

AGENDA: September 6, 2007

**TO:** Regional Transportation Commission  
**FROM:** Rachel Moriconi, Senior Transportation Planner  
**RE:** Update on Fiscal Year (FY) 2007-08 State Budget and Legislation

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC):

1. Accept information regarding the FY 07/08 State budget and State legislative issues;
  2. Support AB478 - Night Illumination and AB1581 - Traffic Actuation Signal, as recommended by the Bicycle Committee; and
  3. Monitor AB 1358 – Complete Streets Act of 2007 (the Bicycle Committee recommends that the RTC support this bill).
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**BACKGROUND**

Every year the Regional Transportation Commission adopts a legislative agenda to guide its support and opposition of state and federal legislative or administrative actions. Thousands of bills are introduced by the State Legislature each year. Working with its state legislative assistants and transportation entities statewide, the RTC monitors several bills that could impact transportation in Santa Cruz County. September 14 is the last day for the Legislature to approve bills this calendar year. By October 14, 2007 the Governor is required to sign or veto bills passed by the Legislature this year. Several bills have been pulled and will be reconsidered in 2008. Additionally, the FY2007/08 State Budget was adopted on August 24, 2007. The State Budget will impact several transportation projects and programs in Santa Cruz County.

**DISCUSSION**

The FY2007/08 State Budget

After nearly an 8 week delay, on August 24, 2007, the FY2007/08 State Budget was signed by the Governor. A summary of the impacts that the approved budget may have on transportation is attached (Attachment 1). The diversion of transportation funds to the General Fund reduces the amount of funding available for Metro’s capital transit projects; however, Caltrans has reported that the California Transportation Commission (CTC) will still be able to allocate all of the STIP projects currently programmed in FY07/08. Staff will attend a special CTC meeting on September 5, 2007 on how the budget and corresponding trailer bills will impact the amount of funds available for programming in the 2008 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Staff will provide any additional information that may be available at this meeting.

Notably, in order to obtain the votes needed to pass the budget, each house adopted a compromise budget trailer bill that places a moratorium on greenhouse gas-related legal actions against projects to be funded through transportation bonds approved by voters under Proposition 1B last fall. This action responds to concerns raised over Attorney General Jerry Brown's use of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to sue local governments for their failure to address greenhouse gas emissions prior to authorizing development. The bill would sunset after the state Air Resources Board promulgates new regulations implementing recent legislation that requires the state to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 25% by the year 2020.

### Legislative Updates

Staff has been monitoring several key bills this year. A matrix of the legislation being tracked by RTC staff and/or the RTC's state legislative consultant, JEA & Associates, is attached (Attachment 2). The matrix includes several bills which staff recommends the RTC "watch," rather than take a position of "support" or "oppose." One such bill RTC staff is closely monitoring is **SB375**, which is aimed at addressing air quality. This bill could significantly impact transportation and land use decisions in the future. The attached letters from the League of California Cities and California State Association of Counties/Regional Council of Rural Counties outline some of the concerns entities statewide have about this bill (Attachments 3 and 4).

Consistent with the RTC's Legislative Agenda and/or RTC direction at prior meetings, staff has sent letters of support on several bills. Most recently, support letters were sent to legislators regarding **AB 534** (Smyth) – increasing Bicycle Transportation Account funding available for cities and counties; and **AB 444** (Hancock) Congestion Management: Motor Vehicle Registration Fees which would allow voters in Santa Cruz County and several other counties to increase motor vehicle fees by up to \$10 in order to pay for a variety of transportation projects.

At its August 13, 2007 meeting, the Bicycle Committee discussed several bills related to bicycle transportation. **The Bicycle Committee recommends that the RTC support the following bills:**

- **AB 478** (Wolk) Night Illumination - Expands the types of facilities where bicycles must be equipped with lamps and reflectors to include sidewalks and bikeways. Allows a bicyclist to wear the required white or yellow pedal reflectors on his or her shoes or ankles in lieu of being placed on the pedal itself. **Staff concurs with the Bicycle Committee recommendation to support this bill.**
- **AB 1581** (Fuller) Traffic-actuated signals: bicycles, motorcycles - This bill requires, to the extent feasible, cities and counties, upon first placement of a traffic-actuated signal or replacement of the loop detector of a traffic-actuated signal, to install those signals that detect motorcycle and bicycle traffic on the roadway. **Staff concurs with the Bicycle Committee recommendation to support this bill.**
- **AB 1358** (Leno) Complete Streets Act of 2007. This bill would require local governments to consider and accommodate all users in the planning and development of their local highways and public transportation systems. Though this bill is consistent with the RTC's Legislative Agenda, which states the RTC's support for legislative initiatives

to improve conditions for cycling, walking, and transit and measures that would require bicycle and pedestrian facilities as part of newly constructed streets and roads, cities and counties in the state have expressed some concerns about this bill. Specifically, they have cited concerns about paying for the improvements, physical limitations on some roadways, and potential increased risk of litigation by creating a newly mandated level of service without sufficient definition. As such, **staff recommends that the RTC monitor this bill.**

## **SUMMARY**

After a lengthy delay, the FY2007/08 State Budget was approved on August 24, 2007. Staff will provide any additional information on the budget's impact to transportation at this meeting. As the legislative year is nearing completion staff and the Bicycle Committee recommend support for two additional bills (AB478 and AB1581). Staff recommends monitoring AB1358, for which the Bicycle Committee recommends the RTC support.

### Attachments:

1. Summary of the State Budget
2. 2007 Legislation Matrix
3. Opposition Letter from the League of Cities regarding SB375
4. Opposition Letter from the CSAC/RCRC Counties regarding SB375

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