

**PLANNING COMMITTEE
MEETING OF NOVEMBER 14, 2008
MINUTES**

ATTENDANCE

Commissioner Spering called the Planning Committee meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Other members in attendance were Commissioners Chu, Giacopini, Haggerty, Halsted, Worth and Yeager. Commissioner Bates also attended.

CONSENT CALENDAR: Minutes os October 10, 2008

Commissioner Worth moved approval, Commissioner Haggerty seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

TRANSPORTATION 2035: a) Review of Attorney General's Comments on the Notice of Preparation for the Draft EIR

Mr. Doug Kimsey summarized some issues that staff discussed with the Attorney General's (AG) staff and how MTC staff is prepared to proceed: 1) Committed Funding – AG staff suggested that MTC consider assessing the impacts of directing additional committed RTP funding to transit maintenance shortfall. Staff will assess the feasibility of this given the limited discretion MTC has to redirect much of this committed RTP funding; 2) Methodology – the AG asked for more explanation on the methodology to be used. The RTP EIR will include full disclosure on methodology and data assumptions used to assess alternatives; and 3) HOT Network – the AG staff requested more information describing the benefits of the HOT Network. MTC staff is completing a supplemental HOT Network report that will be directly referenced in the RTP.

In closing he noted that staff expects the RTP and RTP EIR documents to be released next month for a 45-day comment period.

b. Building Momentum for Change – Context, Tracking Trends & Performance, and Potential Bold Actions

Ms. Ashley Nguyen and Ms. Lisa Klein provided an overview of possible policy issues that may easily be turned into “bold actions” that the commission may want to incorporate into the plan. They noted that staff shared several questions with the Partnership Board and Partnership Technical Advisory Committee as well as MTC's Advisory Committees, and a roundtable discussion of different stakeholders to get their input. Ms. Nguyen updated the committee on the feedback received thus far.

Commissioner Spering stated that as part of MTC's legislative approach there needs to be some discussion about consolidation of operators. It should be woven into MTC's overall objective over the next 30 years.

Commissioner Haggerty suggested looking at consolidating some of the operations that are possible – the marketing committee or the finance departments, etc.

Commissioner Worth suggested providing incentives for partner agencies to provide a seamless connection of service from one county to another. This will allow operators to go into another service area. She also suggested looking at other services such as paratransit – that may be an area to consolidate.

Commissioner Bates commented on the point of offering transit options to their employees, and stated that the City of Berkeley has been working with AC Transit to recommend that when there is a new private developer developing a new condo to make it mandatory to provide to their residents some kind of an opportunity to provide free transit. He suggested staff look into providing developers some incentives.

Commissioner Haggerty stated that, working with the Air District, staff can channel more money towards governmental fleets. Mr. Heminger stated that, in terms of funding, the Air District has regulatory authority, which MTC lacks. He noted that staff needs to touch base with some of the other agencies so a partnership at the Commission level can be made.

Commissioner Bates requested something be written indicating the authority each regional agency might use to implement these “bold actions”. Mr. Heminger suggested that staff make a presentation to the Joint Policy Committee where all four agencies hold seats.

Lastly, Ms. Nguyen summarized the next steps, which are to develop a “Building Momentum” strategy that reflects the input from the Partnership, stakeholders, and Commission; continue ongoing dialogue through January 2009; and, includes preferred strategy in the T2035 Plan in March 2009.

Commissioner Spring asked how aggressive MTC can be on the self-help funding? Mr. Heminger stated MTC needs to forward the following notions to Sacramento: 1) the notion of reducing the vote threshold; 2) the notion of trying to convert the current authority for a regional gas tax to a gas fee, which would have the effect of lowering the vote threshold for that measure; and, 3) the notion of the HOT network or further authority on Regional Measure 3, which already has a vote threshold only 50%. MTC needs to try to get any or all of these. Commissioner Spring suggested having MTC’s Sacramento advocacy focus on those three issues and broadens the number of legislators other than just the Bay Area delegation. He also asked if MTC can host a statewide summit that includes some of the other MPOs and larger transit operators to address some of these issues. Mr. Heminger stated that staff will work on it.

Commissioner Worth stated that it is important to incorporate transit needs in this effort – and to make sure that any voter threshold provides money for streets, roads, and highways as well as transit.

Commissioner Bates commented on the stimulus package, and suggested staff look into how transit fits into the strategies. He also stated that he agrees with the three notions, but commented that it would also be good for staff to think about what they want when they come out of it – how to shape things to make it better – where to put the money and how to spend it.

Commissioner Haggerty stated that staff needs to find a balance between how much to take on in relationship to solving the region’s problems and letting the state off the hook. He expressed the fear of the state taking transit funding and that the money will never be returned.

Commissioner Spring requested that staff have some mention of performance measures on the table at some point. Commissioner Halsted agreed with keeping the performance measure, but to also find some new strategies for dealing with the lifeline issues.

Commissioner Spring called for public comment.

- Mr. Bob Planthold commented on the messages received from the various MTC advisory committees and stated that increased transit efficiency can sometimes mean that some lose their right to travel. Monitoring is too passive, ought to be cooperation.
- Ms. Carli Paine, TransForm, stated that right now is not the time to let Sacramento go by the wayside. She noted that the cuts disproportionately affect lower income households. She also stated that the State Transit Assistance Program should not be cut, which is the sole source of state money for operations.
- Mr. Scott Mace stated that now is the time to include a gas tax.
- Ms. Diana Dorinson requested staff to be more aggressive on matters that effect health. She stated that the 13c work rule should be addressed at the federal level. She also commented that staff should use TLC money to incentivize communities to improve parking policies.
- Mr. Andy Katz stated that some legislative leaders may be more receptive to keeping transit funding - protecting transit funding for social services, and other legislators would be more motivated by the climate argument. He encouraged the transit efficiency studies - having multiple performance measures are important. He also suggested coordination with the Air District on the green parking program.
- Mr. Richard Hedges, EDAC and Advisory Council, commented on infrastructure and the proposed federal stimulus program. He encouraged staff to direct their representatives to build something with the money, and not give it back to people. He also stated that debt service comes out of TLC money.
- Ms. Margaret Okuzumi urged the commission to focus on the bread and butter issues.

Commissioner Haggerty stated that it is important to understand that when they talk 13c, it's not just one rule - it's several different rules, and when you merge companies you may have to reconcile 50 to several hundred 13c work rules. He also agreed with Ms. Paine's comment about staff working with the advocates and to continue to lobby Sacramento.

REGIONAL BICYCLE PLAN UPDATE 2009

Mr. Kimsey stated that this is one of several supplemental reports that will be issued along with the RTP.

OTHER BUSINESS/PUBLIC COMMENT

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 10:35 a.m. The Committee's next meeting is scheduled for Friday, December 12, 2008 at 9:30 a.m. in the Lawrence D. Dahms Auditorium, Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter, Oakland, CA.