



DATE: April 25, 2019

TO: Transportation Authority of Marin Board of Commissioners

FROM: Dianne Steinhauser, Executive Director

SUBJECT: Authorize the Executive Director to Expand Consultant Support on SR 37 Corridor Project (Action) Agenda Item 6e

RECOMMENDATION

Authorize the Executive Director to expand consultant support for TAM efforts to coordinate with Caltrans in developing a project in the State Route (SR) 37 corridor to raise SR 37 above the most flooded areas in Marin County, from Highway 101 to Atherton Avenue.

BACKGROUND

In the Fall of 2017, TAM completed a small study as part of the SR 37 Policy Committee effort to define improvements in the SR 37 Corridor. The study looked at raising the highway from Highway 101 to Sear's Point. It divided up the effort into three separate segments, raising SR 37 from Highway 101 to Black Point, raising SR 37 from Black Point to Sears Point, then raising a shorter segment in the most flood-prone area, from Novato Creek to Atherton Avenue. This last segment, called Alternative 3 within the study, has drawn scrutiny and support from Caltrans, who owns and operates SR 37.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

Staff has been working closely with the partners in the Corridor to address all the needs along Route 37. While the SR 37 Policy Committee of all four counties - Marin, Sonoma, Napa, and Solano along with BATA and Caltrans - has adopted the widening of the two-lane segment of SR 37 from Sears Point to Mare Island as the corridor priority, Marin only agreed on the condition that addressing flooding in Marin would be done as well. After this action in the Fall of 2017, SR 37 closed again in the Winter of 2019, drawing even more attention to the need to address the flooded area in Marin.

TAM has been working very closely with Caltrans to consider best next steps to address the flooded area that continues to cause the closure of SR 37 in Marin. While Caltrans temporary solutions have been a good investment - totaling about \$15 million to date - to keep SR 37 open near Marin's Novato Creek, a permanent solution is needed. TAM began the development of that solution - raising SR 37 through Marin - in 2017.

Recently, at the behest of our Senator, Mike McGuire, and in coordination with Caltrans staff in District 4, Caltrans appears willing to begin more formal consideration of raising the highway in Marin. It is necessary for TAM to support that activity with the consultants under TAM's On-call Project Management Services contract, who developed the initial study to raise SR 37. This will expedite a solution for the corridor.

FISCAL CONSIDERATION

The consultant support effort will be an expansion of existing efforts TAM conducted in 2017. It is envisioned the cost will range from \$50,000 to \$100,000. Funds will come from fees TAM receives from our member agencies.

NEXT STEPS

Caltrans is beginning the development of a Project Study Report for environmental work only to be able to program that environmental work in the SHOPP. It is noted that the Caltrans SHOPP has numerous demands on its funding and the project investment could be out many years in terms of schedule. However, Caltrans may be willing to start the necessary project scoping and environmental work as soon as possible given the precarious condition that this critical highway is in which is why TAM's support may be critical.