

AGENDA: April 2, 2009

TO: Regional Transportation Commission
FROM: George Dondero, Executive Director
RE: Director's Report

For Information Only

Assembly Hearing on Federal Stimulus at Local Level

The Assembly Committees on Local Government and Housing and Community Development held an informational hearing on March 25 to look at "How Cities, Counties and COGs are using American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Funds for Local Projects." Local Government Committee Chair Anna Caballero (D-Salinas) and Housing Committee Chair Norma Torres (D-Pomona) both emphasized their interest in learning how the state could help local governments receive and spend federal stimulus dollars with an eye toward creating jobs. The Committees heard from the Legislative Analyst's Office on the type and amount of federal dollars available for housing and transportation projects and was told about the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency's latest initiative to request Regional Economic Recovery Work Plans from twelve zones throughout the state. Gary Gallegos, Executive Director of the San Diego Association of Governments and I each testified on how our counties are making use of the stimulus funds for transportation projects. After describing projects receiving funds in Santa Cruz County, and expressing thanks for those funds, I pointed out that in countywide there is a \$250M backlog of local road repair work waiting for funding, and a \$2 B shortfall for all transportation needs in the county over the next 20 years.

Safe on 17 Anniversary Event

Just a reminder that the Safe on 17 10-Year Safe on 17 Anniversary Event is scheduled for April 6, at 9:30am. Flyers are available at the table at the rear of the room. The bus tour is going to be a great way to bring the attention to a decade of efforts to improve safety in the corridor, and will provide a unique view of the corridor and its challenges. The Santa Cruz Sentinel ran an article about safety on Highway 17 with a focus the Freeway Service Patrol. Thanks to Joe McDonald of Ladd's Towing for taking the Sentinel reporter for a ride-a-long.

Legislation

Now that the legislature has a budget in place, and has passed a bill authorizing a pass-through of federal stimulus funds to the regions, they can hopefully focus on some of the many transportation related bills introduced this session. We are tracking many of these bills, and will provide a report to the Commission at our May 7 or May 21 meeting. At the COG Directors meeting on March 16, we discussed several of these, including

- **ACA 9** which changes the vote to approve local government bonds and special taxes from two-thirds to 55%;
- **SB406** a bill to authorize an MPO, COG or RTPA to adopt a resolution to impose a \$2 motor vehicle registration surcharge, to develop and implement a regional blueprint plan
- **AB 231** would create an account for AB32 generated revenues for greenhouse emissions mitigation and reduction.

CalCOG Regional Issues Forum

This annual event will be held April 29 – May 1 in Monterey. RTC Delegate Mark Stone and I will join other delegates and directors from around the state to dig into current and upcoming legislative, funding and organizational issues around transportation. RTC consultant Steve Schnaidt will present on a panel looking at state legislation and funding issues.

Staff

On April 1 we recognized Senior Planner Cory Caletti for ten years of service to the RTC. We hope the Cory enjoys the next ten years at agency even more. She coordinates RTC's bicycle and pedestrian programs, and is here today to introduce agenda item #26.