



METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION

Agenda Item 4

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MTC Advisory Council

February 13, 2008

Minutes

Bob Planthold called the meeting to order at 12:37 p.m. In attendance were members Wendy Alfsen, Steve Belkin, John Cockle, Paul Cohen, Angela Columbo, Raphael Durr, David Grant, Mary Griffin, William Hastings, Richard Hedges (via phone), Kathryn Hughes, John Inks, Cathy Jackson, Sherman Lewis, Xiao-Yun Lu, James McGhee, Eli Naor, Margaret Okuzumi, Michael Pechner, Ray Razavi, and Don Rothblatt.

Minutes

Ms. Mary Griffin moved approval, Mr. William Hastings seconded. Motion passed with one abstention.

Public Comment

Mr. David Schonbrunn, TRANSDEF, stated that he submitted an alternative for the previous Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), which was called the TRANSDEF Smart Growth alternative. He stated that this alternative was more environmentally sensitive than other RTP alternatives – that it produced more benefit to low-income communities. He suggested that a future Advisory Council agenda could consider making a recommendation to the Commission to study another RTP alternative besides the “Project” alternative. He also stated that MTC has started to engage in analyzing the qualitative characteristics of policies, such as pricing. Mr. Schonbrunn urged the committee to have a discussion about whether it might make more sense to go to the full road pricing now rather than going through the HOT lane process, which TRANSDEF sees as a half measure.

Report from MCAC; Report from EDAC

Mr. David Grant presented a brief report on the EDAC Committee. He stated that they are discussing funding for the New Freedom proposed projects, as well as the Marin County Enhanced Taxi Study, which looks at a series of measures taken in Marin to improve taxi service to the senior and disabled populations. The committee discussed a variety of different models as options. He also noted

that EDAC member Bruce Oka was appointed to the board of the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency.

Mr. Raphael Durr added to the MCAC report, saying they discussed what projects to undertake for the Transportation 2035 Joint Advisors workshop.

Staff Report

Ms. Therese Knudsen submitted an updated list of subcommittee membership. She noted that if any committee member would like to sign up for a subcommittee, to please contact her.

National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study

Mr. Steve Heminger updated the committee on the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study. He noted that the 12-person membership, made up of representatives from federal, state and local governments, including Mr. Heminger, transportation-related industries, and public interest organizations, was charged with examining the condition and future needs of the surface transportation system across the country, as well as short- and long-term funding alternatives.

Mr. Heminger summarized the Commission's final report, "Transportation for Tomorrow", which was released in January 2008.

Committee comments included:

- What could the Advisory Council do to advise staff or the Commission on the report? Response: It is too early to engage, but one suggestion is to stop using the word "re-authorization" and start talking about a new beginning (regarding the next transportation bill). Mr. Heminger noted that there is another Commission that will report to Congress on financing questions and that there will be many hearings throughout the year in both the House and the Senate on this report, as well as the general subject of the next transportation bill.
- The report seems to focus on policy first rather than financing
- Pricing policies will have an impact on low-income populations, and there will be implementation challenges

T-2035 - Project Assessment - Quantitative Performance Evaluation

Ms. Lisa Klein updated the committee on the Quantitative Performance Evaluation, which was adopted by the Planning Committee on Friday, February 8, 2008. She also summarized the Policy Assessment, which will be a parallel assessment conducted at the same time staff is conducting the quantitative evaluation. The framework for this is a set of vision policy strategies, such as land use and pricing, making the best use of technologies, and encouraging people to change their individual behavior. She stated that staff would then bring all the information together to inform the trade-off discussions that ultimately will lead to a financially constrained investment package.

Ms. Klein stated that key aspects of the approach the Planning Committee adopted include: 1) quantitative comparison of project costs and benefits; 2) benefits related directly to the T2035 Performance Objectives; 3) projects compared directly and quantitatively; 4) most cost-effective projects identified; and 5) focus performance evaluation on major investment decisions.

The criteria for the quantitative project evaluation that the Planning Committee adopted include 1) combined benefit-cost measure capturing reductions of delay, greenhouse gas emissions, particulate matter emissions, and fatal and injury collisions; 2) cost per reduction in vehicle miles traveled (VMT); and 3) alternative benefit-cost measure for maintenance. She noted that the criterion pertaining to affordability – the cost per low-income household served (transit projects only) will go to the full Commission with more detail at their February meeting. She also noted that the outcome will not be driven by a strict ranking of projects but will allow for additional criteria.

Committee comments included:

- There is an increased employability because of increased mobility - try to build in some rough way of sampling those communities who use transit and whether or not it made a difference in their lives
- Measuring car traffic yields other modes only indirectly
- Focus on measures other than transit
- Look at costing greenhouse gas issues
- VMT Measure – look at projects in terms of the absolute reduction even if it costs a bit more
- Need to look at system-wide per capita – need to capture goods and freight delay

- Suggest that staff over-value pedestrian and bicycle trips because of the health benefits they have

Transportation for Livable Communities (TLC) Evaluation

Mr. Doug Johnson updated the committee on the TLC evaluation. He stated that the TLC currently consists of three types of grants: 1) Capital Program, which funds transportation infrastructure improvements, 2) Housing Incentive Program (HIP), which rewards communities with funding for TLC-type transportation improvements, and 3) Community Design Planning Program, which funds community planning efforts to revitalize existing neighborhoods, downtowns, commercial cores and transit stops.

The purpose of MTC's TLC Program is to support community-based transportation projects that develop through a collaborative and inclusive planning process; improve a range of transportation choices by adding or improving pedestrian, transit, and/or bicycle facilities; support well-designed, high-density housing and mixed use development that are well served by transit; support a community's infill or transit-oriented development and neighborhood revitalization activities, and enhance a community's sense of place and quality of life.

Mr. Johnson stated that since 1998, MTC has programmed \$85 million to fund 65 planning projects, 81 capital projects, and 28 HIP transportation projects across the Bay Area. In addition, the CMA's have programmed \$35 million for local TLC programs during fiscal years 2006-2009.

He then went on to highlight key findings of the evaluation, as well as possible policy considerations for the future of the program.

Committee comments included:

- Is there interaction with private entities? Response – interaction is mostly through cities.
- How can we get a better response from project recipients about how their projects meet the goals of the program?
- How can we measure the success of these projects? Need a monitoring program. Metrics are challenging – it is hard to localize results to projects.
- Add funding to the program.

There was no other business. The next meeting of the Advisory Council was scheduled for March 12, 2008. The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.