

TCIF Program Could Bring \$162.7 Million for Riverside County Grade Separations

In April, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) will take formal action to allocate more than \$3 billion for goods movement and freight-related projects statewide. The preliminary staff recommendation from the CTC includes an allocation of \$162.7 million for 12 railroad grade separations and a freeway interchange in Riverside County. The funding marks the most significant financial commitment ever by the state for railroad grade separations.

The lion's share of the funding was made possible by voter approval of Proposition 1B in 2006. The Proposition set aside \$2 billion in bond funding for goods movement projects known as the Trade Corridors Investment Fund (TCIF). The CTC later increased the total to \$3 billion with a combination of state transportation funding and future, yet-to-be-specified federal revenues.



Given the immense impact of international trade and goods movement on the Southern California's transportation system, TCIF applications were submitted collectively by RCTC, several Southern California county transportation commissions, public sector rail agencies, SCAG, and the Ports of Los Angeles, Long

Beach, and Hueneme, in order to garner a regional approach.

RCTC worked with its local partners at various cities and the county to develop a list that would compete well and meet the CTC's criteria. The projects that are currently recommended for funding are single grade separations in Banning and Corona, six grade separations in the City of Riverside, four grade separations in unincorporated county areas and the I-215 Van Buren Interchange improvement near March Air Reserve Base.

The Southern California Consensus approach proved to be successful in gaining support and attention for Southern California's goods movement needs and will be critically important in working with Congress regarding the reauthorization of the federal transportation bill next year.

RCTC to Lead Countywide Federal Effort

Riverside County is fortunate to be represented by effective and capable Members of Congress and Senators, so there is a unique opportunity for success at receiving federal investment in needed infrastructure projects.

In 2009, Congress will take up the issue of the reauthorization of the federal transportation bill, which was dubbed SAFETEA-LU.

Unfortunately, California doesn't always fare well when this kind of bill is considered because the state often fails to develop a coherent and unified message. What could turn into a strong California presence often breaks down as north fights south or counties compete with one another or even individual cities are pitted against one another.

While developing a statewide approach will depend on Caltrans, RCTC will be heading up an effort to develop a unified approach to transportation reauthorization for Riverside County. During the next few months, the Commission will work with cities and the county to develop priorities for the federal reauthorization. The aim would be to narrow the focus to seek funding for large-scale projects.

For more information, please contact RCTC's Government Relations Manager Aaron Hake at (951) 787- 7965.

RCTC Launches New Websites for Projects on SR-91 and I-215



As a project progresses from project development to construction, many significant changes occur that are important to keep the public aware of. RCTC's transportation projects have just launched two new websites to access updated information necessary for the public and project stakeholders.

The project websites for the SR-91 Corridor Improvement Project and the I-215 Improving Mobility projects offer up to date information on each project including project descriptions, maps, environmental status, project timelines and milestones, meetings and hearings, frequently asked questions, traffic alerts and links to other pertinent websites. You can find all of this project information and more at sr91project.info and i215project.info. The websites will be updated periodically as each project progresses toward completion.



Upcoming Meetings and Information

The Riverside County Transportation Commission will hold its next meeting on Wednesday, April 9, 2008, at the Riverside County Administrative Center, Board of Supervisors Meeting Room, 4080 Lemon Street, Riverside at 9:30 a.m.

RCTC also maintains a speaker's bureau that actively makes presentations throughout the county on transportation issues. If you are interested in scheduling a presentation for your service club or community organization, please contact Eliza Echevarria at (951) 787-7141 or eechevarria@rctc.org.

Rideshare Program Honors Valley Employer

RCTC began working with employers in the Coachella Valley six months ago to offer a commuter assistance program. The work was made possible through a grant from the County of Riverside and allows employers the opportunity to offer ridesharing incentives to their employees.

One such employer in Palm Desert – the Big Horn Country Club — has seen remarkable participation from its 90 employees and recently hosted a press conference to celebrate the program's success. Overall, this employer's efforts eliminated 3,280 vehicle trips, 104,264 vehicle miles traveled, and 2,017 lbs. of criteria air pollutants.