

REPORT TO SHASTA COUNTY RTPA

SUBJECT	MEETING DATE	ITEM NUMBER
Select a Demonstration Project to be Included in Federal Reauthorization	12/10/02	7

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Agency consider selecting either the State Route 44 Improvement Project or the Cypress Bridge Replacement Project to refer to Federal legislators for possible inclusion in Federal reauthorization in 2003.

SUMMARY

Staff is seeking Agency guidance to direct efforts regarding project "earmarks" in the Federal transportation reauthorization expected to occur in 2003.

DISCUSSION

Congress funds transportation through six year funding bills. The last two funding bills, passed in 1991 and 1997, were entitled ISTEA and TEA-21. It is expected that Congress will start working on a new transportation bill in 2003, presumably entitled TEA-3. The majority of Federal transportation revenues flow from Washington to Sacramento and are then distributed to regions and local agencies through various programs such as the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) or the Highway Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation (HBRR) program.

In addition to funding many transportation programs, Congress will include language in the bill authorizing certain specific projects. These projects are called "demonstration projects" or "earmarks." Although there are no specific guidelines or statutory authority, all members of Congress are given the discretion to recommend specific projects for funding. Staff has been advised that each member of the House of Representatives will have approximately fifteen million dollars to earmark towards specific projects. United States senators typically are allowed to recommend higher amounts.

Typically, earmarks do not fund one hundred percent of a project and earmarks should be within certain limits.

The first question for the Agency is, "Do they wish to solicit an earmark from Congress in Federal reauthorization?" There does not seem to be any compelling reason not to solicit such a project. To the extent that every other agency is pursuing further funding it seems natural that Shasta County should also play the game. If we do not ask for a demonstration project, it surely will not happen.

If the answer to this question is affirmative, then staff recommends that one project be identified for endorsement. This will allow the region to focus our efforts towards one project. It is expected and encouraged that individual local agencies will push for their own demonstration projects as well.

It should be emphasized that earmarks typically do not fund one hundred percent of a project and earmarks have to be within certain limits. For example, it is not recommended that the Buckhorn Curve Realignment be considered a candidate because there is very little likelihood of receiving upwards of one hundred million dollars from Congress. Likewise, it is not recommended that a two or three million-dollar project be nominated. The reason for this is that a small percentage would be earmarked and it may not be worth the effort.

Legislators are interested in attending ribbon cuttings so projects that are near delivery tend to be prime candidates for demonstration projects.

The project ideally should be included in current planning documents as this provides some tools to use in selling the project. Presumably, all the viable candidate projects should have already been identified as part of the 2001 RTP update.

Another item to keep in mind is that the Federal representatives for Shasta County also represent other counties and, in the case of senators, represent the entire state. Therefore, the likelihood of an entire entitlement coming to this region is remote, as legislators prefer to "spread the wealth." Realistically, it seems the region should aim for about a \$5 million demonstration project.

After factoring in these limitations, staff has identified two potential projects.

SR 44 Improvements (Stillwater Project)

This project is a partnership between Caltrans and the RTPA and is currently programmed for the Environmental phase. The total cost of the project is not yet known but is expected to be up to \$32 million. This project has significant regional benefits, addresses a documented need and has been highlighted in the press recently. It is the second highest ranked project in the region. These factors could make this project a viable candidate as a demonstration project. The highest rated project, the South Bonnyview Widening, is programmed in the current STIP for Environmental and Preliminary Engineering. No work on this project has been initiated.

Cypress Bridge Replacement

This project is in excess of thirty million dollars and has a funding shortfall estimated in excess of twenty million dollars. It is currently in the Environmental phase of development.

If the Agency nominates a project, it is anticipated that staff would meet with our Federal representatives to discuss TEA reauthorization principles adopted earlier by this Agency and the need for the selected demonstration project. Any further suggestions by the Agency for endorsement of the selected demonstration project are welcome.

The Agency may want to consider other projects that had been considered for funding as part of the RTP. Exhibit A is a listing in priority order of those projects identified as Short-Range Fundable in the current RTP.

Select a Demonstration Project
December 10, 2002
Page 3

ALTERNATIVES

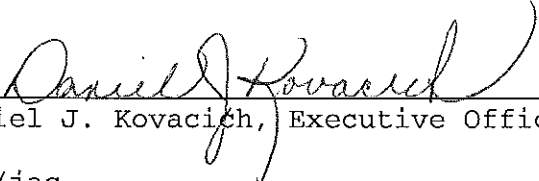
As indicated above, the Agency could choose to not seek a demonstration project, nominate both projects, or nominate any other transportation project within Shasta County.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

This item was reviewed with the TAC committee; however, the staff report was not available until the time of the meeting.

FINANCING

This item would have no impact on the finances of the RTPA. To the extent that demonstration projects are obtained in Shasta County, the practice of the State has been to not reduce other funding available to those regions lucky enough to receive them.



Daniel J. Kovacich, Executive Officer

DJK/jac

Attachment

EXHIBIT A

Shasta County Regional Transportation Planning Agency Summary of STIP Project Scoring Short Term Fundable Listing Approved by Agency June 21, 2001

Project Count	Agency	Project Name	Present Value of Project Cost (STIP Only)	Total Cost of Project	Total Project Points
1	Redding	South Bonnyview Widening *	\$3,783,000	\$3,783,000	70
2	Caltrans	Highway 44 - Stillwater Project *	\$15,940,000	\$31,880,000	68
3	Caltrans	Interstate 5 - expand to six lanes from Riverside Drive to Bonneyview	\$40,000,000	\$80,000,000	65
4	Caltrans	Interstate 5 - expand to six lanes from Bonneyview to SR 299E	\$20,500,000	\$41,000,000	64
5	Redding	Parkview Bridge - Combined Benefits	\$12,000,000	\$14,500,000	61
6	Caltrans	I-5/Cottonwood Hills - Auxiliary Lane	\$2,500,000	\$5,000,000	60
7	Redding	Widen Hilltop Drive where it crosses Interstate 5	\$10,000,000	\$12,400,000	58
8	Caltrans	Buckhorn Grade Corridor *	\$9,600,000	\$96,184,000	58
9	Redding	Widen Hilltop Drive O/C SR44	\$1,775,001	\$1,775,001	57
10	Caltrans	Cottonwood Hills Truck Climbing Lane Southbound	\$1,300,000	\$2,600,000	57
11	Caltrans	Liberty Street Imp to SR 44 **	\$16,500,000	\$16,500,000	56
12	Shasta County	Deschutes Road	\$1,200,000	\$1,141,698	55
13	Redding	Airport Road Interchange at SR 44	\$12,130,000	\$12,130,000	54
14	Redding	Widen Placer from Airpark to Boston	\$6,000,000	\$7,400,000	54
15	Redding	Airport Road North & South	\$18,316,038	\$18,316,038	50
16	Shasta County	Knighton Road West	\$18,000,000	\$18,000,000	49
17	Caltrans	SR 44 Palo Cedro to Shingletown - passing lanes at various locations	\$11,500,000	\$11,500,000	49
18	Anderson	North Street	\$3,553,774	\$3,553,774	48

* Partially Programmed in STIP

** Fully Programmed in STIP