

## REPORT TO SHASTA COUNTY RTPA

| SUBJECT                                                                                                                                                                      | MEETING<br>DATE | ITEM<br>NUMBER |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Conduct Public Hearing and Accept Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) Project Nomination List and Direct Staff to Prepare 2002 RTIP for December RTPA Meeting | 10/23/01        | 6              |

### RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Agency hold a public hearing and direct staff to prepare the 2002 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) pursuant to Table 1 in this report.

### SUMMARY

Based on prior direction from the Agency, staff has developed a list of \$50 million in new transportation projects for programming in the 2002 RTIP. Programming constitutes a commitment of state and federal transportation funds for development and delivery of these projects estimated to occur over the next two to six years. The recommended new project list is based on prior work efforts approved by the Agency as part of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). This included development of a new project selection methodology and a ranked list of projects to be funded in the short-term (2000-2010) RTP planning period. The 2002 RTIP will be presented for Agency approval at the December meeting.

### BACKGROUND

**Prior Agency Direction:** At the July 2000 meeting, the Agency directed staff to develop a project selection methodology and report back to the Agency with a prioritized list of \$50 million in transportation projects for the 2002 RTIP. The project selection methodology was crafted through a series of stakeholder workshops and public meetings. It was adopted by the Agency at the October 2000 meeting.

As part of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) - a twenty-five year assessment of transportation needs - agencies were asked to nominate projects for ranking pursuant to the project selection methodology. Staff then developed a prioritized list of short- (2000-2010) and long-range (2011-2025) projects which was reviewed and accepted by the Agency at their June 21, 2001, workshop.

The project selection methodology, the short-term list of RTP projects, and the \$50 million project target previously set by the Agency provides the basis for selecting new projects in the 2002 RTIP.

**RTIP Programming:** The 2002 RTIP - a five-year budget authorizing funds to develop and deliver specified projects - must be submitted to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) by December 15, 2001. RTIPs are required every two years. Based on State estimates and after funding existing RTIP commitments, money will be available to program new projects in the region.

Projects programmed in the current RTIP are shown on the project tracking chart attached to Item 3-2 of this agenda.

The programming of projects in the RTIP, once approved by the CTC, represents a commitment, or line of credit from the State to fund projects. The CTC anticipates an additional programming capacity of \$31 million in the 2002 RTIP over the five-year programming period ending 2007. Programming capacity refers to the amount of discretionary state and federal funds expected to be available to Shasta County for new projects.

On the face of it, the \$50 million project funding target set by the Agency appears inconsistent with the \$31 million in new programming capacity for the 2002 RTIP. This is reconciled by the fact that some projects, particularly large ones, are only partially programmed by phase. For example, only the environmental phase is typically programmed and bigger-dollar items like right-of-way and construction may not be programmed until 2004 when environmental is completed. By the 2004 RTIP cycle, two additional programming years and two years of funding are added. In Shasta County, an additional \$20 million in programming capacity is projected by 2004. As the RTIP continues in two year cycles, additional programming capacity is accumulated. Figure 1, attached, provides an example of how projects can be fully funded over several RTIP cycles.

#### DISCUSSION

**Methodology to Select New Projects for the 2002 RTIP:** As stated previously, new transportation projects proposed as part of the 2002 RTIP have been developed consistent with the short-term project list in the RTP and the project selection methodology previously adopted by the Agency. The RTP short-term list is reflected on Table 1.

Going down the RTP short-term list and starting with the highest ranked project (South Bonneyview Widening), the responsible agency was asked to either nominate the project for programming and begin delivery in 2002, or defer the project to a later RTIP cycle. Where the agency chose to proceed with the project, staff has recommended programming in the 2002 RTIP. Where the agency chose to defer the project, the next highest ranked project on the RTP short-term list was considered. This process was repeated until the \$50 million target was reached.

**Recommended 2002 RTIP Projects:** Table 1 shows all previously agreed upon short-term RTP projects. Among them, it specifies the seven new projects recommended for programming in the 2002 RTIP, the three projects where agencies elected to defer delivery (strike-out text), and the seven remaining, lower-ranked projects that fell below the \$50 million target.

**TABLE 1:**  
**RTP Short-Term Project Listing With Projects**  
**Recommended for Programming in 2002 RTIP**

| Rk.                                                     | Agency              | Projects Nominated/Not Nominated By Agency       | RTIP Share | RTIP Cost (Thousands) |
|---------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------|------------|-----------------------|
| Off-the-top                                             |                     | Base Allocations                                 | 100%       | \$5,400               |
| 1                                                       | Redding             | South Bonnyview: Four Lanes to SR 273            | 100%       | \$4,000               |
| 2                                                       | Caltrans            | SR 44: Four lanes to Palo Cedro                  | 50%        | \$7,530               |
| 3                                                       | <del>Caltrans</del> | <del>I-5: Six lanes Riverside to Bonnyview</del> | 50%        | <del>\$40,000</del>   |
| 4                                                       | Redding             | Parkview Bridge Over Sacramento River            | 85%        | \$12,685              |
| 5                                                       | Caltrans            | I-5: NB Cottonwood Hill Auxiliary Lane           | 50%        | \$1,768               |
| 6                                                       | Redding             | <del>Hilltop Dr.: Widen over I-5</del>           | 80%        | <del>\$10,000</del>   |
| 7                                                       | Caltrans            | SR 299: Buckhorn Grade Realignment               | 10%        | \$9,600               |
| 8                                                       | Redding             | Hilltop Dr.: Widen over SR 44                    | 100%       | \$1,200               |
| 9                                                       | <del>Caltrans</del> | <del>I-5: SB Truck Ln. at Cottonwood Hill</del>  | 50%        | <del>\$1,300</del>    |
| 10                                                      | Caltrans            | SR 44: Widen Liberty St. to Auditorium Dr.       | 70%        | \$7,821               |
| Subtotal of Projects Proposed for 2002 RTIP Programming |                     |                                                  |            | \$50,004              |
| Rk.                                                     | Agency              | Projects Below \$50 Million Target               | RTIP Share | RTIP Cost (Thousands) |
| 11                                                      | Shasta              | Deschutes Rd.: Widen from Palo Cedro North       | 84%        | \$1,200               |
| 12                                                      | Redding             | Airport Rd.: Improve Interchange at SR 44        | 100%       | \$12,130              |
| 13                                                      | Redding             | Placer Rd.: Widen from Airpark to Boston         | 81%        | \$6,000               |
| 14                                                      | Redding             | Airport Rd.: Widen from SR 44 to Anderson        | 100%       | \$18,316              |
| 15                                                      | Shasta              | Knighton Rd.: Extend West to SR 273              | 100%       | \$18,000              |
| 16                                                      | Caltrans            | SR 44: Psg. Lanes Palo Cedro to Shingletown      | 100%       | \$11,500              |
| 17                                                      | And.                | North St.: Widen through Anderson                | 100%       | \$3,554               |

Most of the projects recommended for programming have been in the planning stages for several years and have included substantive Agency involvement. Four of the seven projects - SR 44/Stillwater, Parkview Bridge, Buckhorn Grade, SR 44/Liberty to Auditorium - already received limited programming from the Agency for delivery of the environmental phase.

**Effect of \$50 Million Target on Future Funding Capacity:** The seven new projects, along with new base allocation projects (see below), total just over \$50 million. The 2002 RTIP will also include prior project commitments carried over from the current RTIP which totals approximately \$26.4 million. Based on these prior commitments, the \$50 million in new project commitments, and future fund estimates, it is likely that capacity to fund additional new projects will not be available until the 2008 RTIP cycle. In addition, depending on if projects are delivered ahead of schedule by agencies, some projects may need to wait one to two years to proceed with the right-of-way or construction phases. Such a scenario is unlikely, however, since project delays are common where Federal funds are involved.

It should be noted that the \$50 million cost estimate for new projects is subject to change based on outcomes of environmental review processes, scope changes and other factors. In an extreme example, the \$7,530 million estimate shown in Table 1 for the State Route 44 widening to Palo Cedro project is conservative and based on an expressway alternative as represented in the current environmental-only programming. This differs from another \$15,940 million estimate representing a full freeway alternative. The higher estimate was used during the project ranking to cover a "worst-case" (highest-cost) scenario for purposes of cost-benefit analysis. The actual cost will likely be somewhere in between but will not be known until an alternative is selected as part of the environmental process over the next two to three years.

**RTP Projects Not Selected for 2002 RTIP Programming:** Agency deferred projects and projects on the RTP short-term list below the \$50 million target, will be reconsidered during a later RTIP cycle when new programming capacity becomes available. Again, this is not anticipated to occur until the 2008 RTIP cycle.

**Base Allocation Projects:** In addition to the competitive selection of regional projects, base allocation projects will also be programmed as part of the 2002 RTIP. Base allocations offer guaranteed minimums for the cities and County to spend at their discretion. Base allocations have been provided in the past and are a useful tool for delivering smaller projects such as intersection improvements and road overlays. County and city base allocation projects will be specified at the December Agency meeting as part of the 2002 RTIP. Based on the Agency's prior direction, the \$50 million target includes a \$5.4 million base allocation - 10.8% of the total - distributed proportionately to population with a \$0.5 million minimum as follows:

| NEW BASE ALLOCATIONS |             |
|----------------------|-------------|
| Redding              | \$2,500,000 |
| Shasta County        | \$1,900,000 |
| Anderson             | \$500,000   |
| Shasta Lake          | \$500,000   |
| Total                | \$5,400,000 |

#### ALTERNATIVES

In addition to the staff recommended list of new projects, three alternatives are discussed below for Agency consideration:

**City of Redding Proposal (See Attached Letter):** The City of Redding has requested that the Agency grant the Redding City Council flexibility in programming the \$12.685 million for the Parkview Bridge Project for one of two alternate projects.

One alternate project is a downtown railroad grade overcrossing or undercrossing. This project was nominated by Redding during the RTP project selection process but competed poorly due to a high cost to benefit ratio. The project was ranked below all projected RTP funding levels. While the need for this project is undisputed, the benefit was difficult to quantify in contrast to relatively high cost. The cost-benefit model is geared toward high volume traffic benefits over twenty-four-hour-a-day use; whereas, a grade separation project provides traffic flow benefits only during train blockages. The inability of the cost-benefit model to gauge the traffic flow benefits combined with the relatively high cost of the project resulted in the low score and rank.

The second alternate project involves reopening the downtown mall to traffic. This project was not nominated by Redding and, therefore, not scored or ranked pursuant to the cost benefit methodology.

The attached City of Redding proposal was received after the October 9<sup>th</sup> TAC meeting and TAC was unable to provide a recommendation on this issue. Also attached is a letter of support from Frances Jenkins.

Staff does not recommend this alternative since it is not consistent with the project selection processes previously established in collaboration with TAC and based on prior guidance from the Agency. As a policy and final decision-making body, the Agency maintains discretion to approve projects based on other considerations. Therefore, this alternative is being presented to the Agency.

The programming of projects based on considerations beyond the regular process has occurred in other instances. The Buckhorn Grade and State Route 44 widening to Palo Cedro environmental programming was approved subsequent to the conclusion of the last project selection process at the urging of the Caltrans district director. It was approved by the Agency based its potential to leverage other non-RTIP funds from the State.

If the Agency is inclined to grant Redding's request, staff recommends delaying any programming of the Parkview Bridge until the Redding City Council decides on which project to build and provides a programming budget and schedule. In addition, staff requests guidance from the Agency regarding future consideration of the Parkview Bridge project should an alternate project be approved. Specifically, can the Parkview Bridge project be considered again for regional funds during future RTIP cycles?

**Program Additional Projects:** A second alternative is for the Agency to consider a more conservative funding target below the \$50 million previously authorized and remove one or more projects from the bottom of the staff-recommended project list. While this would reserve additional programming capacity for any immediately unforeseen transportation needs, this alternative is not recommended because historically - both locally and statewide - programming reserve capacity has been less of a practical concern than the need to facilitate more rapid delivery of projects.

**Remove Projects from Programming:** The Agency could also consider a more aggressive funding target by adding the next highest ranked project(s) from Table 1. This is not recommended due to uncertainties in future funding levels beyond 2008. Staff believes the recommended funding target and programming schedule represents the best balance between estimated project expenditures and funding availability.

#### OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

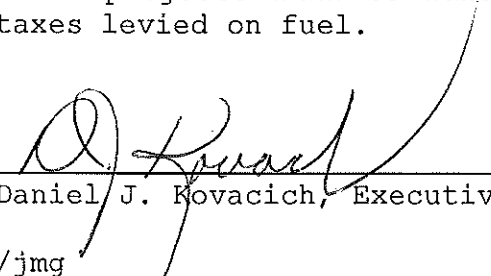
The RTP project selection methodology and short-term list of projects, from which the 2002 RTIP projects are based, was developed over two years with various forms of public and agency participation. An ad-hoc committee, the RTP Working Group, was developed and met regularly last year developing goals and policies to guide the RTP and project selection methodology. The RTP Working Group consisted of public and private interests. All meetings were noticed and open to the public. An RTP open house was held to inform interested members of the public about the transportation planning process and policies set forth in the RTP.

Unfortunately, all efforts to engage the public during RTP development, which represents the early planning stages of new projects, were met with little interest. This agenda item is a public hearing and public interest is anticipated to increase substantially since the 2002 RTIP represents a more definite commitment to specific projects.

The Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) was instrumental in developing the project selection methodology. TAC is the primary advisory body to the Agency and consists of representatives from the cities, the County, Caltrans, and transit agencies. Most fundamental to the 2002 RTIP project selection process was the individual choices by cities, the County and Caltrans to nominate specific projects and, if selected, agree to begin the necessary work for project delivery.

FINANCING

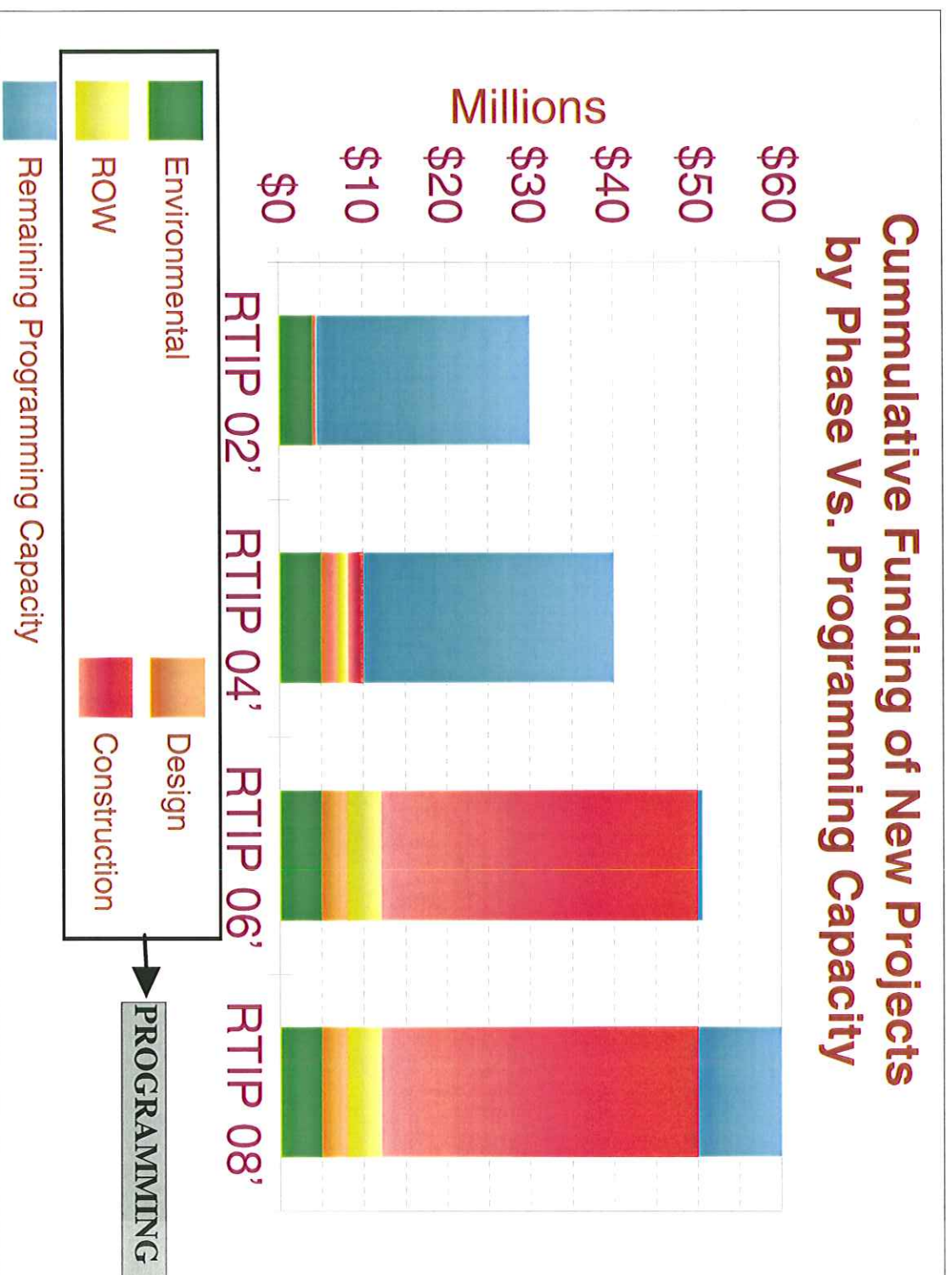
These projects will be funded from state and federal sources generated by taxes levied on fuel.



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Daniel J. Kovacich, Executive Officer  
/jmg

Attachments:     Figure 1  
                     Letter from City of Redding  
                     Public Comments Received to Date

FIGURE 1: Example of How \$50m in New Projects Can be Programmed Over Several RTIP Cycles



\*Under this simplistic scenario, programming capacity is reserved to fully deliver projects in 2006 RTIP cycle.

# CITY OF REDDING



Michael Warren, City Manager

Phillip A. Perry, Assistant City Manager

Kurt Starman, Deputy City Manager

## OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

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October 9, 2001

T-100-375

Board of Directors  
Regional Transportation Planning Agency  
1855 Placer Street  
Redding, CA 96001

Dear Board Members:

The purpose of this letter is to clarify one of Redding's nominations for the new State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funding cycle. As you are aware, the agencies in the County went through a comprehensive look at road and highway improvement needs in the County and the RTPA staff has scored a number of projects. One of the projects that did well was the Parkview Bridge.

In reviewing the City's nominations for funding, the Redding City Council determined to submit the Parkview Bridge with the caveat that the Council might want to select a different project in the Downtown area. The two likely candidates are the opening of the Downtown Mall to through traffic and a grade separation across the railroad south of the Mall.

There are two reasons we are submitting this request. The first reason is the result of public input. Some of the input we received was in opposition to the Parkview Bridge, some input was in favor of opening the Mall, and some input was on the need for a railroad over- or under-crossing. If the RTPA is agreeable, we would have considerably more discussions with the public regarding these projects.

The second reason was the support we received from other agencies. Jim Cain, the Shasta Lake City Manager, was not opposed to the City of Redding's request, nor was Pat Minturn, the Shasta County Public Works Director. I believe both of these individuals felt that the City of Redding would be in the best position to decide whether it would be more beneficial to utilize the \$12 million that has been allocated for the Parkview Bridge on that project or on either of the two Downtown projects. Thom Nieson, the Regional Director of Caltrans, indicated that he favored ideas that improved traffic circulation. Certainly, a railroad over- or under-crossing and traffic through the Downtown Mall would be two projects that would accomplish this goal. None of these three individuals indicated that a particular project would be best for traffic circulation, but that all of the projects can and should be reviewed.

Board of Directors

October 9, 2001

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When considering its projects to nominate, the Redding City Council declared its intent to hold a public hearing to take public input on how the money should be used to best benefit the community. While the City Council has heard from some advocates of various projects, it has not heard from all parts of the community. The Parkview Bridge and other identified projects are of such magnitude that the City Council feels it should have this input before making a final decision. The hearing would occur in November, with a final project being submitted to the Board by December.

We realize that this request could be a change from one project (Parkview Bridge) to another project (Downtown Mall or under-/over-crossing). We understand the reasoning of RTPA's staff and that they will recommend the projects that have been arrived at through an objective analysis. This is a correct stance for the RTPA staff and we applaud their consistency. The City of Redding is not recommending anything that will take money away from any other public agency, but only an opportunity to discuss how best to spend the money (with plenty of public input) that has already been allocated for a Redding project; i.e., Parkview Bridge. The City Council simply wants to do what is best for the community after having heard from the community regarding traffic circulation.

It is the request of the City that the RTPA set aside the funds for the Parkview Bridge for environmental and preliminary engineering in 2004-05, but give the City Council the flexibility of finalizing which project best benefits the community in November after a public hearing. Funding for final design and construction would be rescheduled in 2005-06.

Sincerely,

Michael Warren  
City Manager

MW/kr

cc: Jim Cain, City Manager, Shasta Lake  
Scott Morgan, City Manager, Anderson  
Thom Nieson, District Director, Caltrans District 02  
Pat Minturn, Public Works Director, Shasta County

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2652 Sharon Avenue  
Redding, CA 96001  
October 7, 2001

Regional Transportation Planning Agency  
1855 Placer Street  
Redding, California

Attention: RTPA Members

At a recent Redding City Council meeting, the Council voted to seek flexibility from RTPA regarding possible reallocation of STIP funds for the Parkview Bridge project to other City of Redding projects. I am writing to ask that the RTPA grant the City's request for what I believe to be good and compelling reasons.

These funds could be put to much better use if reallocated to downtown Redding projects, such as the much-needed railroad grade separation and the opening of access through the Downtown Mall.

The grade separation would help to alleviate a safety problem in existence for years regarding emergency situations when vehicles must get to the hospital and to physician's offices.

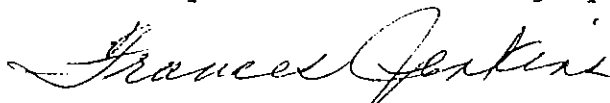
Opening up the Downtown Mall is an idea whose time has come and is, in fact, overdue. The traffic flow in the downtown area is cumbersome, tedious and a real challenge to visitors to the area. It may have worked in the 1970's--it does not work now.

Dedicating funds to these two projects would be worthwhile. On the other hand, the Parkview Bridge project is, in my opinion, a questionable one at best. This is especially true in the eyes of many who live and work in the Parkview neighborhood. Construction of this bridge would undoubtedly bring about many negative impacts which have not been adequately addressed to date.

One such question is the effect the bridge would have on the new City of Redding park which is, at this very time, being developed in the location where the bridge is proposed.

There are other concerns over the Parkview Bridge project but they are not really the purpose of this letter. My reason for writing is to urge RTPA to allow the City of Redding to reallocate these STIP funds to the much-needed--and more worthy--downtown Redding projects. The benefits will be much greater for everyone concerned.

Thank you for considering my letter.

  
Frances Jenkins