

AGENDA: December 20, 2007

TO: Regional Transportation Commission (RTC)
FROM: Rachel Moriconi, Senior Transportation Planner
SUBJECT: Letter to Governor Regarding the Fiscal Year 2008-09 Budget

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) approve sending a letter to the Governor requesting full funding for transportation in the proposed Fiscal Year 2008-09 State Budget.

BACKGROUND

Every year in January the Governor releases a proposed budget for the State for the upcoming fiscal year. That proposed Fiscal Year 2008-09 State Budget is currently being developed by the Governor's office. In recent years the State Budget has not included full funding for transportation. This has delayed projects and made it difficult for transportation agencies, Caltrans and local jurisdictions to maintain the current system and also to make improvements.

DISCUSSION

A letter to the Governor as the FY 2008-09 State Budget is being developed may help increase the level of funding for transportation. Therefore, staff recommends that the RTC approve sending a letter to the Governor requesting full funding for transportation in the State's FY 2008 -09 budget. Staff plans to make the following points in the letter to the Governor:

1. Do not divert transportation funds to the State General Fund, especially revenues from the sales tax on gasoline (as approved by voters in Proposition 42 and Proposition 1A), spillover and other revenues designated for the Public Transportation Account (PTA);
2. Include full funding of local streets and roads programs;
3. Fully fund the Safe Routes to Schools and Bicycle Transportation Account programs;
4. Support efforts to index and increase the state gas and fuel tax, vehicle license fees, and other taxes and fees that are dedicated to transportation; and
5. Assist local agencies to increase their ability to raise funds, making them less dependent on the state, by working with the legislature to:
 - a. Reduce the voter threshold for new sales taxes from 2/3 to a simple majority or 55%;

- b. Give regions the authority to increase Vehicle License Fees; and
- c. Give all regions the authority to increase local gas taxes/fees

SUMMARY

The Governor's office is currently preparing the State's proposed budget for FY 2008-09. Staff recommends that the RTC approve sending a letter to the Governor requesting full funding for transportation.

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