

TRANSPAC Meeting Summary Minutes

MEETING DATE: February 14, 2013

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT: Julie Pierce, Clayton (Chair); David Durant, Pleasant Hill (Vice Chair); Loella Haskew, Walnut Creek; Karen Mitchoff, Contra Costa County; Ron Leone, Concord; Mark Ross, Martinez

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Diana Vavrek, Pleasant Hill; Dan Richardson, Clayton; Bob Pickett, Walnut Creek; Kenneth Craig, Clayton

AGENCY STAFF PRESENT: Randy Iwasaki, Executive Director, CCTA; Jack Hall, CCTA; Martin Engelmann, CCTA; Ray Kuzbari, Concord; John Cunningham, Contra Costa County; Lynn Overcashier, 511 Contra Costa; Kerri Heusler, 511 Contra Costa; Barbara Neustadter, TRANSPAC Manager

GUESTS PRESENT: Raymond Odunlami, MTC; Linda Lee, MTC; Rick Dowling, Kittelson & Associates; Adrian Levy, Caltrans; Roger Matoba, recipient of the MTC Miriam Gholikely Public Service Award

MINUTES PREPARED BY: Marilyn Carter, TRANSPAC Staff

TRANSPAC reserves the right to take formal action on any item included on this agenda, whether or not a form of resolution, motion or other indication that action will be taken is included on the agenda or attachments thereto.

1. Convene meeting/Pledge of Allegiance/Self-Introductions

The meeting was convened at 9:08 a.m., the pledge of allegiance was observed, and self-introductions were made.

2. Recognition of Roger Matoba and the IchiVan

Kerri Heusler introduced Roger Matoba, driver of IchiVan vanpool for 29 years from Contra Costa County to San Francisco. Mr. Matoba is the recipient of the 2012 MTC Miriam Gholikely Public Service award. Chair Pierce thanked Mr. Matoba for his contribution in lowering greenhouse gases and offering an alternative for Contra Costa commuters. A news video documenting Mr. Matoba's service was presented to the group, and a proclamation from TRANSPAC was presented to Mr. Matoba by Chair Pierce. Mr. Matoba thanked Kerri Heusler, who was instrumental in bringing the award to him, and he also thanked Bay Area Commuter staff in bringing riders to him, and in promoting vanpools.

ACTION: None required

3. Public Comment

ACTION: None required

CONSENT AGENDA

4. Approve December 13, 2012 Minutes

The minutes of the December 13, 2012 meeting were approved.

ACTION: Approved. Mitchoff/Ross/Unanimous

END CONSENT AGENDA

5. Presentation on the Contra Costa State Final Ramp Metering Feasibility and Implementation Plan Final SR-4 and SR-242 Ramp Metering Study and Implementation Plan with Appendices

Chair Pierce introduced Randy Iwasaki, Executive Director of the Contra Costa Transportation Authority, as well as Jack Hall, engineer with CCTA, who presented the item. Mr. Hall thanked TRANSPAC for the opportunity to present the Contra Costa State Final Ramp Metering Feasibility and Implementation Plan for the SR4 and SR242 Ramp Metering Study and Implementation Plan. He also thanked the TAC for its hard work over the past year, providing valuable comments to the consultants. Mr. Hall introduced Linda Lee and Raymond Odunlami from MTC, Adrian Levy from Caltrans, and Dr. Rick Dowling from Kittelson & Associates.

The goals of the study were to determine the feasibility of ramp metering, develop a staging plan, develop metering plans, and monitoring before and after conditions. The benefits of ramp metering are to improve travel conditions that normalize traffic surges from platoons on the ramps, optimize operation at ramp merge areas, shorten freeway queues and improve travel speed, and to improve travel safety.

The year 2015 was selected as the base analysis year for the study because ongoing construction east of Loveridge Road on State Route 4 is projected to be completed that year. For the purpose of this evaluation it was assumed that all on-ramps within the study limits would be activated by 2015, with the exception of freeway-to-freeway connectors at I-680, SR4, and SR4/242 interchanges. Draft metering rates were developed through an iterative process using FREQ models developed and calibrated for SR-4 and SR-242 corridors in order to optimally balance ramp delays and queues, as well as reduce mainline travel times. For on-ramp locations where optimal metering rates are suggested, the rates are set so that ramp queues would be contained within available storage at the ramps during the entire peak period. In doing so, the ramp queues would not interfere with traffic operations on adjacent arterial streets.

General improvement in travel speeds for all time periods is evidenced. Travel time savings increases in proportion with traffic demand. Metering reduces queuing significantly and delays the build-up of long queues until after the peak hour, which means the freeway can recover quickly. Travel time savings is not as significant in the westbound direction as the eastbound direction.

Mr. Hall continued that ramp metering would result in a benefit to the overall system performance measures for all roadway facilities in both Central and East Contra Costa County as indicated by a reduction in vehicle hours of delay, vehicle miles travelled, as well as increases in average system means speeds during both the am and pm peak hours. On average, traffic delays cost drivers \$1,300 per year in the San Francisco Bay Area, and the region lost \$3.3 million in economic productivity in 2012. The results showed that on SR-4 westbound travel time was reduced by 10 minutes, and eastbound travel time was reduced by 7 minutes. For SR-4/SR-242, northbound/eastbound travel time was reduced by 1 minute, and southbound/westbound travel time was reduced by 9 minutes. The vehicle hours of travel was reduced by 10%, and the average travel speed increased by 13-14%.

The next steps, assuming the plan is approved, is to execute MOUs with cities and counties, implement a public awareness campaign, activate ramp meters, field observation and refinement, and perform a before and after study.

Rick Dowling stated that before studies are done before the ramp meters are turned on (involving counts) and then a refinement of the recommended rates are coded into the computers at each of the ramps. Floating car travel time studies are also conducted to determine travel times on the freeway before metering is implemented. At the time the metering is turned on, Caltrans makes sure everything works correctly. After the metering has been on for approximately three months, an after study is conducted by another floating car travel study to determine how the travel time has changed on the freeway. He continued that a study is also conducted by working with technical staff from each city and the county to determine how the jurisdictions are affected by ramp metering. He stated that actual counts are not being done on arterial streets to document the before and after, but if the cities or county want that documentation it could be done.

Vice-Chair Durant questioned whether there are studies that determine door-to-door comparisons of time. His constituents question him on the benefits of the ramp metering to save time. Mr. Iwasaki stated that when ramp metering was implemented in San Jose, an unofficial survey was conducted which showed commuters were in fact delayed after implementation. He does not believe an official study for a door-to-door time savings has been conducted.

Mr. Dowling stated that the number of cars in a queue are observed to determine the metering rates in order for the delay to be computed. He knows of no cases where ramp metering has not resulted in a net benefit to everyone. The ramp metering rates are set to allow 1-2 minutes of delay per person, and to ensure that the delay in the ramps is less than the gains that are realized on the freeway.

A brief discussion was held regarding the operations of how ramp metering works.

Member Ross questioned why there were no studies conducted with actual drivers who experience the commute. Mr. Iwasaki stated that the perception of most commuters is that ramp metering slows their commutes, however, ramp metering has been proven to work, and costs much less than widening the freeways.

Chair Pierce stated that she believes more studies on the effect of ramp metering on arterial streets should be conducted. She added that she is in favor of ramp metering and thinks it is a good idea; however, some documentation should be built into the study before ramp metering is turned on, to show the public that there is evidence that traffic will not be worse on arterial streets.

Ray Kuzbari stated that ramp metering is a good project but the benefits will be somewhat marginal because of the bottlenecks on Highway 4. He added that it is his belief that the project will not do away with bottlenecks on Highway 4. Ramp metering and widening the freeway will work hand-in-hand to eliminate those bottlenecks.

Member Leone stated that he is in favor of ramp metering. His concern is timing: if Highway 4 is widened, the ramp metering will be affected. Member Ross added that it will be important to show the benefits of ramp metering to the public.

Vice Chair Durant stated that when cars are stalled at intersections it will be difficult to sell the concept to the public. A study has not been conducted that takes 100 commuters in a particular area and times door-to-door travel before ramp metering is implemented, and then do the same study after ramp metering is implemented. The commuter must understand the concept and must be educated because public perception is much different than hard data presented by an engineer.

John Cunningham stated that the MOU being developed is addressing all of the local concerns. If there are concerns on certain arterials, it can be added to the MOU.

Adrian Levy commented that ramp metering is not being sold as a solution to congestion. It is not a major investment but in terms of benefit/cost ratio, it provides a good return.

Vice-Chair Durant added that unless the outcomes have been tested and the assumptions have been verified, scientifically it does not work. If the concept cannot be proven to the commuter, it is not valid.

Mr. Dowling stated that the study was not done as comprehensively as suggested, however, the before and after study will be beefed up to include the data requested.

Member Ross moved for approval of the item, seconded by Vice-Chair Durant.

ACTION: Approved. Ross/Durant/Unanimous

6. Launch of the 2014 Countywide Transportation Plan (CTP) includes updating the CTP and the TRANSPAC Action Plan and the incorporation of Sustainability into the 2014 CTP presented by Martin Engelmann, CCTA Deputy Executive Director, Planning

Martin Engelmann gave a presentation on "Updating the Action Plans for Routes of Regional Significance." The presentation is divided into two parts: the 2014 CTP, and the sustainability aspect of the plan, and whether the Authority should take some initiative to make sustainability more visible in its daily business.

The 2014 Countywide Transportation Plan will look out to the year 2040. The plan has a vision, goal and strategies, and helps visualize what will happen over the next 30 years. TRANSPAC and the RTPCs will be involved in providing input to the CTP vision, goals and strategies. The Action Plans for Routes of Regional Significance drive the CTP. The Action Plans examine the arterials and freeway system and develop performance standards for those routes. The performance standards are called Multi-Modal Transportation Service Objectives (MTSOs). The 2009 Action Plans have MTSOs and in the next year the MTSOs will be examined to remove the old, update those that are still good, and add in new projects, programs and measures that will help achieve the objectives on those routes.

Deborah Degang with CH2M HILL will be the project manager for this process. An administrative draft is expected in June 2013. The Countywide Plan is due in December 2013, and the Action Plan and Countywide Plan are expected to be adopted in the spring of 2014.

AB 32 and SB 375 will be incorporated into the Plan, as well as Complete Streets, AB 1350A which requires consideration of bicyclists, pedestrians, children, and people with disabilities, and the Plan Bay Area is coming out with the Sustainable Community Strategy.

The Countywide Plan includes a Comprehensive Transportation Project List (CTPL) which is a financially unconstrained list of projects. A missing piece of Safe Routes to School will be added after determining the total need.

The 2013 Congestion Management Program must be updated; there will be a draft in June 2013 and possibly a final document in the fall of 2013.

The funding cycles include \$45.2 million in OneBayArea Grant funding. The Call for Projects will be issued in March 2013, and the projects must be forwarded to MTC in June 2013. This includes projects for local streets and roads, projects that provide transportation for local communities, and pedestrian and bicycle projects. It is also available for Safe Routes to School and planning studies to help develop the Priority Development Areas (PDAs) identified in MTC's Sustainable Community Strategy. \$3.3 million is available in Safe Routes to School programs, which will be divided by sub-area. There will be a release for that in March 2013, with recommendations to be provided to MTC in June 2013.

On the project side, Ross Chittenden will be updating the Strategic Plan for Measure J. There was a bond release which yielded an interest rate in the low two's, resulting in less debt service

and more funds available than in the previous Strategic Plan for 2009. As a result, the additional funds will be allocated to the Measure J projects and programs. There will be some STIP funds available as well.

The public outreach team will do a more thorough job of reaching out to the public through workshops and obtaining input with more modern techniques such as interviews, webinars and social media. Gray-Bowen has been retained to assist in that endeavor.

The CCTA is dealing with sustainability, which is a sensitive subject. The definition of sustainability is to act in a way that will achieve both current and future needs. A common mechanism of sustainability is ensuring that project proponents mitigate or bear the impacts of their actions and ensure the impacts on others are not significant. As a result, sustainability requires some investment.

The Authority's mission is to deliver a comprehensive transportation system that enhances mobility and accessibility while promoting a healthy environment and a strong economy. It has already been done for some time through the Growth Management Program, so the question is whether to take it up a notch. This is done by leading a collaborative decision-making process by establishing partnerships, facilitating countywide dialogs and taking into account the diverse character of Contra Costa communities. The Authority is requesting input for policy guidance from TRANSPAC. While consistent with the Authority's overall mission and goals, the pursuit of sustainability may conflict with other Authority policies and practices. The Authority also needs guidance on the trade-offs between equity and environmental protection, mobility and energy, and conflicts between different types of sustainability. Sustainability concepts and incorporating sustainability helps accomplish goals and is part of best practices. State legislation SB 375 and Plan Bay Area are pushing sustainability.

The pros of incorporating sustainability into the Authority's planning policies and to the CTP are: 1) an explicit policy would establish a framework for improved integration of sustainability; 2) the Authority's leadership position should be utilized to engage local and regional partners; and 3) it could demonstrate the Authority's commitment to sustainability and elevate the Authority's profile on the issue of sustainability.

The cons of incorporating sustainability into the Authority's planning policies and to the CTP are: 1) it can detract from the Authority's core mission and require choosing between competing definitions of sustainability and 2) the Countywide approach may not work locally.

Some options include: sustainability could be added to the vision and goals, it could be added to certain functions, it could be pursued through the general Measure J mission, and/or it could be adopted through new programs, provide tools, or incorporate performance measures.

To pursue it through the Measure J mission, there are three related strategies: operational sustainability, fiscal sustainability, and social health and political sustainability. Overarching programs can be adopted such as green modes, resource conservation, healthy communities, and healthy eco-systems. Tools could be offered to analyze opportunities for sustainable design, which would include a checklist. Incorporating performance measures is very popular

and is happening at the USDOT level with the Sustainable Transportation Analysis and Rating System (STAR System). Caltrans has Smart Mobility and MTC uses performance measures. The existing MTSO framework could also be used as a performance measure for sustainability. The issues of flexibility, the Authority's role, and countywide vs. local scale, need to be resolved.

The real question is should a sustainability policy be incorporated into the countywide plan, and if yes, how. This issue does not need to be resolved right away; this paper does not have a deadline.

Member Ross commented that sustainability has connotations of government planning and central government, and it is one person's idea of what should be done ethically, morally and economically. He believes that a better word for "sustainable" is "resourceful" in planning.

Member Leone is concerned about issues dealing with projects where local control is lost. There will be additional costs and project delays. Mr. Engelmann responded that his concerns are real, and it is unusual where the new requirements end up in more local control, lower costs and fewer delays, and that is one of the cons. In reality, it is saying that these are the things that must be done so that the next generation does not have to pay the costs of our actions.

Chair Pierce commented that she attended the Planning Committee at CCTA, and the words, "mission creep" came up during those discussions. Most sustainability elements are already required by other agencies, so what is being proposed is to package what is already there with another checklist that must be satisfied. Her feedback to those on the Planning Committee is to keep it simple and smart and recognize that other agencies already impose those requirements. She proposed that a referral be made to all the other requirements already imposed, and to insert the word "sustainability" once in the existing language.

Vice-Chair Durant commented that one of the challenges is that when people hear the word "sustainability" they put it in a context that is different from the definition. CCTA's mission already covers everything that SB 375 intended. When the word is defined in a way that nobody understands, it makes things worse by instilling more fear and more bad behavior. The Transportation Authority and the Transportation Plan is concerned with moving people and goods, having it work for today and tomorrow, and having systems and structures in place so that there is always a system that is working and functioning for the people who live here and who pass by here.

Chair Pierce proposed that the word "resource-conscious" replace the underlined word, "sustainable," in the first paragraph of the draft "Sustainability Concepts and the 2014 Countywide Transportation Plan" dated January 16, 2013 (page 6-17 of the TRANSPAC packet).

Member Mitchoff stated that the concept of sustainability is a good one, but a challenge she faces is explaining simple, common, human-decency types of concepts. She supports the suggestion because if it lowers the threshold of fear and concern, it creates a more positive environment.

Bob Pickett commented that he is in favor of Chair Pierce's initial statement about the change in wording. He feels it should be kept simple. Member Leone agreed.

Dan Richardson stated that the challenge is perception, but not the perception of sustainability. It is the perception of whether the public is getting the best return for its transportation tax dollars, and what kind of difference is made in their travel experience. Engineers can provide studies that portray a gain of a minute in commute times. But the reality of the person in the field is that if a car is moving, it is better than if a car is stopped. This gives the perception that all of the money provided to the transportation agencies is not being used efficiently. The focus should be the perception that agencies are being responsible about the use of taxpayers' funds. He suggests that other good projects are coming down the road and that is where the focus should be, instead of shining a light on the word, "sustainable" which gives the perception that the funds are not being used efficiently.

Member Ross proposed that the word to be used in the vision and goals is "resourceful" instead of "resource-conscious." Loella Haskew stated that she likes the words, "resourceful" and "responsible". The combination of the two words means that the Authority is paying attention to the difficult issues.

John Cunningham stated that during the SWAT discussion the commentary was centered around the need to incorporate sustainability because of MTC and/or ABAG, to receive more favorable consideration by those agencies. He would like more clarification on this perception. The County has a mature transportation system and sustainability and efficiency need to be the focus in order to sell a new sales tax measure. There is a palpable cost to not maintaining roads and bridges, and that is the real sustainability issue at hand.

Ms. Neustadter commented that there isn't enough time over the course of the schedule that has been laid out to actually have a reasonable discussion about what it means and how it should be done. Land banking is another possible solution because years could be cut off of project completion, which supports sustainability.

Member Durant stated that there is nothing missing from the concept of sustainability in the first paragraph of the "Sustainability Concepts and the 2014 Countywide Transportation Plan" draft document, even if the proposed word, "sustainable" is not inserted. He proposed that section (1) of the paragraph be left alone, however he is agreeable to adding the word, "resourceful" under identifier (2), "~~cooperative and resourceful planning~~" because it does not hurt anything to add it.

Chair Pierce, Member Ross and Member Mitchoff agreed to this proposal. Member Leone stated that he does not have a problem with the proposal; however, he does not want to lose the local control. Chair Pierce responded that the word "resourceful" is being added to the existing vision statement which is already sustainable by its nature and nothing else is being added to the processes.

Mr. Engelmann stated that this will go to Planning Commission in a few months. He clarified: the four goals are listed on page 4 of the report and the last bulleted goal is proposing to add to the goal, and TRANSPAC is saying no to that proposal.

ACTION: None required

7. Real-Time Ridesharing Pilot Program Update-Martin Engelmann, Deputy Executive Director, Planning, CCTA.

It was decided that this item be put over to the March 14, 2013 TRANSPAC meeting because of time constraints of the members.

ACTION: Item moved to the March 14, 2013 TRANSPAC meeting

8. TRANSPAC CCTA Representative Reports: Reports on the most recent CCTA Administration and Projects Committee (Member Pierce), Planning Committee (Member Durant) and CCTA meetings (Members Pierce and Durant).

Chair Pierce advised that the reports are contained in the agenda packet.

ACTION: Reports received

9. SB 375/SCS Report by Martin Engelmann, CCTA Deputy Executive Director, Planning

Mr. Engelmann reported that the OBAG Call for Projects is coming up and MTC is scheduled to release its draft RTP at the end of March, with presentation to the Authority in April, a public workshop in April, and adoption in June or July.

ACTION: Report received

ITEM TAKEN OUT OF ORDER:

14. Election of TRANSPAC Chair and Vice-Chair for the 2013 term.

Current Chair Pierce advised that planning commissioners do vote on the TRANSPAC Chair and Vice-Chair for the 2013 term. The current Vice-Chair is David Durant. Member Ross nominated David Durant as Chair for the 2013 term, seconded by Member Mitchoff.

ACTION: David Durant elected as Chair of TRANSPAC for the 2013 term.
Ross/Mitchoff/Unanimous

Current Vice-Chair Durant nominated Member Ross as new Vice-Chair for the 2013 term, seconded by Member Haskew.

ACTION: Mark Ross elected as Vice-Chair of TRANSPAC for the 2013 term.
Durant/Haskew/Unanimous

Barbara Neustadter stated that outgoing Chair Pierce, in addition to being Chair of TRANSPAC in 2012, is also one of TRANSPAC's representatives to the Contra Costa Transportation Authority. She is also the Chair of the Administrative and Projects Committee at the Authority, and Vice-President of ABAG. Ms. Neustadter presented several items of recognition to outgoing Chair Pierce in appreciation of her efforts.

Chair Durant presented outgoing Chair Pierce with a gavel plaque and thanked her for a fantastic year.

10. 511 Contra Costa and TRANSPAC Staff Reports

Lynn Overcashier reported that historically the TDM program funding has been based on percent of population and employment. The calculation has not been done since the year 2000, and SWAT requested an updated calculation be conducted, which was done. Central County lost the most combined population and employment – 2.8% less. However, because the TDM program is combined with TRANSPLAN which increased by 2.9%, Central County is getting .1% more. West County is 1.6% lower, so it will lose funding, which will go to SWAT.

ACTION: Report received

11. TAC Oral Reports by Jurisdiction.

Ms. Neustadter stated that briefings for new members will be scheduled in the near future.

ACTION: Information received

12. Correspondence/Copies/Newslips/Information

Chair Pierce advised that these items are contained in the agenda packet.

ACTION: Information received

13. Agency and Committee reports

Chair Pierce advised that these items are contained in the agenda packet.

ACTION: Reports received

Meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.