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MTC PLANNING COMMITTEE
November 4, 2011
DRAFT MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

Chair Spering called the MTC Planning Committee meeting to order at 10:47 a.m. Planning Committee members in attendance were: Committee Vice Chair Halsted, Commissioners Azumbrado, Giacopini, Green, Haggerty, Liccardo, Mackenzie and Mullin. Commission Chair Tissier and Commission Vice Chair Worth were present in their ex-officio voting member capacity. Other Commissioners present as ad hoc members of the Committee were Bates, Campos, Cortese, and Wiener.

CONSENT CALENDAR

- Minutes of October 14, 2011
- Consistency Findings for 2011 Congestion Management Programs, MTC Resolution No. 3434, Revised

Commissioner Mackenzie moved approval of the Consent Calendar, Commissioner Halsted seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Plan Bay Area: Draft Project Performance Assessment Results

Ms. Lisa Klein and Mr. David Vautin presented slides and tables of draft results from the Transportation Project Performance Assessment for Plan Bay Area. Ms. Klein explained that the Project Performance Assessment is one of several analysis efforts to help the Commission select the projects included in the preferred investment strategy for Plan Bay Area. The Scenario Assessment and the Equity Analysis will be brought to the committee next month, and the Investment Trade-off discussion will continue into the early spring.

The Project Performance Assessment is similar that done for Transportation 2035. All non-committed projects, as defined by the Commission earlier this year, were evaluated with a goal of identifying those that stand apart from the majority—both at the high end and also at the low end. The two part assessment looked at (1) how well each project supports the ten targets adopted by MTC and ABAG, and (2) the ratio of each project's benefits to its cost.

Mr. Vautin said staff has received a large amount of technical feedback from Congestion Management Agencies (CMAs), transit agencies, and the Technical Advisory Group. He presented a schedule showing review of the draft project assessment results by additional stakeholders and integration of further analyses in November and December.

Committee Comments

1. Commissioner Wiener questioned the high share of benefits from travel time in the B/C ratio. He suggested the Downtown Extension project and the Caltrain Electrification project not be separated.
2. Commissioner Cortese expressed concerns that projects with high target scores but low benefit-cost ratio might be overlooked and noted the analysis does not reflect a mix of projects that may mutually benefit each other.
3. Commissioner Campos asked that equity considerations be taken into account especially in the adequate housing target.
4. Commissioner Green brought up the issue of weighting the targets—two are state mandated, the other eight are not differentiated as to how important they are but economic vitality is critically important. He suggested the definition of “high-performing” projects include those that score high on either B/C or targets and that “low-performing” projects include those that score low on both B/C and targets.
5. Commissioner Worth asked that the assessment account for a project’s potential to generate revenue to fund construction and maintenance, particularly for goods movement projects. She seconded the importance of the economic vitality target and she asked how geographic equity and local support, including that needed to pass sales taxes, will factor in the process.
6. Commissioner Mackenzie said that projects in Sonoma and Marin County that score high in targets but low in B/C are going to be watched with keen interest.
7. Commissioner Haggerty said that BART to Livermore Phase I costs should be reviewed further. He added that Alameda County is considering a one cent transportation sales tax that will help fund this project and MTC has an obligation to consider it.
8. Commissioner Bates commented suggested that local agencies be required to provide some level of affordable housing to be eligible for regional funding.

Staff Response to Committee Comments

1. Mr. Vautin noted travel time accounts for 80 percent of benefits for a typical project but this varies by project. Transit projects get substantial travel time benefits because it gets people out of cars and onto transit. Travel time by itself is not favoring road or transit projects. Steve Heminger responded to the Downtown Extension/Caltrain electrification question by noting neither project fares well in benefit-cost ratio but considering high-speed rail as part of the project could generate additional benefits.
2. Mr. Heminger responded that the burden is on MTC to find a way to fund high performing projects, but that the burden shifts to the project sponsor to justify why lower performing projects should be included in the RTP.
3. Ms. Klein said that the adequate housing target calls for housing 100% of the demand by income level. When staff looked at the track record on affordable housing production, it fell in sync with other criteria in terms of total amount of housing projected. However, staff will look at this issue more closely and will consider suggested revisions.
4. Mr. Heminger noted benefits may be underestimated but costs certainly are underestimated. On the question of equity and geographic dispersion of the money, he said these projects are being evaluated because they are candidates for discretionary funds.
5. Mr. Heminger noted the importance of the B/C ratio will depend on the funding source. Regional discretionary funds in the control of the Commission or federal funds, where

we need a regional consensus to get them, will generally have better odds of funding if they have higher B/C ratios.

Chair Haggerty received public comment from:

Robert Macaulay, Director of Planning at Solano Transportation Authority, complimented staff on being responsive on comments. This is a good product to move forward in the ensuing months of discussion.

Liz Brisson, SFCTA, complimented staff on their work. She noted the investment policy discussions in Spring 2012 need to consider the role of land use. There should be more detailed discussions about the Freeway Performance Initiative (FPI).

Stuart Cohen, TransForm, referenced his e-mail to the Committee, in which he complimented the excellent process and noted some weaknesses of the assessment. He noted limited funds available for expansion projects.

Andy Katz, Breathe California, noted the analysis has improved over prior work – particularly the way travel time is addressed. He requested the value of smog precursors be reviewed to account for health impacts in event of climate change.

Bob Vinn, assistant city engineer for the City of Livermore, stated the BART to Livermore project is a sustainable project.

OTHER BUSINESS/PUBLIC COMMENT

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 12:31 p.m. The Committee's next meeting is scheduled for Friday, December 9, 2011 at 10:00 a.m. in the Lawrence D. Dahms Auditorium, Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter, Oakland, CA.