



METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION

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MTC Advisory Council
June 11, 2008
Minutes

Bob Planthold called the meeting to order at 12:30 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, Kathryn Hughes, John Inks, Cathy Jackson, Sherman Lewis, Xiao-Yun Lu, James McGhee, Eli Naor, Michael Pechner, and Don Rothblatt.

Minutes

The minutes were approved unanimously.

Public Comment

Mr. Planthold, as a member of the public, expressed concern about the Transportation 2035 on-line survey, indicating that he thought there were problems with validity and bias in some of the questions. Some questions, such as #2, only provided a choice between two options, forcing respondents into a choice they might not normally make. He also thought question #15 was biased.

Staff Report

Ms. Therese Knudsen commented on the State Budget, and noted that the May Revise calls for shifting approximately \$1.4 billion in public transit funds to the General Fund in an effort to balance the state General Fund. She stated that the report could be viewed at http://www.mtc.ca.gov/legislation/budget/web_summary_historic-5008.pdf

A request was made to have staff report on the specifics of the budget as an agenda item at the next meeting.

Report from the Minority Citizens Advisory Committee (MCAC); Report from the Elderly and Disabled Advisory Committee (EDAC)

Mr. James McGhee stated that MCAC is in the process of receiving reports from its subcommittees as part of completing its annual report. He stated that staff made a presentation to MCAC in reference to the Joint Advisory Committee, and that the committee expressed their concern on Question number 15 on the survey (as mentioned under public comment). Mr. McGhee stated that he is in support of a joint letter coming from the committees with their concerns about the survey, but also making sure that there is a better working relationship between staff and the committees.

Mr. David Grant stated that EDAC received a legislative report. The New Freedom Program call for projects was announced. They also had an update on the TransLink® Program, as well as an informative discussion on the new version of the 511 website. He stated that EDAC also received a report from the Pedestrian/Safety subcommittee, which presented a map indicating the number of injury accidents in the Bay Area in 2006. EDAC is in the process of putting together a report, which identifies both the most dangerous cities as well as the dangerous intersections.

TransLink® Update

Mr. Brian Gebhardt briefed the committee on TransLink® and what is expected in the near future. He stated that as of May 1, 2008, TransLink® is averaging about 13,700 weekday boardings and more recently, due to AC Transit local discounts, daily ridership has increased by approximately 2000, bringing the total close to 15,000 boardings per day. There are approximately 25,000 active cards in circulation, about half of which are registered for autoload. Around 36,000 RTC discount cards have been distributed since mid 2007.

He reported on the distribution and marketing, and stated that MTC has a large third party distributor network that consists of various types of mom and pop stores, as well as Walgreens. He noted that AC Transit and Golden Gate Transit are launching promotions for the e-commuter check voucher redeemable online with TransLink beginning in June 2008. He also mentioned that an upgraded TransLink.org website will launch this month.

In terms of implementation, he stated that staff is working to get Caltrain and MUNI operational by summer 2008, and BART by fall 2008. The system will expand to SamTrans and VTA in 2009 and all other transit systems in 2010 and 2011.

Committee comments include:

- Are there any other retail locations where TransLink® is available? Response: TransLink® is available at a few Raley's stores in the region. An Advisory Council member suggested Safeway and offered contacts.
- Are senior and student discounts available? Response: Existing discounts apply, but only at the cash fare value (vs. monthly pass value). Also, those who want them need to go to Golden Gate Transit to pick them up - they are not available at AC Transit. In 6 weeks, AC Transit will have the senior discount available through the RTC discount card.
- Several members of the committee expressed concern about the current discount and distribution policy and suggested that the item return on the July agenda as an action item.
- Three members (Wendy Alfsen, James McGhee, and Sherman Lewis) volunteered to further discuss the issues and propose a recommendation for action.

Regional Fare Project

Mr. Jason Lee, SFMTA, and Steve Bell summarized the Integrated Fare Study. He stated that several integrated fare alternatives were identified and refined and then evaluated to assess their impacts on transit ridership and transit fare revenues. Four concepts were evaluated: 1) Regional Monthly Pass – valid between specific zones, 2) Regional Pass Plus – a stored value ticket, stored trip ticket, or pass-based product, 3) Single Ride Discount – valid for a single trip between two specific zones, and 4) Trip Value Monthly Pass – valid for transit trips up to and

including a specified cash fare. Pricing constraints were defined for each of the integrated fare concepts.

Given the revenue neutrality constraint, the Trip Value Monthly Pass approach cannot be pursued further at this time because it would require pricing the fare at a level that would not result in meaningful ridership gains.

Committee comments include:

- The revenue neutrality assumption created a self-fulfilling prophecy
- The results do not serve the general public.
- There does not seem to be much point if there is no agreement and all operators have separate policies
- MTC should set requirements for funding – there is a need to reach consensus on a regional fare policy. There needs to be cooperation to achieve a regional transit system.

Transportation 2035 Project Performance Assessment

Ms. Lisa Klein stated that the assessment consists of both a qualitative policy assessment and a quantitative performance evaluation and builds on the policy foundation for the plan. The assessment applied to all potential investments except those considered “committed” by Commission policy.

She stated that staff quantitatively evaluated a subset of approximately 75 mostly higher cost projects. Benefits captured in the quantitative analysis include reductions in delay, vehicle miles of travel, emissions and collisions. Staff also evaluated regional funding programs.

For the qualitative project-level policy assessment, staff evaluated approximately 20 project types representing the range of more than 700 candidate projects for discretionary funding. The assessment considered the degree to which each project type supports the T2035 Vision Policy Strategies.

Ms. Klein also summarized the quantitative evaluation approach, the projects subject to analysis, and evaluation measures.

Committee comments include:

- Pedestrian safety and emissions are critical. More should be invested in transit
- The projects with Benefit/Cost scores should be clearly marked as increasing or reducing “delay” and not labeled “benefit cost”
- TALC has a proposal for an RTP investment strategy – would like to see staff take it seriously
- Look at the project types not only for their benefit but also for their cost in the qualitative assessment
- There is no consideration for goals “hurt” – what is the negative impact (on slide 4)
- To assess affordability, what was the price of gas used – it is likely to continue to rise.
- When looking at the projects, look at the importance of the goals and the value for all, as well as the degree to which the project improves the goals
- How can you overlay the local impact of big projects – i.e. BART to Livermore and the new demand this project would create on local roads

Update – Sustainable Transportation Subcommittee

This item was deferred to the July meeting.

Update – Transportation Economics and Pricing Subcommittee

Mr. Sherman Lewis updated the committee on the Transportation Economics and Pricing subcommittee. He submitted a report, which summarized economic analysis, reframing the pricing debate, and pricing policy development. He suggested that the committee review the 3 main points in his report, which will come back to the committee next month for action.

Other Business/Public Comment

There was no other business. The next meeting of the Advisory Council is scheduled for July 9, 2008. The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.