

## Memorandum

**To:** Chair and Commissioners

**Date:** February 24, 2008

**From:** ANDRE BOUTROS  
Interim Executive Director

**File:** Reference No. 2.1c(5c)  
Action Item

**Ref:** Trade Corridors Improvement Fund (TCIF) – Program Amendment

**ISSUE:** Should the Commission approve the proposed TCIF Program Amendments as requested by the Northern California Trade Corridors Coalition and detailed below?

**RECOMMENDATION:** Commission staff recommends that the Commission approve the proposed TCIF Program Amendments.

**BACKGROUND:** The Northern California Trade Corridors Coalition (NCTCC), in conjunction with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, the Port of Oakland, and the City of Richmond, proposes to amend the TCIF Program (see attached letter dated February 24, 2009) as follows:

### Port of Oakland

#### **TCIF Project 1: ~~7<sup>th</sup> Street Grade Separation Project~~**

~~The NCTCC and the Port of Oakland propose to revise the scope of TCIF Project 1: *7<sup>th</sup> Street Grade Separation Project* and reduce the amount of TCIF programmed on this project by \$31.5 million. The Port is also requesting a change in the construction start date from September 2009 to September 2011.~~

~~7<sup>th</sup> Street is the key roadway accessing the Port of Oakland from the east. The *7<sup>th</sup> Street Grade Separation Project* will construct two new bridges to improve rail access into Oakland's two intermodal terminals, while reducing traffic delay between the Port facilities and I-880. The 7<sup>th</sup> Street and Maritime Street intersection will be modified into a new configuration which will better accommodate projected traffic flow. The new grade separated crossings will also provide direct access between the Port's rail terminals for greater coordination and functionality of the facilities. The project will also improve safety for pedestrian, bicycle and automobile movements to and from Middle Harbor Shoreline Park, a major public access point along the shore of San Francisco Bay.~~

~~Subsequent to the adoption of the TCIF Program in April 2008, the Port of Oakland evaluated opportunities to value engineer the *7th Street Grade Separation Project*.~~

Through the proposed engineering and design changes, the Port of Oakland has reduced the total project cost by \$77 million, from \$427 million to \$350 million. The project will still provide the benefits to the goods movement system originally envisioned, reducing congestion and delays at a major chokepoint entering and leaving the Port of Oakland. The cost savings will be split proportionally so that the original TCIF/Local match ratio remains the same. The reduced cost of the *7<sup>th</sup> Street Grade Separation Project* will reduce the TCIF from \$175 million to \$143.5 million, saving the program \$31.5 million.

The NCTCC approves the changes requested by the Port of Oakland and requests the Commission's concurrence (see attached letter dated February 24, 2009).

### **Metropolitan Transportation Commission & City of Richmond**

#### ***TCIF Project 2: Martinez Subdivision Rail Improvements Project***

The NCTCC, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, and the City of Richmond propose to revise the scope of TCIF Project 2: *Martinez Subdivision Rail Improvements Project* and reduce the amount of TCIF programmed on this project by \$56.5 million. In addition, the NCTCC and the City of Richmond propose to add the *Marina Bay Parkway Grade Separation Project* to the TCIF Program, using \$18.975 million of the \$56.5 million TCIF deprogrammed from the *Martinez Subdivision Rail Improvements Project* to program this project.

The *Martinez Subdivision Rail Improvements Project* was originally developed working with both BNSF and UPRR. The Martinez Subdivision is owned by UPRR but also used by BNSF, Capital Corridors, and Amtrak. The project originally included new mainline tracks and operating improvements on the Martinez Subdivision, running north of the Port of Oakland along the Central Corridor. In May 2008, the Surface Transportation Board determined that BNSF does not currently have federal authority to operate certain of its intermodal trains on the Martinez Subdivision north of Stege (south Richmond). This ruling changed the routing of BNSF trains in the corridor and resulted in a sudden increase of trains through residential and commercial areas surrounding downtown Richmond, resulting in significant negative impacts on local residents. These changes caused the reevaluation of the *Martinez Subdivision Rail Improvements Project*.

The project scope of the revised *Martinez Subdivision Rail Improvements Project* and the proposed *Marina Bay Parkway Grade Separation Project* will consist of an at-grade connector between UPRR's Martinez Subdivision and BNSF's Stockton Subdivision near San Pablo and a grade separation at Marina Bay Parkway in Richmond. The revised *Martinez Subdivision Rail Improvements Project* is an at-grade rail connection between the BNSF' Stockton Subdivision and UPRR's Martinez Subdivision near San Pablo, just north of Richmond. The project is needed to accommodate and better serve both current and future freight traffic on the corridor while reducing the impacts on the local community. The proposed at-grade rail connection would eliminate the need for a number of long BNSF trains to continue to travel through downtown Richmond

(traversing nine at-grade crossings) to and from the Port of Oakland and serving industrial businesses in the area. A revised rail configuration in the area would address impacts to the City of Richmond, including elimination of long traffic delays at the grade crossings thereby reducing vehicle emission from idling at grade crossings and noise impacts.

The scope of the *Marina Bay Parkway Grade Separation Project* is to construct a roadway under crossing in place of an existing grade crossing at Marina Bay Parkway between Regetta Boulevard and Meeker Avenue in Richmond. This grade separation project is intended to resolve major traffic as well as health and safety issues in the City of Richmond. In the South Richmond Shoreline area, low maximum train speeds result in traffic blockages for 20-30 minutes at a time with no alternate access. A reconfigured crossing at Marina Bay Parkway will reduce traffic congestion and allow emergency vehicles to access the Marina Bay area unimpeded. In addition, the project would improve air quality by reducing the emissions of idling vehicles. This project was conditionally programmed by the Commission in the Highway Railroad Crossing Safety Account (HRCSA) and if TCIF funding is approved, the City of Richmond will withdraw its request for HRCSA funding.

The NCTCC approves the proposed changes to the *Martinez Subdivision Rail Improvements Project* as well as the addition of the *Marina Bay Grade Separation Project* and requests the Commission's concurrence (see attached letter dated February 24, 2009).