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**Policy Advisory Council
November 10, 2010
Draft Minutes**

Chair Paul Branson called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m. Members in attendance were Naomi Armenta, Cathleen Baker, Richard Burnett, JoAnn Busenbark, Carlos Castellanos, Bena Chang, Wilbert Din, Richard Hedges, Allison Hughes, Dolores Jaquez, Linda Jeffery Sailors, Randi Kinman, Federico Lopez, Marshall Loring, Evelina Molina, Cheryl O'Connor, Kendal Oku, Lori Reese-Brown, Gerald Rico, Frank Robertson, Dolly Sandoval, and Egon Terplan. Absent: Carmen Rojas.

Minutes

The minutes of the October 13, 2010 meeting were unanimously approved after a motion by Ms. Jeffrey Sailors and a second by Mr. Din.

Subcommittee Reports

Regional Advisory Working Group (RAWG) Ad Hoc Subcommittee

Ms. Jeffrey Sailors reported that the Subcommittee has come up with ten draft targets, and their next meeting is scheduled for December 7. Mr. Hedges noted that some of the targets require further discussion and conflicts between some of the targets need to be addressed. Mr. Loring noted that the Subcommittee's agenda is posted on the MTC Web site. He added that the issue was raised regarding adequate allocation of land for industrial use. Ms. Kinman stated that discussions regarding public land and open space should be focused in urban settings; she said it is important to create urban green zones. Ms. Kinman asked if the goal of one of the targets is to increase access to walking/bicycling or to increase the amount of time people spend walking and biking. Ms. Jeffrey Sailors noted that the Subcommittee is discussing both. Ms. Kinman added that MTC staff created a mapped walkability matrix that could be used as a visual on the subject. Mr. Din cautioned against increasing walking/bicycling without addressing related safety issues. Ms. Sandoval asked what the timeline is for the targets. Pam Grove of MTC staff noted that the proposed targets will be presented to the Council in December.

Equity and Access Subcommittee

The Council received Ms. Armenta's report. Ms. Kinman suggested it might be beneficial for the Council to receive an informational presentation about the Darrensburg case and the focus of the equity discussion surrounding it. Mr. Loring asked if private company shuttles would be included when collecting statistics about travel in the Bay Area. Ms. Armenta noted that they are not currently planned to be captured in the MTC survey. Chair Branson noted that staff agreed to talk to state-level staff to see if these modes could be included in the state survey.

RTP/SCS – Vision Scenario Development

The Council received the presentation by Ken Kirkey of the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG). Ms. Jeffrey Sailors asked what criterion (such as equity) is used to determine the place types. Mr. Kirkey replied that Priority Development Areas (PDAs) were nominated by the local jurisdictions and adopted by the regional agencies. The place types are based on national standards, and the majority of PDAs have place types (which can be found on the ABAG Web site) that were chosen by the local jurisdiction. He said that new PDAs will be measured against various equity concerns.

Mr. Robertson asked if MTC oversees Title VI compliance of other agencies. MTC Executive Director Steve Heminger said that MTC is responsible for its own Title VI compliance and has limited oversight responsibility. He noted that the issue has been raised with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and a final determination has not been reached. Mr. Robertson said he believes in the interim MTC has responsibility. Mr. Heminger stated that is incorrect and the issue has yet to be resolved.

Ms. Baker noted that some local planning directors were not engaged in the first county/corridor meetings, prior to the creation of the RAWG. She asked how the Council could participate in engaging local planning directors and how they would be engaged in the future. Mr. Kirkey noted that in most counties, the Congestion Management Agency (CMA) is taking the lead in working with local planning directors, city planners, and some city managers. Regional agency staff want CMAs to take the lead on local engagement and are encouraging them to be very inclusive. Mr. Kirkey added that Council members should encourage their local planning directors to be involved. The issue of non-governmental organization (NGO) participation has been raised and is encouraged; however, that decision will be made at the CMA level.

Ms. Kinman asked that meetings be scheduled at a time when the general public is able to participate, noting it is important for the public to have a vested interest in the SCS process. Furthermore, she said that cities see the PDA process as a way to get funding and are only concentrating on density; she cautioned against using density as the only measure of a successful PDA. Mr. Kirkey noted that staff is working to create complete communities in the PDAs.

Mr. Hedges asked if NGOs include organizations such as affordable housing developers, and how such organizations can become involved. Mr. Kirkey said they should contact their local CMA. Mr. Castellanos asked if all future growth would be concentrated in San Jose, Oakland and San Francisco. Mr. Kirkey noted that the three major cities will play a significant role but would not take on all future growth. Ms. Chang said there needs to be a strong framing around the issue of creating vibrant communities where people want to live. She noted the importance of making sure the public views the SCS process as something positive, and asked if staff is allowing adequate time for input from local jurisdictions. Mr. Kirkey noted that the schedule is tight; however, this is only a starting point, and the discussion will be ongoing throughout 2011. Ms. Reese-Brown asked for clarification as to who will be included in the regional agencies' partnership with local jurisdictions. She noted the importance of conveying a clear message to local officials as to how to deal with local opposition. Mr. Kirkey said that the goal is to put local jurisdictions in the driver's seat because regional agencies have no direct oversight over local land use authority. He added, however, some would say that resources should support the communities that are willing to take on growth in the right places.

RTP/SCS – Vision Scenario Development (continued)

Ms. Molina expressed concern that despite her community involvement, she has not heard about the SCS locally. She commented that the message needs to be better communicated to the public through the use of local media outlets. Mr. Kirkey replied that the SCS process is just getting underway, and going forward staff will be working within local communities to involve the public. Mr. Terplan noted that Council members should serve as ambassadors to their local media regarding the SCS process. He asked if there is only one vision scenario, how will its performance be assessed? Mr. Kirkey noted that the initial vision scenario will be released in February; however, there will be future iterations that will take into account the feedback received, and detailed scenarios will be developed after that. Mr. Terplan asked if the vision scenario could be designed in such a way that it achieves the greenhouse gas targets. Mr. Kirkey said because it does not yet exist, it is unknown how the scenario is going to perform. He added that part of the effort is to see how much can be achieved through land use policy alone. Mr. Heminger stated that we have to start somewhere and land use visioning is our most powerful tool, which can make it controversial. Staff is trying to start the conversation with the vision scenario and to posit it in a direction that local governments may support.

Mr. Robertson requested that the Council be informed when the engagement process begins. MTC's Deputy Executive Director Ann Flemer noted that an update to the Public Participation Plan has been released, and she welcomed Council members' comments on the Plan. Mr. Din suggested looking to the CMAs for involvement. Ms. Baker asked if low-income and minority households will be oversampled in the telephone poll. Ellen Griffin of MTC staff said yes, the population of the poll will mirror the population of the region. Ms. Baker asked if local jurisdictions will be given guidance for submitting visionary transportation projects once the vision scenario is released and the call for projects is made. Mr. Heminger stated it will depend in part on how close we get to the targets, noting that the infrastructure projects selected do not matter as much as where people live, where they work, and how much they pay to travel. He added that the vast majority of resources are for maintenance of the system, which leaves little room for expansion, and future infrastructure projects will not be a big contributor to the solution.

Transit Sustainability Project Update

The Council received the presentation from Carolyn Clevenger of MTC staff. Ms. Jaquez asked what ability MTC has to come up with a different paradigm to make transit work better. Ms. Clevenger said that engagement with the transit agencies has been successful up to now, and added that MTC has a variety of carrots and sticks it can use. Ms. Jaquez added that bad decisions by agency management and boards should be part of the discussion. Ms. Reese-Brown asked if the implication is that cities and counties are not planning effectively for transit needs. Ms. Clevenger noted some are doing a good planning job, while others are not. Ms. Reese-Brown added that transit agencies do not have a viable plan for the communities they serve and the responsibility lies with the transit agencies, not the cities and counties. She asked Ms. Clevenger to elaborate on the issue of transit not being price and time competitive with the auto alternative. Ms. Clevenger added that these are issues that are challenges for transit, and that the transit mode share has not changed over the years. Ms. Reese-Brown asked that the focus be on the transit agencies, not the communities they serve.

Mr. Din suggested streamlining the purchasing process for maintenance to achieve cost savings. Ms. Sandoval suggested that since over 75 percent of transit costs are employee costs, that data should be analyzed against other people-oriented industries. She also suggested analyzing if rising health care costs are kept low due to contracts and if they might increase in future years. Ms. Baker asked if there is discussion about consolidation. Ms. Clevenger said it's a discussion for the institutional analysis. Staff is looking at the way the agencies deliver services (smaller agencies are usually more efficient), and added that consolidation is not a panacea for transit's challenges. Ms. Molina said the major focus should be on customer dissatisfaction. She suggested studying Bogotá, Colombia as an example of a successful model. Ms. Molina also asked if staff is considering the impact of the introduction of greener cars on the future. Ms. Clevenger said that the study is looking at current conditions and into 2020. She added that cost is not the only factor and increased congestion means the region still needs a good transit system.

Mr. Hedges noted that many of the work rules are state mandated. He added that the pension problems were obvious – you cannot take money out of a trust fund when times are good, increase benefits and reduce the amortization time to benefit the highest paid employees who are negotiating the contracts and not create a problem. Mr. Lopez asked why consolidation has not occurred and if the cost drivers can be separated out in order to achieve economic efficiency. Ms. Clevenger noted that staff has begun looking at staffing levels within the region and will look at local and county levels in the future. Mr. Castellanos thanked staff for their work on this project, and said it is important to also compare executive pay. He also suggested a study on making the workplace healthier for bus drivers. Mr. Terplan asked if the data will be available to the public by agency. Ms. Clevenger said the data are available to the public, but some are not disaggregated by operator. Mr. Terplan said it would be useful to identify what work rules are harmful for service quality, but do not benefit many workers. Ms. Kinman said it is important to capture real data versus anecdotal data. Chair Branson said that a future paratransit discussion is critical.

Staff Liaison Report

The Council received the report by Ms. Grove. Ms. Flemer said staff's analysis of the impact of the November election on transportation will be presented to the Legislation Committee on Nov. 12 and will be forwarded to the Council. Ms. Baker asked if MTC would support reintroduction of legislation on transit oriented development accessibility requirements. Ms. Flemer stated she would forward the comment and question on to MTC legislative staff.

Council Member Reports

Ms. Jaquez congratulated staff for their work on the Excellence in Motion Awards. Mr. Din thanked staff for their Clipper outreach to the Chinese community in San Francisco. Mr. Hedges said that he and Mr. Loring presented the Elderly and Disabled Advisory Committee's TOD presentation to the Housing Leadership Council. Mr. Loring announced that the City of San Mateo is rolling out its pedestrian plan.

Public Comment/Adjournment/Next Meeting

There was no public comment. The next meeting is scheduled for December 8, 2010. The meeting was adjourned at 3:31 p.m.