

UpState RailConnect Committee

Dedicated to Completion of the Alternative Rail Route Feasibility Study

Trinity Public Utility District Conference Room

26 Ponderosa

Weaverville, CA

11:00 AM-2:00 PM

November 14, 2012

Minutes

1. Introductions

Committee Members Present: City of Eureka Councilmember Lance Madsen, Councilmember Mike Newman; County of Humboldt Supervisor Rex Bohn; County of Trinity Supervisor-elect John Fenley, CAO Wendy Tyler; County of Tehama Supervisor-elect Steve Chamblin, CAO Bill Goodwin; and Upstate California Economic Development Council General Manager Alison O'Sullivan.

Committee Members Absent: Humboldt County Supervisor Clif Clendenen; Trinity County Supervisor Debra Chapman; Upstate California Economic Development Council Board President Brynda Stranix

Staff: Eureka City Manager David Tyson; Humboldt County CAO Phillip Smith-Hanes; David Hull

Public: Larry Glass

2. Purpose of Meeting – Kickoff/Organizational Meeting

3. Review of Agenda

4. Role of *UpState RailConnect Committee*

The Committee agreed that the role of the *UpState RailConnect Committee* is to:

- a) Conduct public outreach and develop the scope of work for the feasibility study
- b) Obtain funding for the feasibility study
- c) Retain a consultant to complete the feasibility study
- d) Oversee consultant activities
- e) If feasible, the Committee will use feasibility study results to identify capital and investors

5. *UpState RailConnect Committee* Organization Discussion

- a. **Chair:** Bill Goodwin moved that Lance Madsen be Chair and point of contact and Rex Bohn be Vice-Chair. Motion seconded by John Fenley. Motion carried unanimously.
- b. **Notices/Media Release Protocol:** The Committee agreed that the Chair would review all notices and media releases prior to release. It was also agreed that all draft

media releases would also be circulated to Committee members prior to release. It was further agreed that David Hull would act as staff to the Committee by arranging meetings, drafting agendas and other Committee needs as directed by the Chair and Committee members. All members agreed to send Hull their lists of media contacts and Hull was directed to create a media release based on this meeting.

- c. **Public Involvement in Meetings:** The Committee members agreed that this committee would operate in as open and transparent a process as possible including 72 hour public notice posted at all member jurisdictions noticing each meeting.
- d. **Committee Funding and Uses of Eureka CDBG Grant:** David Tyson reported that the City of Eureka had obtained a \$25,000 CDBG Planning and Technical Assistance grant. The intended use of this PTA grant will be to develop one or more applications and ultimately acquire grant funds to initiate the Feasibility Study. Specifically, PTA funds for this Project will be used for:
 - Identification of potential grant source(s)
 - Gathering of information necessary to prepare a competitive grant application
 - Identification of match funding sources (if necessary)
 - Preparation of grant application(s) and their submittal
 - Travel/Committee expenses
 - Presentation and application preparation supplies
 - Meeting attendance
 - Making presentations
- e. **How to Handle Requests for Additional Committee Members:** The Committee members felt that the *UpState RailConnect Committee* was already big enough with five member agencies with 10 agency representatives. The Committee outlined potential methods to deal with requests for additional committee members that included the other agencies feeding input through a member agency, or entering input through public comment, or feeding input to the Committee through the non-profit organization, the Land Bridge Alliance. It was also discussed that there may be a need for technical support and review where other agencies, such as the North State Super Region or regional transportation agencies could function as a "Technical Advisory Committee".
- f. **Consideration of Process for Private Contributions to Study**
 - i. **Role of Landbridge Alliance:** Chair Madsen made a brief presentation on the role and purpose of the Land Bridge Alliance in obtaining private donations to be used for the feasibility study or other alternative rail educational and research purposes. The Committee also discussed utilizing the Land Bridge Alliance's website to make presentations and information on the feasibility study process available. It was noted that the City of Eureka's website has, and is, being used to house information regarding the Alternative Rail Route Feasibility Study.

- ii. **Response to Requests to Donate:** The Committee agreed that any requests to donate private funds to the Alternative Rail Route Feasibility Study process would be handled by the Land Bridge Alliance.
- iii. **Conditions on Private Donations:** The Committee agreed that any private donor to the Alternative Rail Route Feasibility Study would be notified of the following list of conditions associated with that donation prior to the donation:
 - o Regardless of the source of funds, the Alternative Rail Route Feasibility Study will be a “public” process
 - o There are no preconceived outcomes of the study
 - o There are no preconceived outcomes for those making private donations
 - o Private funding sources can privately fund their own study but if they want the benefit of the *UpState RailConnect Committee* process, then they will need to understand that this is a public process
 - o Private donations to the Alternative Rail Route Feasibility Study will be made through the Land Bridge Alliance
 - o Private donations to the Alternative Rail Route Feasibility Study made to the Land Bridge Alliance can be either listed anonymously or by name as requested by those making the donation.

6. **Discussion on Potential Funding Sources:** The Committee discussed the potential for several funding sources to be explored including:

- o Private donations
- o MAP-21 Grants
- o HCD CDBG Planning and Technical Grants
- o USDA
- o US Department of Commerce – Economic Development Administration Grants
- o CalTrans Transportation Planning Grants
- o Headwaters Community Investment Fund Grants
- o Combinations of the above

7. **Discussion on the Draft Scope of Work:** The Committee discussed the following as draft elements of a draft scope of work for the feasibility study:

- o Identification of a proposed route and alternatives
- o Identification of land ownerships
- o Economic benefit to the entire rail corridor
 - o Assessment of market potential
 - o Assessment of indirect benefactors
 - o Assessment of impact to ports
- o A conceptual development plan that will include:
 - o Ownership/governance of the rail line
 - o Prelim engineering
 - o Highway/port connectors/potential stops/spurs along the route

- Outline of national security issues
- Additional uses of the corridor (fiber optic, trail, water, etc)
- Estimated permitting needs
- Estimated environmental issues and mitigations
- Estimated development costs and timelines

a. **Discussion on Public Outreach/Input Process:** The Committee discussed the need to have each member agency represented on the Committee craft a public outreach process for their community that would allow the public to feed input into the development of a scope of work.

8. **Task Assignments:** The committee agreed to the following tasks in preparation for the next Committee meeting:

- Each member agency represented on the Committee will craft a draft public outreach process for their community that would allow the public to feed input into the development of a scope of work
- Each member agency represented on the Committee will discuss with their agency the potential to share in a CDBG Planning and Technical Grant (\$100K each)
- Each member agency on the Committee will send David Hull a list of their media contacts for use in regional media releases
- Ask North State Super Region if they are interested in fulfilling the role of Technical Advisory Committee
- Put info on a website (either Land Bridge Alliance or City of Eureka, or both)

9. **Other:** None

10. **Next Meeting:** Next meeting was set for January 18, 2013 from 10 AM – 1 PM at the Trinity Public Utility District Conference Room; 26 Ponderosa, Weaverville, CA

11. Meeting adjourned 1:55PM

Approved: Motion Goodwin/Second O'Sullivan. Unanimously approved 1-18-2013

Lance Madsen, Chair