

Statewide Infrastructure Bond Measure
Priority Projects by Category

Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
February 2, 2006

If the state's Infrastructure Bond Measure includes earmarked transportation projects, the following projects are proposed to be submitted by the SCCRTC. The projects are listed by category and are not in priority order. The Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC) supports these projects.

Proposed Projects for the Regional Priority Routes – Congestion Relief Category

Improvement to the Highway 1 corridor has been identified as the highest priority of the RTC for several years. The Highway 1 Auxiliary Lane Projects between Soquel Avenue and Morrissey Boulevard (\$8.5 million), and between Bay Avenue/Porter Street and Park Avenue (\$15 million) were identified as the most cost-effective congestion relief projects on the Highway 1 corridor in Caltrans's Operational Improvement Project Study Report prepared in 2002. In the event funding was secured through a bond measure for the Soquel/Morrissey project, the \$8.5 million currently programmed in the proposed 2006 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) would be available for other projects.

Staff does not recommend inclusion of the Highway 1 HOV Lane Widening Project, over concern that the project could not meet a timely delivery requirement thereby risk losing allocated funds and/or the opportunity to nominate other worthy project efforts on the priority list based on a fair share allocation. Once the current Project Approval/Environmental Documentation (PA/ED) process on the Highway 1 HOV Lane project has progressed to the selection of the preferred alternative, currently scheduled in the Fall of 2007, it will be feasible to identify and deliver effective elements of the project in a timely manner.

Proposed Projects for the Maintenance and Rehabilitation of Regional Roads Category

As we all know, the condition of our local roadways has worsened due to insufficient transportation revenues and redirection of Prop 42 funds over the past few years. The cost of rehabilitating those roadways increases exponentially as maintenance funds are further deferred. This program category was identified as the highest priority by the Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC). Inclusion of a funding category for roadway rehabilitation projects has been strongly supported by the Rural Counties Task Force of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) in discussion with key staff of Caltrans and California Transportation Commission. The recommended funding level of \$23 million is equivalent to the annual need reported by cities and county in preparation of the Regional Transportation Plan.

Proposed Projects for the Transit Category

The project identified in the Transit category was taken from the list of projects adopted by the Santa Cruz County Transit District (METRO) as part of their 2006 State Legislative Agenda in the event a new state transportation funding measure were to include specific projects. The ITAC advised against inclusion of the full list of projects adopted by METRO, to allow inclusion of other projects (e.g. the Auxiliary Lanes and Maintenance and Rehabilitation of Regional Roads) in the RTC Priority Project List within a fair share expectation of available funds. METRO staff participated in the ITAC and voted for the ITAC recommendation. From METRO's list of projects, the ITAC recommends inclusion of the Bus/Diesel/CNG Conversion - \$6.8 million.

Other projects included in METRO's list of projects (not included above) are:

- o Fixed Route Bus Replacement - \$10,000,000
- o ParaCruz Van fleet expansion/replacement - \$1,460,000
- o Automated Vehicle Location System - \$5,000,000
- o Administration Facility Development - \$6,000,000
- o Pacific Station Construction 0 \$4,000,000

Proposed Projects for the Corridor Mobility Category

Staff recommends inclusion of the Highway 1/9 Intersection (including bike/pedestrian crossing of Highway 1 near San Lorenzo River) in the Corridor Mobility category, due the congestion experienced at that location on a daily basis, and the critical role Highway 9 serves as the main street and lifeline of the San Lorenzo Valley communities. The ITAC supported this project for inclusion in the Priority Project List. There is a Project Study Report prepared by Caltrans on this project.

Proposed Projects for the Non-Motorized Transportation Category

Staff recommends inclusion in the Non-Motorized Transportation category (pedestrian and bike facilities) funds for the Santa Cruz Coastal Trail Network which could include, but not be limited to, the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail (MBSST), Coastal Rail Trail, Wilder Ranch Phase 2, East Cliff Drive Bike/Pedestrian Path. A decision would be made at a later date where to focus the funds, subject to project eligibility criteria adopted with the transportation bond measure. The Bike Committee recommended inclusion of this category in the Project Priority List, with no specific project recommendations, but funded at \$50 million for the "Coastal Rail Trail" network and another \$20 million to be shared by the county and cities for high priority bike projects. Staff and the ITAC recommend \$5 million.

Proposed Projects for the Traffic Operation System Improvements Category

Traffic Operation System Improvement category in the Governor's proposal does not include specified projects at this time. The staff and ITAC recommendation is to provide \$10 million for Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) applications that offer management strategies to improve the safety and operational efficiency of Highway 1 and Highway 17 and provide information to users to consider in their driving decisions. Caltrans has prepared Project Study Reports (PSR) for TOS improvements for Highway 1 and Highway 17 in 2001 and 2003, respectively. Specific improvements could include coordinated traffic signal systems between the highway ramps and adjacent arterial roadways, and electronic monitoring/notification systems including changeable message signs, highway advisory radio, closed-circuit television and microwave detection systems. This funding would be used to supplement existing systems and establish a Traffic Management Center which serves as a single point of contact for emergency services, media and the traveling public. Funding provided in this program could be used to augment existing project budgets to expand TOS applications, such as the Highway 1 HOV Lane Project, the Highway 17 Glenwood Curve Project, or as a stand alone improvement effort on these corridors.