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Steve Kinsey
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Sam Liccardo
Cities of Santa Clara County

Jake Mackenzie
Sonoma County and Cities

Kevin Mullin
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Bijan Sartipi
State Business, Transportation
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James P. Spering
Solano County and Cities

Scott Wiener
San Francisco Mayor's Appointee

Steve Heminger
Executive Director

Ann Flermer
Deputy Executive Director, Policy

Andrew B. Fremier
Deputy Executive Director, Operations

**Transit Sustainability Project
Select Committee Meeting
October 26, 2011
Minutes**

1. Call to Order

Chair Adrienne Tissier called the meeting to order at approximately 10:33 a.m.

2. Minutes of February 23, 2011 meeting

Minutes of the February 23, 2011 meeting were approved after a motion by Commissioner Jake Mackenzie and a second by Commissioner Jim Spering.

3. Financial Analysis

Kenneth Folan, MTC Programming and Allocations Section, presented an update on the Transit Sustainability Project Financial Analysis work completed to date, including proposed recommendations.

Commissioner Scott Wiener asked how a ten percent operating cost reduction would be enforced and stressed the importance of enforcement. Mr. Folan explained that staff is working with the TSP Project Steering Committee on specifics and that a sub-committee of regional members and appropriate staff would recommend enforcement measures. Mr. Folan further noted that MTC has discretion over certain funding sources. Commissioner Wiener additionally commented that it is helpful for transit agencies during the collective bargaining process to understand that certain costs savings must be achieved.

4. Service Analysis

Carolyn Clevenger, MTC Programming and Allocations Section, presented an update on the Transit Sustainability Project service analysis work completed to date and draft recommendations.

Commissioner Wiener asked for the rationale of focusing on regional services and commented that he understands the approach of focusing more on large rather than small operators, but given, for example, that Muni carries the highest number of passengers in the Bay Area but does not meet the definition of regional, he did not understand that distinction. Ms. Clevenger explained that the focus has been on regional because that is where MTC has the most authority in terms of funding and has been the most engaged. Additionally, there has been a focus on the urban trunk system, primarily through a proposed incentive based program which also applies to Muni for the bulk of their routes. To date the approach has been that local agencies should focus on developing their own performance metrics.

Commissioner Wiener disagreed with this approach given the number of Muni passengers and further commented that Muni may be a system that only operates in one jurisdiction but still carries a large number of passengers and is very important to the regional transit infrastructure.

Commissioner Mark Green commented that performance metrics should be applied to everyone.

Commissioner Steve Kinsey asked about performance measures for large versus small operators. Ms. Clevenger explained that a lot of the local services are provided by the large operators and MTC could develop metrics for the large operators and include their local services. Commissioner Kinsey suggested that large operators be the priority and that small operators' performance metrics development occur over the next few years. He noted that he performance metrics would clearly be different from the large operators. A one size fits all approach would not work.

Alix Bockelman clarified that on the financial side staff is looking at applying a financial metric to all of the large operators.

Commissioner Amy Rein-Worth agreed with Commissioner Kinsey's comments and added that MTC needs to be mindful of the challenges that the smaller operators, in suburban communities have in providing service to households without access to transit.

Commissioner Scott Haggerty agreed with Commissioner Kinsey's comments and added that it will be difficult to developing standards with the smaller operators and MTC should allow the locals to continue to do that.

Commissioner David Campos asked with regards to eligibility for new funds tied to improved performance how the issue of improved performance and funding relates to agencies like San Francisco MTA. Ms. Clevenger explained that staff is proposing the financial metrics for all large operators including San Francisco MTA (SFMTA) and while they do not operate regional service they would be subject to the financial metric. Additionally, Commissioner Campos asked how the financial metrics are set towards this effort. Ms. Clevenger explained that the financial metric would be a ten percent reduction in operating costs per service hour provided within five years.

Commissioner Wiener agreed with Commissioner Kinsey's comments and stated that small operators in particular are extremely different from the larger operators and would like MTC to hold operators like SFMTA accountable for service and costs. There is great leadership at SFMTA but all the support they can get would be helpful.

Commissioner Kinsey commented that in the county of Marin over twenty-five percent of morning traffic has to do with school commutes and school districts have been dropping their services. The TSP has not addressed any concerns with school service but recommended that staff use this opportunity to better understand what is happening around school services in the Bay Area.

Commissioner Tom Bates asked which laws prevent us from using school buses for other transportation. Ms. Bockelman confirmed that this is under federal law.

Commissioner Haggerty suggested MTC reward local transit agencies that make their schedules beneficial to schools because it is important that we look at ways to start changing behavior.

Ann Flemer, Deputy Executive Director for Policy, commented that many operators have completely absorbed school service into their service to some detriment to their productivity and one of the reasons we did not want to offer a single regional reward for local service is because in some cases they are the local school bus operator and at certain times of day that is the focus of their service. The issue of access for youth has to do with ways that youth can access transit in a more convenient way through making transit more affordable and education of transit in schools and these are things that will need to be discussed further with the transit agencies.

5. Next Steps

Carolyn Clevenger, MTC Programming and Allocations Section, presented an update on the Transit Sustainability Project next steps and recommendations to date.

Commissioner Mackenzie commented that he recently toured the Washington Metro system in Washington D.C. and we should be thinking in terms of a metropolitan transportation system as a long-term goal.

Commissioner Kevin Mullin commented that one way to increase speed in the transit systems is to reduce the number of stops but the right balance is important. Ms. Clevenger responded that routes must be examined route-by-route to determine appropriate spacing and noted that running a rapid as well as a local along the same route allows frequent stops as well as the rapid service for passengers traveling a longer distance.

Commissioner Bates asked if we have analyzed a uniform policy for fares and customer service policies. Ms. Flemer responded that it has been several years since a study was undertaken and a new analysis is likely in the near future; however when fare policies that are changed, it impacts the bottom line and there is less to invest in your services.

6. Public Comment Adjournment / Next Meeting

Under Public Comment, Mr. Rick Hedges commented that split shifts do not work well for transit operators because they are very hard to administer and can degrade service. He also commented on regionalization and that there will never be a real transit system until all of the ideas discussed today are implemented.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:50 a.m. The next meeting of the Transit Sustainability Project Select Committee will be determined at a later date.



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**Transit Sustainability Project
Select Committee Meeting
January 25, 2012
Minutes**

1. Call to Order

Chair Dodd called the meeting to order at approximately 10:58 a.m.

2. Minutes of October 26, 2011 meeting

Minutes of the October 26, 2011 meeting were not included in the packet and will be mailed with the next TSP Select meeting packet.

3. Project Update and Financial and Service Performance

Kenneth Folan, MTC Programming and Allocations Section, presented an update on the Transit Sustainability Project work completed to date, including the proposed draft performance approach for the financial and service elements of the project.

4. Transit Performance Initiative Investment Proposal

Kenneth Folan, MTC Programming and Allocations Section presented a proposal for a call for projects to fund service improvements on major transit corridors, conditioned on funding included in the OneBayArea Grant proposal adoption.

Commissioner Haggerty asked which agencies are being referenced when staff refers to the seven agencies. Mr. Folan explained that the proposed ten percent reduction in cost per revenue service hour over a five year period would be limited to the Big Seven agencies (AC Transit; BART; Caltrain; GGBHTD; SFMTA; Samtrans; and VTA) because they carry ninety-five percent of the riders and account for approximately ninety-five percent of the costs. He further explained that the initial \$30 million in the call for projects would target the four largest bus and light rail agencies (AC Transit, SFMTA, VTA, and SamTrans) because they have the largest ridership in the urban trunk systems.

Commissioner Haggerty asked at what point the suburbs will be engaged because some of those transit agencies feed into BART and AC Transit. Mr. Folan explained that the concept of the Transit Performance Initiative is that if the initial \$30 million pilot program is successful, future rounds could address other operational and speed improvements throughout the region, including smaller operators. Commissioner Haggerty further commented that he is interested in understanding how the TSP recommendations will affect suburban transit agencies as they often provide critical feeder service to BART.

Commissioner Haggerty asked what the function of a joint call center operation would be. Mr. Folan explained that the intent is to find coordination and potentially consolidation opportunities for call center and customer service centers where it makes sense financially and maintains high quality customer service. Commissioner Haggerty asked if this service would be duplicative of the 511 Call Centers. Mr. Steve Heminger further explained that call centers provide 511 information as well as responding to customer complaints and comments.

Commissioner Haggerty asked where the funding would come from to reward agencies for improved ridership and service productivity and if any thought has been given to penalties. Mr. Heminger explained that the answer to this is still outstanding. With regards to penalties, to the extent that two operators are both eligible for a certain type of funding, there could be an incentive program based on ridership and the operator with the greatest ridership would receive more funding than the other. The operator getting less funding might view that as a penalty.

Commissioner Haggerty asked about the source of the initial \$30 million for the OneBayArea Grant. Mr. Heminger explained that this funding is coming from uncommitted funding. Commissioner Haggerty asked where that money would have normally gone. Mr. Heminger explained that the funding was unexpected based on the region's strong delivery record and could be used to support various Commission investment priorities.

Commissioner Haggerty commented that he is not certain he would be supportive of an Express Bus Service again because he had understood that this type of service would have preemptive traffic signals and this is not the case if projects are not coordinated with local jurisdictions. Mr. Heminger responded that there is language in the OneBayArea Grant proposal that tries to address this issue.

Commissioner Wiener commented that the \$30 million to incentivize increases in speed is one of the most important things that the Commission could support and will improve Muni's reliability and speed. The key challenges include funding and making sure that there is political will to implement the changes.

Commissioner Green commented that it is his hope that staff will continue on track with the timeline for the Transit Performance Initiative (TPI) as indicated in the presentation and that he agrees that starting with the four operators is a good idea.

Commissioner Cortese commented that VTA has a significant expressway system under Santa Clara county control and has done extensive capital studies on what is required to improve intersections but the capital money is not available today. He further commented that preempting traffic signals may not work because the intersections are so congested the buses won't be able to bypass auto traffic. Additionally, Commissioner Cortese asked how agencies that are expanding will be addressed. Mr. Folan explained that the \$30 million funding will be used to test the concept on existing corridors; future funding rounds may address additional corridors.

Commissioner Spring commented that he appreciates and supports the distinctions between the large and the small operators because they clearly have different issues and he likes the direction staff is taking in the possible coordination concepts for smaller operators. He would like to see performance measures strengthened.

Commissioner Liccardo asked if the intent of the TPI project is to focus on travel time savings or increase ridership through amenities such as WiFi. Mr. Folan explained that it is focused primarily on travel time and operating costs savings, however increased ridership is a fundamental goal of the TSP and could be an outcome of improved travel time.

Commissioner Haggerty commented that he would like to have a better understanding of the intent towards small operators. Mr. Heminger explained that in the context of this project, staff is focusing on the larger operators and spending \$30 million, a small investment relative to the size of the entire transit system. He also noted that if the performance standards are going to be focused on the larger operators, some investment should also be focused on them.

Commissioner Campos commented that he is supportive of the approach that has been presented by staff and that he does recognize the importance of including suburban systems in future rounds of funding.

Commissioner Mackenzie commented that he is looking forward to meetings being held to discuss intentions for the smaller operators.

Commissioner Bates commented that the reality is that the larger operators carry the largest number of passengers and it is important to invest in improving those systems.

The Committee, upon the motion of Commissioner Kinsey with a second by Commissioner Spring, unanimously approved the call for projects pending the final approval of the One Bay Area Grant.

5. Next Steps

Kenneth Folan, MTC Programming and Allocations Section, presented an overview of the remaining work plan and schedule leading to adoption of the Transit Sustainability Project in April 2012.

6. Public Comment/ Information/ Next Meeting

Under Public Comment, Cory LaVigne, Planning Manager of AC Transit, commented that he appreciates MTC staff's proposal for the TPI and the recognition of a need for improving service speed in the major urban transit corridors.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:54 a.m. The next meeting of the Transit Sustainability Project Select Committee is tentatively scheduled for February 22, 2012.