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### **FISCAL IMPACT REPORT**

SPONSOR:	Feldman	DATE TYPED:	02/11/00	HB	
SHORT TITLE:	Integrate Visual Enhancement Into Highway Design			SB	SJM 9/aSCORC
				ANALYST:	Valdes

### **APPROPRIATION**

Appropriation Contained		Estimated Additional Impact		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY00	FY01	FY00	FY01		
		See Fiscal Implications			Highway Funds

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

### **SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

State Highway and Transportation Department (SHTD)

### **SUMMARY**

### Synopsis of SCORC Amendment

- This amendment deletes "architecture of bridges" and focuses visual enhancement and design elements on landscaping and public art in the design of highway projects.
- It requests the department to adopt "procedures" instead of "regulations" to incorporate visual enhancements in highway construction projects.
- It requests the department to prepare requests for proposals (RFPs) for highway engineering projects which direct engineering consultants to "consult with" environmental design professionals such as urban designer-architects, landscape architects or artists as appropriate. It deletes wording requiring the engineering consultant to have these specific professionals on the design "team".

### Synopsis of Original Bill

This memorial requests SHTD to incorporate visual enhancements including architectural design of highway structures, landscape elements and public art into engineering design. In addition it requires the department to adopt regulations to include design and visual enhancement elements in all new highway construction projects. It requires requests for proposals (RFPs) issued by the department for engineering consultants include services of an urban designer-architect, landscape architect and an artist.

### Significant Issues

This memorial applies to all new construction and highway rehabilitation projects in urban or rural areas. According to the department, implementation of these design and construction requirements for all future projects will have a significant fiscal impact on individual projects and construction funding.

### **FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

The department estimates that design costs would increase in excess of \$500,000 annually by adding services of an urban designer, architect, landscape architect and artist to RFPs for engineering design. Adding visual enhancement features to highway projects would reduce available funding for basic design and construction needs.

The department indicated that decorative or aesthetic elements can be included in projects to construct new

structures such as bridges, with a minimal cost increase. The department works with local entities on urban project enhancement issues. The additional cost of visual enhancements such as lighting and landscaping in urban areas requires SHTD to receive commitments from local governments for funding capital costs and future maintenance costs.

Project enhancements qualify for federal funding, however, use of limited project funds for enhancements limits the funds available for construction of essential functional elements of the project.

### **TECHNICAL ISSUES**

According to the department, visual enhancements may not be appropriate for all highway projects. This memorial requires visual enhancement consideration for all projects.

### **OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

It is the practice of the department to work with local entities and community groups to develop projects that are functional and environmentally sound. Visual enhancements are included when the local entity funds the capital costs and provides future maintenance requirements.

MFV/njw:gm