

TO: Regional Transportation Commission

FROM: Grace Blakeslee, Transportation Planner

RE: Update on the 2006 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Staff recommends that the Regional Transportation Commission:

1. Review the attached California Transportation Commission (CTC) staff recommendations for the Santa Cruz County portion of the 2006 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) (Attachment 2); and
 2. Review the April 13, 2006 memorandum to David Brewer, CTC Chief Deputy Director (Attachment 4) and provide input on any additional follow-up action desired.
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BACKGROUND

In September 2005, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) adopted a Fund Estimate for the *2006 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)*. The Fund Estimate assumed that Proposition 42 revenues would be released to transportation as outlined in statute and that prior loans to the General Fund would be repaid. Under this scenario, Santa Cruz County would be able to access \$20 million in new transportation funds over the next five years.

On January 5, 2006 the Regional Transportation Commission adopted the *2006 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP)*, nominating projects for inclusion in the *2006 STIP*, shown in Attachment 1. The CTC, which adopts the STIP every other year, makes the final determination on which projects are included in the STIP and in what year funds will be available for each project.

DISCUSSION

On April 7, 2006, CTC staff released its recommendations for the *2006 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)* (Attachment 2). The CTC is scheduled to adopt the 2006 STIP at its April 27, 2006 meeting. The 2006 RTIP programmed STIP funds to 26 projects. CTC staff has recommended that the 2006 STIP include 14 of these projects in addition to programming the supplemental funds for the Highway 1/17 Merge Lanes Project. CTC staff recommended that 9 of these projects be programmed as listed in the 2006 RTIP. In some cases, projects were programmed in later years than requested and in other cases the total amount of funds requested were not programmed.

The disparity between the 2006 RTIP proposal and the CTC staff recommendation for Santa Cruz County was primarily a result of the “color of funds” available for programming in the 2006 STIP compared with Santa Cruz County transportation priorities and the statewide backlog of highway and road projects. This disparity between county RTIP proposals and the CTC staff recommendations for the 2006 STIP is an issue for every region in the state.

Prior to receiving RTIP proposals from counties, the CTC staff informed counties that the level of funds available for highway and road projects in the Fund Estimate may not meet statewide requests. However, CTC staff asked the regions to program their RTIPs according to their priorities and did not establish separate highway and transit targets for each county (Attachment 3).

Once it became clear that the CTC would not be able to program all of the Santa Cruz County highway and road projects as shown in the 2006 RTIP, RTC staff submitted comments and a list of programming priorities to CTC staff. This list was provided to the RTC at their April 6, 2006 meeting. Priorities were set given the following considerations:

- Carryover of 2004 STIP projects at the amount programmed in the 2004 STIP
- Projects with federal funds that needed non-federal match
- Project readiness

CTC Staff 2006 STIP Programming Recommendations for Santa Cruz County

Of the \$20 million anticipated in new funds available for programming in Santa Cruz County, CTC staff recommends only programming \$6.5 million. Of this, \$3.3 million are new programming funds for highway and road projects.

The CTC staff recommendations for Santa Cruz County in the 2006 STIP are included as Attachment 2. The following is a summary of the CTC staff recommendation for Santa Cruz County.

- All of the 2004 STIP carryover projects are included in the CTC staff recommendation. These projects include the Harkins Slough Interchange Project, the Highway 1/17 Landscaping Project, Graham Hill Road Improvements, Highway 1 Freeway Service Patrol, Planning Programming and Monitoring Program, the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Right- of Way, Broadway-Brommer Street Bicycle/Pedestrian Path, Wilder Ranch Bikeway Phase 2, Coastal Rail Trail, AB3090 for the MetroBase Project and the A3090 for El Rancho.
- All of the 2004 STIP carryover project cost increases and additional funds proposed in the 2006 RTIP, with the exception of additional funds for the Freeway Service Patrol, are included in the CTC staff recommendation. These projects include the Graham Hill Road Project, the Harkins Slough Interchange Project, the Planning, Programming and Monitoring Program and the Wilder Ranch Bikeways-Phase 2.
- All of the 2004 STIP carryover projects are programmed in the years proposed in the 2006 RTIP with the exception of the MetroBase AB3090 reimbursement, the Wilder

Ranch bikeways – Phase 2 and the Coastal Rail Trail. The MetroBase AB3090 reimbursement is programmed in FY08/09 instead of FY06/07, the Wilder Ranch bikeways-Phase 2 and the Coastal Rail Trail were programmed one year later than requested.

- No new highway and road projects in the 2006 RTIP are included in the CTC staff recommendations.
- The new Public Transit Account (PTA) eligible project, the Transit Trip Planner, and all the new Transportation Enhancement eligible projects are included in the 2006 STIP. The new Transportation Enhancement eligible projects are the Santa Cruz Coastal Trail and the San Lorenzo River Bicycle/ Pedestrian Bridge.

Statewide CTC Staff 2006 STIP Programming Recommendations

Against the new capacity of \$455 million available for programming highway and road projects throughout the state, the CTC received proposals for \$1.23 billion, including cost increases and new projects. On the rail and transit side, the Commission received proposals for \$625 million against the \$1.355 billion in new capacity. For the Transportation Enhancement (TE) portion, the proposals were a much closer match, \$120 million in proposals against \$116 million in capacity. This means that the CTC will leave about \$780 million in highway proposals out of the STIP while \$730 million in rail and transit capacity will remain unprogrammed.

Given the constrained programming capacity for highway and road projects in the 2006 STIP, CTC staff gave priority to the projects carried forward from the 2004 STIP, including cost increases for these projects, provided there was available capacity and that programming proposals met funding targets. Highway and road programming in most counties was held to less than 20% of their estimated total funding. In some cases 2004 STIP carryover projects were deleted to accommodate cost increase on other projects. A few new projects or project components were included where a county needed to meet the minimum county share targets or where regions proposed the deletion of 2004 STIP carryover projects to allow for the inclusion of new projects. For most counties, no new projects were included.

Follow-up to CTC Staff 2006 Recommendations

RTC staff continues to advocate for inclusion of Santa Cruz County 2006 RTIP highway and road projects to be included in the 2006 STIP ([Attachment 4](#)). RTC staff notes that the percent of the Santa Cruz County target programmed to highway and road projects is 16.4% which is below the county average of 22%. In addition, 37% of the 2006 RTIP is PTA eligible and the RTC did not anticipate that the Highway 1/17 supplement funds would be included in the 2006 STIP when adopting the 2006 RTIP in January.

Despite the disparity between 2006 RTIP proposals and the CTC staff recommendations, CTC staff is communicating to regions that no new highway and road projects will be included in the 2006 STIP unless a county recommends deprogramming projects currently included in the recommendations. For Santa Cruz County this would mean deprogramming 2004 STIP carryover projects. Staff does not recommend deprogramming any 2004 STIP carryover projects.

In addition to increasing the total highway and road projects programmed for Santa Cruz County, RTC staff asks that the CTC indicate its intention to honor county shares and amendment proposals at a later date as it relates to the unprogrammed PTA balance. This will allow the RTC to consider Santa Cruz County PTA eligible projects for inclusion in the STIP as amendments if possible.

RTC staff has communicated the RTC decision to shift programming of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line Acquisition project from fiscal year 06-07 to fiscal year 07-08 to CTC staff by email and is also included in Attachment 4. CTC staff has indicated that this request can be accommodated.

RTC staff is communicating with our legislative representatives about the 2006 RTIP proposal, RTC priorities, the CTC 2006 STIP staff recommendations and future transportation funding options. The STIP being an unreliable funding source is a statewide issue, not just a Santa Cruz County issue. RTC staff will continue to work with legislators to secure a stable transportation funding sources and advocate for a regional fair share of funds.

Next Steps

RTC staff will return to the Commission's May 4, 2006 meeting with a report on the adopted 2006 STIP. It is likely that the adopted 2006 STIP will not match the 2006 RTIP. Therefore, staff will consult with sponsoring agencies and work with the Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC) to develop a recommendation to the Commission on how to minimize potential delays to various projects, and other options. In any event, the RTC will need to amend the 2006 RTIP to make it consistent with the adopted 2006 STIP. A public hearing is needed to amend the RTIP. If needed, the SCCRTC staff will recommend a date for the RTIP hearing at the May 4, 2006 SCRTC meeting.

Should the STIP funding picture change as a result of recent proposals under consideration by the Governor and Legislature or as a result of the state budget, the CTC staff would recommend the adoption of a new fund estimate and the commencement of a new programming process.

SUMMARY

The California Transportation Commission (CTC) is scheduled to adopt the 2006 STIP on April 27, 2006. Attached are the CTC staff recommendations for the 2006 STIP (Attachment 2). Staff will report on the adopted STIP at the May 4, 2006 Regional Transportation Commission meeting. Staff will work with the ITAC to develop recommendations if the adopted 2006 STIP does not closely reflect the 2006 RTIP.

Attachments:

1. SCCRTC's 2006 RTIP
2. CTC Staff Recommendations for Santa Cruz County
3. Summary of 2006 STIP Funding Constraints – March 2006
4. Memo to David Brewer April 13th, 2006

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