



NEVADA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Grass Valley • Nevada City • Nevada County • Truckee

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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Nevada County Transportation Commission

FROM: Daniel B. Landon, Executive Director 

SUBJECT: Executive Director's Report for the March 21, 2012 Meeting

DATE: March 9, 2012

1. 2012 STATE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Attached is a copy of the California Transportation Commission (CTC) staff recommendations for the 2012 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The Executive Director of the CTC is required to make the staff recommendations available to the CTC, Caltrans, and regional agencies at least twenty days prior to the adoption of the STIP. The CTC will receive comments on these recommendations and adopt the STIP at its March 28-29, 2012 meeting. The staff recommendations propose programming many highway and road projects later than proposed in the Regional Transportation Improvement Programs (RTIPs). These changes were necessary to align programming to the capacity-by-year identified in the STIP Fund Estimate. The CTC staff recommendations are primarily based on:

- the need identified in the STIP Fund Estimate to delay projects currently programmed in FY 2012/13;
- the programming targets identified in the STIP Fund Estimate, especially the base (minimum) targets, for the share period ending FY 2015/16;
- project priorities and scheduling recommended by regional agencies in their RTIPs; and
- CTC policies, as expressed in the STIP Guidelines, including projects that fund later components of projects previously included in the STIP.

It should be noted that the CTC intended to focus on RTIP proposals that meet state highway improvement needs, as described in the CTC STIP Guidelines. Finally, programming capacity, as depicted in the STIP, does not represent cash. Rather, it represents the level of programming commitments that the CTC may make to projects for each year within the STIP period.

The CTC staff recommendations for the Nevada County RTIP are that all projects be programmed as submitted. NCTC staff believes that CTC staff were able to make these recommendations based on the fact that NCTC had "banked" its shares in previous STIPs and therefore had a significant balance to be programmed prior to the end of the county share period in FY 2015/16. Also, NCTC has focused on state highway projects and therefore CTC staff were able to recommend programming more than NCTC's target shares for the development of the SR 49 widening from La Barr Meadows Road to McKnight Way.

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2. DORSEY DRIVE INTERCHANGE STATUS

On January 20, 2012 the City of Grass Valley released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for construction management services for the Dorsey Drive Interchange. The purpose for the RFP was to select a consulting firm that will provide all of the required construction engineering services necessary to complete a constructability review, project inspection, quality control, materials testing, safety, storm water quality, claims mitigation, document control, and construction management services for the Dorsey Drive Interchange project. The consulting firm will provide a Resident Engineer, as well as a Construction Manager. The Construction Manager will oversee a review of the Dorsey Drive plans for document completeness, compatibility between documents, overall coherency and constructability. The review will also include a value engineering review of the plans to assure an economical and efficient construction, possible construction claims, construction staging, safety, project schedule, and provide an estimate of the number of working days required to complete the project.

The City of Grass Valley received seven responses to their RFP. Three of the seven firms were interviewed on March 8th and a recommendation for award of the contract will be presented to the City Council on March 13th.

3. NORTH STATE SUPER REGION TRANSPORTATION FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STUDY

In April 2011 Caltrans awarded a planning and research grant of \$225,000 to the Shasta County Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) on behalf of the sixteen county North State Super Region (NSSR). The purpose of the grant is to conduct a study to identify transportation investments that can be made throughout the Super Region in support of economic development. In February 2012 the Shasta County RTPA received proposals from firms interested in conducting the "North State Transportation for Economic Development Study". A committee made up of NSSR members has selected a consortium headed by the System Metrics Group, Inc. to conduct this study during the period of February 2012 through December 2012. System Metrics Group, Inc. is a firm with staff who are knowledgeable in transportation forecasting, travel demand management, and geographic information systems. To complement the staff from System Metrics Group, Inc., additional firms have been added to their team that include: *EDR Group*, with expertise in tying transportation and economic development together; *Wahlstrom & Associates*, a firm familiar with economic issues in the North State; *DKS Associates*, which is a traffic engineering firm that has developed travel demand models in many of the North State counties; *Dave Singleton*, a consultant with extensive experience working with Indian tribes; and *Susan Jones Moses Associates*, a firm that has experience in working on economic development projects in the North State.

For purposes of this study, the consultant team is characterizing the NSSR as consisting of three general subareas:

1. Coastal Area – made up of Lake, Mendocino, Trinity, Humboldt, and Del Norte Counties;
2. Sacramento Valley – made up of Shasta, Tehama, Butte, Glenn, and Colusa Counties;
3. Mountain Area – made up of Siskiyou, Modoc, Lassen, Plumas, Sierra, and Nevada Counties.

The consulting team plans to hold mini-conferences in each of the subareas to discuss economic and transportation issues, and to identify economic development targets and potential transportation needs.

Task 1 of the study will be for the consulting group's economic team to assemble and assess key aspects of the North State's economic landscape in a form that highlights changes occurring in the economy and commercial connections with state, national, and international supply chains and markets. The sub-team will work in consultation with local economic development corporations, economic development districts, the Center for Economic Development at California State University, Chico, and the Shasta College Economic and Workforce Development group, as well as other relevant stakeholders.

While the economic team is developing that information, the team devoted to documenting the transportation landscape will collect data relevant to understanding the transportation infrastructure available in the North State, and will consider travel demand and capacity expansion needs, along with maintenance and rehabilitation needs in the region. The transportation team will also briefly discuss the availability of commercial aviation in the region, since it can be a limiting factor for economic growth. The team will work with RTPAs, each of the three Caltrans districts involved, private sector entities, and other relevant stakeholders identified during the study process.

In Task 2 of the study, the consulting team will develop economic performance measures for evaluating the North State's planned transportation improvements. The primary goal of this task is to demonstrate how proposed transportation projects will perform in terms of evolving state and federal transportation funding priorities. This task will include a deliverable that is a technical memorandum that identifies primary and secondary performance measures and the results of applying these measures to fiscally constrained and unconstrained projects in the transportation system.

In Task 3 the consulting team will identify and assess alternative strategies, both transportation and economic development strategies, in consultation with the transportation and economic development stakeholders. In one part of the task, the consulting team will work with stakeholders to identify current and emerging industries that are transportation reliant and those that are less reliant on traditional transportation projects. As a part of this task, the team will also evaluate the relative merits and economic benefit of travel demand strategies as an alternative to, or in conjunction with, transportation system expansion. One example of this type of economic development strategy may be to promote access to recreational facilities, park lands, or tribal lands.

Task 4 will bring together findings and recommendations in a final report. The consulting team will provide a Super Region perspective, but the data, findings, and recommendations will be broken down by individual counties. The report will include a series of project, policy, and program recommendations for collaboration between the transportation and economic development communities that will yield the greatest economic benefit. The focus will be on how transportation planning can assist the local economy. Transportation investments are just one of several collaborative activities that may include other forms of public-private capital investments (e.g., enhancements to industrial parks, housing, or recreational facilities) and supporting programs (e.g., economic incentive, regulation, or training programs). The final report will identify areas for meaningful coordination and planning between the economic and transportation sectors.

Task 5 will be initiated after completing the final report. The consulting team will ensure that all spatially-related data developed as a part of the project is compatible with the North State's regional Geographic Information System (GIS) platform currently under development by the Shasta County RTPA. Although this GIS platform is a Shasta initiative, North State counties are being invited to piggyback on the regional server.

4. DESIGNATION OF NON-ATTAINMENT AREAS UNDER THE EPA'S 2008 NATIONAL AMBIENT AIR QUALITY STANDARDS FOR GROUND LEVEL OZONE

On February 14, 2012 NCTC staff received information regarding implementation of the 2008 National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Ozone. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has notified California Governor Brown that they intend to lower the primary eight-hour ozone standard from 0.08 parts per million to 0.075 parts per million, to protect against health effects associated with ozone exposure. As a first step in implementing these 2008 ozone standards, the U.S. EPA had asked states to submit their recommendations regarding appropriate area boundaries. It was a part of that process that led NCTC and Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District to develop information for the California Air Resources Board and U.S. EPA regarding maintaining western Nevada County as an ozone non-attainment area separate from Sacramento. Development of those recommendations led to Commissioner Scofield and Supervisor Owens to travel to Washington, D.C. with Executive Director Landon and consultant John Dunlap in June 2011. After considering the ozone designation recommendations that were presented to the U.S. EPA and our congressional delegation in June, the U.S. EPA indicates that they intend to continue the designation of western Nevada County as a separate non-attainment ozone area. The U.S. EPA sent this information to Governor Brown in a letter dated December 9, 2011, and attached to the letter was a technical support document. It is interesting to note that much of the technical support data related to western Nevada County that was presented to the U.S. EPA in Washington was also included in their technical support document sent to the governor.

Maintaining this separate boundary designation is important because if western Nevada County were combined with Sacramento ozone non-attainment area, it would result in a heavier regulatory burden on local businesses and residents in Nevada County, with a negligible air quality benefit. Sacramento has developed regulations for over one hundred source categories, including bakeries, coffee roasters, residential water heaters, wineries, and residential wood combustion. The miniscule portion of western Nevada County's ozone that results from these activities within western Nevada County would not be substantially affected by more stringent regulations. Most of the measures that Sacramento area has adopted thus far, and could adopt in the future, would essentially have no effect in reducing ozone concentrations if implemented in western Nevada County; either they are impractical for rural implementation or the regulated source categories are exceedingly small. In addition, new businesses could be deterred from opening in western Nevada County in order to avoid such burdensome controls.

5. REAUTHORIZATION OF FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION BILL

The last federal transportation bill, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), expired in September 2009, but has been extended with Congress passing continuing resolutions. The most recent and eighth continuing resolution extends the bill through March 2012. Both the Senate and the House of Representatives have developed bills in an attempt to get a reauthorization bill that can be approved by Congress and ultimately signed by the President before the end of March. Both bills focus on consolidating programs to provide increased flexibility, streamlining project delivery, and do not include earmarks. However, like previous surface transportation bills, the issue of how to adequately fund them is once again a major hurdle. Both the Senate and House committed to finding the necessary funding from other means than raising the federal gasoline tax, which has not been increased since 1993. If the March 31st deadline cannot be achieved, Congress would be faced with having to pass another continuing resolution to extend the previous federal transportation bill.

The Senate's Environmental and Public Works Committee (EPW), chaired by Senator Barbara Boxer, has developed a bi-partisan proposal to reauthorize the Federal-aid highway programs called Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21). The bill would invest about \$109 billion over two years, while maintaining the current funding levels plus inflation. Based on the projected Highway Trust Fund (HTF) revenue, the Senate Finance Committee was tasked with identifying an additional \$5.5 billion of budget revenue offsets in order to fully fund this proposal. On February 7, 2012 the Senate Finance Committee approved a list of budget revenue offsets needed to fully fund MAP-21 and the bill has been forwarded to the Senate floor.

A large number of amendments have been proposed for the bill and Majority Leader Harry Reid failed to win a key vote in the Senate on March 6, 2012 that would have ended debate and forged significant progress toward passage of a two-year transportation bill. Needing 60 votes to pass, only 52 Senators voted in favor of the measure and 44 voted against it. The vote means Reid and top Senate Republican Mitch McConnell must continue to negotiate a list of amendments that will be allowed for individual consideration on the floor. It is the second time this type of vote on the bill has failed since it was first brought to the Senate floor.

The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, chaired by Congressman John Mica, developed a proposal for a five-year \$260 billion bill to fund the nations' surface transportation programs (highway, transit, and rail) called the American Energy and Infrastructure Jobs Act (H.R. 7). The funding levels proposed are consistent with current year spending, but are less than what is proposed in MAP-21. In order to pay for the entire bill, approximately \$50 billion in new revenue is needed to supplement the projected HTF revenue over the five-year timeframe. Additionally, the bill proposes to remove transit funding from the HTF, which would make it vulnerable to the annual budget process.

While highway bills have traditionally been supported by both sides of the aisle, H.R.7 is drawing serious opposition because it would partially be paid for by a series of new domestic oil and gas drilling proposals, including the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska. Given this opposition, there have been rumors that the House is considering shifting from a five-year reauthorization to releasing a short-term bill.

6. WESTERN NEVADA COUNTY PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION GOVERNANCE STUDY

The Project Advisory Committee (PAC) met on January 31, 2012 to review and comment on the Technical Memorandum prepared by the consultant, LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc. The Technical Memorandum included a summary of existing transit services in western Nevada County, institutional arrangements, administrative costs, funding responsibilities, an overview of the various alternatives for the governance of public transportation, and peer transit agency data. A public workshop was also held on January 31, 2012 at the Grass Valley City Hall to provide an overview of the study purpose, existing governance model, and alternative structures. Following these meetings, the consultant took into consideration the input received from the PAC and the public and prepared an analysis of the governance alternatives, privatization options, recommendations, and an implementation plan to incorporate this information into the draft report. The consultant is scheduled to present the draft report to the Transit Services Commission (TSC) at their March 21, 2012 meeting. Comments received will be addressed in the final report that will be presented to the TSC at their May 16, 2012 meeting.

7. TOWN OF TRUCKEE MOBILITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc., is working on completing the analysis of strategies and solutions that will be detailed in Technical Memorandum #2. This information will be presented to the PAC for review and comment at a public meeting in early April 2012. The input received will guide the selection of the preferred alternatives, and any revisions will be incorporated into the draft report that will be presented to the Truckee Town Council in May 2012. The final report will be presented to the Truckee Town Council at a meeting in June 2012.

attachment

2012 STIP STAFF RECOMMENDATION - COUNTY SHARE

Does Not Include ITIP Interregional Share Funding (See Separate Listing)
(\$1,000's)

Agency	Rte	PNO	Project	Ext	Del.	Voted	Total	Project Totals by Fiscal Year							Project Totals by Component				
								Prior	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	RW	Const	E & P	PS&E	RR sup	Con Sup
STIP Projects at Fund Estimate (August 2011)																			
Nevada CTC		01.83	Planning, programming, and monitoring			Jul-10	95	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Calltrans	20	3976	Dorsey Drive interchange				16,660	6,105	10,555	0	0	0	0	0	3,000	10,555	1,250	655	1,200
Calltrans	89	3L43	"Mousehole" grade separation (06S-01)				498	498	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	498	0	0
Nevada CTC		01.83	Planning, programming, and monitoring				343	100	81	81	81	0	0	0	0	343	0	0	0
			Total Existing STIP				17,596	6,798	10,636	81	81	0	0	0	3,000	10,993	1,748	655	1,200
PROPOSED 2012 PROGRAMMING																			
Highway Project Proposals:																			
Calltrans	89	3L43	"Mousehole" grade separation (06S-01)				-498	-498	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-498	0	0
Calltrans	89	3L43	"Mousehole" grade separation (06S-01) (SHOPP)				1,798	498	0	1,300	0	0	0	0	0	1,300	498	0	0
Calltrans	20	3976	Dorsey Drive interchange				-16,660	-8,105	-10,555	0	0	0	0	0	-3,000	-10,555	-1,250	-655	-1,200
Calltrans	20	3976	Dorsey Drive interchange				7,405	7,405	0	0	0	0	0	0	4,300	0	1,250	655	1,200
Gross Valley	loc	3978	RI 20, Dorsey Drive interchange				14,155	0	14,155	0	0	0	0	0	0	14,155	0	0	0
Calltrans	49	4117	La Barr - McKnight widening (env)			NEW	6,000	0	0	0	0	3,000	3,000	0	0	0	3,000	3,000	0
Nevada County	loc	NEW	RI 49, Signal Preemption - three locations		SOF	NEW	138	0	0	0	0	136	0	0	0	121	0	15	0
Nevada CTC		01.83	Planning, programming, and monitoring				-243	0	-81	-81	-81	0	0	0	0	-243	0	0	0
Nevada CTC		01.83	Planning, programming, and monitoring				397	0	81	81	81	47	107	0	0	397	0	0	0
			Subtotal, Highway Projects				12,480	1,300	3,600	0	1,300	3,183	3,107	1,300	5,175	3,000	3,015	0	0
			Total Proposed 2012 STIP Programming				12,490	1,300	3,600	0	1,300	3,183	3,107	1,300	5,175	3,000	3,015	0	0

Notes:
RTIP adopted 12/14. Received 12/15.

Balance of STIP County Share, Nevada	
Total County Share, June 30, 2011	23,302
Programmed at Fund Estimate	17,596
Unprogrammed Share Balance	5,706
Share Balance Advanced or Overdrawn	0
Proposed New Programming	12,490
Minimum Target	6,646
Maximum Target	8,792
Under (Over) Target	(3,698)