

TO: Regional Transportation Commission
FROM: Pat Dellin, Acting Executive Director
RE: Status Report on Related Highway 1 Projects

RECOMMENDATIONS:

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

DISCUSSION

Highway 1/17 Merge Lanes Project

Caltrans is finalizing project plans and specifications, and preparing a presentation on the design features and construction phasing for the February RTC meeting. In response to Commissioner's comments at the last meeting, staff is working with Caltrans on three issues: 1.) Providing readily accessible and current public information on the Highway 1/17 project at the library and on the project website (found at: www.dot.ca.gov/dist05/projects/scr_1_17); 2.) Providing pedestrian and bicycle access via underpasses and overpasses; and, 3.) Determining how an extension in the southbound direction to the Soquel Drive Interchange could be coordinated with the Highway 1/17 project. All of these issues will be included in Caltrans presentation.

Right of Way Utility Relocations are the critical path to completing the design phase, scheduled for completion in June 2005. The goal is to finalize pre-construction activities as soon as possible so the project is "Ready to List" to better compete for limited state funds over the next year. The availability of funding to construct the project is the subject of another item on this agenda.

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

Staff and project consultants are preparing for the evening TPW meeting and public hearing to receive input on the Project Alternatives to be evaluated through the PA/ED process. The meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, January 20th at 7:00 p.m. in the Board of Supervisors Chamber.**

To encourage active participation at the public hearing, staff has assembled the names and addresses of all parties that have commented on the Highway 1 HOV Lane Widening Project, responded as interested property owners adjacent to Highway 1, attended the public information meetings and/or subscribed to the RTC's E-News program for information on RTC's highway and rail projects or the transportation sales tax measure. In addition, staff has notified all parties and organizations currently included in the RTC's mailing list including community based environmental and business groups. In total, staff has sent out over 850 meeting announcements (Attachment 1- enclosed separately) either electronically or through the postal mail.

The project consultants have updated the Project Alternatives memo (Attachment 2) based on input provided at the November TPW meeting. The updated information includes order of magnitude cost estimates for the respective alternatives (including engineering design, right-of-way, construction and construction management), deleting direct bus ramps to/from HOV lanes, and renaming Alternative 2 as the Ramp Metering and Auxiliary Lanes Alternative. The Project Alternatives memo is also available on the Commission's website.

Meanwhile, the critical path on the project schedule continues to be access to AMBAG's Travel Forecast Model. In association with the model update, AMBAG revised their model use agreement requiring a trust account deposit. Staff is reviewing options to satisfy this latest requirement.

On a separate track, staff and consultants are reviewing work progress and consultant expenditures. While the project schedule has been extended due to prolonged delay in access to the Travel Model, work is progressing on budget and the consultant remains hopeful that some of the project delay can be made up. Modest administrative adjustments have been made to the task budget, consistent with original scope of services, due to unexpected events involving project engineering, surveying, and investigation of cultural resources. Staff will present a full report on the consultant budget with any recommended actions in February.

The Project Development Team continues to hold monthly meetings.

Highway 1 Construction Authority (HCA)

The HCA Board is scheduled to meet on January 7, 2005 at 8:30 AM. At their last meeting in November, the HCA Board tabled discussion on staffing while work continues with Caltrans on the Cooperative and Master Agreements necessary for the HCA to assume responsibility for the Highway 1 HOV Lane Widening Project. Per direction received at the November TPW meeting, the Highway 1 consultants will make a presentation on the Highway 1 Project Alternatives Options at the January HCA meeting. All input provided by the HCA on the project alternatives will be reported at the January TPW meeting.

SUMMARY

Caltrans will make a presentation on the Highway 1/17 Merge Lane Project at the February RTC meeting. A Public Hearing has been scheduled for Thursday, January 20, 2005, at 7:00 p.m. in the Board of Supervisors Chambers for the selection of project alternatives to be studied through the PA/ED process. Staff has sent out XXXX meeting announcements to interested parties and organization and has posted the updated Project Alternatives memo (Attachment 1) on the RTC website. The HCA Board is scheduled to meet on January 7, 2005.

Attachment:

1. Public Hearing Announcement, January 20th - Selection of Project Alternatives, (enclosed separately)
2. Project Alternatives memo, revised December 2004, by Nolte Associates

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