

- DRAFT -
Air Quality Conformity Task Force
June 9, 2008
Summary Notes

Attendees:

Dennis Wade – CARB (phone)	Chuck Purvis – MTC
Aimee Kratovil – FHWA (phone)	Ross McKeown – MTC
Ted Matley – FTA (phone)	Sri Srinivasan – MTC
Greg Tholen – BAAQMD (phone)	Harold Brazil – MTC
Saravana Suthanthira – Alameda CMA	Raymond Kan – MTC
Dick Fahey – Caltrans District 4	Ashley Nguyen – MTC

1. Welcome and Self-Introductions: Ashley Nguyen called the meeting to order at 10:35 a.m. See attendance roster above.

2. Transportation 2035 Update: Ashley Nguyen (MTC) highlighted the key project milestones from 2007 through May 2008. She also described the key next steps in the Transportation 2035 process, which includes: discussion of investment priorities and tradeoffs (June), preparation of draft financially constrained investment plan (July), and MTC Planning Committee and Commission review and approval of the draft financially constrained investment plan (late July). MTC staff will begin the technical work on the EIR and conformity analysis once the Commission has approved the draft financially constrained investment plan.

Saravana Suthanthira (ACCMA) noted that the “call for projects” milestone was not covered in the staff memo. Ashley reported that MTC issued an open call for projects to the public and our partner agencies (CMAs, transit operators, regional agencies, etc.) to submit projects for consideration in the Transportation 2035 Plan. Projects were due to MTC in early March. Upon receiving projects, MTC proceeded with a project-level performance assessment that was completed in May 2008.

3. Approach, Assumptions, and Schedule for the Conformity Analysis for the Transportation 2035 Plan and 2009 Transportation Improvement Program Amendment #09-XX: Ashley and Chuck presented the key assumptions for the conformity analysis. Ashley said that the conformity analysis would cover both the Transportation 2035 Plan and 2009 TIP Amendment. In addition, she noted that SMART and Napa and Santa Clara Counties may have sales tax measures on the November ballot, and should they pass, the financially constrained plan would need to be adjusted to include any fully funded projects. Chuck noted that MTC staff may need to rerun the Project Alternative in November if these measures do indeed pass.

Specific points of interest in Ashley and Chuck’s presentation about the assumptions include:

- Lane miles and transit supply for each analysis year will be summarized.

- There will be an appendix in the conformity analysis that provides a list of the projects in the financially constrained plan and their respective analysis year.
- Regarding the pricing assumptions, MTC may want to revisit parking costs assumptions next month because some cities like San Francisco have parking caps.
- Bridge tolls are not assumed to increase with inflation.
- Transit fares are assumed to increase with inflation. MTC will code them as of June 1, 2008.
- Auto operating costs have seen huge swings in recent weeks and months, at this point in time, MTC is comfortable with \$7.47 gas price in 2008\$. The other component of auto operating cost is fuel economy. The vision analysis assumed only Pavley I, now assume PI and Pavley II. This huge increase in gas price will be largely offset by increase in fuel economy; now coming out with \$0.23/mile which is about 5-6% higher than today's actual levels (as of May 30). \$7.47 is the best guess today for 20 years out.

Dick Fahey (Caltrans) asked if in the past there were significant differences in VMT forecast and the reconciliation occurred between ARB and MTC. Harold Brazil (MTC) replied that yes, MTC will use travel demand model to grow the VMT in EMFAC, but we've cut our differences in half. It used to be 25% difference. We're now much closer to the assumptions in EMFAC2007.

Dick asked if there is cutoff point where projects are considered in the plan for highway and transit network coding purposes. Ashley replied that the Commission will take action on financially constrained investment plan in July; that's the cutoff.

Dennis Wade (ARB) asked how sensitive are the MTC travel forecasts to gas prices. Chuck replied that although MTC did a lot of composite pricing sensitivities in the vision analysis, it would be difficult to just tease out the affects of gas prices.

Dennis stated that it may not make sense to deal have a 2006 or 2007 analysis year; he wasn't clear as to why we are still dealing with the 1-hour standard. Greg Tholen (BAAQMD) said that EPA made a finding that the Bay Area was in attainment of the 8-hour standard. The next step for the Bay Area is to prepare a maintenance plan and update the emissions budget. The trend lines show that the Bay Area will likely be out of attainment for the 8-hour standard. We want to avoid preparing a maintenance plan and ask for redesignation and then fall out of attainment soon thereafter. The schedule for the maintenance plan needs to be further discussed at the Air District.

6/18/08 Update: *Per Ginger Vagenas of EPA on June 18, 2008, note that while monitoring data indicate the Bay Area is currently meeting the 8-hr O3 NAAQS, EPA has not made a finding that the Bay Area has attained the 8-hr O3 std. We did make a finding of attainment for the 1-hr O3 std (69 FR 21717, April 22, 2004).*

Ashley said that for the conformity analysis for the Transportation 2030 Plan, MTC received guidance by the federal partners to use the 1-hour budget from the 2001 Ozone

Attainment Plan to conform the RTP to both the 1-hour and new 8-hour standard. At the time, the analysis years were to be 2006 to cover the budget year for the 1-hour standard and 2007 to cover the budget year for the new 8-hour standard. So, given that the only budget we have is the 1-hour budget from the 2001 Ozone Attainment Plan, MTC seeks guidance from the federal partners as to what budget to use and what analysis years to evaluate.

Dennis suggested that it may be useful to get in touch with EPA. Aimee Kratovil (FHWA) agreed, noting that 2006 is not appropriate for the analysis year. She suggested that MTC review Sections 93.106 and 93.109 to understand what's required. Ashley asked if Aimee could take the lead in coordinating a meeting between FHWA, FTA, EPA and MTC to discuss this issue. Aimee confirmed; Ashley will await the meeting day and time.

Chuck pointed out that another purpose of 2006 forecast is that it will serve as the base year for the EIR for the Transportation 2035 Plan. In addition, Chuck asked the task force to confirm the reasonableness of the assumptions. The task force had no issues with the assumptions.

***6/19/08 Update:** At the Task Force meeting, Aimee Kratovil of FHWA raised the issue about using 2006 and 2007 as analysis years. As suggested by the Task Force, MTC consulted with EPA, FTA and FHWA about this issue on June 19, 2008. Ginger Vagenas of EPA reported that OTAC finds that here is no reason for MTC to include either 2006 or 2007 in the conformity demonstration. Even though those were the 1-hour and 8-hour ozone attainment years they are now in the past and are not within the timeframe of the transportation plan. They may choose to model 2006 as part of their model validation process but the results would not be used to demonstrate conformity for that year. OTAC finds that MTC could demonstrate the 8-hour conformity by running analyses for 2015, 2025 and 2035. Both Ted Matley of FTA and Aimee Kratovil of FHWA agreed with these findings as presented by EPA. Therefore, MTC will demonstrate the 8-hour conformity by running analyses for 2015, 2025 and 2035.*

Ashley walked through the schedule for the conformity analysis, and there were no questions from the task force.

4. Air Quality Updates: No air quality updates were reported with exception of the report from Greg that the Air District will be updating its state air quality plan, making this a multi-pollutant plan to address particulate matter, greenhouse gases and ozone.

5. Other Business/Next Meeting: There was no other business. Ashley adjourned the meeting at approximately 10:45 a.m.