

MTC Regional Pedestrian Committee
Meeting Notes from 12/13/07
By: Rochelle Wheeler

1. Introductions:

- Jason Patton, City of Oakland
- Rochelle Wheeler, ACTIA
- Bob Planthold, MTC Advisory Council & Senior Action Network
- Beth Thomas, Caltrans
- Roger Bazeley, SF PTA
- Heath Maddox, San Francisco MTA
- Cristina Olea, San Francisco MTA
- Fabian Favila, City of Santa Rosa
- Sara Woo, Solano Transportation Authority
- Sean Co, MTC

2. Summary of October 2007 Meeting

- No edits were made to the meeting notes.

3. Summary of Regional Pedestrian Planning Needs – Facilities and Programs

- Jason Patton reviewed the work that has been completed to date to develop a proposal and supportive arguments for a regional pedestrian plan. Thus far, the group has discussed: (1) project basis, (2) existing conditions, and (3) facilities and programs. For each topic area, a short memo will be written by the persons facilitating the discussion. Several group members will assemble all of these memos into a final “white paper” for MTC and others to review.
- The last discussion, on facilities and programs, was led by Nancy Baer and Michelle DeRobertis, neither of whom could attend the December meeting. They will be writing a memo to summarize this topic area, which will be shared with the group. Jason reviewed the discussion, as reflected in the October meeting minutes.
- Christina Olea made the argument that there is a huge need for consistent data collection methods and models to predict pedestrian collision rates. She sees a role for MTC to (1) develop best practices for pedestrian counts, with one form for all Bay Area jurisdictions to use, and (2) collect all of these counts in a regional database. It was suggested that this would be a good topic for a future RPC agenda.

4. Regional Pedestrian Planning Needs – Policies

- Jason Patton briefly introduced the policies topic and noted that it was being taken out of order due to scheduling issues.
- Heath Maddox led the group in a discussion of the policies related to regional pedestrian planning. (Wendy Alfsen, co-leader for this topic, was unable to attend the meeting.) Heath distributed a two page memo summarizing MTC policies, including those contained in current plans, resolutions, and programs.

- Heath compiled notes on the discussion and will present a draft memo summarizing the issue at the next meeting in February. Following is a brief summary of comments made during the discussion.
- MTC policies should be strengthened by making reference to the transportation impact on public health and physical activity.
- There is no regional mandate for Pedestrian Advisory Committees, as there is for Bicycle Advisory Committees in TDA Article 3, and hence no mandated public review of pedestrian projects.
- MTC could create policies that incentivize better project design, including a stronger emphasis on pedestrian infrastructure. One example given was that funding for Priority Development Areas (PDAs) could require that the projects comply with MTC's routine accommodation policy.
- The RPC efforts should be coordinated and integrated with other MTC planning efforts related to pedestrian programs and projects. Better communication and information-sharing is needed.
- Jason wrapped up the discussion by stating that the next topic area will be implementation. He proposed that the discussion of the synthesis of all the memos should take place in June 2008 (not April, as noted on the original schedule), to allow the opportunity for the implementation memo to be reviewed (at the April meeting) before the synthesis document is prepared.

5. Pedestrian Projects in Priority Development Areas (PDAs)

- Sean Co requested the group's input on a proposal being considered to focus regional pedestrian funding in PDAs. The essence of the question was how to use limited regional funds in a manner that will produce as much benefit to pedestrians as possible. Sean also requested any research data on the impact of investments in pedestrian projects and programs on mode shift.
- Overall, the group was uneasy about focusing all regional pedestrian funds in PDAs. The group generally agreed that the designation of PDAs was made with little consistency between geographic areas, and hence each PDA is (or will be once built) quite different. In addition, there wasn't a clear consensus on how the PDAs are defined, so it was difficult to know if putting limited pedestrian funds in these areas was the best idea. Christina stated that there are other areas not covered by PDAs, which are focused around transit, which need investment, such as residential areas, and school areas. Rochelle Wheeler added that connections between counties might be excluded with this focus. Heath brought up that approach would further limit already limited discretionary funds. Beth Thomas felt that the proposed approach leaves out social equity, which was not included in the development of PDAs.
- Christina thought that it might be acceptable to give priority to PDAs, but that other areas should not be excluded. Others seemed to agree.
- Heath said that existing evaluation criteria for the Regional Bicycle Pedestrian Program already include a focus on transit, so is this focus on PDAs needed? Sean said he would be reviewing where the RBPP funds have been spent thus far, to see how much was invested in PDAs.
- Jason wondered how effective it would be to focus funding on PDAs, since some transit-intensive areas may not be able to build pedestrian/bike infrastructure due to

projected levels of future development impacting auto level of service to the point that no road space can be used for peds/bikes. He gave the example of access to MacArthur BART, where bike lanes are being considered, but 2035 traffic projections show all roadway space needed for autos to maintain an acceptable LOS.

6. MTC Tech Transfer Road Diet Seminar

- Sean presented a memo from Jeff Georgevich outlining a planned Road Diet Seminar, which will be part of MTC's Technology Transfer Program, to take place on March 19. Sean asked for feedback on other information to include in the Seminar.
- Jason suggested that the difficulties of dealing with hardscape medians when doing either 4-to-3 or 6-to-5 lane conversions be addressed.
- Sean asked that any further comments be directed to Jeff G.

7. Chair and Vice-Chair - Nominations

- Jason introduced the topic of elections. Each year, the committee elects a new Vice-Chair, and the current Vice-Chair becomes the Chair. In this case, Nancy Baer will become the Chair for 2008. In general, the group has attempted to have the Chair/Vice-Chair roles alternate between jurisdiction staff and advocates (or other public agency staff, such as public health departments).
- The group decided to only nominate people for the Vice-Chair position, since the agenda stated "nominations", and to hold the elections at the next meeting. Sean will codify our election procedures in the RPC mission statement to avoid future confusion.
- Bob Planthold, Beth Thomas and Heath Maddox were nominated for Vice-Chair, and nominations were closed at the end of the meeting.

8. Info-sharing

- Routine Accommodation Checklist update – Sean reported that the online checklist is almost complete. He still needs to write the program procedures. The first cycle where the checklist will apply is likely to be the Local Road Rehab Shortfall program, tentatively projected to occur in June 2008 or later. Sean hopes to have the checklist distributed to all CMAs by early 2008, but this will depend on his availability.
- 2006 American Community Survey – Sean reported that new Journey to Work data has been posted to the MTC website from this 2006 survey. The American Community Survey is conducted in jurisdictions of 65,000 or more every other year, and has replaced the long-form of the US Census, which had been done every 10 years.
- Federal Safe Routes to School Call for Projects – Expected in January, and will come from Caltrans. No match is required.
- New Caltrans Pedestrian Advisory Committee – Beth Thomas reported that Caltrans District 4 is creating a PAC which will focus on reviewing project initiation documents (PIDs) and providing comments from a pedestrian perspective. The first meeting will take place in March 2008.

Next Meeting: February 21, 2008