



**METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION**

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Memorandum

TO: Regional Pedestrian Committee

DATE: December 13, 2007

FR: Sean Co

W. I.

RE: Pedestrian Projects within Priority Development Areas (PDAs)

Background

In June of 2007, ABAG in cooperation with MTC, the Air District and the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) invited agencies to apply for regional designation of an area within their community as a Priority Development Area (PDA) an effort of the regional incentive-based development and conservation strategy known as FOCUS. PDAs are infill development opportunities within existing communities. These communities welcome more residents; they are committed to creating more housing choices in locations easily accessible to transit, jobs, shopping and services. To be eligible to become a PDA, an area had to be within an existing community, near existing or planned fixed transit or served by comparable bus service, and planned for more housing.

In response to the call for applications, 50 jurisdictions (plus several Congestion Management Agencies) applied for over 100 proposed PDAs. ABAG adopted the PDAs in at the November board meeting. The areas nominated include most of the places in Bay Area served by fixed transit, major bus corridors, or planned transit under MTC's Resolution 3434. Together, these areas comprise about 115,000 acres of urban and suburban land, less than 5 percent of the Bay Area's total land area. However, even though this is a small proportion of the region's land area, the proposed PDAs could accommodate half of the Bay Area's projected housing growth to the year 2035, mostly at relatively moderate densities.

Discussion

Transportation 2035 Plan has defined performance-based targets that are based under the Three Es of economy, environment and equity. Through analysis of what will be needed to meet these targets, MTC has shown that focused growth along with pricing can be more effective than many infrastructure investments. PDA planning will be supported by limited Station Area Planning Grant funds. These funds alone are not enough to provide adequate PDA development incentives.

MTC is now reviewing existing discretionary funding programs to assess whether they could be reconfigured to better support FOCUS and provide incentives. To date commissioners have shown some interest in directing a portion of TLC funds for this purpose. Another potential source of PDA incentive funds is the Regional Bicycle Pedestrian Program (RBPP). No formal proposals to the commission have yet been developed on using RBPP funds. A slide showing the bicycle network within PDAs was briefly presented at the November 28, 2007 Commission

Workshop, with no further discussion by staff or commissioners. While there is no regional pedestrian network, staff will analyze the costs of pedestrian improvements within PDAs early next year. To help guide staff discussion, the group's input on using RBPP or other pedestrian funds for use in PDAs is requested.

In order to guide this discussion, the following questions are offered for the committee's input:

1. Can focusing pedestrian projects within PDAs result in larger mode shifts compared to areas outside PDAs?
2. Does the committee agree that regional environmental goals can be achieved by higher pedestrian mode share within PDAs? A mode shift from auto to walking reduces CO2 emissions.
3. How does a focus on PDAs fit within the regional interest of the RPC's pedestrian planning needs?
4. What would be the trade-offs using available pedestrian project funds for projects within PDAs?
5. How do the links to transit impact pedestrian usage?

Sean Co