

Transportation projects recommended for funding

By DENISE FRANKLIN
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SANTA CRUZ — Scotts Valley will receive \$450,000 in federal money toward its \$3 million improvement of the intersection at Mount Hermon Road and Scotts Valley Drive, the county Regional Transportation Commission agreed Thursday.

This was one of only two changes made by the commission to a list of countywide projects recommended for \$9 million in federal transportation funds.

The commission also agreed to grant \$55,000 for a shuttle bus at UC Santa Cruz.

At the request of Scotts Valley Mayor Joe Miller, the \$450,000 was taken from \$975,000 recommended for a transit center in Scotts Valley. This left about \$525,000 in federal funds for the transit center, which will be built by Scotts Valley and the Metropolitan Transit District.

Scotts Valley has also received a \$500,000 state grant for the center, which it must match, bringing the total available for the center to \$1.5 million.

The city envisions a transit center similar to the one at Capitola Mall being built where Kings Village Drive now intersects Scotts Valley Drive. It would include a park-and-ride lot.

Miller, who serves on the commission, said he proposed moving money from the transit center be-

cause the intersection improvements are the city's top priority. Additionally, Miller said, he felt the Transit District wants to spend too much on the transit center.

"I don't want to get so carried away with a transit center that it becomes a monument to government inefficiency," Miller said.

Santa Cruz City Councilman Scott Kennedy, also a member of the commission, recommended that \$55,000 earmarked for improving the intersection at Soquel Avenue and Branciforte Road be given to the UCSC shuttle. That leaves \$11,000 for the intersection.

All this money comes from the Intermodal Surface Transportation Act passed in December. The act allocates \$151 billion in federal gas tax revenues over the next six years for road improvements and congestion-relief projects and will create an estimated 4 million jobs nationwide, according to Congressman Norm Mineta, D-San Jose, who spoke in Scotts Valley Thursday.

It's estimated that 16,000 of these jobs will be created in the Greater San Francisco Bay Area, including Santa Cruz County, Mineta said.

Local transportation agencies are given the power under the act to decide how to spend the money. Local jurisdictions who receive funds must match them by 11.5 percent.

The following projects will receive funding this fiscal year:

UCSC — Off-campus bicycle parking, shuttle bus.

Capitola — Bikeway connecting east and west Capitola via a footbridge across Soquel Creek at Rispin Mansion. Trip-reduction ordinance. Intersection improvements at Bay Avenue and Porter Street.

Transit District — Completion of construction of the 12-bus transfer station. Purchase of buses that meet clean air requirements. Bus transfer station and park and ride lot in Scotts Valley.

Santa Cruz — Trip-reduction ordinance. Traffic signal coordination at Laurel and Front streets and on Soquel Avenue. Study of a bike and pedestrian path linking Broadway, Brommer Street and harbor. Improvements to the Seabright Avenue and Murray Street intersection, including left-turn lanes on Murray Street. Traffic signal improvements at Soquel Avenue and Branciforte Drive. Portion of the money needed to widen River Street.

Scotts Valley — Trip-reduction ordinance. Lockwood Lane bike path from Whispering Pines Drive to Mount Hermon Road. Bear Creek Road bike path. Study of a bus shuttle service and rental or purchase of shuttle. Portion of funds for Mount Hermon Road/Scotts Valley Drive intersection improvements.

Transportation Commission — Subsidy program to help businesses install bike parking. Materials to help local jurisdictions develop

trip reduction ordinances. Training of transportation coordinators selected by businesses to help employees find alternatives to driving alone to work. Outreach program by the Transportation Management Association, a group of local businesses working to cut down on congestion. Implementation of the county Congestion Management Program. Study of connecting proposed rail service from Santa Cruz to Watsonville with Caltrains stop at Watsonville Junction.

Watsonville — Bike lanes and

sidewalk reconstruction on Rodriguez Street. Bike storage and showers at Muni Service Center and City Hall. Bike lanes, pedestrian walkways, and traffic signal coordination on Green Valley Road. Trip-reduction plan for Pajaro Valley Unified School District employees. Traffic signal coordination at Rodriguez and Second streets. Widening and resurfacing of Freedom Boulevard between Green Valley Road and Davis Avenue.

County — Part of funding needed for bike path connecting Broad-

way and Brommer Street. Trip-reduction ordinance. Bike safety in schools. Traffic signal at State Park Drive and Highway 1 in Seacliff. Rehabilitation of Capitola Road, Soquel Drive, Bear Creek Road in Boulder Creek, and Soquel-San Jose Road. Signal at Glen Arbor Road and Highway 9 in Ben Lomond. Road improvements and traffic signal at Porter Street Bridge in Soquel. Repair of Green Valley Road slip-out. Repair of Old San Jose Road slide at Olive Springs Road.

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