

Memorandum

To: Chair and Commissioners

Date: August 17, 2006

From: John F. Barna, Jr.
Executive Director

File No: Ref. Agenda 2.2c.(3)
ACTION

Ref: **APPROVAL OF PROJECT FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION OF FUNDING – CALTRAIN EXTENSION TO MONTEREY COUNTY – PASSENGER RAIL STATIONS (TCRP #14) (FINAL EIR) RESOLUTION E-06-28**

Issue: Should the Commission approve the Transportation Agency of Monterey County's (TAMC) Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) on its proposed three rail stations, layover facility, minor track improvements, and limited equipment acquisition?

Recommendation: The TAMC Board will consider the Final EIR on the August 23rd. If TAMC does not act, this item will be withdrawn because the Commission cannot act on an environmental document that has not been certified by the lead agency. After TAMC certifies the Final EIR, the Commission, as a responsible agency, can consider the Final EIR. Currently, the final EIR concludes, with mitigation measures, that the project will not result in significant impacts.

Commission staff recommends that the Commission approve the attached Resolution E-06-28. As a responsible agency, the Commission must approve this Resolution prior to allocating funds for capital purposes to the proposed project.

Background: This resolution proposes to approve for future consideration of funding the following project for which a Final Environmental Impact Report has been completed under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA):

- Three commuter rail stations located respectively at Pajaro, Castroville, and Salinas in Monterey County;
- a layover facility at Salinas; and
- minor track improvements and limited equipment acquisition.

The proposed stations and layover facility would be an extension of the existing Caltrain commuter rail service, an existing service on a rail line that is already in use. As such, the 2 round trips per day and ultimately 4 round trips per day, according to the Final EIR would be categorically exempt under Section 21080 (b) 10 of the Public Resources Code.

The Commission's approval and the resulting filing of the Notice of Determination with the Office of Planning and Research will satisfy the environmental requirements for this stage of the project planning process.

Project Cost: The estimated total cost of the project is \$75 million. Project funding will come from the Traffic Congestion Relief Program, Proposition 116, CMAQ, State Transportation Improvement Program and federal earmarks. Of the \$75 million, \$ 45.5 million is committed. Of the \$29.5 million that is uncommitted, TAMC intends to seek federal new rail starts funding. The stations and each component can be phased so that utility can be gained even if the full funding is not currently available.

Operating costs for 2 round trips is estimated to be around \$1.2 million and is expected to be covered from a sales tax measure or local transit operating funds.

Attachment

CTCmemo0906 Caltrain Extension Monterey rail stations.doc

CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Resolution for Approval of Project for Consideration of Future Funding Caltrain extension to Monterey County, Passenger Rail Stations

Resolution E-06-28

- 1.1** **WHEREAS**, the Transportation Agency of Monterey County (TAMC) completed a Final Environmental Impact Report in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the CEQA Guidelines, and the California Transportation Commission Environmental Regulations for the following project:
- Three commuter rail stations located respectively at Pajaro, Castroville, and Salinas in Monterey County;
 - a layover facility at Salinas; and
 - minor track improvements and limited equipment acquisition.
- 1.2** **WHEREAS**, TAMC has proposed mitigation measures that will result in significant impacts being reduced to less than significant; and
- 1.3** **WHEREAS**, TAMC has considered the record taken as a whole; and
- 1.4** **WHEREAS**, TAMC has certified the Final Environmental Impact Report and that the project will not have a significant impact on the environment; and
- 1.5** **WHEREAS**, the California Transportation Commission, as a responsible agency, has considered the information contained in the Final Environmental Impact Report.
- 2.1** **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Commission, as a responsible agency, certifies the Final EIR, finds that the project will not have a significant impact on the environment; and
- 2.2** **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Commission, as a responsible agency, finds that the project listed below is approved for future consideration of funding:
- Transportation Agency for Monterey – Caltrain extension into Monterey County, Passenger Rail Stations:
- Three commuter rail stations located respectively at Pajaro, Castroville, and Salinas in Monterey County;
 - a layover facility at Salinas; and
 - minor track improvements and limited equipment acquisition.