

Agenda: April 5, 2007

To: Regional Transportation Commission
From: Rachel Moriconi, Transportation Planner
RE: Amendments to the *2006 Regional Transportation Improvement Program*

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the Regional Transportation Commission:

1. Review the proposed amendments to the *2006 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP)*, including programming projected State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP), and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) Phase-Out funds (Attachment 2); and changes to previously programmed projects (Attachment 3);
2. Consider recommendations made by the RTC's advisory committees (Attachment 5)
3. Hold a public hearing to receive comments on the proposed amendments and consider written comments received (Attachment 6);
4. Adopt a resolution (Attachment 1) amending the *Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP)* as shown in Attachments 2 and 3, including priorities for STIP funds;
5. Make funding for the Commute Solutions Rideshare Program and the second year of funding for the Transportation Management Associations contingent on results of the countywide Transportation Demand Management analysis;
6. Reserve any remaining balance for programming as part of the 2008 RTIP, to be initiated in Fall 2007;
7. Request that the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) and California Transportation Commission (CTC) incorporate these amendments into the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) and State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), respectively; and
8. Authorize staff to seek Bicycle Transportation Account and Safe Routes to Schools grants for the Mar Vista Bicycle/Pedestrian Bridge.

BACKGROUND

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) is the agency responsible for selecting projects to receive a variety of state and federal funds. The *Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP)* for Santa Cruz County is a list of local and regional projects which

have been selected by the RTC to receive funds from a variety of state and federal programs over the next five years. The RTIP primarily serves two purposes: 1) a tool to assist in monitoring the delivery of state and federally-funded regional transportation projects; and 2) the RTC's proposal to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) for the region's share of funds from the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The RTIP is typically adopted every two years. Interim amendments are made as needed.

As a result of passage of Proposition 1B in November 2006, the California Transportation Commission will be programming anticipated bond funds, as well as previously unprogrammed balances of State Transportation Improvement Program funds this spring. Approximately \$12 million in STIP funds are targeted for Santa Cruz County. The RTC's proposal for programming these funds is due to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) the first week of April 2007.

Based on federal apportionment estimates, \$6.3 million in FY07/08 and FY08/09 Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) and \$560,000 in Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) Phase-Out funds are available for programming.

STIP and RSTP funds are available for a wide range of projects that will improve transportation in the region, including highway projects, roadway rehabilitation, safety improvements, rideshare programs, bicycle projects, sidewalks, enhancement activities and transit capital projects. Projects that use CMAQ funds must demonstrate that they will result in a reduction in air pollutant emissions. For instance, projects or programs that support a reduction in single occupancy automobile use are eligible for CMAQ funds. Due to changes in federal air quality standards, the region is no longer eligible to receive CMAQ; however, as the result of recent state legislation, the county will receive two years of "phase-out" funds.

In total approximately \$19 million in STIP, RSTP, and CMAQ funds are available for programming. At its January 11, 2007 meeting, the RTC indicated its intent to:

- Program \$4 million of the projected funds to projects selected by local jurisdictions, distributed on a population basis, with a minimum of \$200,000 distributed to each city;
- Program \$12.5 million to regionally significant projects, including the Transportation Management Associations; and,
- Program the remaining funds to local jurisdictions by formula, if the funds are not needed for regionally significant projects.

Additionally, at its December and January meetings, as part of its nomination of projects for the Proposition 1B Corridor Mobility Improvement Account (CMIA) program, the RTC agreed to secure additional funds that may be needed to fully fund projects selected for the CMIA program.

DISCUSSION

Staff considered the funding needs of thirty local and regionally-significant projects and recommends, upon completion of the scheduled public hearing, that the RTC adopt a resolution (Attachment 1) programming \$18.4 million in STIP, RSTP, and CMAQ funds to twenty-two projects (Attachment 2). As described later in this report, several factors could impact when and how much of the recommended funding will be available. Staff also recommends that the RTC amend the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) to reflect schedule and other

changes to several previously programmed projects (Attachment 3). Attachment 4 includes additional information on the projects proposed for new funding. At their February and/or March meetings, the Interagency Technical Advisory Committee, Bicycle Committee and Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee reviewed the preliminary staff recommendations. The committees' recommendations are shown in Attachment 5.

\$4 million to Local Jurisdictions

At its January 2007 meeting, the RTC indicated its intent to program \$4 million to the county and cities based on population, with a minimum of \$200,000 per jurisdiction. Due to state and federal restrictions against partially funding projects, local jurisdictions were encouraged to use their share of funds on existing projects that have experienced cost increases. Since local jurisdictions were given the discretion to identify projects for their shares of funds, **staff and the Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC) recommend that the RTC program \$4 million to local jurisdictions in accordance with their requests (Attachment 2).**

The staff recommendation includes programming RSTP funds to all but three of these local projects. Staff recommends programming CMAQ funds to the San Lorenzo River Bike/Pedestrian Bridge since this project is already undergoing the federal process and can obligate the funds in the near future. Since the CTC typically makes cost increases on existing STIP projects one of its highest priorities for programming, staff is recommending STIP funds for the Graham Hill Road and El Rancho Road projects. Though it is unlikely, **if the CTC does not approve STIP funding for the El Rancho Road and Graham Hill Road projects, staff recommends programming RSTP funds to those projects.**

The ITAC further recommends that the RTC make the \$4 million for local projects the highest priority for funding. The Bicycle Committee supports funding for all of the local projects with the exception of the Scotts Valley's Traffic Signalization Project. The Bicycle Committee also recommended that in addition to the \$300,000 requested by the City of Santa Cruz for the San Lorenzo River Bike/Pedestrian Bridge project, that the RTC also program any additional funds that maybe needed to fully fund the project. The City of Santa Cruz is currently seeking other state grant funds to complete the funding package for this project. The City of Santa Cruz has requested and **staff recommends that if sufficient other grant funds are secured, that \$300,000 in RSTP previously programmed to the San Lorenzo River Bridge project be redirected to the Ocean Street Rehabilitation project.**

Regionally Significant Projects

There is no shortage of regionally significant projects that need funding. Staff reviewed 17 regionally significant projects identified at the January RTC meeting. Regional projects were evaluated according to their anticipated performance, timing of project delivery, risks to project delivery and matching funds, and achievement of the *2005 Regional Transportation Plan Goals*. The evaluation criteria used included standards adopted by the CTC for the STIP and those developed for smaller counties. **The ITAC and staff recommend that the RTC program \$14.4 million to the regionally-significant projects shown on Attachment 2.**

Initially staff was concerned about the financial feasibility of the Highway 1/9 Intersection project and did not recommend the project. Additionally, through the performance evaluation, this project

ranked lower than the other regionally-significant projects that staff recommends for funding. Since the March TPW meeting, the City of Santa Cruz has committed to ensuring that the Highway 1/9 Intersection project is fully funded through construction (Attachment 7). Therefore, staff now recommends \$500,000 for the design phase of the Highway 1/9 project. At its March 23, 2007 meeting, the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District also voted to support the Highway 1/9 Project, as the project is anticipated to facilitate bus operations. Although the City has addressed concerns regarding the financial feasibility of this project, the

Since the TPW meeting, the cost estimate for the Mar Vista Bike/Pedestrian Bridge has been reevaluated and Nolte Associates has determined that the estimated cost as \$7,530,000. Staff continues to recommend full funding for this element of the Highway 1 HOV Lane project, especially since it provides an important link to Mar Vista Elementary School. **Staff recommends that the RTC program \$1 million in RSTP funds for the project as a place holder and that the RTC authorize staff to seek Bicycle Transportation Account and Safe Routes to Schools grants to replace some of the STIP and RSTP funds in the future.** Additional information on the Mar Vista Bike/Pedestrian Bridge is included in Attachment 8.

In response to other inquiries from commissioners at past RTC meetings, staff has also prepared a summary of the work programs for the Commute Solutions Rideshare Program and Transportation Management Associations (Attachment 9) and the cost increases on the Highway 1 HOV PA/ED consultant contract (Attachment 10). **Staff recommends that the RTC make release of STIP funds for the Commute Solutions program and the second year of CMAQ funds for the Transportation Management Associations contingent on the results of the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) analysis,** to be completed later this year. The RTC's advisory committees recommend funding these TDM programs.

STIP Funding Uncertainties

There is a very high degree of uncertainty regarding how much of the region's \$12 million STIP target the CTC will actually include in the 2006 STIP Augmentation. Staff is recommending that the RTC program the region's full 2006 STIP Augmentation target, however, the CTC is only obligated to program \$369,000 to Santa Cruz County at this time. Alternately, depending on submittals from other regions in the state, the CTC could decide to only include up to \$8.4 million in non-transit projects from Santa Cruz County in the 2006 STIP Augmentation. Finally, cost overruns of up to \$5.5 million for the Highway 1/17 Project are expected to be filled with Santa Cruz County's share of 2006 or 2008 STIP funds. Staff is moving forward assuming that the cost overruns will count against Santa Cruz County's share of the 2008 STIP. As such, the staff recommendation does not include the Highway 1/17 project increases. However, **the CTC may determine that cost increases on the Highway 1/17 project (see separate staff report on this agenda) will need to come out of the region's 2006 STIP Augmentation target, thereby reducing the amount they will program to other projects.** Staff will not be able to confirm this until after the CTC adopts the 2006 STIP Augmentation in June 2007 or if Caltrans delays its supplemental funds request until after that action. At its March 22, 2007 meeting, the ITAC recommended that the RTC ask Caltrans to seek non-STIP funds to cover the cost increases.

If the CTC restricts non-transit projects and charges Highway 1/17 increases against the region's 2006 STIP Augmentation target, **the CTC could decide to only program \$2.9 million of the region's \$12 million 2006 STIP Augmentation target this June.** Our region would have to wait

until future programming cycles to access the remaining funds.

Taking these issues into consideration, as well as the Governor's FY07/08 budget proposal which could further restrict the availability of STIP funding, the RTC's prior commitment to reprogram lapsed funds to the County of Santa Cruz when they return to the region (anticipated as part of the 2008 STIP), anticipated future needs, and potential reductions in federal authorization levels, staff determined that **it is not prudent to fully program all of the region's available funds at this time. Any balance will be programmed as part of the 2008 RTIP cycle, scheduled to begin this fall.**

Priorities for STIP Funds

Since it is possible that the CTC will not include all of the projects proposed for the 2006 STIP Augmentation, the **CTC has encouraged regions statewide to prioritize their projects.** The RTC's prioritized STIP proposal will ensure that the highest priority projects are positioned to receive the available STIP funding and that the \$4 million intended to be programmed to local jurisdictions' projects are less dependent on the uncertainties in available funding at the state level.

Staff recommends the RTC prioritize projects for STIP funds as shown below:

1. Graham Hill Road Safety Improvements - \$350,000 (to address cost increases)
2. El Rancho Road Reconstruction – \$248,000 (to address cost increases)
3. Highway 1 Soquel-Morrissey Auxiliary lane - \$2,734,000 (match to CMIA funds)
4. Freeway Service Patrol - \$300,000 (to cover three additional years of service)
5. Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network - \$785,000
6. Rideshare Program - \$300,000 (to cover two additional years of service)
7. Highway 1 HOV PA/ED - \$216,000 (to cover cost increases)
8. Highway 1 Mar Vista Bike/Pedestrian Bridge - \$6,564,000 (STIP share of project)
9. Highway 1/9 Intersection Improvements Design - \$500,000

Projects lower on the list are at risk of not being approved by the CTC in this cycle.

In the event that the CTC does not approve funds as requested for some of these projects, **staff recommends that the RTC program RSTP to the Graham Hill Road and El Rancho Road projects, and reconsider the remaining projects for programming as part of the 2008 RTIP.**

The ITAC recommends that the RTC make the Highway 1/9 Intersection design work a higher priority for the STIP than the STIP funds designated for construction of the Mar Vista Bicycle Pedestrian Bridge (\$5,374,000).

Changes to Previously Programmed Projects

In addition to programming RSTP, CMAQ, and STIP funds to various projects, **staff and project sponsors recommend several additional amendments to existing projects (Attachment 3).** The RTIP must be amended to reflect these changes in order to ensure federal and state funds are retained and accessible to project sponsors.

Public Input

The RTC has scheduled a public hearing to give members of the community an opportunity to comment on the proposed amendments to the RTIP. This public hearing has been noticed in major local newspapers and news releases regarding the public hearing were distributed in advance of this meeting. Correspondence received as of the printing of this agenda packet is included in Attachment 6. Any additional correspondence that is received will be distributed at the meeting.

Additional Project Information

The RTIP document is available online at www.sccrt.org/rtip. The RTIP project listings for the projects currently under consideration for amendments, including project descriptions, funding and history information, are attached (Attachment 11). Maps of all projects included in the RTIP, including those under consideration as part of the proposed amendment, are shown in Attachment 12.

SUMMARY

The California Transportation Commission (CTC) is in the process of updating the *2006 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)* to include Proposition 1B funds and unprogrammed balances. The STIP is the means by which the California Transportation Commission programs state and federal funding to regions for projects of regional significance. Additionally, Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) funds are currently available for programming. The RTC identified projects to receive the region's share of projected STIP, RSTP and CMAQ funds through the *Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP)*. Attachments 1-3 represent staff's recommendations for programming funds and amending existing projects.

Attachment 1: Resolution

Attachment 2: Staff Recommendations for STIP, RSTP, & CMAQ Funds

Attachment 3: Proposed Amendments to Existing Projects

Attachment 4: Project Summaries

Attachment 5: RTC Committee Recommendations

Attachment 6: Comments Received on RTIP Proposal

Attachment 7: Letter from Santa Cruz City Manager Richard Wilson regarding Highway 1/9

Attachment 8: Mar Vista Bicycle/Pedestrian Bridge Cost Estimate

Attachment 9: Summary of Work Programs for Transportation Demand Management Programs

Attachment 10: Memorandum from Nolte regarding Highway 1 HOV Lane PA/ED Cost Increases

Attachment 11: RTIP Project Listings for Amended Projects

Attachment 12: Maps of all 2006 RTIP Projects