

AGENDA: November 3, 2005

TO: Regional Transportation Commission
FROM: Pat Dellin, Acting Executive Director
RE: Director's Report for November 2005

This item is for information only.

Upcoming Projects and Work Load Issues

As I make preparations for my departure, I'm starting to step back and look at the work load for the Commission and the staff for the upcoming months and beyond. It's clear that there are significant developments in key areas that will occupy the Commission's and staff's time more than usual. Commissioners on committees will be called upon to meet more frequently than usual, and the Commission itself will be hosting evening public meetings. I will be working with the Budget and Administration/Personnel Committee, the RTC, our consultants and the staff to develop plans to manage the work load and keep the RTC's high priorities and on-going responsibilities moving forward.

As a key step in the process, staff is working with the Budget and Administration/Personnel Committee on an amendment to the FY05-06 Budget and Work Program, which will be presented to you at your next meeting. Staff recommendations will include strategies to address the staff work load situation. A specific recommendation on the budget and work plan for the Transportation Funding Task Force will be included.

Some of the major projects which will take significant Commissioner and staff time follow:

- **Highway 1/17 Merge Lanes Project** – After several years of hiatus, this project will be entering the construction phase and therefore be catapulted into the public consciousness. The Commission and staff, in collaboration with Caltrans and the City of Santa Cruz, will be at the front line of addressing issues and communicating with the public before and during the three-year construction timeframe. RTC staff will be involved in frequent coordination meetings and in implementing an enhancement to the rideshare program. The RTC management team will need to spend much more time on this project. The Commission itself will hear the status of the project and be involved in listening to public input and working to resolve issues at both your regular RTC meetings and at Transportation Policy Workshop meetings.

- **Highway 1 HOV Lane Project** – This project is entering a new, more mature phase where documents will be made ready for public review and where issues such as the cost of delays will need to be addressed. Staff and the RTC itself will be involved in working through these complex issues and holding meetings with the public. Most of the RTC's Transportation Planners and management staff participate on one or more of the Highway 1 staff teams.
- **Rail Line Acquisition Project** – The workload for this complex project continues unabated. Several reports and analyses still need to be prepared and received by the RTC so that you can make an informed decision on whether and how to proceed. The Commission and the Rail Acquisition Task Force continue to consider the elements of this project at many meetings. Most of the RTC's Transportation Planners and management staff participate on the staff team for this project.
- **Separation from the County Administration** – As originally envisioned, implementation of the separation from the County administration will involve several time-consuming one-time tasks. In addition, the on-going work load will increase after the separation. Due to other, higher priorities, only one Transportation Planner is assigned to this work at this time, for only part of her time. Significant time of the management staff is also called for. The Budget and Administration/ Personnel Committee plans to meet monthly through the completion of the separation, targeting for July 1, 2006, a much more frequent meeting schedule than usual. Major issues and decisions will be brought to the RTC for your direction. Because this is not the RTC's highest priority, there is a possibility that the target date will not be met due to staffing or other issues.
- **Transportation Funding Task Force** – This new major project is still in the planning stages. The Budget and Administration/Personnel Committee has already considered proposed budgets and work plans for this project, and will again consider the project at its next meeting. The need for staff and Commissioner time on this project will be presented to the full RTC at your next meeting.
- **Recruitment and Transition to New Executive Director** – The process of recruitment of your new Executive Director will involve Commissioner time at both the Budget and Administration/Personnel Committee and RTC levels. Once the new Executive Director is hired, there will be a transition period. The schedule calls for some overlap between the interim and the permanent Executive Director to help ease the transition.

I look forward to working with the RTC, Budget and Administration/Personnel Committee, staff and consultants on addressing these challenges.