



Elderly and Disabled Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Feb. 5, 2009

Committee Chair, Paul Branson, called the meeting to order at 10:35 a.m. Members in attendance: Janet Abelson, Ken Altenburger, Joe Bischofberger, Eleanor Bloch, Myrtle Braxton, Richard Burnett, David Grant, Eugene Halliday, Rich Hedges (remote participation), Julio Lacayo, Suzanne Levine, Marshall Loring, Joshua Miele, Dennis Trenten, Doug Weir, Craig Yates.

Audience Member Self-introductions

Kristen Mazur, Transit Program Manager, MTC
Dayna Whitmer, self
Linda Walls, former EDAC secretary
Wendy Alfsen, MTC Advisory Council member

Public Comment from Audience Members

Ms. Mazur, a new staff member at MTC, is in charge of the New Freedom Program. She reported that the FTA published a notice of proposed policy change for the program and comments are due February 23, 2008. The information was e-mailed to members by staff liaison, Ursula Vogler.

Ms. Whitmer spoke about the impact of mental disabilities and the pedestrian right-of-way on the Golden Gate Bridge, and she noted that people are dying at an alarming rate. She mentioned that the Board of Directors of the Golden Gate Bridge understands this is a public safety issue. She asked the committee to make a recommendation to the Commission to support funding for the construction of a barrier.

EDAC Minutes

The Minutes of Dec. 4, 2008 meeting were approved after a motion by Mr. Hedges and a second by Ms. Abelson. There were no abstentions.

Member Updates

Mr. Lacayo announced that the *Taking Charge* DVDs are available for members. He also shared a flier about the DMV's *Senior Driver Ombudsman Program*, which will be posted in DMV offices throughout the state.

Mr. Hedges announced that San Mateo County lost a tremendous amount of money in the Lehman Brothers meltdown and he noted that paratransit services will absorb a portion of that loss.

Advisory Council Report

Mr. Grant reported on the December and January meetings of the Advisory Council. In December, new leadership was elected: Cathy Jackson as the new chair and Bob Planthold as the new vice chair. In January, staff presented information on Transit Oriented Development choices and SB 375 (Steinberg). Mr. Grant reported on the state budget, which hadn't yet passed.

EDAC Subcommittee Reports

Emergency Preparedness Subcommittee Chair Burnett reported that MTC Staff Jeff Georgevich spoke at the subcommittee's meeting about the 2009-10 process of the Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Grant Program, sponsored by the Urban Area Security Initiative. Mr. Georgevich noted there is great concern about the counties' ability to provide emergency shelter to the special-needs population.

Mr. Burnett also reported that MTC staff came up with two performance objectives for the Transportation 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (T2035): 1) improve emergency preparedness, and 2) reduce vulnerabilities/security threats. Before the Commission moves to approve the Transportation 2035 Plan, the subcommittee will work with staff to try to modify the objectives to include a minimum response-to-recovery standard, and to improve life safety for the special-needs population.

Ms. Bloch said that she recently wrote legislation concerning emergency transportation, and mentioned that two legislators are interested in carrying the bill; she is planning to go to Sacramento to work on getting this accomplished.

Transportation and Land Use Subcommittee Co-chair Loring said the subcommittee will meet in March before the regular EDAC meeting.

Pedestrian Safety Subcommittee Chair Grant said that the subcommittee will: 1) coordinate with MTC's Regional Pedestrian Committee, to which he

was elected Chair in December; 2) identify local projects by doing observational studies and counts in order to build a pedestrian database; and 3) investigate what pedestrian safety information they can obtain from MTC to disseminate to the public. In order to demonstrate the high cost of pedestrian accidents, he mentioned interest in creating a report that weighs pedestrian accident health care costs to cities/counties vs. capital improvement costs.

Mr. Grant announced three meetings: 1) the Office of Traffic Safety will hold a state conference on April 8-10; 2) the California Pedestrian Advisory Committee will hold their meeting on April 7 in San Francisco; and 3) MTC's Regional Pedestrian Committee meeting will hold their meeting at the MetroCenter on February 19.

Chair's Report

Mr. Branson welcomed the committee's newest member, Suzanne Levine, from San Francisco, and the new secretary, Leslie Lara. Ms. Levine introduced herself and noted that she is interested in creating a sidewalk-accessibility map, like Mapquest, for people with disabilities. Mr. Branson announced a special Joint Advisors meeting about the federal economic stimulus plan, which will be held on February 10 at 3:15 p.m. at MTC. He encouraged EDAC members to attend. He also reported that a successful Joint Leadership meeting, which included the chairs of the EDAC subcommittees, was held in January. He would like to hold them quarterly.

Staff Liaison Report – Ms. Vogler's announcements:

- The Caltrans Planning Grants deadline was extended to February 13, 2009. MTC is willing to become a sponsor for applicants. If interested, call or email Ms. Vogler or Carolyn Clevenger of MTC staff. An e-mail was sent to members.
- If members want copies of the *Taking Charge* DVD, let Ms. Vogler know.
- The special Joint Advisors meeting on February 10 is a formal opportunity to make comments about the stimulus package. Members will receive more information prior to the meeting.
- MTC staff will present the public's comments regarding T2035 at the next Planning Committee meeting on February 13. The Plan will be up for adoption in March.

Legislative Report

Rebecca Long of MTC staff reported on the federal economic stimulus package, announcing the status of the House and Senate versions. She provided a side-by-side comparison chart of both proposals. She noted that the House bill has more money for transit, and most of the money will go to rehabilitation and maintenance.

Member comment:

Mr. Yates asked if the governor could redirect federal money to the General Fund. Ms. Long responded that the bill contained language that would make it very difficult. Mr. Branson asked if there would be any money available for operating costs. Ms. Long said no. Mr. Grant inquired as to what the impact might be of the “Buy American” requirement. Ms. Long noted the issue is still being debated. Ms. Bloch asked if all qualifying projects have to be ready-to-go projects. Ms. Long said yes. Mr. Hedges asked if Amtrak funds would be reduced in either bill. Ms. Long responded that all attempts to reduce Amtrak funding had failed.

TransLink[®] Program Update

Shannon Wu of MTC staff noted that the incorrect version of her memo was distributed to members and she handed out the correct version. She announced the roll out of the AC Transit senior and disabled pass on the RTC TransLink[®] card. She also mentioned that SF Muni began their public launch in December, while Caltrain will start their trial groups later this year. BART is still on schedule to roll-out later this year; SamTrans and VTA will roll-out next year.

Member comment:

Ms. Abelson noted that the December 2008 card user statistics are disheartening and that card readers remain inaccessible to wheelchair users on AC Transit. Ms. Wu said that usage may increase once BART is on board and the issue of accessibility is being addressed. Mr. Yates asked Ms. Wu to explain the RTC acronym (Regional Transit Card) and pointed out that Golden Gate transit already has rear-door card readers. Mr. Miele asked if the single-ride AC Transit and BART fare included the senior/disabled discount. Ms. Wu said that AC Transit does have the discount TransLink[®], but has yet to roll-out on BART. Mr. Grant commented that customers cannot track when and where the card is used, and he noted that the transfer feature does not work. Ms. Wu said

that customers can request their transaction history online. She said the transfer fare should read “000 Transfer OK” on the TransLink[®] card reader. If not, call customer service and inform them so that malfunctions can be corrected.

Transit Access to Health/Social Services Study

Therese Knudsen of MTC staff announced a new Caltrans study on the transit accessibility of health and social services agencies in Alameda and Contra Costa County. MTC will manage the project, which consists of five major milestones:

1. Assess transit accessibility;
2. Document existing federal, state and local policies that influence decisions on the locations of the agencies;
3. Conduct outreach to health care and social service decision-makers, as well as local planning directors and their staff;
4. Hold a summit to develop a regional strategy; and
5. Draft a report that will recommend ways to improve coordination.

MTC will hire consultants and establish a technical advisory committee that includes at least one member of EDAC.

Member comment:

Ms. Abelson mentioned that sometimes transit service exists, but headway length and routing remains a factor. Ms. Braxton, Mr. Trenten and Mr. Branson noted that agencies do not take these factors into account when planning the location of services. Members mentioned that study participants must include: county agencies that contract with the state, county human services, regional centers, non-profits, non-contractual organizations, agencies that lease their building facilities, and state agencies, as well as employees of these facilities, and actual bus riders. Mr. Grant noted that the term “accessibility” needs to be defined. Mr. Lacayo added that if this study is successful, MTC should expand the study to other locations, like Napa County, where transit services are scarce. Mr. Trenten commented that planners need to think about people who do not drive. Mr. Miele mentioned that the report should include mitigating measures for cash-strapped agencies that are limited in their location choices. Ms. Knudsen specified that the results of this project need to have applicability throughout the state.

EDAC Subcommittee Tasks

Ms. Vogler reported that the chairs of each subcommittee met with her and Chair Branson on January 26 to talk about their goals and tasks for 2009, which Ms. Vogler presented to the Committee.

Pedestrian Safety Subcommittee. Ms. Abelson noted her concern that the subcommittee's goal to research healthcare costs and contrast that information with the cost of life-saving capital upgrades seemed too ambitious. Mr. Grant responded that the subcommittee felt it was an important task. Ms. Alfsen mentioned that lists of both medical and capital upgrade costs currently exist; Ms. Levine mentioned that the San Francisco Department of Public Health conducted a similar study. Mr. Lacayo noted the need to connect with agencies that do similar work as EDAC.

Emergency Preparedness Subcommittee. Ms. Levine mentioned that she has been working on emergency preparedness maps for the city of San Francisco and offered to work with the subcommittee. Mr. Burnett noted that the T2035 plan is the first time MTC staff included emergency preparedness, although only one paragraph is dedicated to the special-needs population.

Transportation and Land Use Subcommittee. Mr. Hedges stated the need to find a couple of legislators who can support the work of the TLU subcommittee. Ms. Bloch offered her help.

Technology Subcommittee. Mr. Miele noted an edit to the subcommittee's tasks description: "accessible technologies" should be changed to "transportation-related technologies." Mr. Miele went on to describe the role of the subcommittee, which will: 1) act as a technology scout, and 2) advise MTC staff on the accessibility of MTC's technology projects, like 511.

Mobility Management Subcommittee. Mr. Branson announced their next meeting will be held next month before or after the regular EDAC meeting.

Ms. Abelson requested a schedule of when each meeting will be held. A grid will be created, and Ms. Vogler will work with the chairs to schedule non-conflicting meetings. Members are allowed to change their subcommittee assignments.

Other Business, Next Meeting

There was no other business. The next EDAC meeting was scheduled for Mar. 5, 2009. The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.