



**METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION**

Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter
101 Eighth Street
Oakland, CA 94607-4700
Tel.: 510.464.7700
TTY/TDD: 510.464.7769
Fax: 510.464.7848
e-mail: info@mtc.ca.gov
Web site: www.mtc.ca.gov

**MTC Advisory Council
September 12, 2007
Minutes**

Margaret Okuzumi called the meeting to order at 12:32 p.m. In attendance were members Steve Belkin, John Cockle, Paul Cohen, Angela Colombo, Raphael Durr, Karla Goodbody, William Hastings, Richard Hedges, Kathryn Hughes, John Inks, Cathy Jackson, Eli Naor, Michael Pechner, Bob Planthold, Don Rothblatt, Paul Silvestri, Xiao-Yun Lu, and Commissioner Giacobini

Minutes

Mr. Planthold moved approval of the minutes, Rich Hedges seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Staff Report

Ms. Therese Knudsen commented on the Spare the Air Campaign, and noted that there were two Spare the Air Days in August, which did increase transit ridership.

She commented on the Bay Bridge Closure that happened over the Labor Day weekend, and noted that crews completed the work - seismic work as well as toll lane reconfiguration on lanes leading up to the approach of the east side of the span. She also noted that the new Benicia-Martinez Bridge opened, which utilizes FasTrak Express, the Bay Area's first exposure to open road tolling.

Ms. Knudsen stated that the Bay Area was awarded \$158.7 million in federal funds under the Urban Partnership Program.

She also reported on two upcoming events. The first is a Transit Oriented Development Tour of the Dublin Transit Village on Friday, October 19. The second is General Assembly/Transportation Summit on October 26, where Bay Area residents will preview some of the major decisions anticipated as part of an update to MTC's long-range transportation policy and investment blueprint, known as Transportation 2035.

**Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Policy and Station Area Planning Program
Evaluation**

Mr. James Corless presented some background information on the TOD Policy, and summarized the Corridor Housing Thresholds and Station Area Planning Program Evaluation.

He stated that the housing thresholds appear to be achievable for all the corridors, though not without a strong commitment to transit-oriented development planning in the SMART, eBART, and SVRT corridors. The Dumbarton Rail project will meet the housing thresholds if implemented as planned from Redwood City to Union City. The revised eBART corridor will achieve the housing thresholds upon adoption of a station area plan now underway for the intermediate station at Railroad Avenue in Pittsburg.

How the TOD policy should apply to the ferry service expansion is a question that has been addressed in a recent report on waterfront-TOD. Staff is now recommending a minimum of 2500 housing units around ferry terminals that would be applied only to those terminals where development is feasible.

Mr. Corless commented on the Station Area Planning Program Evaluation, and noted that the Commission awarded \$2.8 million for a pilot cycle of eight station area plan in July 2005 in order to assist individual jurisdictions in meeting the requirements of the TOD policy. The evaluation of the program has found that the plans have succeeded to address a range of issues without any stringent standards imposed on the local jurisdictions by MTC. There is, however, a clear need for more guidance and a consistent set of principles and expectations communicated from the regional agencies to the Station Area Planning Program grantees. Advisory Council members will have an opportunity to review the draft proposed set of guidelines before going to the Planning Committee in October.

He commented on the next cycle of Station Area Planning Grants, and stated that MTC has reserved \$4.6 million through the TLC program for a subsequent cycle of grants under the Station Area Planning Program. Staff will recommend that the Commission release a call for projects for the next cycle of grants this fall.

In conclusion, Mr. Corless stated that at the Planning Committee meeting on October 12th, staff intends to: 1) present the findings of the TOD policy and station area planning program evaluation; 2) present the findings of EDAC's evaluation of accessibility in Bay Area TODs; 3) recommend a revision to the TOD policy housing threshold for ferry terminals, and 4) request approval for a subsequent round of \$4.6 million in grants for a Station Area Planning Program.

Committee comments include:

- Are there other grant programs similar to MTC's Station Area Planning program in other parts of the country? Response: There are a few programs that are similar on the planning side – one through the Atlanta Regional Commission. Denver is planning transit expansion.
- What can be done with the cities that already received grants and haven't adopted a specific plan? Response: Seven of the eight cities are wrapping their efforts up and will be presenting their planning efforts soon.
- Does MTC weigh-in on mixing residential and industrial? Response: It is possible in some areas to get some industrial activity in these general station areas along with residential and commercial. Pittsburg is looking at relocating some of their lighter industrial uses within that station area to preserve some blue-collar jobs. Staff has to figure out what the long-term goal is for those areas.
- New Station Area Planning recipients should be required to tour station areas that have previously received grants.

- Is there a plan to follow-up to see whether the communities are adhering to their plans? Response: There was a suggestion, which staff worked through with ABAG, in terms of monitoring and evaluating. Staff will need to think through exactly how that will work.
- There needs to be some independent evaluation of some of the numbers that the cities say they plans support
- Concerned about unintended consequences – this needs to work in terms of incentives and also to be sensitive as to where it is appropriate and where it is not acceptable – i.e. some communities will not want all the housing requirements.

Chair Okuzumi called for public comment. Mr. Carlos Romero, E. Palo Alto Planning Commissioner and MCAC member, asked when the next round of Station Area Planning grants would be. Mr. Corless stated that staff will go to the Planning Committee on October 12, 2007, and should begin shortly after that. He also asked if there is a document to review the selection of criteria. Mr. Corless stated that it has not been released yet, but that the draft criteria may be available at the October MCAC and Advisory Council meetings. Mr. Romero asked if there had been any thought of trying to couple the grants with non-profits/foundations and MTC? Mr. Corless stated yes, staff has been meeting with the San Francisco Foundation, and East Bay Community Foundation, but additional collaboration is possible. He also mentioned that local displacement and equity issues need to be addressed.

Parking Study

Ms. Valerie Knepper stated that over the last year MTC has conducted a study of parking policies to support smart growth, funded by Caltrans. MTC held a training seminar on June 14, 2007, attended by over 125 registered participants, including elected officials, city planning directors, managers, city public works directors, real estate developers, and community advocates. She noted that this seminar focused on assisting communities in identifying parking strategies that are likely to be effective in their city.

The “Toolbox/Handook”, developed as part of the parking study, provides an explanation of strategies and examples of best practices. Additionally, eight local case studies formed a core of this effort, and staff and its consultants reviewed current conditions, potential policies, stakeholder feedback and recommendations for future policies.

Ms. Knepper stated that as a final step, staff is developing recommendations for regional and state policies to support parking reform. There are a number of state or regional policies that have been proposed; the most promising are: 1) provide technical assistance and incorporate smart parking into regional programs; 2) develop new programs to support innovative parking measures and linkages to TOD; 3) expand and enforce parking cash out; 4) investigate a regional parking fee, and 5) reform a parking access issues for disabled.

Committee comments include:

- Is there funding available to continue this kind of training and support program on parking for the region? Response: Yes, staff will be requesting funding from the Commission to provide to local jurisdictions.
- Consult the San Francisco Civil Grand Jury Report that was issued in early July – a report about blue-placard use and abuse
- Levying a fee on paid parking and not on free parking is problematic - malls tend to be very auto-centric and provide acres of free parking, whereas local downtown areas

trying to compete for retail almost always have to charge something for parking to offset the cost they have for policing, etc.

- Accessible parking spaces – what are the legal requirements for the number of disabled parking spaces? Does implementing transit-oriented development limit the number of overall parking spaces - if so, will that affect the number of disabled parking spaces? Response: staff's perception is that the lack of availability of spots was related to the abuse of the system – staff needs to look at the overall spaces and other work that has been done in that field.
- If a regional parking fee is instituted, where would the fees go and how would they be administered? Response: This is a conceptual idea - details have not yet been worked out.

Transportation 2035 Scenario Performance Assessment: Performance Targets/Sensitivity Analysis

Ms. Lisa Klein stated that staff will be recommending modifications to the performance targets for Environment and Equity at the September 14th Planning Committee. She noted that the recommended Environmental target would replace the previously approved target for particulate matter emissions (10 percent reduction compared to today) with the following targets: 1) reduce emissions of finer particulate matter (PM2.5) by 10 percent under today's levels by year 2035, and 2) reduce emissions of coarser particulate matter (PM10) by 45 percent under today's levels by year 2035. The recommended Equity target is to decrease by 10 percent (from today) the share of household income consumed by housing and transportation costs for low-income households.

Committee comments include:

- Surprised that accessibility is not a target
- Pricing policies would have a big impact on service workers and the working poor – some jobs don't lend themselves to taking transit, such as those that start before transit begins operating (e.g. construction workers, service workers)
- Pricing policies would also have a big impact on business – would have to follow this on a policy level
- Would like to see Water Quality added to the impacts
- What is the timing for phasing in pricing policy? What about market conditions? What happens at county lines/borders? Response: These are all good suggestions to consider for implementation, but we are not yet at that stage.
- Is there state guidance on these performance targets? Response: Other communities within California are looking at reducing VMT and carbon dioxide, so we are not alone. However, we have set quantitative measures.

Chair's Report on Transportation Pricing Meeting

Margaret Okuzumi reported on a meeting of several Advisory Council members focused on transportation pricing. This was the first meeting of the group. The group discussed several existing studies and policies and their potential for success in the Bay Area.

Other Business/Public Comment

There was no other business. The next meeting of the Advisory Council is scheduled for October 10, 2007. The meeting was adjourned at 2:32 p.m.