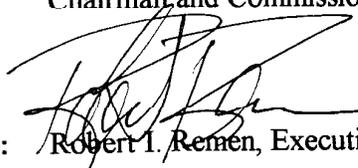


Memorandum

To: Chairman and Commissioners

Date: August 10, 2001

From: 
Robert I. Remen, Executive Director

File No: K54
BOOK ITEM 4.5c
INFORMATION

Ref: **Comments on Draft Reform of California's Transportation Enhancement Activities (TEA) Program**

Issue: What specific reforms should the Commission consider and adopt to help improve project selection and delivery in the federal enhancements program?

Recommendation: Commission staff recommends that the Commission take comments at the August meeting and provide more time for interested parties to submit written comments on the Draft TEA Program Reform proposal before giving direction to staff and considering any new TEA Program design.

Background: The Commission at its July 2001 meeting reviewed a staff generated outline of draft proposals for TEA program reform. The Commission solicited written comments from the transportation community on the draft proposals. As of the date of this memorandum the Commission received written comments from the City of Oakland and the Sierra Club (comments attached).



CITY OF OAKLAND



LIZIEL BUILDING - 250 FRANK H. OGAWA PLAZA, 4TH FLOOR - OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA 94612

Public Works Agency

Transmitted by fax: 916/653-2134

(510) 238-3961
FAX (510) 238-2233
TTY (510) 238-7644
August 8, 2001

Mr. Allen M. Lawrence, Chairman
California Transportation Commission
1120 N Street, Room 2221 (MS-52)
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Lawrence

Re: TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENTS PROGRAM

The City of Oakland wishes to voice its objection to the CTC staff's proposal that funding for the TEA 21 Enhancements Program project be limited to right-of-way and construction costs. In the past, we have relied upon Enhancement funds to also defray project development costs including environmental assessment, design and engineering. These elements can easily represent 22% of the total project costs. If cities such as Oakland must now absorb these costs -- in addition to the minimum local match of 11.5% -- you will greatly diminish the pool of potential applicants. Those of us who now struggle to raise the minimum local match, plus other ineligible overhead costs, will be hard-pressed to meet this higher threshold which could total up to 40% of project costs.

Oakland has benefited significantly from the federal Transportation Enhancements Activities (TEA) program, as well as from the Transportation for Livable Communities Program sponsored by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission. Currently, six TEA funded projects totaling roughly \$8 million are in various stages of development in Oakland. Each is contributing to significant community revitalization, improving pedestrian/bicycle safety, plus bringing new public art and landscaping to neighborhoods long neglected.

Please do not limit TEA funds to right-of-way and construction costs as proposed by CTC staff. Without access to funding for project development costs, it is unlikely that Oakland would be able to compete for future Enhancement funds. CTC clearly recognizes the importance of funding project development for STIP funded projects. We encourage you to do the same for TEA funded projects. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Claudette R. Ford
Public Works Director

cc: Commissioners McKenna, Hallisey, and Kellogg; Steve Heminger, Dennis Fay, Robert C. Bobb,
Dolores Blanchard, George Musgrove

Post-It® Fax Note	7671	Date	8/8/01	# of pages	1
To	Judge Kemp	From	Phonix		
On/Dept.		Co.	o Home		
Phone #		Phone #	238-6613		
Fax #	116-286x	Fax #			



Kenneth D Ryan <kdryan60@juno.com> on 08/10/2001 09:50:04 AM

To: Stephen.Maller@dot.ca.gov
cc: bmcgavern@mcsweb1.com, kfrick@mtc.dst.ca.us
Subject: Sierra Club Comments on CTC TEA Program Reform Proposal

Robert Remen's memo of 6/27/2001, File K54, Book Item 4.8, succinctly presents the situation today and notes "only about 12% (of the available funds) have been allocated to delivered projects; thus the TEA program is running almost three years behind" Sierra Club strongly supported this program at the Federal level and we are disappointed to see the dismal performance by the State of California. We agree serious revisions must be made.

Sierra Club's interest in this program is two fold:
* Use of the Federally earmarked funds and Federal flexible funds supplemented by State and local discretionary funds for a full range of projects described in the TEA section of Federal law
* Inclusion of environmental and community interests in all phases of project development and implementation

Sierra Club supports the proposals in said memo with the following modifications (we reserve the right to modify these comments if the 8/10/2001 comment period is extended):

Proposal 1) Item B - We can not support the proposal to change the formula for determining regional and state shares unless you provide much more detail. How would your formula have effected the allocation of funds to the current cycle in comparison with the actual allocations to date? The 75/25 rule is easily understandable by the public. Your proposal looks suspiciously like a way to move \$\$\$ away from TEA projects. My constituents can not understand why SHOPP and federal local assistance programs have any claim on or role to play on the use of TEA funds.

Proposal 1 is also missing a significant element - commitment of state discretionary funds as local match for federal funds. If we are to believe the state is serious about supporting the TEA program we need to see you put some \$\$\$ into the process.

Proposal 2) Item A - This seems to be in direct conflict with Proposal 6A. We urge you eliminate this recommendation.

Proposal 3) Item A - While we agree there can be problems with poorly thought out projects, we do not see this as the way to handle the situation. Plus, we see this as a way of severely limiting input by citizen groups. We urge staff recommend the approach developed by the MTC which allocates a small amount of discretionary funds for planning projects and urges citizen groups to apply for these funds as a way of refining their ideas. Some ideas fall away while others are deemed worthy and go on to compete for and secure engineering and construction funding. This process; managed by one part time, program dedicated staff person; has yielded a 50% TEA Obligation rate as of 4/30/01 and brought many very effective citizen's groups into the process. MTC uses a local advisory committee to evaluate projects and suggest program refinements. This model should be recommended to other regions of the state.

Further, we see citizens groups as essential to the successful implementation of projects in this program. The basic fact is the funding is below the radar screen of most of the established transportation providers. However, funding is at a level many local community groups can use to improve their quality of life. The appropriate mix is community groups visioning, sponsoring and ramroding projects and public agencies facilitating projects by processing paper work and issuing contracts. The memo points out success at the State level "hinges on harnessing divergent interests". This is true at the local level too, however here the principal interest groups are community groups and local public works staff moderated by Regional Agencies and/or Caltrans. The TEA Program allows opportunities for effective citizen input to a very complex and competitive process, CTC rules must encourage, not impede these opportunities.

Proposal 4) The Statewide TEA Advisory Committee should be involved here too.

Proposal 6) The proposal that Caltrans define a focus for the state share should be revised to require this be done in consultation with the Statewide TEA Advisory Committee. Staff should compare implementation of the Safe Routes to School Program with Proposal 6 and see if some conformity is practical between these two small statewide programs. We think many of the SRSP projects could qualify for funds from the TEA program and CTC could add discretionary funds to build many more of these small projects.

Proposal 7) Item A - We are absolutely opposed to trading funds to allow "other non-TEA transportation purposes." Rural regions need TEA projects as much or more than urban areas, especially if we factor in the need for SRSP projects. Caltrans has a great deal of influence in rural regions and should use it to facilitate local TEA projects. This program should be a use it or lose it situation, as is the federal intent. We do not object if the Commission wants to ease the way for funding small, local, rural projects by trading funds so long as the ultimate local, rural project is a TEA project.

Kenneth Ryan, Transportation Issue Chair, Sierra Club California

Proposal 7) Item B - We have reservations about this and urge the Statewide TEA Advisory Committee be involved in this issue.