

Elderly and Disabled Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
June 5, 2008

Paul Branson, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.
Members in attendance: Janet Abelson, Steve Belkin, Joe Bischofberger, Eleanor Bloch, Richard Burnett, David Grant, Rich Hedges, Julio Lacayo, Marshall Loring, Dennis Trenten, Doug Weir, Craig Yates. Members reported as unavailable: Ken Altenburger, Eugene Halliday, Josh Miele, Barbara Rhodes, Shirlee Zane.

Audience Member Self-introductions

- Emmanuel Mekwunye, Caltrans Dist. 04, Planning Branch
- Bob Planthold
- John Posadesta, West Marin Taxi

Public Comment from Audience Member

Mr. Planthold said the T2035 poll posed a misleading question by asking if transit subsidies ought to be based on income vs. age or disability (a decision that, he reminded, is made by the federal government). He also asserted that a plan for Commissioners to rotate their attendance at EDAC meetings has not been implemented.

EDAC Minutes of May 1 were approved after Mr. Hedges' motion that Mr. Grant seconded. Abstaining: Mr. Belkin and Mr. Trenten.

Member Updates

Members made announcements and comments: 1) transit now carries more riders but has less revenue because of less driving generating even less revenue from the gas tax, and 2) the CHP is promoting alternatives to elders driving, and seeks MTC's assistance with the CHP's outreach efforts (billboards, ads on radio and TV, public service announcements, etc.).

Advisory Council Report

Mr. Grant summarized Advisory Council member comments, especially about a joint I-80 corridor study and interregional partnership between MTC, Caltrans, ABAG, and other area agencies to affect the I-80 corridor including Hwy. 4. Ms. Abelson suggested Sacramento be included in the Bay Area's 511 information.

Mr. Planthold offered the comment that a regional fare plan would be discussed at the next Advisory Council meeting.

EDAC Subcommittee Reports (from meetings earlier that morning)

Emergency Preparedness Subcommittee Chair Burnett said he and Ms. Bloch reported to the subcommittee members on a seminar in San Jose that they attended on disaster preparedness. Also, he said the subcommittee is working on a purpose statement for emergency preparedness. Subcommittee members had a question: Can the subcommittee work with agencies other than MTC, such as the office of Bay Area Assemblymember Ruskin who serves on an emergency service committee, and the office of Lynn Daucher, director of the CA Dept. of Aging? [Yes, but not as MTC representatives.]

Pedestrian Safety Subcommittee Chair Grant said they now have accident and injury data mapping for the region showing pedestrian accidents per square mile, and hope to obtain mapping of accidents by county, by city, and by street intersection.

Mr. Grant referred to a T-2035 recommendation on pedestrian safety that was presented to MTC's Planning Committee last month as a result of action by MTC advisory committees meeting jointly. It addresses safety programs and projects, including audible pedestrian signals, and prioritizing funding based on measurable, safety-oriented metrics. He moved that EDAC endorse the recommendation.

Mr. Loring seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Chair's Report

Chair Branson was pleased to report on a productive meeting recently with MTC executives to evaluate MTC's equity positions. He said that a suggestion was made about EDAC working with MCAC's equity subcommittee. On other matters, he announced that in her run for Sonoma Co. supervisor, Ms. Zane was the top vote getter and will be in a run-off election.

Staff Report

Ursula Vogler reported that the region had recently won three Tranny awards (the California Transportation Foundation recognizing outstanding achievement in transportation). The awards were for the Kiosk at Embarcadero BART, outreach surrounding the 580-880 MacArthur Maze meltdown, and the George Miller Bridge in Benicia, which received the grand award. Ms. Vogler summarized T2035 public outreach presentations, and gave an update on Railvolution addressing Commissioner Giacomini's request for TOD to be considered for a presentation.

Legislative Report

Ellen Griffin of MTC reported on federal legislation. She mentioned the climate protection bill being led by Sen. Boxer as chair of the U.S. Environment and Public Works Committee. She characterized the bill as a dress rehearsal for climate change action next year under a new administration, and also when there may be potential for transit revenue. Aspects of the bill deal with 'cap and trade' (pollution bartering). She said that MTC would be developing principles for climate change.

Regarding state legislation, Ms. Griffin said June 15 was the deadline to pass the state budget (unlikely). She said that legislative bills were supposed to have advanced out of their house of origin by now. Also, a permanent fix is still needed to stop the Legislature from diverting transit revenues to the general fund and California is in the process of deciding if it is going to be a high- or a low-service state. In response to Mr. Hedges asking about the debt service and the constitutional requirement to pay bonds first, Ms. Griffin said our method unfortunately appears to be one of "taxing our grandchildren."

New Freedom Program

Christina Atienza reviewed the second funding cycle of New Freedom. Certain EDAC members expressed interest in Ms. Atienza's upcoming project evaluation panel (Belkin, Bischofberger, Hedges, Loring, and Yates). Previously, she said EDAC member Miele expressed interest. She thanked the members and said she would be in contact via e-mail about the panel.

TransLink® Program Overview/Update

Kelley Jackson gave a history of the program and an update on the new cards (noting that the Walgreen at Oakland's 13th and Broadway location recorded high sales). At the end of her presentation, she clarified for Ms. Abelson that RTC cards are now TransLink®-enabled and are available now.

Valerie Knepper summarized the TOD pilot project that will provide transit passes for residents of select transit-oriented developments in Oakland, Berkeley and Emeryville. In response to Mr. Hedges asking if further free transit would be available. She responded by saying that the program is a pilot and will be evaluated at the end of the year.

511 Transit Web site

Tom Spiekerman gave an update on the 511 Web site and the Trip Planner replacement. He said that wheelchair access information is under consideration. In summary, he is proceeding with development but slowing down with the “rollout.” He addressed real-time speeds for wheelchairs between stations (even the “slow” speed of Trip Planner is too fast for wheelchairs), but he is looking into it and maybe create “work-arounds.”

Member comments on 511 Transit Web site/Trip Planner replacement:

- Exact location of bus stops are needed, e.g., NE corner, SW corner, etc. by transit riders unfamiliar with where they are going
- Make the Web site “feedback” button more obvious
- Attempt to gain access to data exchanges with other agencies such as Sacramento light rail

Chair Branson appreciated the 511 working group's keen involvement, and hoped that the group would continue working with EDAC.

Other Business - The next EDAC meeting was scheduled for July 3, 2008. The meeting was adjourned at 11:25 a.m.