

July 3, 2024

Ms. Tanisha Taylor  
Executive Director  
California Transportation Commission  
1120 N Street, MS 52  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Executive Director Taylor,

The San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA) is pleased to submit the **National Trails Highway Bridge Replacements Project** in partnership with San Bernardino County for consideration in the formulaic Senate Bill 1 (SB1) Local Partnership Program (LPP). SBCTA is the nominating agency for the project and San Bernardino County will be the implementing agency. The total project cost is \$98,281,000 and requested LPP programming totals \$5,776,000.

The National Trails Highway Bridge Replacements Project includes the rehabilitation of a 130-mile stretch of National Trails Highway across the Mojave Desert between the towns of Barstow and Needles. This stretch, the longest remaining original section of Route 66, includes 128 historic timber bridges built between 1929 and 1931 and is designated as a National Historic Trail by the National Park Service. The requested LPP programming and allocation will be used to partially fund the replacement of 33 of the 128 bridges. Nearing a century old, these bridges have far exceeded their useful life and are in need of being replaced.

The National Trails Highway Bridges Replacement Project addresses existing gaps in service in a vital rural transportation corridor. The project will improve goods movement to the area and surrounding regions that depend on this road and will provide a detour option from I-40, as the National Trails Highway currently offers the only bypass to a 96-mile section of the interstate. A full closure in this area would result in national impacts to interstate commerce, national security, and the preservation of one of America's historical treasures, Route 66. This project will minimize road closures and remove the weight restrictions that currently prevent large vehicles from using portions of the roadway including emergency, military, and commercial vehicles. The project will also serve residents in rural areas of San Bernardino County, including significantly disadvantaged populations. Every Census Tract in the project area is an established Persistent Poverty Census Tract by the U.S. Department of Transportation.

The amount being requested for LPP programming is critical to initiating and completing the project approval and environment document (PAED) and the plans, specifications, and estimate phases of the project. SBCTA and San Bernardino County also intend to request the first allocation for the PAED phase at the August 2024 CTC meeting. SBCTA greatly appreciates your consideration of LPP programming for the National Trails Highway Bridge Replacements Project.

Sincerely,

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Raymond W. Wolfe  
Executive Director  
San Bernardino County Transportation Authority  
*Nominating Agency*

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Luther Snoke  
Chief Executive Officer  
San Bernardino County  
*Implementing Agency*

## National Trails Highway Bridge Replacements Project

<b>Project Title</b>	<b>National Trails Highway Bridge Replacements Project</b>
<b>B. Screening Criteria</b>	
<b>B.1 Eligible Project</b>	The National Trails Highway Bridge Replacements Project is an eligible project for the Local Partnership Formulaic Program (LPP). San Bernardino County (County) is completing the rehabilitation of a 130-mile stretch of National Trails Highway across the Mojave Desert between the cities of Barstow and Needles. This stretch, the longest remaining original section of Route 66, includes 128 historic timber bridges built between 1929 and 1931 and is designated as a National Historic Trail by the National Park Service. The LPP funds will be used to partially fund the replacement of 33 out of the 128 bridges. Nearing a century old, these bridges have far exceeded their useful life and are in need of being replaced.
<b>B.2 Electronic Project Programming Request (ePPR)</b>	Attached
<b>B.3 Performance Metrics</b>	Included in ePPR
<b>C. General Information</b>	
<b>C.1 Overview</b>	LPP funds will be used to partially fund the replacement of 33 out of 128 bridges located on a 130-mile stretch of the National Trails Highway across the Mojave Desert between the cities of Barstow and Needles. The National Trails Highway Bridge Replacements Project addresses existing gaps in service in a vital rural transportation corridor which a full closure would result in national impacts on interstate commerce, national security, and the preservation of one of America's historical treasures. The National Trails Highway Bridges Replacement Project is located on a section of National Trails Highway, from the town of Daggett to Amboy Road through an essential section of the historic U.S. Route 66 (also known as "National Trails Highway" or "Route 66"). Attachment 3 is a map of the project location with the locations of the 33 bridges indicated with an orange star.

## National Trails Highway Bridge Replacements Project

<b>C.2 Project Location</b>	The National Trails Highway Bridges Replacement Project is located on a section of National Trails Highway, from the town of Daggett to Amboy Road through an essential section of the historic U.S. Route 66 (also known as “National Trails Highway” or “Route 66”) in San Bernardino County.
<b>C.3 Scope</b>	<p>The County is completing the rehabilitation of a 130-mile stretch of National Trails Highway across the Mojave Desert between the cities of Barstow and Needles. This section, the longest remaining original section of Route 66, includes 128 historic timber bridges built between 1929 and 1931 and is designated as a National Historic Trail by the National Park Service. The LPP funds will be used to partially fund the replacement of 33 of the 128 bridges. Nearing a century old, these bridges have far exceeded their useful life and are in need of being replaced. Because they are less than 20 feet in length, they are not eligible for Federal Highway Bridge Program funds.</p> <p>The bridges still exist in the original design of simple timber girders and a continuous cast-in-place concrete deck. They span over various manmade ditches that control surface drainage. The bridges are supported on closed-end backfilled timber pile extension strutted abutments and timber pile extension bents and now have asphalt overlays. Approximately ten bridges have restricted weight limit postings as low as three tons due to structural deficiencies. This weight restriction prevents large vehicles, including emergency, military, and commercial vehicles, from using the roadway, limiting travel and the movement of goods. The bridge replacements will prevent additional road closures, eliminate weight restrictions, and will meet current codes and include seismic design criterion while replicating the original structure type to maintain historical accuracy.</p> <p>The LPP funds are proposed to be used to complete the environmental and final design phases for the 33 bridges. The funds are proposed to be programmed for an early scope of work to advance three bridges and a longer term scope of work to complete the remaining 30 bridges.</p>
<b>C.4 Project Benefits</b>	<p><b><i>Protects Motorized/Nonmotorized Users and Communities/Local Residents from Safety Risks</i></b></p> <p>One of the County’s primary goals with this project is the safe operation of National Trails Highway and restoration of accessibility for all roadway users. The replacement of National Trails Highway bridges between the town of Daggett and Amboy Road will allow the County to open this section of the roadway safely with minimal weight restrictions. The bridges will be designed to preserve the historic setting while safely accommodating legal and permit loads. National Trails Highway provides the only bypass to Interstate 40 (I-40) in the event of freeway closure, serves as the only access to a 73-mile segment of BNSF’s rail corridor, and is a critical access route for the US Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow (MCLB) and Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center (MCAGCC) in Twentynine Palms. As such, the project will mitigate potential safety risks to the community associated with potential accidents or closures on I-40, potential derailments or collisions on the rail line, and delays of critical equipment transport to military installations.</p> <p><b><i>Increase Intermodal and Multimodal Freight Mobility</i></b></p> <p>Rural communities along the project corridor rely on I-40 and National Trails Highway; they have no other options. National Trails Highway plays a significant role in serving both rural and transportation needs across the Mojave Desert. Local mining, farming, and utilities businesses need reliable access to National Trails Highway for goods movement. These businesses have experienced increased transportation costs and transit time because of closed and weight-restricted bridges on National Trails Highway.</p> <p><b><i>Reduces Air Pollution and Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Transportation.</i></b></p>

## National Trails Highway Bridge Replacements Project

	<p>Replacing the existing timber bridges with well-designed modern structures allows National Trails Highway to become a critical detour route for I-40 in the event of a catastrophic closure. Motorists could be stranded with no detour route available if current bridge weight limits remain, become more stringent, or bridge outages occur. Cars would continue to idle under this scenario (as motorists would keep their cars running in the desert climate), creating greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs). The project bridges will also provide an important north-south connection for traffic to and from the City of Twentynine Palms to I-15. Without this connection, the length of trips increases, generating additional vehicle emissions.</p> <p><b>Output:</b> <i>45,610 sq feet of Local Reconstructed Bridge/Tunnels</i></p>
<b>C.5 Nominating Agency/Implementing Agency</b>	<p>SBCTA is the nominating agency. San Bernardino County is the implementing agency. Funding agreement No. 24-1003172 has been approved between the agencies regarding the allocation of funds for the Project.</p>
<b>C.6 Reversible Lanes</b>	Not applicable.
<b>D. Project Delivery</b>	
<b>D.1 Delivery Method</b>	It is anticipated that this will be a design-bid-build project.
<b>D.2 Contracts</b>	<p>It is the County's priority to complete the first three bridges out of the 33 bridges as quickly as possible. There will be one contract for the Project Approval/Environmental Document (PAED) phase; however, there will be two notices to proceed (NTP). The 1<sup>st</sup> NTP will start the environmental phase for the first three bridges and the 2<sup>nd</sup> NTP will start the environmental phase for the remaining 30 bridges. There will be two allocations for the PAED phase. The above will also apply to the Plan, Specifications, and Estimates (PS&amp;E) phase. There will be one contract with two NTPs; therefore, there will be two allocations.</p>
<b>D.3 Schedule Risks</b>	<p>The County intends to request allocation in August 2024 to complete the PAED Phase for the first three priority bridges. The County intends to request allocation in October 2024 to complete the PAED Phase for the remaining 30 bridges. It is anticipated that the PS&amp;E allocation for the first three bridges will be requested in March 2025 and the PS&amp;E allocation for the remaining 30 bridges will be requested in May 2026.</p> <p>The County has invested \$4,094,133 of its own funds over the last 10 years to prepare for reconstruction of the 90-year-old short bridges on National Trails Highway between Barstow and Needles. This previously incurred work included topography and hydrological studies, bridge inspections, and developing scopes of work. Significant work is ongoing or has been completed on the other bridges along this stretch of National</p>

## National Trails Highway Bridge Replacements Project

Trails Highway, and all of this work (e.g., design, environmental, permitting) will be used to the greatest extent possible for the project, which will accelerate project readiness.

Please see below table for additional information regarding risk for the overall project.

Project Risk	Mitigation Strategy	Status
Right-of-Way Acquisition Risk	The County owns all the Right-of-Way required to construct the project.	Mitigation Complete
Feasibility of Historical Bridge Design	The County has designed multiple bridge replacements on this section of National Trails Highway; those replacements are complete or underway, all of which demonstrated historical replication feasibility.	Mitigation Complete
Delay in SHPO Section 106 Consultation	The County is in regular communication with SHPO on other adjacent ongoing and completed bridge projects on the National Trails Highway, which will accelerate SHPO review and approval.	Mitigation Underway
Procurement Delays	The County has conducted procurement for multiple completed and ongoing bridge projects in the project area and will adapt existing bid documents and procurement processes	Mitigation Complete
Cost Uncertainty	The County has replaced multiple bridges on National Trails Highway, and other projects are underway. Cost data from these projects were the basis of this application's cost estimate.	Mitigation Complete
Delay in Environmental Clearance	The County drafted an EIR/EA in 2016. The expected ISMND/EA will be based on the draft EIR/EA and other completed environmental documents for ongoing or completed bridge projects on National Trails Highway. Use of portions of these existing documents will accelerate clearance.	Mitigation Underway
Delay in Technical Studies Completion	The County completed corridor-wide topographical mapping and hydrology studies in 2018. Updates will be accelerated because they will be based on the existing studies.	Mitigation Underway
Delay Due to Utility Relocations	Level 3 fiber optic runs through the corridor. The County is already dealing with this issue on other bridges that have been reconstructed or in-progress along the corridor. The process for managing the issue is already set and will be duplicated for the proposed project, which will minimize delays.	Mitigation Complete

### E. Project Funding

#### E.1 Funding Plan

Fund Source	Committed or Uncommitted	Fiscal Year of Allocation (LPP-F)	PAED	PSE	Right of Way	Construction	Total
LPP-F Request	Uncommitted	FY24/25	263.000				263.000
LPP-F Request	Uncommitted	FY24/25	2,625.000				2,625.000
LPP-F Request	Uncommitted	FY24/25		263.000			263.000
LPP-F Request	Uncommitted	FY25/26		2,625.000			2,625.000
Local Funds	Committed		2,888.000	2,888.000			5,776.000
STP	Committed					14,929.000	14,929.000
STIP	Committed					40,300.000	40,300.000
Future Grant Request	Uncommitted					31,500.000	31,500.000
Total			5,776.000	5,776.000		86,729.000	98,281.000

### F. Other

## National Trails Highway Bridge Replacements Project

<b>F.1 Interagency Cooperation</b>	This project is not on the state highway system.
<b>F.2 Transfer of Formulaic Program Funds between Taxing Authorities</b>	N/A

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- 1) ePPR: National Trails Highway Bridge Replacements, Amboy to Kelbaker
- 2) ePPR: National Trails Highway Bridge Replacements, Dagget-Yermo Road to Goffs Road
- 3) Project Location Map