Humboldt County Association of Governments
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AGENDA ITEM NO. 6.b
HCAOG Board meeting
of January 17, 2013

DATE: January 11, 2013
TO: Policy Advisory Committee (PAC)
FROM: Marcella Clem, Executive Director
SUBJECT: **Request for use of High Priority Project (HPP) Funds on State Route 299**

STAFF REPORT

Contents:

- Staff's recommendation for PAC action
- Staff Summary
- Report on the STAA study
- Report on Buckhorn Projects
- (Attachments)
  - 2012 Excellence in Transportation Award Winner Announcement
  - Cooperative Agreement

Staff recommended PAC Action:

1. Introduce the item as an action Item;
2. Allow staff to present the item;
3. Receive public comment;
4. Review and discuss the request;
5. Consider making the following motion:
   "I move that the PAC recommend that the HCAOG Board direct staff to enter into a cooperative agreement with CALTRANS to augment the Enchilada Curve realignment project with HPP funds."

Staff Summary:

In August of 2005, HCAOG was successful in obtaining $5,600,000 in federal funding for High Priority Projects (HPP) on State Route 299 in Shasta and Trinity counties. This congressional legislation was part of SAFETEA-LU which apportioned over $1,000,000,000 for 426 HPP earmarks in California.

The funding description was determined by law to be used on projects that reduce congestion and boost economies through safer access to the coast by realigning Highway 299 between Trinity and Shasta Counties. Currently there is no expiration date for the obligation of HPP funds.

To date, HCAOG has entered into three Cooperative Agreements with Caltrans District 2 to augment safety projects on Highway 299 in Shasta and Trinity counties. $1,000,000 was

obligated for the Top of Buckhorn Curve realignment project, $2,000,000 to the Yankee Gulch Curve realignment and $1,500,000 to the Twin Gulches realignment. Due to low bids on the Yankee Gulch Curve project, the funds were de-obligated and returned to the HPP fund balance. The current fund balance is $3,100,000.

In August of 2012, HCAOG and Caltrans District 2 were announced as recipients of the Excellence in Transportation Award for Rural Highways for the Highway 299 Projects. The award letter is attached to this report.

In cooperation with HCAOG, Caltrans District 2 would like to enter into a cooperative agreement to augment an additional safety project.

Trinity 299 Postmile 0.5/0.85 project, nicknamed **Enchilada Curve** (the west limit of the project is at the Whole Enchilada Restaurant):

This Project Report proposes to improve safety along Route 299 in Trinity County by improving horizontal alignment, improving the superelevation transitions, and providing six foot paved shoulders. The project was initiated as a result of 12 accidents within the project limits. This project will improve the alignment by eliminating one of the reversing curves with design speeds varying from 25 mph to 45 mph at an approximate 2.0% grade, downhill to the east.

The East limit of project is adjacent to an STAA restricted curve. The utilization of the HPP funding allows us to eliminate the restriction. Extension of the original project limits includes retaining wall systems that were planned to be constructed but will need to be extended to provide necessary shoulder width and superelevation run-off and reconstruction of the roadway.

This project is currently planned to go to construction in late summer of 2013. The total project cost is $4.5 million. The HPP COOP agreement is for $1.7 million.

If approved, the new funding balance available for use on other projects will be $1,400,000.

Report on the STAA study:

Caltrans District 2 is conducting final studies on the route between Redding and the coast for STAA deficient curves. The district in cooperation with the CHP had an STAA legal truck drive the route. During the drive video was taken of the front and back of the truck to observe the wheel tracking and noted the areas where the truck was not able to keep the rear wheels on the pavement without crossing the yellow stripe in the middle of the road. Additionally, the district drove the route with a LIDAR equipped vehicle to collect survey data to help in the analysis of the video data. This information was collected for the entire route between Redding and Highway 101.

Preliminary study results:

- District 1 is STAA compliant from the Humboldt/Trinity County line to Highway 101.
- District 2 has already initiated the projects at the STAA restriction areas. All of these restriction projects are scheduled to be completed by the time the Buckhorn realignment projects are complete.

Report on Buckhorn Projects

District 2 is currently constructing the "Middle of Buckhorn" project (SHA-299-2.5/4.3).

This project is being constructed by Mercer Fraser of Eureka. They are approximately 60% complete with the work and are now in winter suspension (a contractual stop of work due to winter weather). The contractor is currently addressing storm water issues on the grade due to heavy early rainstorms this winter. The contractor will most likely begin full operations in mid-May, as that is when earthwork operations will be able to resume.

Caltrans has opened bids for the "Twin Gulches" project (SHA-299-4.3/5.5). The apparent low bidder is Nordic Industries Inc of Olivehurst CA. This $12.2 million dollar project is partly funded with $1.5 million in HPP funding.