



## Notice of Preparation for an Environmental Impact Report

### 2015 Regional Transportation Plan

Notice is hereby given that the Shasta Regional Transportation Agency (SRTA) will be the lead agency for the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report for the 2015 Regional Transportation Plan ("RTP"). Pursuant to section 15082 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), SRTA is soliciting views from your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental information which is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. SRTA will also accept written comments concerning the scope and content of the EIR from interested persons of the general public and organizations concerned with the project.

The Draft EIR will be a Program EIR. A Program EIR is prepared on a series of actions that can be characterized as one large project. A program level EIR allows SRTA to analyze the regional or general impacts of the projects and policies within the RTP. A more detailed or project-level environmental review (if required) of the projects included in the RTP will be conducted by the responsible agencies, including Caltrans, Shasta County, and the cities within the county, before each project is approved for construction and implementation.

The project description, location, environmental review requirements, and probable environmental issues to be addressed in the EIR are attached. An Initial Study is not attached and is not required because the need for an EIR has previously been determined, in accordance with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15060(d).

The 2015 RTP will address all transportation modes including motor vehicles, transit (commuter and local), rail, goods movement (rail freight and trucking), bicycle and pedestrian facilities, aviation systems, intelligent transportation systems (ITS), and transportation systems management (TSM) programs and projects within the horizon year of 2035. Specifically the RTP is intended to meet the region's transportation goals regarding current and future mobility needs through the identification of policies, actions, and a list of projects which will address these needs. The RTP will guide the development of the Regional and Federal Transportation Improvement Programs (RTIP and FTIP) as well as other transportation programming documents and plans throughout Shasta County.

This RTP will include a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), which is a new component in the RTP required by California Senate Bill 375, the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008 ("SB 375"). SB 375 mandates regional greenhouse gas ("GHG") reduction targets for cars and light trucks and, pursuant to that law, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) has established 2020 and 2035 GHG reduction targets for each region covered by one of the state's metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs). As the MPO for Shasta County, SRTA is required to prepare an SCS as part of the RTP that demonstrates how GHG reduction targets will be met through integrated land use, housing, and transportation planning. SRTA will develop several possible growth scenarios to evaluate the effect of various land use and transportation choices on meeting the established GHG emissions targets per SB 375.

**SRTA will host an EIR Scoping Meeting.** The purpose of the Scoping meeting is to solicit input on the scope and content of the environmental analysis that will be included in the Draft EIR and to discuss and learn about the RTP process.

The date, time and location of the meeting are as follows:

- **Wednesday, February 19, 2014**  
**3:30 PM**  
**Redding Library Community Room**  
**1100 Parkview Ave.**  
**Redding, CA 96001**

Because of the time sensitive nature of the regional transportation planning process, we request your response at the earliest possible date. Mail comments to Jennifer Pollom at **SRTA, 1255 East Street, Suite 202, Redding, CA 96001** or e-mail comments to [srta@srta.ca.gov](mailto:srta@srta.ca.gov) no later than **March 12, 2014**. Please identify the name, phone number, and email address of a contact person at your agency. Comments from the public must also include name, phone number, and email or postal address.

For more information, visit [www.srta.ca.gov](http://www.srta.ca.gov) or call 530-262-6190.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND SCOPE OF ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS**

### **Project Title**

Program EIR for the Shasta Regional Transportation Agency (SRTA) 2015 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

### **Project Location**

The geographical extent of the proposed RTP includes the area within the limits of Shasta County, California, including the incorporated cities of Anderson, Redding and Shasta Lake. Capital improvement projects identified in the RTP may be located on Interstate 5 (I-5), state highways, county roads and local streets, as well as on airport property, transit district property, federal lands, state lands and tribal lands.

### **Project Description**

The proposed 'project' is the 2015 RTP. SRTA is in the process of preparing the RTP as required by Section 65080 et seq, of Chapter 2.5 of the California Government Code, and federal guidelines pursuant to the federal surface transportation reauthorization, "Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" (MAP-21), the Transportation Conformity for the Air Quality Attainment Plan per 40 CFR Part 51 and 40 CFR Part 93, and requirements set forth in Assembly Bill 32, The Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, and Senate Bill 375, The Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008. The compendium of projects, policies and programs which aim to meet the transportation needs of the region while reducing congestion and improving air quality comprise the 2015 RTP.

SRTA's previous RTP was adopted in July 2010 ([http://srta.ca.gov/pastel/RT\\_RTP.html](http://srta.ca.gov/pastel/RT_RTP.html)). The 2015 RTP is the culmination of a multi-year effort that aims to maintain or enhance the efficient and effective movement of goods, services and persons. Further, the SCS will seek to coordinate local land use and transportation systems within the region to reduce emissions from cars and light trucks. SRTA is required by federal law to develop an RTP that determines the needs of the transportation system and prioritizes proposed transportation projects. The RTP is also necessary to obtain and allocate federal funding for regional transportation projects.

## **RTP Framework**

The 2015 RTP's unified strategy would include the following key elements:

- An overall description of the region's current and future challenges in accommodating growth and meeting mobility needs.
- A fiscally-constrained transportation network that consists of US and State Highways, local roadways, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, public transit, airports and passenger and freight rail.
- An integrated transportation and land use strategy for accommodating the region's future employment and housing needs, and that protects sensitive habitat and resource areas.
- Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures that improve system efficiency by influencing individual travel behavior.
- A financial plan that lays out the funding sources and mechanisms required to implement the strategies of the RTP. The financial plan will also recommend additional innovative financing strategies that can be implemented to carry out additional needed projects and programs.
- A transportation system performance evaluation that lays out the ability of the proposed strategies to address challenges.
- Additional strategies and illustrative or planned projects that have little or no money programmed for funding.

## **Sustainable Communities Strategy**

The 2015 RTP will include a newly required element called the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) pursuant to the requirements of SB 375. Under SB 375, MPOs such as SRTA are required to develop an SCS as part of the RTP, showing how the region intends to reduce, to the extent feasible, greenhouse gas emissions from cars and light trucks to meet a specified target for 2020 and 2035. The California Air Resources Board (ARB) issued SRTA a regional GHG target of no increase in per capita GHG emissions for the planning year 2020 and no increase in per capita GHG emissions in planning year 2035, as compared to baseline per capita emissions levels in 2005. If the targets cannot be feasibly met, an Alternative Planning Strategy (APS) will be prepared by SRTA to show how the targets could be achieved through alternative development patterns, infrastructure, or additional transportation measures or policies without the limitations of fiscal or other constraints. SRTA's intent is to achieve these targets with the SCS. The GHG reductions are to be derived from fewer and/or shorter per capita automobile and light truck trips resulting from integrated transportation, land use, housing and environmental planning.

Furthermore, SB 375 requires that the SCS shall identify general land uses, residential densities, and building intensities as well as areas to house future residents (see California Government Code Section 65080(b)(2)(B) for the full list of SB 375 requirements).

## **Issues to Be Addressed in the EIR**

The impact categories listed below have been preliminarily identified for analysis in the 2015 RTP EIR.

- Aesthetics (Visual Resources)
- Agricultural and Forest Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Environmental Justice
- Geology/Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards/Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology/Water Quality
- Land Use/Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population/Housing
- Public Health & Services
- Recreation
- Transportation/Traffic
- Utilities/Service Systems

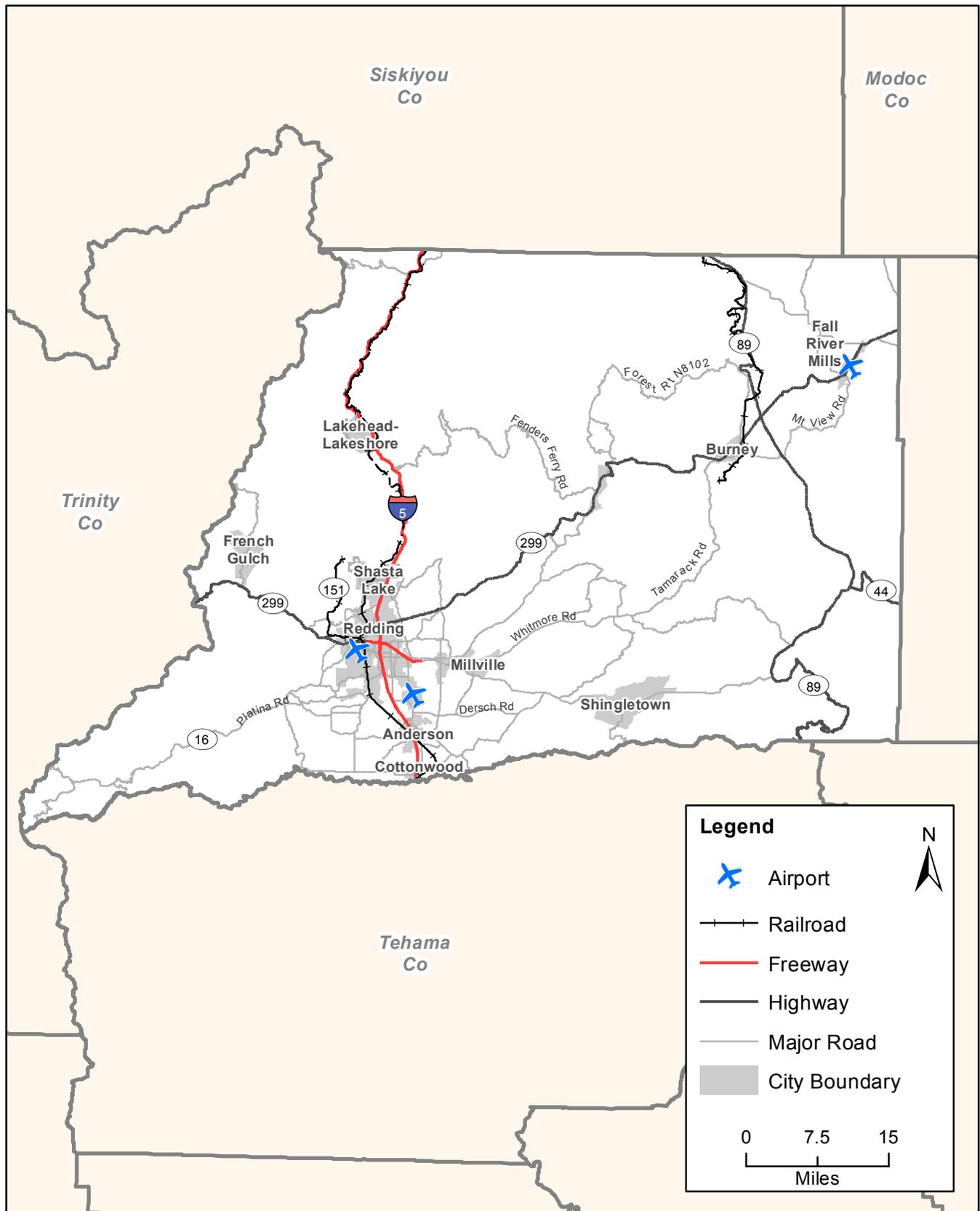
In addition, the EIR will address cumulative impacts, growth inducing impacts, and other issues required by CEQA.

Through the NOP, SRTA is seeking input on further categories of analysis or areas of focus within the specified categories above.

### **CEQA Streamlining**

SB 375 contains CEQA incentives, or streamlining provisions at the project level, to encourage the implementation of coordinated land use and transportation planning within the RTP. Certain types of development projects (i.e., transit priority projects or residential/mixed use projects, as defined by the statute) may qualify for CEQA streamlining as long as the requisite criteria are met. Generally, this means that the proposed project seeking to utilize the CEQA incentives is determined to be consistent with an approved SCS. Consistency will be determined by the local jurisdiction that is the lead agency for each project to be streamlined. SRTA's primary role is to include appropriate information in the SCS, such as land use information as required by SB 375 and/or guidance to aid in interpreting land use information that will allow a jurisdiction to make a consistency determination with respect to appropriate streamlining options on a project by project basis.

The programs and projects to be included in the 2015 RTP will be programmatically addressed in the EIR. This will allow SRTA to analyze the regional or general impacts of the program and projects. A more detailed or project level environmental assessment, if required, will be provided by the various responsible agencies, including Caltrans, Shasta County, and the cities within the County, for the various projects included in the RTP, before the projects are approved for construction.



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RTP Plan Area

