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NEWS RELEASE

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Highway 1 Soquel/Morrissey Auxiliary Lanes Construction Bid Award Recommended

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC), as the construction manager for the Highway 1 Soquel/Morrissey Auxiliary Lanes Project, will hold a special meeting on January 5, 2012 to select the contractor that submitted the lowest of four bids, to build this project. The lowest bidder is RGW Construction, a firm with extensive experience in both road and bridge work.

Components of the Highway 1 Soquel/Morrissey Auxiliary Lanes project include:

- Adding one auxiliary lane in each direction on Highway 1 between the Soquel Avenue and Morrissey Boulevard interchanges. Auxiliary lanes connect an on ramp with the next off ramp, but do not modify the interchange, with the purpose of extending the weaving and merging distance between the ramps and improving traffic flow. They are not designed to carry through traffic, but to provide greater separation between vehicles entering and exiting the freeway to and from mainline traffic.
- Rebuilding the La Fonda Avenue overcrossing, adding bicycle lanes and a wider sidewalk for pedestrians.
- Adding new "green" sidewalks along Rooney Street and Morrissey Boulevard between Elk Street and San Juan Avenue where none currently exist. The sidewalk work will feature the first publicly advertised application of a new concrete product that reduces green house gases through the use of a partial cement replacement. The innovative product uses industrial carbon dioxide, which would otherwise be released into the atmosphere, and instead is permanently captured in a solid form.

Construction of the project will begin in early 2012 with vegetation and tree cutting, followed by soundwall construction. In order to minimize disruptions to Harbor High School, Delaveaga Elementary School and the neighborhood, demolition of the La Fonda Bridge is scheduled to start at the beginning of summer break in 2012. The La Fonda Bridge will take approximately 6-8 months to rebuild.

Community members interested in finding out more about the project are encouraged to attend a kick off meeting that will be held during the evening of Thursday, January 19, 2012 at the DeLaveaga Elementary School Multipurpose room. The meeting will feature both open house and presentation formats. Information about the project, including the meeting flyer and contact information card, is on the RTC website (<http://sccrtc.org/projects/streets-highways/highway-1-aux-lanes/>).

An extensive environmental analysis of the Highway 1 Auxiliary Lanes project, including technical reports, was previously conducted. It included analysis of the project's air quality, traffic, visual/aesthetics, noise, water quality, biology, climate change/greenhouse gas emissions, growth and cumulative impacts. In March 2011, a judge confirmed the validity of the environmental analysis for the project.

Highway 1 from Soquel Drive to Morrissey Boulevard is historically the busiest section of the highway carrying over 115,000 vehicles per day and routinely operating at the worst level of service (LOS) "F" for 8 hours each day. The completion of this project is anticipated to shift vehicles traveling in the area to Highway 1, rather than using local neighborhood streets. The project is consistent with the RTC's mission to provide the community with a range of safe, convenient, reliable, and efficient transportation choices.

This project is funded with a combination of federal and state funds, including Proposition 1B bonds approved by California voters in 2006, State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funds, Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) funds, and a federal earmark.

For more information about this project, the RTC and transportation in Santa Cruz County: call (831) 460-3200, email info@sccrtc.org , or log onto www.sccrtc.org. The staff report for the January 5, 2011 RTC meeting is available online at: <http://sccrtc.org/meetings/commission/agendas/>.

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