

STAFF REPORT



MEETING DATE:	December 8, 2015
SUBJECT:	Authorize Request for Proposals to Study the Far Northern California Consolidated Goods and Freight Hub
AGENDA ITEM:	9
STAFF CONTACT:	Daniel Wayne, Senior Transportation Planner

SUMMARY:

SRTA was awarded \$125,000 through the Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program to study the feasibility and benefits of a centrally-located hub for goods and freight transport. A request for proposals (RFP) for consultant services to complete the study has been prepared for distribution. Results will be used to attract capital grant funds for start-up costs and an experienced private-sector operator.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the board of directors authorize the executive director to issue an RFP for the *Far Northern California Consolidated Goods and Freight Hub Study* (attached).

DISCUSSION:

The North State economy is hampered by a lack of intermodal infrastructure for the aggregation, wholesale, and distribution of regional commodities (*North State Transportation for Economic Development Study*, 2013). To address this issue, a partnership was formed between SRTA, Superior California Economic Development, and Growing Local (a coalition of agriculture industry advocates representing far-northern California). Together, the partnership is exploring the feasibility and benefits of a centrally-located hub for the consolidated transport of goods and freight, both within the region and to external markets. It is envisioned that such a hub would serve the eight northernmost California counties (i.e. Del Norte, Humboldt, Siskiyou, Trinity, Shasta, Tehama, Modoc, and Lassen) and focus initially on agriculture-related commodities (e.g. wild rice, fruits, tree nuts, livestock, nursery stock crops, etc.). The ideal location would provide direct access to Interstate 5 and freight rail service.

In October, 2014, the board of directors authorized the submittal of a grant application under the Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program. The application, entitled the *Far Northern California Consolidated Good and Freight Hub Study*, was successful and the attached Preliminary Draft RFP for consultant services is provided for consideration by the board of directors.

Results of the study will be used when seeking capital grant funds to cover start-up costs and attract an experienced private-sector operator. Before even beginning the study, SRTA's partnership has caught the attention of the California Air Resources Board (CARB) and the California Energy Commission (CEC), who visited the region on November 3. A possible joint pilot project was discussed in response to the Governor's recent call for California Sustainable Freight Pilot Project Ideas (Executive Order B-32-15, October 23, 2015). A concept proposal was submitted to CARB for consideration (attached) and staff is monitoring other potential state funding sources.

ALTERNATIVES:

The board of directors may modify the RFP or defer the item to the February meeting to request additional information.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

A strong candidate site for the hub is located in the city of Anderson, southeast of Interstate 5 and Deschutes Road. The California Air Resources Board and California Energy Commission representatives visited the region on November 3, 2015. A tour of the candidate site was provided by Anderson City Manager Jeff Kiser, Mayor Hunt, and Vice-Mayor and SRTA Board Member Baugh. Representatives from Caltrans District 2 and project partners were also in attendance.

FINANCING:

Consultant costs (up to \$110,000) and SRTA staff time (\$15,000) required for project management and grant administration will be funded through the \$125,000 grant. Local matching funds of \$31,250 will be provided in the form of in-kind support from project partners, including Superior California Economic Development District, Growing Local, and the Center for Economic Development at California State University, Chico.

Daniel S. Little, AICP, Executive Director

Attachments:

Preliminary Draft RFP for the *Far Northern California Consolidated Goods & Freight Hub Study*
CARB Pilot Project Concept Proposal