APPROVED MINUTES

SHASTA COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AGENCY (MPO)
ECONOMIC STIMULUS SPECIAL MEETING
Tuesday, February 10, 2009, 4:00 p.m.
Shasta County Board of Supervisors Chambers,
1450 Court Street, Suite 263, Redding, California.

(Note: These minutes are not intended to serve as a transcript or verbatim record of the proceedings of the Shasta County Regional Transportation Planning Agency, but rather as a record of meeting time, place, and attendance; the order and general nature of discussion; Board deliberations; and action taken, if any.)

Board Members Comnick, Dickerson, Moty, Hartman, Palmer, and Jones were present. Board Members Hawes, Stegall, and Baugh were absent.

1. Call to Order
Chair Comnick called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

2. Staff Introductions

3. Public Comment Period
There was no one who wished to speak during the Public Comment Period.

Regular Calendar

Caltrans District 2 Director, John Bulinski, gave an update on Proposition 1B projects. Mr. Bulkinski stated that there are 39 projects in the state, with the Dana to Downtown project being the local project of interest. The Pooled Money Investment Board has, since May of last year, suspended the sale of general obligation bonds. The Department of Finance instructed the Department of Transportation, Caltrans, on January 30, that if a budget resolution was not achieved by February 6, they must suspend all existing Prop. 1B projects that are currently in construction. The Caltrans director met with the Department of Finance and informed them that the estimate for putting all projects into suspension was about $200 million. To restart them after six months would cost about $190 million. Because of this meeting, and news that there was a budget that was imminent, the Department of Finance decided to suspend their decision. Instead, contractors have been instructed to develop a suspension plan, due February 17. Caltrans District 2 has met with the Dana to Downtown contractor, Golden State Construction, and estimate that it will take until mid-May and approximately $2.5 million to complete enough work to be able to put that project into suspension. Currently the project is about 44% complete, at about $26 million.

Mr. Bulinski noted that the sale of bonds is not necessarily automatic once a budget is in place.

Executive Director Dan Little added that the Economic Stimulus bill has no provision where the money can be used on contracts that are already awarded, such as Dana to Downtown. It can only be used on new contracts.

4. Federal Stimulus: Adopt Policies; Preliminary Projects; FTIP Amendments; and RTIP Amendment

Executive Director Dan Little stated that in the Economic Stimulus bill, for planning and programming purposes, it is assumed we will receive $30 billion nationwide ($28 billion actual) for transportation infrastructure. California's share will be about $3 billion ($2.7 billion actual). Of that $3 billion, $2 billion would be distributed to the regions across the state. Shasta County's share is typically about one-half of one percent, or $10 million. The other third would be for state projects. These estimates are on the high side; actual amounts will be less.

Mr. Little noted that a meeting was held three weeks ago with public works directors and some city managers to start working on stimulus projects. Mr. Little noted that they wanted to work with Caltrans and Local Assistance because stimulus projects must go through the National Environmental Policy Act and a Local Assistance process. The first order of business for the RTPA is to get the projects into the federal program; the Board is therefore asked to amend the Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) to add the new projects. Mr. Little explained that it was agreed upon that the RTPA didn't have any priority projects ready to go federally. It was also agreed that the money would be apportioned to the jurisdictions based on population. The Board is being asked to ratify that decision through the policy attached to the staff report. Within this policy are also provisions stating that the top priority is not losing funds to the region. If one jurisdiction under-delivers, another jurisdiction can step in and deliver more than their percentage.

Mr. Little stated that the agencies were given targets based on the $10 million and the respective population apportionment, but were asked to go over the amount because they are allowed to put more in the FTIP than what the stimulus might actually offer. The project list totals $18 million in programming for stimulus funds, but that is not stimulus dollars, that's programming – setting a budget and getting a place holder in the program. Mr. Little again emphasized that the $10 million is a high-aiming target and not a guarantee. Because of the NEPA requirements and the "use it or lose it" timelines, most agencies chose to go with road preservation projects or concrete on top of concrete projects where there are no environmental issues. Those that did not do concrete-on-concrete projects provided a backup list of overlay projects. If more complicated projects are trying to be delivered and it looks like they won't make it, they can fall back and deliver the overlay projects in order to assure timely use of the stimulus funds.

Mr. Little explained that there is also a component for purchase of buses and vans. The money would flow through existing Federal Transit Administration programs, which is expected to be about $1.9 million. Therefore, RABA is included on the project list. A portion of the funds might be for Transportation Enhancement projects, which are non-motorized projects, should the agencies choose such projects against their total stimulus shares. Otherwise, a portion of the East Redding Bikes Lanes Project would be delivered as a regional priority.

Mr. Little read the list of projects and noted that RTPA staff is recommending programming of all projects on the list into the FTIP. The action being taken today only deals with the regional portion; by the February 24 meeting, they should have an idea of the state nominated projects. Mr. Little stated that for the action being requested today, because of the nuances of the way the programming works for the FTIP, it is required to be done in three steps. The first amendment is basically to insert the stimulus funds into the financial program at $255 million. The second amendment is to administratively add projects. The third step is a formal amendment which has to be approved by the Federal Transit Administration and Federal Highway Administration.

Mr. Little stated that there is also an action being requested for an amendment to the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP). It is unclear at this point if some of the funds will have to flow through the State Transportation Improvement Program. The recommendation today is that all projects be put in the FTIP, and the minimum amount be programmed in the STIP, in order to expend those funds.

Gary Cadd, a citizen from the audience, spoke. Mr. Cadd noted that there is only one stimulus project on the list that is going to create jobs. The Oasis overpass would lead to the Oasis Town Center; the Oasis Town Center will result in new business and jobs.

By motion made and seconded (Palmer/Jones), the staff recommendation passed unanimously.

There being no other business to discuss, Chair Comnick adjourned the meeting at 4:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Daniel S. Little, Executive Director

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