



METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION

Agenda Item 10

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Memorandum

TO: Elderly & Disabled Advisory Committee DATE: January 31, 2008
FR: Ursula Vogler
RE: Joint Advisor Workshop Follow-up on Transportation 2035

Earlier this month, MTC staff asked EDAC members to work together to come up with project ideas relating to seniors and persons with disabilities for inclusion in the Transportation 2035 Plan. Staff requested that the project ideas be relevant to the service and policy gaps listed in the Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Plan (Coordinated Plan) and be high priorities. Over the past month, EDAC members have provided recommendations via an EDAC-specific strategy session (and subsequent e-mail request for ideas) and the joint advisor workshop. This memo outlines three major policy/program areas that have emerged from the provided input:

1. Develop a Bay Area mobility management strategy. This would include identifying the range of possible program delivery options (e.g., county-based mobility management centers or regional entity), analyzing their strengths and weaknesses and developing an implementation strategy.
2. Develop a regional transportation program aimed at coordinating and supporting current and potential social service transportation programs and public transit services. One of the major program components may include developing a regional database of accessible taxis. A complementary initiative would be to provide funding to procure accessible taxis, which would then be leased to taxi companies willing to provide accessible services.

3. Integrate universal accessibility criteria into regional funding policies and programs, such as MTC's TOD Policy, TLC/HIP program, and the Priority Development Areas.

In addition to these three major policy/program areas, two detailed projects were recommended by advisors (Attachment A).

At the February 7 EDAC meeting, MTC staff will lead a discussion to flesh out these ideas further (and any others that are recommended) to determine more specific recommendations for 1) discussion at the next joint advisors meeting, and 2) potential inclusion in the T2035 Plan.

Discussion Questions

1. Do these three major policy/program areas are reflective of your priorities? Are there other areas that should be considered?
2. Does the committee want to craft broader policy recommendations, in addition to continuing to pursue more detailed project and program ideas for inclusion in the RTP investment plan?
3. What should EDAC recommend for consideration/discussion at the next joint advisors meeting?

Directly after the February 7 EDAC meeting, we will be holding another T2035 strategy session. This meeting will be dedicated to honing EDAC's Transportation 2035 vision statement and strategies.

Attachment

Attachment A
Transportation 2035 Suggestions
Joshua A. Miele, Ph.D. – EDAC

Vision: MTC recognizes that accessibility and availability of transit-related information is a crucial factor in promoting the 2035 Plan's goal of supporting access to transit by people with disabilities.

Information accessibility projects

Geographic Information Repository for Transit-Related Data (GIRTRd)

Many aspects of transit-related information are inherently geographical (e.g., transit routes, bus stops, entrances to underground stations, paths of travel between transit facilities, etc.). These are typically provided by transit agencies in the form of maps and graphics, and are some of the most difficult types of information to make accessible to blind and visually impaired transit users. By maintaining a single on-line geographic information system (GIS) to track all such elements of transit providers in the nine Bay Area counties, MTC will greatly enhance the ability of blind and visually impaired travelers to obtain and use this information. Such a system will make the production of tactile maps and other non-visual representations of spatial transit information much easier and more readily achieved than is currently possible. The centralization of this information is likely to have other benefits as well, far beyond the accessibility advantages. It is likely that such a project could be incorporated into an existing program such as 511.org.

This project will:

1. Establish a centralized, on-line data repository for the organization and electronic distribution of geographical transit information.
2. Establish mechanisms for ensuring that the data in the repository is updated regularly and as necessary.

3. Work with outside information accessibility experts to ensure that the data in the repository is readily reproducible in modern accessible formats.

Accessible Signage Promotion and Coordination (ASPC)

This project would provide financial support and incentive mechanisms for transit agencies wishing to improve the accessibility of directional, informational, and designational signage within their systems. Signage is clearly a crucial element to a functional transit system (else, why include it?), so its lack of accessibility necessarily impacts the ability of people with visual and print-reading disabilities to effectively use the system. There are many approaches to improving the accessibility of transit-related signage, including automated audio announcements, push-to-talk buttons on dynamic (realtime) signage, and remote audible infrared (riars) signage. These are in addition to the more common tactile, large-print, high-contrast signage already mandated for accessibility in many contexts. This project will:

1. Provide funding and incentive mechanisms to agencies for enhancing accessibility of system-wide signage.
2. Promote standardization of accessible signage among Bay Area transit providers through a set of accessible signage guidelines attached to funding opportunities.
3. Provide informational support to Bay Area transit agencies interested in accessible signage solutions.