

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ March 20, 2008

Committee Meeting Date: \_\_\_\_\_ March 20, 2008

Board Meeting Date: \_\_\_\_\_ April 3, 2008

**BOARD MEMORANDUM**

**ACTION ITEM**

**TO:** Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority  
Board of Directors

**THROUGH:** Michael T. Burns  
General Manager

**FROM:** John H. Ristow  
Chief CMA Officer

**SUBJECT:** Funding Agreement for Implementation of Ramp Metering

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**Policy-Related Action: No**

**Government Code Section 84308 Applies: No**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Authorize General Manager to execute a funding agreement for \$2,051,000 with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) which specifies the roles and responsibilities to implement ramp metering on three freeway corridors in Santa Clara County.

**BACKGROUND:**

As the agency responsible for regional transportation planning in the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area, Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), is responsible for developing and maintaining the Bay Area's regional transportation plan. The current plan, known as Transportation 2030, was adopted by the Commission on February 23, 2005. Transportation 2030 includes approximately \$2 million per year for high priority system management improvements.

MTC Resolution 3609, adopted in 2003, directed MTC staff to work with the Bay Area Congestion Management Agencies to develop a list of high priority system management improvements, including Caltrans Traffic Operations System improvements (e.g. ramp metering, message signs, and incident detection).

Based on a recent survey of ramp meters by Caltrans-District 4 staff, a number of freeway segments operate poorly (at capacity, or have long queues) and have inactive ramp meters. The operations on these freeway segments could be improved through the activation of the ramp metering equipment. Examples of these freeway segments include the following:

- SR-87 was recently ranked by the San Jose Mercury News (Mr. Roadshow) as #1 on the "Dirty Dozen" list for driver frustration -- primarily due to a lack of active freeway access management.
- According to the VTA-2006 Monitoring and Conformance Report, five miles of out eleven miles of US 101 between Embarcadero Road and De La Cruz Avenue operate at Level of Service (LOS) F.

### **DISCUSSION:**

On February 9, 2008 MTC approved funding of up to \$2,051,000 in Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) and Service Authority for Freeways and Expressways (SAFE) funds from Fiscal Year (FY) 2007/2008 for improvements to ramp metering within the State Route 87 (SR 87), SR 85, and US 101 corridors in Santa Clara County. MTC has requested that VTA undertake the coordination of the project in conjunction with Caltrans and affected Cities within Santa Clara County.

The project scope is to implement ramp metering for the following three freeway corridor segments:

- Southbound SR 85 between Almaden Expressway and Cottle Road
- Northbound and Southbound SR 87 between US 101 and SR 85
- Southbound US 101 between Embarcadero Road and De La Cruz Boulevard

The cooperative agreement between VTA and MTC will define roles and responsibilities between MTC as the funding agency and VTA as the project manager. MTC as the funding agency will provide funding to cover costs of VTA staff, consultant services and procurement and installation of any equipment needed for the project. VTA as the project manager is responsible for coordination of implementation including, development of the consultant scope of work, conducting field reviews, completing detector loop and other equipment repairs, data collection, development of ramp meter timing plans, implementation of timing plans, and evaluation of the timing plans. VTA is also responsible for outreach and coordination on the project with Caltrans and local agencies. Caltrans, the operating agency for ramp metering, is to provide an oversight in the development and implementation of the ramp metering plans.

The costs for contracting of professional engineering and construction services and VTA staff costs and contingency is estimated at \$2.05 million. The estimated schedule to complete the project is one year from initiation of the work.

### **ALTERNATIVES:**

VTA can elect not to lead this project and forego this funding opportunity. As an alternative MTC could decide to manage the project or to contract with Caltrans or another agency to implement the project which would likely result in a significant delay in deployment of the ramp metering.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

Appropriation approval for this project is included in the VTA Highway Capital Project Fiscal Years 2008-2009 Biennial Budget under the VTP Highway Program for Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) project. The proposed funding agreement with MTC provides enough funding to complete the project including VTA staff support costs.

**STANDING COMMITTEE DISCUSSION/RECOMMENDATION:**

The Congestion Management Program & Planning Committee considered this item on March 20, 2008 and made the following comments:

- Expressed strong support for the Ramp Metering Project.
- There was a question about the operations and maintenance of the ramp meters. Staff responded that VTA would work together with Caltrans and local jurisdiction staff to implement the metering plans. After implementation, Caltrans would ultimately be responsible for the operations and maintenance of the meters.

The Committee unanimously recommended that the Board approve this item.

Prepared by: David Kobayashi, Senior Transportation Planner, CMA Engineering