



DATE: August 24, 2017

TO: Transportation Authority of Marin Board of Commissioners

FROM: Dianne Steinhauser, Executive Director
Nicholas Nguyen, Principal Project Delivery Manager

SUBJECT: Authorize Executive Director to Review and Pursue Caltrans Planning Grant Opportunities for State Route (SR) 37 and Novato Creek Flooding Mitigation (Action), Agenda Item No. 12

RECOMMENDATION:

Move to authorize the Executive Director to review and pursue Caltrans planning grant opportunities for State Route 37 and Novato Creek flooding mitigation in coordination with Marin County Public Works and approve local match funding.

BACKGROUND AND PAST ACTIONS:

Due to its strategic transportation role and environmentally sensitive natural footprint, Highway 37 has been the subject of a long-range planning study conducted by UC Davis (UCD) and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). In addition, staff and elected officials from the four counties have been in discussion over the past three years about how local transportation authorities might play a role in advancing improvements in the corridor and expediting the delivery of improvements in the SR 37 Corridor to address the threat of sea level rise, traffic congestion, transit options and recreational activities.

In January 2017, the TAM Board approved \$20,000 as TAM's contribution to matching funds for the SR 37 Transportation and Sea Level Rise Corridor Study, also referred to the Design Alternatives Analysis (DAA) to be conducted by Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC) consultant Kimley Horn. The nearly \$1 million scope of work, funded primarily through MTC, consists of (a) a high-level Corridor Plan from Hwy 101 to Hwy 80, (b) Design Alternatives of Priority Segment B, from Highway 121 to Mare Island, for near and long term projects, and (c) a high-level Shoreline Protection analysis. The draft Corridor Plan will be released at the September 7, 2017, SR 37 Policy Committee meeting.

While the DAA will prove to be very helpful in furthering the understanding of the issues and needs for the corridor, it will not provide enough detail and specific opportunities to address the concerns found along SR 37 in Marin County, Segment A, where the highway was closed for approximately three weeks due to flooding and subsequent Caltrans emergency repairs earlier this year. While Caltrans made over \$5million in emergency repairs and upgrades at the approaches to the Novato Creek bridge where a private levee breach occurred during King tides and steady rain events, which combined to flood the highway in late January and early February, Caltrans has indicated that SR 37 could suffer further flooding and potential closures.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS:

Since MTC's DAA will not provide sufficient clarity and Caltrans has not spoken with one voice regarding whether their upgrades are adequate for the foreseeable future, TAM staff is recommending further analysis be conducted along Segment A to better ascertain flood protection and sea level rise adaptation opportunities. Towards this end, Caltrans has informed TAM of available planning grants: Transportation Planning Grants and Climate Change Adaptation Planning Grants. Applications for either grant programs are due October 20th, 2017, and would require a minimum 11.5 percent local match.

Caltrans has encouraged TAM to apply for further planning as there is a need to bring the owners of the assets together to develop a joint scope of improvements covering Novato Creek, locally owned properties, local roads, and the state highway.

Caltrans grant program objectives include sustainability, preservation, innovation, mobility, safety, and local and regional adaptation planning efforts on the transportation system. TAM staff has reached out to Marin County Public Works to discuss this opportunity and potentially partner in one or more applications for SR 37. Public Works has indicated interest in supporting this effort, indicating coordination with both them and the Flood Control District if warranted. The specific scope details of the application are yet to be determined.

Staff is proposing to coordinate with Marin County to develop a scope of work for the application in an approximate amount of \$215,000 and how to best apply. If for some reason TAM is the sole applicant, then an 11.5 percent local match is needed in the amount of \$24,725.

FISCAL CONSIDERATION:

TAM will seek to coordinate with local partners, such as Marin County, to submit an application and share in the local fund matching requirement. However, if TAM is the sole applicant, then a fund commitment of \$24,725 should be expected.

NEXT STEPS:

If authorized, the Executive Director will coordinate with local partners to develop a scope of work for the application and how to best apply.