

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

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April 24, 2008

TO: Commissioners and Interested Parties

FROM: Peter Douglas, Executive Director
Susan Hansch, Chief Deputy Director
Tami Grove, Statewide Development and Transportation Liaison

SUBJECT: Interagency Agreement with the California Department of Transportation for public hearing and Commission action at the California Coastal Commission Meeting of May 7-9, 2008

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the Commission authorize the Executive Director to amend the current interagency agreement and accept up to \$300,000 from the Department of Transportation to provide environmental guidance, coordination and review services to Caltrans-related programs, plans and projects in Caltrans' Coastal District 4 (Sonoma, Marin, San Francisco and San Mateo Counties).

Motion:

"I move that the Commission authorize the Executive Director to amend the current interagency agreement with the Department of Transportation and accept up to \$300,000 to provide a range of services in support of the Department of Transportation's work."

Staff recommends a **YES** vote.

Staff Analysis:

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) undertakes many plans and projects in the coastal zone every year, involving construction and repair of highways, bridges, and other facilities. Transportation planning issues are interlinked with many of the land use planning issues that the California Coastal Commission (CCC) reviews and monitors in local coastal programs throughout the state. Further, many transportation projects are located within the CCC's original jurisdiction area for coastal permits. Other projects are located within the coastal permit jurisdiction of cities or counties with certified Local Coastal Programs (LCPs) where the local government is responsible for reviewing coastal permit applications. In most cases, however, local government actions on Caltrans projects are appealable to the CCC, and a

sizeable number of these local actions are in fact appealed. Because many of these projects are significant public works, a wide array of Coastal Act issues are often implicated.

The purpose of this amendment is to provide additional resources to the CCC staff in order to give more timely review and analysis of information prepared in support of Caltrans' District 4 transportation plans, projects, programs and coastal development permit applications. Important aspects of this work will include:

- early and on-going coordination with Caltrans District 4 staff to avoid unnecessary project processing delays;
- analysis of environmental documents, technical reports, coastal permit applications, appeals, and LCP submittals involving Caltrans transportation projects and preparation of technical and staff reports for action by the CCC;
- development of strategies for orderly responses to storm damage and emergency situations involving state highways and transportation facilities, including advance understanding of construction techniques, appropriate for use in the North Central Coast District coastal zone, and the use of environmentally-sensitive, thematic designs and construction materials for such structures as retaining walls, guard and bridge railings, median barriers, erosion control devices, bicycle lanes, etc.;
- the planning and construction of the California Coastal Trail;
- improve strategies to provide better protection of archaeological resources that may be affected by transportation projects and coastal access requirements; and,
- update treatment of sea-level rise issues in transportation plans and projects

This interagency agreement amendment will augment a current contract between Caltrans and the CCC by providing the needed resources to support the equivalent of one permanent CPA III position. The agreement provides for sufficient funding to support this equivalent staffing related costs for up to a total of two years. The current contract being amended expires on December 31, 2009.

The date for initiating this additional work is April 1, 2008. Caltrans has entered into similar agreements with other resources agencies, with the same goal of improving the design and review of transportation projects that affect a variety of resources and land uses throughout the State.