



STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE:	10/22/13
SUBJECT:	Accept North State Transportation for Economic Development Study (NSTEDS) Final Report
AGENDA ITEM:	9
STAFF CONTACT:	Daniel Wayne, Senior Transportation Planner

SUMMARY:

State and federal transportation partners are placing a greater emphasis on economic benefit when selecting projects for funding. The North State Transportation for Economic Development Study (NSTEDS) will be used by the sixteen-county North State Super Region to build an economic case for transportation investments in the North State.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the board of directors accept the North State Transportation for Economic Development Study (NSTEDS) final report.

DISCUSSION:

All regions rely to some degree on competitively awarded state and federal transportation grants to meet their respective mobility needs. In light of the recession, economic benefit is now a common criteria used in the selection of transportation projects for funding. SRTA's performance measures do not include economic outputs. SRTA could apply economic measures commonly used by larger metropolitan regions, but these tend to be congestion focused and discount the impact of transportation investments in small urban and rural regions.

The North State Super Region received a \$225,000 State Planning and Research grant from Caltrans to better understand and document the economic benefits of transportation investments from a North State perspective. SRTA served as lead agency for this effort, known as the *North State Transportation for Economic Development Study*. The board of directors approved a technical services contract in February of 2012 with System Metrics Group to complete the study.

The attached final report benefits SRTA and other North State regions in several ways:

- 1) It provides a comprehensive compilation of transportation and economic development activities, projects, and data¹ for the North State. This information will also be available via the agency's online map viewer (www.FarNorCalGIS.org).
- 2) An economic model was utilized to translate transportation performance measures (e.g. travel time, safety, congestion, etc.) into economic effects (e.g. labor productivity, business operating costs, etc.) and then to final economic outcomes (e.g. jobs creation, gross regional product, etc.). These economic outcomes will be referenced in future transportation plans and grant applications².
- 3) Implementation strategies highlight opportunities to help shape state and federal transportation policy and improve coordination between transportation and economic planning and projects³.

ALTERNATIVES:

The board of directors may delay acceptance of the final report and request specific modifications.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

Grant funds for this study are administered by the California Department of Transportation. All regional transportation agencies representing the sixteen-county North State Super Region contributed to the development of the study. Economic development councils, districts, and corporations representing the same geographic area were likewise engaged in the process.

FINANCING:

This effort was fully financed through a State Planning & Research grant. Acceptance of the final report has no direct fiscal impact to the agency; however, SRTA (and other North State regions) may borrow from and reference the study to compete for state and federal grants.



Daniel S. Little, AICP, Executive Director

Attachments: *North State Transportation for Economic Development Study (Final Report) is available online at http://www.srta.ca.gov/RTstudy_current.htm*

c: North State Super Region Executive Directors

¹ See Final Report: Transportation Landscape, Economic Landscape, and Appendices A – E

² See Final Report: Transportation and Economic Development Interactions

³ See Final Report: Study Recommendations