 1 HOV Lane Widening Project – Project Approval/Environmental Documentation (PA/ED)

Release of AMBAG's Regional Travel Demand Model continues to be the critical path for the PA/ED phase of the project. Per the RTC's direction, staff has spoken with AMBAG staff and sent the attached letter (Attachment 1) requesting a written report on the status of the model. Attached (Attachment 2) is a response from AMBAG anticipating a model completion date of November 15, 2004, representing a one year delay in the original release date.

As you know, the travel demand model is a computerized traffic analysis tool which is a key component in assessing alternative development scenarios for Highway 1. To date, the delay in release of the model has resulted in a 7-8 month delay in the anticipated completion date of the PA/ED process. While the consultant is confident some of this delay can be made up, once the model is released, there may be future cost implications as it was necessary to pursue certain design engineering elements on a sequential basis, rather than in parallel with traffic analysis, to minimize further delays in the overall project schedule.

In response to questions regarding the proposed bicycle/pedestrian over-crossings of Highway 1, Nolte has prepared a memo (Attachment 3) summarizing activity to date and outlines an approach to determine the appropriate locations for the overcrossings.

In November, the Nolte project team will make a presentation to the RTC and Highway Construction Authority (HCA) on potential additional alternatives for consideration through the PA/ED phase of the project. The purpose of analyzing an array of project alternatives is to determine the preferred method of developing Highway 1, between Morrissey Blvd. and San Andreas/Larkin Valley Road.

Once selected, the suite of project alternatives will be thoroughly evaluated in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) for the purpose of making a recommendation on the preferred method in the final environmental document.

By way of review, the current project alternatives derived through the Project Study Report (PSR) prepared by Caltrans, include:

- 1 HOV Lane in each direction – full shoulder width standards
- 1 HOV Lane in each direction – reduced shoulder width standards
- the Traffic System Management (TSM) with Auxiliary Lanes Alternative
- the No Build Alternative

The existing scope of work provides for the consideration of up to three additional alternatives. The range of alternatives ultimately selected is intended to be responsive to agency and community input on design and operational aspects of the project consistent with the stated Purpose and Need adopted by the RTC. A principle objective of the Public Information and Agency Meetings held in April was to collect input to assist in the development of potential project alternatives.

As this is a critical milestone in the project development process, staff proposes presentations to both the RTC and HCA in November with the intent of arriving at a consensus, with public input, at the January RTC meeting on the set of alternatives to be studied through the PA/ED phase.

The Project Development Team for the Highway 1 HOV Lane Widening Project continues to meet monthly.

#### Highway 1 Construction Authority (HCA)

The HCA meeting scheduled for October 1, 2004, has been cancelled. The processes of developing a contract agreement with the consultant for Administration of the HCA and in working with Caltrans on the Cooperative Agreement are ongoing. The next HCA meeting will be held on November 5, 2004.

#### **SUMMARY**

In a written status report ([Attachment 2](#)), AMBAG has indicated that the Regional Travel Demand Model will be available in November 15, 2004. The October 2004 meeting of the HCA has been canceled while work continues to empower the HCA to take responsibility for the Highway 1 project.

#### Attachments:

- 1) Letter to AMBAG regarding the Regional Travel Demand Model
- 2) Letter from AMBAG regarding the Regional Travel Demand Model
- 3) Memorandum from Nolte Associates, re: Highway 1 Bike/Ped Over-Crossing Locations, dated September 23, 2004.