



METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION

Agenda Item 8

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Memorandum

TO: Elderly and Disabled Advisory Committee

DATE: October 30, 2009

FR: Ursula Vogler

RE: Staff Liaison Report — November 2009

Joint Advisor Meeting on New Advisory Committee Proposal

A Joint Advisor meeting was held on October 28 at the MetroCenter Auditorium to discuss the new advisory committee proposal — 34 advisors attended the meeting. MTC staff presented considerations regarding committee composition, along with two options for the committee's structure. Nora DeCuir of PMC facilitated the feedback discussion with advisors, and Ann Flemer, MTC's Deputy Executive Director of Policy, summarized key comments, including:

- While group size is an issue, advisors feel a larger group could function well.
- Of the two options presented (proportional representation based on population and a hybrid option that includes some of the existing categories), the proportional option is problematic and needs more consideration.
- We might want to be less specific about the types of sectors to include in the hybrid option's seats and instead focus on what type of advice we're looking for (i.e., modal, senior, disabled, etc.)
- The advisors did not want term limits, and preferred leaving reappointment responsibility with the Commissioners.
- A few advisors commented that the role of the advisors should be to advise the Commission on policy issues, as opposed to provide technical expertise, which should come from staff.

A revised proposal will be presented to the Legislation Committee meeting on November 13 (in the form of a proposed new resolution), and will be

available for review on November 6. If you have any questions, please let me know.

Bridge Toll Hike Proposed for Earthquake Safety

The recent closure of the Bay Bridge only underscores the need for repairs and seismic strengthening of our toll bridges. The Bay Area Toll Authority (BATA) is considering a toll increase on the seven state-owned Bay Area toll bridges: the Antioch, Benicia-Martinez, Carquinez, Dumbarton, Richmond-San Rafael, San Francisco-Oakland Bay and San Mateo-Hayward bridges. (The toll proposal does not affect the Golden Gate Bridge, which is owned and operated by an independent authority).

This proposed toll hike comes in response to the need to raise an additional \$160 million in annual revenues. The additional revenue is needed to finance the estimated \$750 million cost of necessary seismic retrofit projects on the Antioch and Dumbarton bridges. Other factors include a slow but steady decline in toll-paying traffic on the seven state-owned bridges during each of the past five years, increasing operational expenses and rising debt — due in part to the upheaval in the municipal bond markets over the past two years.

Three options were presented at the October BATA Oversight Committee meeting (http://www.mtc.ca.gov/news/info/toll_increase.htm).

In addition, three public hearings will be held in November and December (outlined below) to take public comment on the options. BATA Commissioners will consider this public comment as part of their decision on the toll increase — scheduled for January 2010.

1. Wednesday, November 4, 2009, at 1:30 p.m. at the Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter - Lawrence D. Dahms Auditorium
2. Tuesday, November 17, 2009, at 6:30 p.m.* at the San Mateo City Hall - City Council Chambers, 330 West 20th Avenue, San Mateo, California
3. Thursday, December 3, 2009, at 6:30 p.m.* at the Concord Senior Center - Wisteria Room, (located in John F. Baldwin Park), 2727 Parkside Circle, Concord, California

*Note: This hearing will feature a short open house (from 6:30 to 7 p.m.) and a staff presentation (beginning at 7 p.m.) prior to taking public testimony.

Written comments will be accepted until 4 p.m., December 21, 2009; written comments should be submitted to the BATA Public Information Office at 101 Eighth Street, Oakland, California, 94607-4700; or faxed to BATA at 510.817.5848; or sent via e-mail to tolls@mtc.ca.gov. For more information on the hearings or the proposal, visit the MTC Web site at www.mtc.ca.gov or phone the BATA Public Information Office at 510.817.5757.

Supreme Court Victory for Transit

As Rebecca Long reported last month, the State Supreme Court rejected the Schwarzenegger Administration's appeal of a lower court ruling that recent budget raids of the State Transit Assistance (STA) program are illegal and should cease. Staff's analysis indicates that Bay Area public transit operators and MTC are owed \$720 million in "back pay" if the Legislature were to restore the funds that have been illegally diverted over the past several years. Moving forward, staff estimates that the Bay Area stands to gain about \$250 million per year if STA funds are again included in future state budgets.