


AGENDA: June 29, 2006

TO: Regional Transportation Commission/Rail Trail Authority

FROM: Luis Pavel Mendez, Acting Deputy Director 

RE: Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line Acquisition Project – Supplemental Structural Assessment and General Inspection

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the Regional Transportation Commission:

1. Accept presentation of the *Santa Cruz Industrial Lead Supplemental Structural Assessment Report* produced by HNTB Corporation; and
 2. Review the draft work proposal provided by HNTB for a general inspection of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line; and
 3. Approve the proposed revised draft Rail Acquisition Project Financial Plan incorporating the general inspection of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line.
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BACKGROUND

The Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) has been working on acquisition of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line for over four years. In December 2004, the RTC approved entering into a non-binding Letter of Intent with Union Pacific to purchase the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line for \$19 million. A number of reports and steps must be completed before the RTC can make a final decision on acquisition of the Branch Line and obtain the necessary approvals from the relevant funding and regulatory agencies.

A draft Structural Assessment report prepared by Biggs Cardosa Associates and Systra Consulting was presented to the RTC in August 2005. The report recommended additional structural analysis for structures at six crossings and for three retaining walls. The RTC contracted with HNTB Corporation to produce the supplemental structural analysis and with Biggs Cardosa and Associates to provide peer review of HNTB's work.

DISCUSSION

2005 Santa Cruz Branch Line Structural Assessment

In 2005, Biggs Cardosa and Associates and Systra Consulting performed a visual inspection and produced a structural assessment report for all the bridges, trestles, and some culverts, on the

Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line. The *Santa Cruz Branch Line Structural Assessment* provided a condition rating, potential capital costs and potential maintenance costs for the structures inspected. The report also recommended additional structural analyses for the following:

- MP 1.06 – the bridge over the Pajaro River
- MP 9.09 – the La Selva Beach Trestle
- MP 10.45 - Timber trestle in Seascapes near Sumner Avenue and Dolphin Drive
- MP 15.89 - the Capitola trestle.
- MP 19.43 - Steel trestle over the San Lorenzo River (including seismic analysis)
- MP 23.54 - Bridge over Meder Creek in Wilder Ranch State Park.
- Three retaining walls

Right of Entry Agreement and Union Pacific Participation

Union Pacific (UP) agreed to contribute 50% of the cost of the additional structural analysis of the La Selva Beach Trestle, up to \$30,000. The right of entry agreement with UP was amended to extend the term and establish the terms for UP's financial participation. The right of entry agreement established that confidential UP information is not to be included, that the final report must be presented to the RTC by June 30, 2006, and that it must remain confidential until UP had the opportunity to review it and provide comments. UP reviewed the draft report and provided several comments.

Supplemental Structural Analysis

HNTB's *Santa Cruz Industrial Lead Supplemental Structural Assessment Report* is being finalized and is not ready for distribution with this staff report. Staff and consultants expect to have the report finalized soon and plan to present it at the meeting. As soon as the report is distributed to the Commission, it will be posted on the RTC website (<http://www.sccrtc.org>) and be available to the public. Hard copies of the report will be available at the meeting and may be obtained at the RTC offices. **Staff recommends that the RTC accept presentation of the completed structures assessment report.**

The objective of the Supplemental Structures Assessment Report was to provide the RTC with an assessment of structure condition, load carrying capacity, repair and maintenance costs, and general recommendations for selected bridge and wall structures along the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line. In general, HNTB's scope of services covers:

- Data collection and document review of information provided by SCCRTC and UP related to the bridge structures. Relevant documents include as-built bridge plans and record drawings, information from the UP bridge books, information from UP bridge inspections, prior inspection records from other consultants, and prior structural assessment reports from other consultants.

- Field investigation of bridge structures and wall structures to document condition of representative bridge and wall members, preparation of field investigation notes, and photographing structures.
- Performing bridge service load analyses for the bridges to determine operating service loads.
- Performing a seismic vulnerability study of the San Lorenzo Crossing to identify seismic vulnerabilities, developing preliminary retrofit concepts, and developing conceptual costs for retrofit concepts.

For each of the structures analyzed, the report will recommend repair work along with their projected costs, optional repair work and a maintenance program along with projected annual maintenance costs. The report will also provide a seismic analysis for the San Lorenzo River Trestle and make recommendations on seismic retrofit work.

Biggs Cardosa and Associates reviewed all of the materials available to HNTB, the work done by HNTB engineers and the draft report. Biggs Cardosa and Associates provided a list of comments for consideration by HNTB.

General Inspection of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line

In April 2006, the RTC directed staff to work with the Rail Acquisition Task Force (RATF), now the Rail Acquisition Committee (RAC), to develop a draft scope of work and financial plan for a general inspection of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line. Staff communicated with various firms who inspect rail lines to produce a draft scope of work and obtain general cost estimates. The draft scope of work (Attachment 2) includes a video of the entire rail line; an inspection of the entire rail line including track, ties, signals, ballast, roadbed and drainage; and cost estimates for recommended repairs and annual maintenance.

The cost estimates for the inspection ranged from \$10,000 to \$40,000, with most firms indicating that the cost would likely be closer to \$40,000 in order to produce more reliable condition analyses and recommendations for repairs and maintenance. As staff called firms to obtain cost estimates, HNTB Corporation indicated that up to \$30,000 could remain in their contract budget after completion of the detailed structural assessment report and that they could produce the required work if their contract was amended to include the additional scope for the inspection. HNTB produced a draft proposal (Attachment 3). **Staff recommends review of HNTB's draft work proposal.**

The attached revised draft financial plan for the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Acquisition Project (Attachment 4) shows how the cost of the general inspection may be included. The \$30,000 in remaining funds from the structural assessment work will cover most of it. The remaining \$10,000 is proposed to come from Federal Appropriation funds previously designated for the title insurance cost. The title insurance cost will be incurred at the time of acquisition and funds designated for acquisition may be used to cover this cost so this draft revised financial plan

proposes that the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)/Coastal Conservancy funds be used for the title insurance cost. **Staff recommends approval of the proposed revised draft Rail Acquisition Project Financial Plan incorporating the general inspection of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line.**

SUMMARY

HNTB's *Santa Cruz Industrial Lead Supplemental Structural Assessment Report* is being finalized. The report will be presented at the meeting. A draft scope of work and a proposal for a general inspection of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line are attached along with a proposed draft financial plan. Staff recommends review of the work proposal prepared by HNTB and approval of the proposed draft financial plan to include the general inspection work.

Attachment 1: Draft Scope of Work for a General Inspection of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line

Attachment 2: Draft Proposal from HNTB for a General Inspection of the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line.

Attachment 3: Revised Draft Rail Acquisition Project Financial Plan

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