

STAFF REPORT



MEETING DATE:	6/30/15
SUBJECT:	Certify the Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the 2015 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), Adopt the 2015 RTP; and Adopt the Updated ShastaSIM Travel Demand Model
AGENDA ITEM:	10
STAFF CONTACT:	Daniel Wayne, Senior Transportation Planner

SUMMARY:

The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is a long range (20-year) plan for the management, operation, and development of a regional intermodal transportation system. It includes a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) for the reduction of per capita greenhouse gas emission. The accompanying environmental impact report (EIR) analyzes the potential impacts of implementing the RTP. Comments on the Draft 2015 RTP (including SCS) and EIR have been reviewed and minor changes have been made in preparation for EIR certification and 2015 RTP adoption. The regional travel demand model used for the 2015 RTP and EIR must also be adopted to become the official model for local and regional planning processes and project-level traffic impact analyses.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the board of directors:

1. Adopt Resolution 15-09, certifying the Final EIR for the 2015 RTP, adopting a mitigation monitoring and reporting program, and approving the 2015 Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy;
2. Adopt Resolution 15-10, adopting the updated ShastaSIM regional activity-based travel demand model as the official model for Shasta County.

DISCUSSION:

Background – SRTA is required by federal and state law to develop a long-range (20-year) RTP. The purpose of an RTP is "to encourage and promote the safe and efficient management, operation, and development of a regional intermodal transportation system that, when linked with appropriate land use planning, will serve the mobility needs of goods and people."¹ Key elements of the 2015 RTP for Shasta County include:

¹ California Transportation Commission, 2010 California Regional Transportation Plan Guidelines

- A regional vision, supported by a program of short- and long-range strategies;
- An evaluation of regional mobility needs in light of population, housing, and job forecasts;
- An SCS pursuant to Senate Bill 375 for the reduction of passenger vehicle greenhouse gas emissions; and
- A list of transportation improvements with anticipated construction timelines and a funding plan.

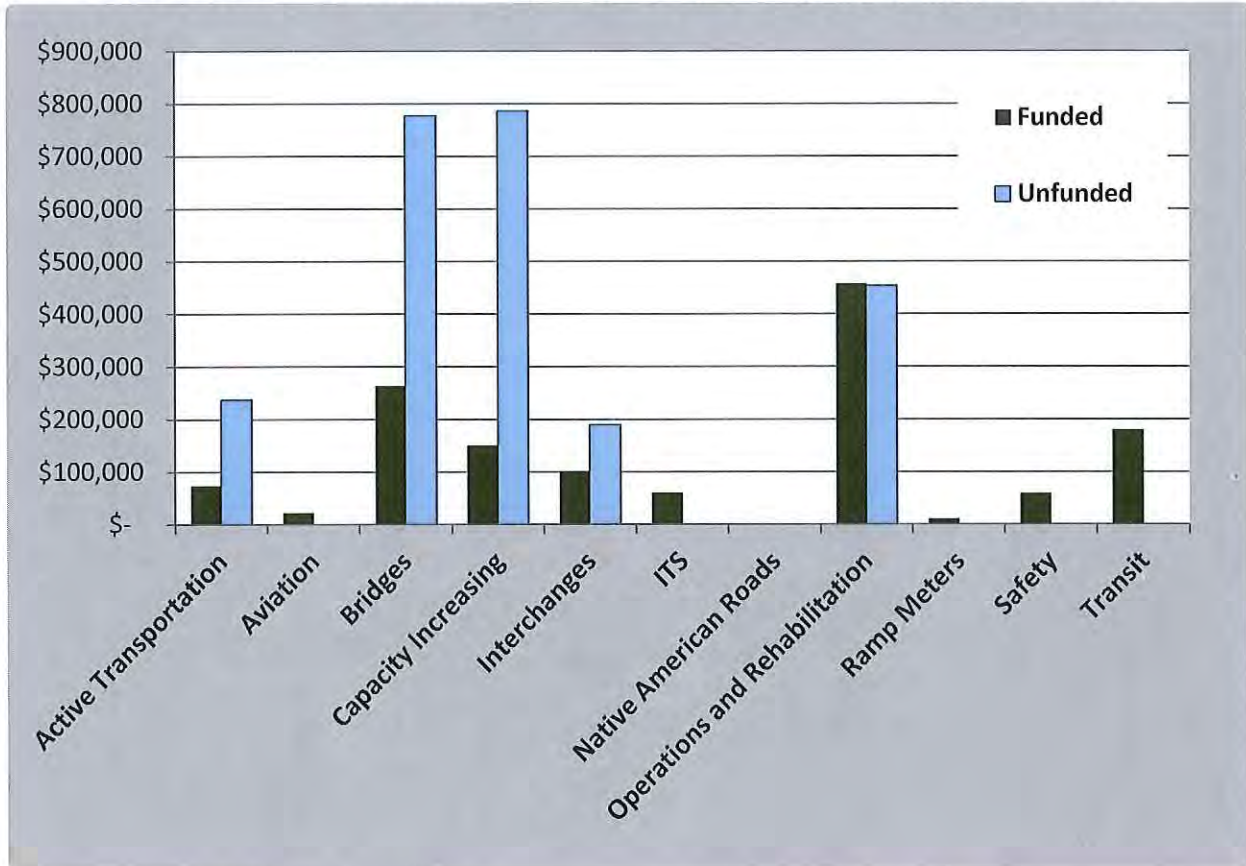
The RTP is updated every four years in collaboration with local, state, and federal partners. With limited exceptions, transportation projects must be included in the RTP in order to be eligible for federal and state funding. An EIR is prepared alongside the RTP pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act in order to evaluate the environmental impacts of implementing the plan. Staff has presented the 2015 RTP and EIR to the board of directors in stages as shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1: 2015 RTP DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE

Topic	Schedule	Recommendation
• Board priorities survey results	Dec 2013	• Receive presentation
• Draft vision statement with accompanying goals, policies, and strategies • Preliminary Strategic Growth Areas	Feb 2014	• Review and approve
• Travel demand model • Draft performance measures	Jun 2014	• Adoption • Review and approve
• Transportation projects list	Oct 2014	• Review and approve
• Public hearing on Draft RTP, SCS, and EIR	April 2015	• Hold public hearing on Draft RTP, SCS, and EIR
• Presentations to city councils and board of supervisors, including 2nd public hearing for the SCS.	May 2015	• Review and comment
• Final EIR • Final 2015 RTP • Travel demand model	June 2015	• Certify EIR • Adopt 2015 RTP • Adopt updated travel demand model
• California Air Resources Board (CARB) review of SCS (60-day)	July - August 2015	• Review and approve technical methodology and assumptions (formal acceptance by CARB is scheduled in October)

Regional Transportation Needs – Over the 20-year planning horizon, it is estimated that \$2.2 billion will be available for transportation infrastructure and services (see Table 2). The single largest expenditure (\$457 million) is for the operation and maintenance of existing transportation infrastructure. An additional \$2.4 billion in transportation needs have been identified in excess of forecast revenues. The most notable funding shortfalls are for roadway capacity-increasing projects and the maintenance and replacement of bridges.

TABLE 2: 2015-2035 FUNDED & UNFUNDED TRANSPORTATION NEEDS (x 1,000)



Sustainable Communities Strategy – California’s eighteen metropolitan regions are required by Senate Bill 375 to prepare a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) as part of the RTP. An SCS is a coordinated transportation and land use plan showing how the region intends to meet targets set by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) for the reduction of per-capita greenhouse gas emissions from passenger vehicles and light-duty trucks. The region’s given target for the year 2020 and 2035 is a 0% change from 2005 levels. The region’s SCS has met both targets.

TABLE 3: IMPACT OF 2015 RTP ON PER-CAPITA EMISSIONS

Year	SB 375 Emissions	% Under/Over Target
2005 (baseline)	21.3 lbs CO ₂ /capita	-
2020	20.3 lbs CO ₂ /capita	-4.9%
2035	21.2 lbs CO ₂ /capita	-0.4%

In addition to aggressively pursuing a full range of transportation funding sources, coordinated regional and local efforts to reduce travel demand is needed to delay the onset of congestion and minimize wear and tear on the system. The following factors outlined in the SCS portion of the 2015 RTP represent the low-hanging fruit whereby the region may manage the upward trend in vehicle usage:

1. Population and employment shift to community centers known as 'Strategic Growth Areas' (SGAs);
2. Increased residential densities in SGAs;
3. Increase automobile operation costs;
4. Increased public transportation service frequency; and
5. Accelerated delivery of active transportation investments in SGAs.

To fully realize the 2015 RTP vision, SRTA will need to double-down on these efforts and add new strategies in consultation and coordination with local jurisdictions. The agency's funding priorities will need to be periodically revisited to address changes in funding levels and travel behavior. Various options and strategies are being explored by staff and will be presented for discussion as a prelude to the 2018 RTP update.

2015 RTP Vision Statement

SRTA will meet the region's evolving mobility needs and generally avoid traffic congestion and other growth-related pitfalls commonly observed in larger metropolitan regions. This will be accomplished through strategic and timely transportation system improvements, the integration of travel options into a seamless network, and collaborative effort toward transportation-efficient land use patterns where it is most beneficial.

SRTA acknowledges that its efforts are intertwined with regional prosperity, environmental quality, community health and well-being, and various other elements that collectively define quality of life. Such considerations are integral to regional transportation planning, policy-making, and project programming. SRTA will be actively engaged with its partners in developing and carrying out joint strategies and initiatives that yield multiple community benefits. Planning and decision-making processes shall engage the public and be transparent and responsive to documented community values and priorities.

Public Review and Comment Period – The Draft 2015 RTP and Draft EIR were circulated to interested parties on March 17 and posted on the agency's website. The public review and comment period was extended to June 2 to include presentations to each city council and the county board of supervisors. Public hearings were held on April 28 at the SRTA Board of Directors meeting and on May 19 at the City of Shasta Lake Council meeting. Three formal comments were received. A comment log, including the agency's responses, is provided by attachment.

Regional Travel Demand Model – The agency’s regional activity-based travel demand model (ShastaSIM) is used to forecast future travel behavior and measure the impact of planned transportation infrastructure, policies, and services on system performance. A new model run was created for the 2015 RTP, including updated transportation projects and Sustainable Communities Strategy factors. These updates must be formally adopted in order for the model to be used in local and regional planning processes and project-level traffic impact analyses going forward. Past and current users of the model will be notified and model documentation will be updated on SRTA’s website.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The 2015 RTP addresses Federal Planning Factors found in the federal transportation bill and Planning Emphasis Areas generated by the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration for California. Local agency partners were actively involved in development of the SCS. Administrative and draft versions of the 2015 RTP were made available to SRTA’s partners, including local jurisdictions, Redding Area Bus Authority, and Caltrans. Public and stakeholder comments have been addressed and final draft documents presented to the Technical Advisory Committee. Formal presentations were provided to the three city councils and Shasta County Board of Supervisors.

FINANCING:

Preparation of the 2015 RTP and EIR was budgeted in the agency’s FY 2013/14 and 2014/15 Overall Work Program under several work elements and funded by Federal Highway Administration Planning funds, State Planning Programming and Monitoring funds, and Proposition 84 grant funds. Total cost to prepare the 2015 RTP and EIR, including the development of new travel demand model, public outreach, and interagency consultation, comes in at approximately \$545,000. This is roughly twice the cost of recent RTP planning cycles due to the required SCS component and the need for a comprehensive, cover-to-cover overhaul. It is anticipated that the 2018 RTP will be a relatively minor update of the 2015 RTP.

Daniel S. Little, AICP, Executive Director

Attachments:

Resolution 15-09: Certify the Final EIR for the 2015 RTP and SCS, and approve the 2015 RTP and SCS

Resolution 15-10: Adopt Shasta County Regional Activity-Based Travel Demand Model (ShastaSIM v1.1)

Final Environmental Impact Report and 2015 RTP

<http://www.srta.ca.gov/142/Regional-Transportation-Plan>

Comment Log and SRTA responses – (not available for TAC meeting)

RESOLUTION



RESOLUTION NUMBER:	15-09
SUBJECT:	Certify the Final Environmental Impact Report for the 2015 Regional Transportation Plan, Adopting a Mitigating Monitoring and Reporting Program, and Approving the 2015 Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy

WHEREAS, the Shasta Regional Transportation Agency (SRTA) is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) comprised of five member agencies: Shasta County, the cities of Anderson, Redding, and Shasta Lake, and the Redding Area Bus Authority; and

WHEREAS, SRTA is the agency responsible for maintaining a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process which will result in a Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 134(a) and (g), 49 U.S.C. §5303(f); 23 C.F.R. §450, and 49 C.F.R. §613; and

WHEREAS, SRTA is the Lead Agency in preparing the Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy and is required to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) [Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 21000 et seq.]; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15002(f), an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is the public document used by a governmental agency to analyze the significant environmental effects of a proposed project, to identify alternatives, and to disclose possible ways to reduce or avoid the potential environmental damage; and

WHEREAS, CEQA Guidelines Section 15168(a) specifies that a Program EIR (PEIR) be prepared on a series of actions that can be characterized as one large project and are related either: (1) geographically; (2) as logical parts in a chain of contemplated actions; (3) in connection with issuance of rules, regulations, plans, or other general criteria, to govern the conduct of a continuing program; or (4) as individual activities carried out under the same authorizing statutory or regulatory authority and having generally similar environmental effects which can be mitigated in similar ways; and

WHEREAS, SRTA has determined that a Program EIR is appropriate to assess the environmental impact of the 2015 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS); and

WHEREAS, the EIR is a regional planning level analysis which analyzes environmental impacts of the 2015 RTP on a broad planning level, while presenting as much detailed information about the individual RTP projects that is available at this time; and

WHEREAS, project-specific impacts of the individual RTP project should be analyzed in detail by the implementing agencies as the individual projects are designed, engineered, and considered for approval at a later date; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15086, SRTA consulted with and requested comments on the Draft EIR from responsible agencies, trustee agencies with resources affected by the project; and other state, federal, and local agencies which exercise authority over resources which may be affected by the RTP; and

WHEREAS, SRTA circulated a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of an EIR for the proposed project on February 6, 2014, to trustee and responsible agencies, the State Clearinghouse, and the public; and

WHEREAS, a scoping meeting was held on February 19, 2014, at 3:30 PM in the City of Redding to solicit concerns and issues relative to the RTP; and

WHEREAS, concerns raised in response to the NOP were considered during preparation of the Draft EIR; and

WHEREAS, SRTA published a public notice of availability (NOA) for the Draft EIR on March 17, 2015, inviting comments from the general public, agencies, organizations, and other interested parties; and

WHEREAS, the Draft EIR was available for public review from March 17 through May 16, 2015; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a), SRTA, as the Lead Agency, must evaluate comments on significant environmental issues received from persons who review the Draft EIR and must prepare a written response thereto; and

WHEREAS, SRTA received three comment letters, all from public agencies, regarding the Draft EIR; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15088, the Final EIR responds to the written comments received, and

WHEREAS, the Final EIR document and the Draft EIR, as amended by the Final EIR, constitute the Final EIR; and

WHEREAS, when making the findings pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15091(a)(1), the agency must also adopt a program for reporting on or monitoring the changes which have been either required in the project or made a condition of approval to avoid or substantially lessen significant effects, and which are fully enforceable through permit conditions, agreements, or other measures, as required by CEQA Guidelines Section 15091(d); and

WHEREAS, consistent with the requirements of the CEQA Guidelines, a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) has been prepared to outline the procedures for implementing all mitigation measures identified in the EIR; and

WHEREAS, according to CEQA Guidelines Section 15093(b), where the decision of the public agency allows the occurrence of significant effects which are identified in the Final EIR but are not avoided or substantially lessened, the agency must issue a Statement of Overriding Considerations setting forth the specific reasons to support its actions based on the Final EIR or other information in the record; and

WHEREAS, CEQA Guidelines Section 15093(c) provides that if an agency makes a statement of overriding considerations, the statement should be included in the record of the project approval and should be mentioned in the Notice of Determination.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that:

1. The Shasta Regional Transportation Agency finds as follows:

- (a) The Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) prepared for the 2015 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) was completed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act; and
- (b) The Final EIR was presented to SRTA's decision making body, the SRTA Board; and
- (c) The SRTA Board has reviewed and considered information contained in the Final EIR; and
- (d) The Final EIR reflects SRTA's independent judgment and analysis; and
- (e) The Final EIR consists of the Draft EIR and the Final EIR, which includes a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program; and

2. Based on and incorporating all of the foregoing recitals and findings supported by substantial evidence in the record and set forth in the "Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations," attached hereto and incorporated by reference, SRTA hereby certifies the Final EIR for the 2015 RTP and adopts the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program; and

3. The SRTA hereby approves the Shasta County 2015 Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 30th day of June, 2015, by the Shasta Regional Transportation Agency.

Missy McArthur, Chair
Shasta Regional Transportation Agency

RESOLUTION



RESOLUTION NUMBER:	15-10
SUBJECT:	Adopt Shasta County Regional Activity-Based Travel Demand Model (ShastaSIM v.1.1)

WHEREAS, the Shasta Regional Transportation Agency (SRTA) is the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Shasta County region; and

WHEREAS, SRTA is the agency responsible for maintaining a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process which will result in a Regional Transportation Plan pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 134(a) and (g), 49 U.S.C. §5303(f); 23 C.F.R. §450, and 49 C.F.R. §613; and

WHEREAS, SCRTPA is the Lead Agency in preparing the Regional Transportation Plan and is required to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) [Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 21000 et seq.]; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15002(f), an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is the public document used by a governmental agency to analyze the significant environmental effects of a proposed project, to identify alternatives, and to disclose possible ways to reduce or avoid the potential environmental damage; and

WHEREAS, SRTA is responsible for updating and maintaining the region's travel demand model; and

WHEREAS, the Shasta County Regional Activity-based Travel Demand Model (ShastaSIM) is the technical tool used to assist in the updating of the regional transportation plan; and

WHEREAS, SRTA has completed development of the 2015 Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Community Strategy; and

WHEREAS, the modeling methodology and results support SRTA's determination that the Sustainable Community Strategy, if implemented, would meet the California Air Resource Board's greenhouse gas reduction targets, as required under Senate Bill 375; and

WHEREAS, SRTA desires to provide an updated regional activity-based travel demand model for use in the Shasta County region;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Shasta Regional Transportation Agency makes the following findings:

1. The Final EIR prepared for the 2015 RTP was completed in compliance with CEQA; and

2. Approves the updated Shasta County Regional Activity-based Travel Demand Model, ShastaSIM (v.1.1), for use in all travel modeling activities in the Shasta County region; and
3. Authorizes the executive director to make changes to the model and related documentation, as necessary, for approved projects in the region.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 30th day of June, 2015, by the Shasta Regional Transportation Agency.

Missy McArthur, Chair
Shasta Regional Transportation Agency

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