

REPORT TO SHASTA COUNTY RTPA

SUBJECT	MEETING DATE	ITEM NUMBER
Agency Policy for Commenting on Regionally Significant Projects & Shasta County Courthouse Comment Letter to the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC)	4/28/09	7

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board:

- 1) Provide direction regarding the Agency's policy for commenting on new development proposals; and
- 2) If consistent with the Board's policy direction, authorize the Chair to sign the attached comment letter to the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) regarding site selection of the new Shasta County courthouse.

SUMMARY

Chairman Dickerson has requested that the RTPA forward the attached letter to the AOC recommending that the new Shasta County courthouse remain in Downtown Redding. The RTPA does not typically comment on new development proposals; however, this is certainly within the purview of the RTPA which is a "responsible agency" under the California Environmental Quality Act. Staff has provided a range of options regarding the types of projects where RTPA staff could provide comment. Board direction is requested.

DISCUSSION

Agency Policy for Commenting on Regionally Significant Projects – The RTPA is responsible for regional transportation policy and funding, including new land use responsibilities under Senate Bill 375. It is the current practice of RTPA staff to only comment on regionally significant projects outside Shasta County (i.e., Del Webb) and to comment in support of area grants related to transportation. Staff requests direction from the Board regarding the types of projects for which the Agency should comment. The Board may choose among some or all of the following alternatives:

1. As directed by the Chair or full Board.
2. The above, plus comments on transportation projects; in support of grants; to provide technical information; and for regionally significant projects and plans outside Shasta County impacting our region.
3. The above, plus planning documents within Shasta County at the discretion of the Executive Director.
4. The above, plus regionally significant projects within Shasta County at the discretion of the Executive Director.

Items 1 and 2 represent current practice. Choosing all four items would generate about ten to twenty letters per year (presently one to two comment letters per year is typical). Letters signed by staff would be provided for the Board's information within the "Correspondence" section of RTPA agendas.

Shasta County Courthouse Comments – The AOC is considering at least three sites for the new Shasta County courthouse: two in Downtown Redding and one in the City of Anderson. Final site selection is determined by the AOC.

According to the AOC's Shasta County Courthouse Feasibility Report dated November 7, 2008, selection factors for the new courthouse include site availability, adequate space for all necessary structures and parking, and a real estate market analysis. In addition, the AOC must establish and work with an advisory group of individuals or representatives of entities affected by the court facility.

Traffic impacts are not listed among the AOC's selection criteria.

The attached comment letter recommends the location of the courthouse remain in Downtown Redding. The recommendation is based on regional mobility and accessibility concerns as well as SB 375 compliance issues. As directed by the Board, the letter will be submitted to the AOC for their consideration.

ALTERNATIVES

The Board may provide other guidance regarding RTPA letters or leave it entirely to the discretion of the Executive Director.

The Board may choose not to authorize the Chair to sign the attached comment letter, or to authorize the letter for signature with desired modifications.

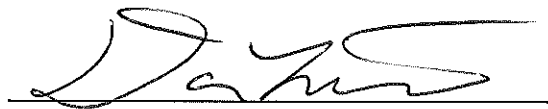
OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

The proposed Shasta County courthouse site locations are in the City of Anderson and the City of Redding.

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) has reviewed this item and recommends that the RTPA comment on all four types of projects outlined.

FINANCING

There is adequate funding available to review projects and provide the additional comment letters. No fiscal impact would directly result from the attached AOC letter.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Little', written over a horizontal line.

Daniel S. Little, AICP, Executive Director

DSL/DTW/jac

Attachments: Shasta County Courthouse Comment Letter



Shasta County

Regional Transportation
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Daniel S. Little, Executive Director

April 28, 2009

Administrative Office of the Courts
Office of Court Construction and Management
2880 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 300
Sacramento, CA 95833-3509

Subject: Location of the New Shasta County Courthouse

In regard to the location of the new Shasta County courthouse, it is understood that three sites have been proposed for consideration by the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC): two in the City of Redding and one in the City of Anderson. Based on traffic studies for other courthouse projects, this 173,000 square foot facility is estimated to generate 7,500 daily vehicle trips. This is the equivalent of a 750 unit housing project. In deliberating your decision, the following transportation related factors need to be included:

- **Consider the impact of projected future congestion levels on travel time between support facilities, including the county jail and proposed courthouse sites.** North/south travel corridors between the City of Anderson and Downtown Redding are limited to Interstate 5 and State Route 273. Congestion on these roadways is typically within acceptable levels, but will degrade over time with no funding program in place to address the increasing travel demand. These corridors are projected to fall into gridlock during peak hours by the year 2030. What may take 15-20 minutes to drive today is expected to take 30-40 minutes in the future.
- **Consider equitable public access to the courthouse.** The Redding Area Bus Authority (RABA) has one route that provides limited (once every two hours) service between the City of Anderson and Redding. By contrast, the Downtown Transit Center is located one block east of the current and proposed Redding sites. The Downtown Transit Center is the central transfer point for all ten of RABA's regular routes, plus the Burney Express.
- **Consider consistency with other state agencies' objectives and programs.** Shasta County is under a state mandate (AB 32 and SB 375) to reduce greenhouse gas emission and other pollutants resulting from vehicle miles traveled within the region. Land use decisions that reduce the number and length of trips are critical to success in meeting regional and statewide greenhouse gas reduction targets. State agencies need to lead by example and follow their own imposed mandates.

The SCRTPA recommends the location of the new Shasta County courthouse remain in Downtown Redding.

Sincerely Yours,

Dick Dickerson, Chair
Shasta County Regional Transportation
Planning Agency (MPO)

DD/jac