

**PLANNING COMMITTEE
MEETING OF JANUARY 11, 2007
MINUTES**

ATTENDANCE

Commissioner Sperring called the Planning Committee meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Other members in attendance were Commissioners Azumbrado, Chu, Dodd, Giacomini, Haggerty, Halsted, Lempert, Rubin, and Tissier.

CONSENT CALENDAR: a) Minutes of December 14, 2007; b) Consistency Findings for 2007 Congestion Management Program (CMPs), MTC Resolution 3424, Revised

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

TRANSPORTATION 2035 (T2035):

a) Vision Policy/Targets

Ms. Ashley Nguyen presented the proposed performance objectives for T2035. New performance objectives are proposed for the Maintenance and Safety Goal per Committee direction. Under “Improve Maintenance”, the performance objectives are: maintain Pavement Condition Index (PCI) of 75 or greater for local roads, keep State highway distressed pavement condition lane-miles to 10% or less of the total system, and maintain transit (to be determined based on consultation with transit operators). Under “Reduce Collisions/Fatalities”, the performance objectives are to reduce fatalities from motor vehicle collisions by 15 percent and to reduce bicycle and pedestrian fatalities attributed to motor vehicle collisions by 25 percent. Staff recommends that the five performance objectives tested as part of the scenario analysis be carried forward: reduce congestion, reduce vehicle miles traveled, reduce emissions of finer and course particulates and carbon dioxide, and improve affordability. No performance objective is recommended for the Security Goal since issues of transportation and homeland security are addressed at the national level and there are no clear targets for the region.

Ms. Nguyen recommended that the committee provisionally approve the proposed performance objectives, which will allow staff to move forward with the project level performance assessment to be conducted from early March through mid-April 2008. She noted that staff will return to the Committee in February to seek provisional approval for the transit maintenance performance objective as well as input on the rest of the vision policies.

Commissioner Spering noted that having ambitious performance objectives was not the issue but that some of the Commissioners want to have some type of interim measurements to test their feasibility.

Commissioner Chu noted that the CMA planning directors are meeting to review the performance objectives, and asked if it would be acceptable to delay taking action until next month. Doug Kimsey replied that staff met with the CMA planning directors earlier in the week, and they had no comments on the proposed performance objectives. Commissioner Spering suggested that perhaps this item be forwarded to the full Commission for review, and Steve Heminger replied that the Committee may do so if it helps to address Commissioner Chu's concern. Commissioner Chu replied yes.

Commissioner Azumbrado expressed his concern about the affordability performance objective, a decrease by 10% of the combined share of low-income and lower-middle income residents' household income consumed by transportation and housing. He asked how that would be achieved. Mr. Steve Heminger stated that this objective is a very challenging one because it embraces two policy areas. He stated that what's really driving the combined housing transportation costs in the Bay Area is the housing piece. He noted that as a result of the land use changes that ABAG is now forecasting, affordability is the only area where staff forecasts improvement over time. He stated that if the Committee approves of a measure that is trying to deal with this combined housing and transportation question, ABAG and partners in local government, along with MTC, are responsible. He acknowledged Commissioner Azumbrado's concerns as legitimate ones, and requested approval because of the importance of this issue. Mr. Heminger noted that staff will add language stating that these require broad responsibility for achievement, not just MTC's Regional Transportation Plan.

Commissioner Halsted stated that it is a good idea to see if staff can find something on bicyclist and pedestrian injuries that could enhance the safety standards. She also requested staff to look at developing separate standards for bike fatalities and injuries from pedestrians since she's seen information that bike fatalities had been reduced over the last 10 years just by increased mode share.

Chair Spering called for public comment. Mr. Carli Paine, Transportation and Land Use Coalition, encouraged the committee to move forward with adopting the proposed performance objectives. Ms. Sabrina Merlo, Bay Area Bicycle Coalition, expressed her support on separating out bicycle and pedestrian fatalities and injuries numbers.

Commissioner Lempert moved approval, noting that the Congestion Management Agencies will be notified that this item will be going to the full commission meeting on February 27, 2008. Commissioner Rubin seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

b) Final Prior Commitments Policy

Mr. Doug Kimsey presented the final prior commitments policy and reiterated on some clarifying issues. He stated that the revenue projections are still considered preliminary. Discussions will take place over the next few months on what new revenues and amounts staff will want to carry forward in the financially constrained element of the plan. He noted that new revenue could include, but would not be limited to new transportation sales taxes, and that the HOT lane revenues will be pending more discussion with the CMAs and the Commission.

Mr. Kimsey summarized which funds are committed and uncommitted. Approximately 90% are mostly committed to local programs and revenues and maintenance expenditures, which leaves about 10% of uncommitted revenues for regional discretionary investment.

He also summarized programs and projects that would be considered committed and would not be subject to further evaluation: 1) ongoing Regional Operations Program (current funding levels); 2) Resolution 3434 Regional Transit Expansion Program. He noted that for these to be included in the financially constrained element of the plan, the projects will have to demonstrate full capital and operating funding; and 3) TIP Committed Projects.

Mr. Kimsey recommended that the committee provisionally approve the new Transportation 2035 “prior commitments criteria” for committed funding and committed projects. He noted that a separate committee approval will be sought over the next couple of months to determine final funding assumptions, including new revenues that might be included in the financially constrained element of the plan.

Chair Sperring called for public comments. Ms. Carli Paine expressed her concern with staff only looking at 10%. She noted that it would be helpful to get a breakdown of the 90% in terms of what the piece of pie is indicating the committed projects that are not being looked at. Mr. Daryl Halls, Solano Transportation Authority Executive Director, stated that CMA staff will be providing staff with feedback on the committed and financially constrained projects later on in the month. Mr. Bob Allen stated that he hopes that projects that don’t fit into the larger vision policies will not be included in the financially constrained RTP.

Commissioner Lempert moved approval. Commissioner Chu seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

b) Performance Evaluation Process

Ms. Lisa Klein presented an overview of the proposed approach to project evaluation. MTC staff intends to identify the most cost-effective projects with respect to the Transportation 2035 Performance Objectives, and to compare projects and programs directly and quantitatively.

She stated that the proposed approach is to compare project costs and benefits. As much as possible, benefits would be valued monetarily, based on economic research, and combined in a single benefit cost measure. The combined benefit cost measure would include the Performance Objectives for reductions of delay, greenhouse gas and particulate matter emissions, and fatal collisions.

Alternative measures would be required for the remaining performance objectives to reduce vehicle miles traveled and improve maintenance: 1) Cost per reduction in vehicle miles traveled would be reported separately; and 2) An alternative benefit-cost measure for maintenance. Staff believes the affordability objective can be more meaningfully addressed at a policy level than through the project evaluation and is not currently proposing a project performance criterion for this objective.

Ms. Klein also proposed that staff focus evaluation efforts on the most costly and biggest-impact projects and programs under consideration for discretionary funding.

In closing, she stated that staff will refine the proposal through discussions with partners and advisors this month and seek Committee approval in February. Projects are due to MTC on March 5. Staff will conduct the analysis and check results with project sponsors in mid-April. The Commission, partners and public will use the results to inform discussion of trade-offs for investments in the financially constrained plan. The Commission's policy discretion will then come into play and smaller projects excluded from the evaluation be introduced.

d) Freeway Performance Initiative (FPI) Corridor Studies

Ms. Joy Lee summarized preliminary findings for the FPI. Two major differences between the FPI and other studies are (1) the higher level of precision in the analysis, and (2) the focus on non-recurrent congestion, in addition to recurrent congestion. The solutions are different for these two types of congestion. Day-to-day recurrent congestion generally leads to traditional capital improvements, whereas solutions to manage congestion caused by incidents lead mostly to system management strategies. The key is a balanced combination of capital and system management projects, tailored to the specific corridor being studied.

The key findings of this corridor study effort: (1) non-recurrent congestion, caused by incidents is a major problem, ranged from between 30 to 70 percent of the total congestion; (2) general support exists for ramp metering, which was significantly enhanced through the six regional ramp metering workshops held at the end of last year; (3) confirmation that system management strategies are very effective and relatively low-cost solutions for non-recurrent congestion, which can also provide near term congestion relief for recurrent, or day to day congestion before large capital projects can be built; and (4) greater coordination of the operation of the arterials and the freeways is needed.

Initial findings from the I-80 corridor in Solano County were presented. As Phase 1 corridors are wrapping up, work is starting on some Phase 2 corridors. In summary, the focus of this project is to make sure we build the right projects in the right place at the right time, and that the money is being spent where the most benefits can be derived.

OTHER BUSINESS/PUBLIC COMMENT

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 10:31 a.m. The Committee's next meeting is scheduled for Friday, February 8, 2008 at 9:30 a.m. in the Claremont Conference Room, Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter, Oakland, CA.