

TO: Regional Transportation Commission
FROM: Luis Pavel Mendez, Deputy Director
RE: Support for the Highway 101/San Juan Road Interchange Project

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) approve writing a letter of support for the Highway 101/San Juan Road Interchange project being proposed by the Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC).

BACKGROUND

The Highway Safety, Traffic Reduction, Air Quality, and Port Security Bond Act of 2006, approved by the voters as Proposition 1B on November 7, 2006, includes \$2 billion for infrastructure improvements along federally designated "Trade Corridors of National Significance" in this state or along other corridors within this state that have a high volume of freight movement. Funds from this Trade Corridor Improvement Fund (TCIF) will be programmed by the California Transportation Commission (CTC) as they are made available by the Legislature. The Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC) and Caltrans are seeking \$35 million in funding from the TCIF for the Highway 101/San Juan Road Interchange project.

DISCUSSION

Highway 101 and San Juan Road meet at a T intersection just south of the Monterey County line with San Benito County. San Juan Road along with Highways 129 and 152 is one of the access routes from Highway 101 into and out of the Pajaro Valley including Watsonville and the surrounding area. The traffic volumes on Highway 101 make it extremely difficult for the T intersection to function properly. The truck traffic volumes on Highway 101 and San Juan Road further exacerbate the problem resulting in an intersection with a history of a high number of collisions.

The Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC) and Caltrans have been developing an interchange project for the Highway 101/San Juan Road intersection. TAMC and Caltrans have together programmed \$10 million in regional and interregional State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funds for the environmental and design phases of the project. TAMC will also include the project in a transportation sales tax measure, which will be before Monterey County voters in 2008. However, \$35 million in TCIF funds is needed to complete the funding package.

Although the project is not located in Santa Cruz County, San Juan Road provides access to motorists and trucks traveling into and out of Watsonville and its surrounding area. Therefore, the new interchange at Highway 101 and San Juan Road would improve safety for resident, visitor and business travel to and from the southern part of Santa Cruz County. The new interchange would help ensure not only that people travel through the intersection safely but would also help ensure that the agricultural and other products of the southern part of Santa Cruz County reach their intended markets. **Therefore, staff recommends that the RTC approve writing a letter of the support for the Highway 101/San Juan Road Interchange project.**

SUMMARY

Proposition 1B established the Trade Corridor Improvement Fund (TCIF). TAMC and Caltrans are seeking \$35 million in TCIF funds to complete the funding for the Highway 1/San Juan Road Interchange project. San Juan Road is one of the access routes from Highway 101 to the southern part of Santa Cruz County and the project would significantly improve the safety of people and goods traveling through the Highway 101/San Juan Road intersection. Staff recommends writing a letter of support for the project.

Attachment 1: Fact Sheet on the Highway 101 San Juan Road Interchange Project

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