

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
THIRD QUARTER FY 06-07 PROGRESS REPORT
January through March 2007

101 Work Program and Budget

During this quarter, working with the Budget and Administration/Personnel Committee staff produced a draft budget and work program for FY 07-08 which were approved by the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) and submitted to the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG). Staff also produced and the RTC approved a scope of work for the required triennial performance audit for fiscal years 03-04 to 05-06. A consultant was hired to begin working on the triennial performance audit. During this period staff also prepared internal financial statements for the first half of FY 06-07 through the end of December 2006.

General Administration

The Budget and Administration/ Personnel (B&A/P) Committee met two times this quarter. The Committee and staff recommended to the RTC a FY 07-08 budget and work program, job reclassifications and new salary schedules for the administrative support staff and a schedule and form for the annual performance evaluation of the Executive Director. The Committee also discussed the RTC's affiliation with AMBAG and reviewed the status of the RTC autonomy. Staff continues to develop the necessary administrative and fiscal procedures to ensure that the RTC functions effectively and efficiently as an autonomous agency.

112 Plan Coordination

During this quarter, staff attended regular meetings of the California Transportation Commission (CTC), the Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) Group, the California Association of Councils of Government (CalCOG), the Caltrans Regional Coordination Group, and the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (SCMTD) Board of Directors. Staff also participated in regional coordination meetings with staff from the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) and the Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC).

RTC staff met with AMBAG staff to discuss the current status of the regional travel demand model and begin coordinating the planned update of the model. An outgrowth of that meeting is a regional Transit Model Enhancement Sub-Group that will assess cost efficient efforts to enhance the regional models ability to project transit ridership (information not currently coded into the travel model).

In January, following review by all of RTC's advisory committees, the RTC adopted a State and Federal Legislative Agenda for 2007. Also during this period, the Executive Director and the staff legislative liaison, together with the RTC's Washington D.C. Assistants (Carolyn Chaney and Chris Giglio) met with Santa Cruz County Federal

legislative staff members and Congressman Sam Farr while in Washington D.C. attending the annual Transportation Research Board Conference. RTC staff and legislative assistants reviewed major projects, programs, and issues anticipated in 2007.

RTC Commissioners and the RTC's Executive Director, together with the RTC's Sacramento Assistants, met with key State Legislators, staff, and other prominent agency staff with a focus on securing an equitable share of the Proposition 1B Transportation Bond Measure's Corridor Mobility Account Improvement (CMIA) funds. The RTC did receive a \$16.2 million allocation of CMIA funds for the enhanced Highway 1 Soquel/Morrissey Auxiliary Lanes Project which includes modifications to the Highway 1/Morrissey Boulevard Interchange.

The Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC) met twice this quarter. Discussions focused on project coordination and programming new State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ), and Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) funds.

113 Public Information

The RTC provided the media, local jurisdictions and chambers of commerce press releases regarding the Transportation Funding Task Force progress in developing a Transportation Funding Plan which can garner broad community support, a \$16.2 million allocation for the Soquel/Morrissey Auxiliary Lanes project and a public hearing for considering approval of 22 projects to be included in the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP). The RTC also placed display ads in the local papers to advertise the public hearing for the RTIP. In addition, the RTC continued to provide information/highlights about Commission actions at its monthly meetings.

RTC staff, Caltrans and City of Santa Cruz staff continued implementation of the public information campaign for the Highway 1/17 Interchange Merge Lanes project by working with the media on articles related to the project. The town's main newspaper is running weekly articles about aspects of the project. The project hotline and website continue to provide information about project conditions and road closures. Caltrans staff continues to be available to directly answer inquires during regular business hours.

Improved organization, updates and maintenance to the current website continued. These included: posting current Commission and Committee packets, agendas, minutes and highlights, press releases, meeting schedules and reports, and providing links to websites of transportation partners. The RTC expanded email notification of meeting agendas and information to realize even more savings on paper and printing/mailing costs. The Transportation Funding Task Force (TFTF) and Commute Solutions websites were also maintained and updated. Work on the remainder of the redesigned RTC site continues, employing a new and more user-friendly organizational structure. The first phase of this new website was already launched, beginning with a new "Highways" page that is linked from the current site. Staff also continued work on implementation on an internal website, or "Intranet," for use by staff.

115 Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail (MBSST) Network

Staff began writing a scope of work and Request for Proposals in order to bring a consultant onboard to develop a Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network Master Plan for the Santa Cruz County portion of the trail network. A timeline was developed and a fall target date was established for the consultant to begin work on developing the Master Plan. Staff researched federal funding parameters with Caltrans, met with the Santa Cruz County Interagency Sanctuary Task Force and Transportation Agency for Monterey County staff to coordinate trail planning efforts and exchange ideas and information. Staff also developed initial plans for in-house activities to be conducted as part of the Master Planning public outreach process.

177 Freeway Service Patrol (FSP)

Staff continued to administer the FSP Program including administration and oversight of two existing FSP Program contracts. Staff monitored performance of the FSP service provided by contractors using motorist surveys, assist data and feedback provided from Santa Cruz CHP officers working with FSP in the field.

The FSP Procurement and Evaluation Committee reviewed proposals and requested follow up information from the two contractors who submitted proposals in response to the 2007 Freeway Service Patrol (FSP) RFP. The FSP Procurement Evaluation Committee, including RTC, CHP and Caltrans staff, conducted site visits to each of the contractor's tow facilities and interviewed interested contractors. The RFP Procurement Evaluation Committee rated the proposals taking into consideration the contractor's original proposal, their response to the follow up information requested and site visit observations. The RTC approved the Committee's recommendation to award the contract to the highest ranked contractor.

Staff attended a Statewide FSP Group meeting to review the updated FSP cost-benefit analysis program and cost-benefit results for Santa Cruz County's FSP program in Fiscal Year 04/05.

178 Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (SAFE)/Call Boxes

Staff continued to work with the Commission's call box service providers, including Comarco Wireless Technologies, Cingular Wireless and Connections Communications to maintain the system. Call box usage reports received from Comarco Wireless Technologies were updated and reviewed. Staff worked with Connections Communications, the private call box center for Santa Cruz County, to provide more detailed reporting about the calls received.

Staff coordinated the initiation of the digital and TTY upgrades to the Santa Cruz County call box system. Staff monitored the phasing-in of the new call box equipment and addressed issues associated with transitioning call boxes from analog to digital service as

needed. Staff negotiated a new maintenance contract with Comarco Wireless Technologies to continue maintenance to the Santa Cruz County call boxes and to provide maintenance for new equipment installed in the call boxes as a result of the digital and TTY upgrades.

Staff continued to administer the Safe on 17 Program including reviewing invoices and administering the Safe on 17 CHP enforcement contract. Staff updated the Safe on 17 Roster and sent out an announcement for the upcoming March meeting. Staff worked with the CHP to coordinate the one Safe on 17 Task Force meeting held during this period.

179 Transportation Demand Management (TDM) - Commuter Services

Through employer contacts, the website, the 429-POOL phone line, and follow up contacts, Commute Solutions produced match lists and provided follow up services and referrals. Staff continued collaborating with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and its contractor, Parsons Brinckerhoff, to provide instant on-line ride matching services to Santa Cruz County residents and commuters.

Commission staff continued working with employers, partner agencies, the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG), the Santa Cruz Area Transportation Management Association (SCATMA), and the Pajaro Valley Transportation Management Association (PVTMA) on general sustainable transportation outreach. Staff met with rideshare agency staff from Monterey and San Benito Counties to plan a joint marketing promotion in May for Clean Air Month funded by Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District (MBUAPCD). Staff continued to distribute relevant TDM materials developed for the Commission's former Don't Drive One in Five campaign.

Staff worked with the SCATMA on promoting the Emergency Ride Home and Folding Bikes in Buses programs. Grants for both programs were secured from the MBUAPCD with SCCRTC public agency sponsorship. Program development and implementation are being conducted by the SCATMA with SCCRTC collaboration and oversight.

Staff provided assistance to various entities in their promotion of sustainable transportation modes and coordinated with area agencies and employers. Topic highlights have included obesity rates due to inactivity, dispersed land use patterns and dependence on single occupancy vehicles, as well as rising gas prices.

At Commission direction, staff began work on a report analyzing current Transportation Demand Management (TDM) needs, strategies and services in the region. In addition to outlining current programs and their effectiveness, the report will also identify gaps in services and provide recommendations about how best to coordinate and implement TDM programs in the future.

Staff finalized an update of the 2004 Santa Cruz County Bikeways Map and coordinated with a local printer for final production services. Local jurisdictions provided needed

changes to the map and a cartography consultant began making the first round of modifications. Staff continued to coordinate with the Electric Bicycle and the Bike to Work/School Programs and prepared reports for the Commission's consideration of continued funding to alternative transportation programs.

231 Transportation Monitoring and Evaluation

Field Data Services has conducted 8 traffic counts this quarter including 5 special counts for the City of Capitola, and the resulting data has been entered into the RTC online traffic count database. An agreement between TAMC and RTC regarding the regional coordinated traffic counts program to include Monterey County traffic counts in the RTC contract with Field Data Services was completed.

Work began on the 2006 Transportation Monitoring Report, gathering and recording relevant data. Completion of the Report is expected in May.

411 Land Use/Transportation Coordination

Staff continued to monitor and review draft environmental documents for projects with potential transportation impacts. Staff submitted comments on the Initial Study for a City of Santa Cruz development project at 2120 Delaware concerning future transportation considerations.

614 Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Program

The Bicycle Committee met two times during this quarter. Staff provided the Bicycle Committee with a monthly packet of information on current issues and followed up on projects as directed. Staff organized meetings with local jurisdiction representatives to review design elements of new projects, signs or roadways needing improvement. Staff also wrote letters in response to draft environmental reports and local bike way issues on behalf of the Bicycle Committee.

Staff held a day long workshop titled "Bicycle Committee Efficiency and Effectiveness" on Saturday, March 10, 2007. Staff brought in a consultant to lead the effectiveness workshop and assembled bicycle planning resource packets for participants. Staff also conducted a recruitment to fill vacancies and expired seats.

Staff attended monthly meetings of the Community Traffic Safety Coalition, coordinating with this group on issues relating to bicycle and pedestrian safety throughout the county.

Staff communicated with public works department staff at the various local jurisdictions regarding bicycle hazard report forms submitted by members of the public. Staff distributed bike racks through the Bikes Secure Program and advertised the program to area entities.

Staff continued implementing and promoting the new Pedestrian Access Reporting Program whereby members of the public report sidewalk problems and other pedestrian access issues to the Commission. Commission staff then forwarded the submitted forms and followed-up with local jurisdictions.

621 Specialized Transportation

During this quarter, the Elderly and Disabled Transportation Advisory Committee (E/D TAC) met once. Discussion focused on the following: Article 8 TDA claim from the City of Santa Cruz for pedestrian features in the DeLaveaga School neighborhood, update on the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network Masterplan, input into the Draft Transportation Funding Plan, the draft Annual Report, changes in ride contracts provided by Community Bridges, approval of a letter to local jurisdictions about inconsistencies in the five local taxi ordinances (specifically with regard to the provision of services for seniors and people with disabilities), follow up on the request to reinstate bus transit service to the La Posada/Gault neighborhood, and support for projects in the Regional Transportation Improvement Program. Also included were reports and presentations from service providers and planning staff.

622 Regional Transportation Plan

Staff continued to work with local agencies to implement the projects and policies included in the *Regional Transportation Plan* through their planning and capital improvement program actions and staff continued to monitor projects to ensure consistency with the RTP. Staff also attended meetings on the new federal guidelines for RTPs and worked with AMBAG to ensure that federal requirements are met.

631 Transportation System Management

Staff continued to coordinate with Caltrans and the CHP on enhancements to the existing traffic information system and to maintain the existing system. Staff continued to seek opportunities to coordinate TOS improvements with planned construction projects throughout the county.

Staff monitored the use of Changeable Message Signs (CMS) and Highway Advisory Radios (HAR) in Santa Cruz County for this period. Staff analyzed the use of TOS elements in response to incidents and out of the ordinary traffic congestion. These items were discussed at the one meeting of the Traffic Operations System (TOS) Oversight Committee which met jointly with the Safe on 17 Task Force.

641 Transportation Improvement Program

Staff implemented the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) Augmentation programming cycle. The RTC and project sponsors identified projects to be considered for new Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP), Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) phase-out, and State

Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funds. Utilizing various performance criteria, staff evaluated and prioritized regional projects for new funds. RTC committees reviewed and recommended projects for funding.

Staff met with project sponsors to review and update information on existing projects listed in the RTIP. Staff worked with project sponsors, Caltrans, and the California Transportation Commission (CTC) on a variety of funding amendments, allocations, and obligations. Staff continued to work with project sponsors to ensure state and federal funding deadlines and other requirements were met.

Staff attended monthly meetings of the California Transportation Commission and the Regional Transportation Planning Agencies group that centered on Proposition 1B programs, including the Corridor Mobility Improvement Account (CMIA) and the 2006 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Augmentation, and various state and federal regulations.

Transportation Funding Task Force

This project continues to be a major focus of staff time this quarter. This includes holding 6 meetings to negotiate the Transportation Funding Task Force Funding Plan this quarter. Tasks include planning meetings, frequent email updates to the Task Force members and the public, and responding to requests for additional information. Regular planning meetings continued to be held with the convener, consultants and staff. A final vote on the plan by the Task Force members is expected in May, 2007.

682 Rail/Trail Authority

The RTC continued to negotiate with Union Pacific on the rail line acquisition through its negotiator, Kirk Trost of Miller, Owen and Trost, and the RTC was informed of progress in closed sessions. Staff worked with the negotiations consultant and technical consultants to prepare information required for negotiations with Union Pacific.

683 Highway 1 Widening- Project Approval/Environmental Document (PA/ED)

684

Through this period the engineering consultants finalized the design plans that combine the “best” aspects of the previous Standard Design and Reduced Width HOV project alternatives into a single HOV Build Alternative. The new HOV Lane Alternative includes standard inside median and outside shoulders where there is sufficient right-of-way width (generally in the southern section of the project), but would seek design exceptions for a narrower inside median and/or outside shoulders and would incorporate retaining walls and other design techniques to minimize impacts where the right-of-way is narrow. Formal approval of the proposed design alternatives will be pursued following selection of the preferred alternative, anticipated in the Summer 2009, when engineering drawings will taken to a more complete level.

Environmental studies are now in full process. In mid-January discussions were initiated with the California Coastal Commission (CCC) to review stream crossing design plans and review assessments made by project biologists and water quality design staff.

There is no change in the project schedule that shows an anticipated completion date of late Fall 2009, or early 2010. As part of the 2006 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) Augmentation an additional \$2 million was recommended to the RTC for the PA/ED phase. Additional funds are needed to address project cost increases associated with delays in the availability of the regional travel demand model and delay of subsurface archaeological investigations until after selection of the preferred project alternative. New work items are also envisioned, including: a "Fundability" study to assist deliberations of the RTC's Transportation Funding Task Force; provide funding for additional engineering work beyond the minimal level required for environmental clearance; creation of visualization tools to enhance public understanding of specific design elements of the project. Subject to the California Transportation Commission's approval of the RTC's 2006 RTIP Augmentation, these work tasks will be presented to the RTC in late summer for consideration and incorporation into the consultant contract.

Highway 1 Soquel Avenue to Morrissey Boulevard Auxiliary Lanes Project

In January, staff issued a Notice to Proceed to the Highway 1 consultant team for work to begin on the Project Approval/Environmental Documentation (PA/ED) phase of the project. This action followed receipt of favorable findings from Caltran's Office of External Audits on a pre-award audit of the proposed consultant contract. The pre-award audit examines the Consultant's proposed costs to determine if they are reasonable in relation to actual historical costs and estimating procedures, and that the consultant is capable of accumulating reasonable, allocable, and allowable costs.

With the allocation of \$16.2 million in Corridor Mobility Improvement Account funds, the project has been enhance and PA/ED activity will include modification of the Highway 1 Morrissey Boulevard Interchange including reconstruction of the Morrissey Boulevard overcrossing of Highway 1 and realignment of the northbound ramps to improve motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrian safety. Both the Morrissey Boulevard Bridge and the La Fonda Avenue overcrossing will be replaced with structures that could accommodate widening of the highway to provide HOV lanes.

As part of the 2006 RTIP Augmentation, and additional \$2.734 million in State Transportation Improvement Program funds was recommended to the RTC, which together with the \$2.9 million in Federal funds secured through Congressman Farr and \$16.2 million in CMIA funds complete the funding needed to deliver this project. The project schedule anticipates circulation of a draft environmental document in Summer 2008, and construction to begin in the Summer of 2010, following completion of the Highway 1/17 Merge Lanes project. The Project Development Team has proposed to hold an Information Open House meeting on this project later this summer.

683 Highway 1 Planning

Highway 1 Construction Authority (HCA)

The HCA did not meet through this period.

Highway 1/17 Merge Lanes Project

Construction on this project is about 1/3 complete and construction will continue over the next two years. This quarter contractor crews completed constructing approximately 50% of soundwalls along the length of the project to minimize the construction impacts and highway noise to the neighbors. In addition, erosion control seeding was performed on disturbed cut slopes, traffic control was implemented for ramp and undercrossing closures, completed pilings for most of the bridges over creeks and reconstructed embankments. The RTC is continuing to work with employers and neighbors to minimize traffic through the interchange by promoting transportation demand management practices. The RTC is working with the City of Santa Cruz and Caltrans on outreach efforts associated with the public awareness campaign for neighbors, drivers, employers/employees, goods movement and emergency services. A major amount of RTC staff time this quarter was spent address Caltrans request for additional project funding to cover costs for dealing with unknown buried materials, unmapped utilities and support casing/pier issues. RTC staff convened a peer review panel comprised of local jurisdiction public works directors to review the cost overruns and need for the additional work. Approximately \$5 million in additional funding was requested. These funds are sought from the regional local share of State Transportation Improvement Project funding.

Santa Cruz Area Transportation Management Association

631 TMA Outreach Services Program

The progress report is being submitted with the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Transportation Systems Management quarterly invoice.

LOCAL JURISDICTION PLANNING PROJECTS FUNDED BY FEDERAL CMAQ/STP AND STATE TSM FUNDS

The progress reports are attached to the invoices.

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM (STP) EXCHANGE PROGRAM

Staff made payments to projects previously approved to receive RSTP Exchange funds and continued to monitor projects receiving those funds.