



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

AGENDA ITEM NO.

C-7

For the meeting of: April 22, 2014

Date: April 18, 2014

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Supervisor Estelle Fennell

Subject: Support Letter for North Coast Railroad Authority's TIGER Planning Grant Application - Humboldt Bay Block Master Plan

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors authorize the Chair to sign the attached support letter.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

N/A

DISCUSSION:

The U.S. Department of Transportation is soliciting funding proposals under the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) VI grant program. The solicitation was published in March 2014 and applications are due by April 28, 2014. A total of \$600 million was appropriated by Congress for national infrastructure investments with funds to be awarded on a competitive basis. While the majority of funds will be awarded for capital projects, up to \$35 million can be awarded for surface transportation planning activities. The North Coast Railroad Authority intends to submit an application for TIGER Planning Grant funds to prepare a master plan for the Humboldt Bay Block portion of their line, which extends from Samoa to South Fork for a length of over 60 miles. A proposed support letter is attached.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: N/A

Prepared by Kathy Hayes

Signature

Estelle Fennell

REVIEW:

Auditor County Counsel Personnel Risk Manager Other

TYPE OF ITEM:

- XX Consent
Departmental
Public Hearing
Other

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

Upon motion of Supervisor Sundberg Seconded by Supervisor Fennell

- Ayes Sundberg, Bohn, Fennell, Bass
Nays Lorelace
Abstain
Absent

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.

Meeting of:

and carried by those members present, the Board hereby approves the recommended action contained in this Board report.

Dated: April 22, 2014

By: [Signature]
Kathy Hayes, Clerk of the Board

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT: North Coast Railroad Authority; Humboldt County Association of Governments; Caltrans; City of Eureka; City of Arcata; City of Fortuna; Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation and Conservation District; Upstate RailConnect Committee

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS: Board discretion

ATTACHMENTS: Draft Support Letter



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

825 5TH STREET

EUREKA, CALIFORNIA 95501-1153 PHONE (707) 476-2390 FAX (707) 445-7299

April 22, 2014

United States Department of Transportation
Office of the Secretary
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

**RE: Support for North Coast Railroad Authority's TIGER Planning Grant Application –
Humboldt Bay Block Master Plan**

Dear Application Review Committee:

The Humboldt County Board of Supervisors expresses strong support for the North Coast Railroad Authority's TIGER Planning Grant application for funds to develop a master plan for the Humboldt Bay Block portion of the NCRA's rail corridor.

This plan would provide a strategy for NCRA to collaborate with local jurisdictions and interests to improve and utilize the railroad corridor for freight and excursion train use in conjunction with developing a multi-modal transportation network and addressing existing flooding hazards and environmental impacts.

The north end of the NCRA railroad corridor has been isolated for nearly 20 years due to storm damage within the Eel River canyon to the south. While remaining a valuable public asset, the corridor is underutilized and has deteriorated due to lack of funds for maintenance. There is considerable interest from a diversity of stakeholders to utilize the railroad corridor to stimulate economic opportunities, connect small communities, and reduce the flood risk and environmental impacts associated with the corridor. The strategy proposed by NCRA would bring together short-term and long-term opportunities to make investments in this important transportation infrastructure for public benefit and reduce the costs and risks associated with the current condition.

We believe NCRA's proposal is an excellent match with the selection criteria for the TIGER grant program. We support the collaborative approach and pledge to be an active partner.

Sincerely,

Rex Bohn, Chair
Humboldt County Board of Supervisors

RB:kh