



MEETING OF THE
TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY OF MARIN
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

March 16, 2009
2:00 p.m.

TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY OF MARIN
TAM ROOM on LOBBY LEVEL
750 LINDARO STREET
SAN RAFAEL, CALIFORNIA

MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Steve Kinsey, Chair
Al Boro, City of San Rafael
Alice Fredericks, Town of Tiburon
Peter Breen, Town of San Anselmo
Charles McGlashan, Marin County Board of Supervisors
Joan Lundstrom, City of Larkspur
Madeline Kellner, City of Novato

Commissioner Members Absent: None.

Staff Members Present: Bill Gamlen, Project Delivery Manager
Bill Whitney, Project Delivery Manager
Dan Cherrier, Project Delivery Manager
David Chan, Programming Manager
Li Zhang, Finance/Administration Manager
Denise Merleno, Recording Secretary

Staff Members Absent: Dianne Steinhauser, Executive Director

Chair Kinsey called the meeting to order at 2:10 p.m.

1. Chair's Report (Discussion)

Chair Kinsey reported that he went to Washington D.C. on behalf of MTC and TAM to work on two areas of interest. The first was the reauthorization of the Transportation Enhancement (TE) Program and the other area was to make a strong case for the way the program is structured for the larger federal bill known as SAFETEA-LU. There are 108 programs identified in SAFETEA-LU and the goal is to narrow that number to a smaller number of larger programmatic areas and to allow, on a regional basis, flexibility in the decision making as to how to use the funds.

On the issue of ongoing highway design and multi-modal needs, he went on to state that Mr. Will Kempton, Director of the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has expressed a willingness to meet with TAM and to that end, the Chair will be forwarding an invitation in the coming weeks. Chair Kinsey said that he would like the focus of this meeting to center on a few areas: 1) the issue of design standards/exceptions on Hwy 101 with a key focus on the Marin Sonoma Narrows (MSN); 2) review the "bus on shoulder" concept; and 3) explain achievements associated with the Non-

motorized Transportation Pilot Program (NTPP) and to encourage the support of Caltrans with this type of program in the future. He encouraged the members of this committee to contact him in the near future as to any matters they would like addressed at this upcoming meeting with Director Kempton.

2. Commissioner Comments (Discussion)

None.

3. Executive Director's Report (Discussion)

In the Executive Director's absence, Mr. Bill Whitney provided a brief report on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

Mr. Whitney reported that TAM may receive an additional \$5.6 million for allocation through this stimulus program; this is additional money coming through the California Transportation Commission (CTC) via the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Staff released a call for projects last Friday and added that all projects on the original call for projects list are eligible for this additional funding. The deadline on any new project submissions is March 20 because staff need to provide this information to MTC for forwarding to the CTC for their action.

He cited a change Caltrans instituted in the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program which changes the goal from "race neutral" to "race conscious" and he added that each jurisdiction must update its DBE plan as another requirement to be eligible for ARRA money.

Mr. Whitney reviewed with the Committee a spreadsheet which showed the list of Tier 1 projects funded through the ARRA as well as projects that could be funded through the second call for projects including the Tier 2 projects, the shortfall on the Gap Closure project, and additional local projects.

Commissioner Breen asked if the Committee should consider a recommendation to use this new allocation to fund the shortfall on the Gap Closure Project in order to put the financing issue to rest.

Commissioner Lundstrom suggested that could be one of the alternatives that staff could present for consideration.

Commissioner McGlashan asked if it is possible to fund the Gap Closure shortfall and the Tier 2 projects and Mr. Whitney responded affirmatively.

Commissioner McGlashan suggested adding the TDA Article 3 projects that lost their funding when it became necessary to use that money on the Gap Closure.

Mr. Whitney said that there could be timeline issues related to these projects but that he would check with county staff on that issue.

The Chair thanked Mr. Whitney for his report.

Mr. Dan Cherrier provided an update on the I-580/US 101 connector project. Staff has been working with the state to expedite the approval process of the plans. The project was ready to list (advertise) on March 12 which also would have allowed it to be presented to the CTC for a funding vote. However, since the state is struggling to meet all of its cash needs and is unsure of its ability to sell bonds, staff

has been informed that it could be weeks or months until the bonds can be sold to fund this project. The “ready to list” status is valid for 90 days, so if funding becomes available within that timeframe, this project will be ready to advertise at the next CTC meeting after the money becomes available.

The Chair asked for an update on the possible use of the existing lane completed as part of the Gap Closure as well as some portions of the shoulder as a temporary improved merge from I-580 to Hwy 101.

Mr. Cherrier said that staff met with Caltrans design team and worked through the non-standard issues that this idea presented. Caltrans’ Operations team is concerned about having two lanes merge on and over into Hwy 101 before the opening of the northbound HOV lane. Currently, staff is preparing all the plans, specs, estimate and fact sheets and hopes to proceed with this temporary merge after the HOV lane opens some time in April. The costs associated with restriping and a limited amount of repaving that will need to be evaluated to determine if spending the money will be worth the limited amount of time that this change would be in place.

Jim Schmidt said that the queue that occurs on I-580 which blocks the offramp to Bellam has occurred for over 10 years and that since the shoulder is paved and it would be a minor job to extend that off ramp. He wonders why moving forward with this small road project is being bogged down by a multi-million dollar road project which may not be funded for some time to come. He urged the committee to try to advance this small project.

Chair Kinsey said that moving forward with extending the offramp, as it is currently configured, is a possibility for consideration.

Mr. Cherrier stated that, approximately six months ago, staff spoke with Caltrans about the idea of using the shoulder as an extended lane and allow its use for exiting motorists. Both CT and the Highway Patrol said it was not their policy and they could not allow that.

Commissioner Boro noted that he is concerned about doing a “quick fix” to relieve congestion because at some point, the lack of apparent congestion may cause some to think that there is no reason to move forward with the connector project.

The Chair said that he shares the concern and is aware how important the connector project is to surface streets and pedestrian access. However, with no certainty as to how soon this project will receive funding, he would like to continue to think about these options.

4. Approval of Minutes from February 9, 2009 (Action)

Karen Nygren requested two corrections to a comment she made on page 8. She requested that the statement, “Then, speaking on behalf of the Marin Sierra Club...” be deleted as, at that point, she was speaking on behalf of herself. Additionally, she requested that the last sentence in that same paragraph which reads, “Based on this, *the Sierra Club* does not support...” be changed to read, “Ms. Nygren said *that the Sierra Club Marin Group* does not support...”

Jim Schmidt requested two corrections. He referred to a comment he made on page 6 which read, “...that price is a demand *inflator* on the roadway” and asked that it be corrected to read, “...that price is a demand *deflator* on the roadway”. Additionally, referring to page 8, he asked that the sentence be changed from, “Mr. Schmidt commented that *he does not believe that MTC has done* an adequate job...” to, “Mr. Schmidt commented that *he believes that MTC has not done* an adequate job...”

Commissioner Lundstrom motioned to approve the January 12, 2009 draft minutes incorporating the corrections noted herein which was seconded by Commissioner Fredericks. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

5. Hwy 101 Gap Closure Update (Discussion)

Tho Do presented a brief report on time savings experienced on Hwy 101 during commute hours since the southbound HOV lane. He noted that on March 14, 2007 it took 47 minutes to travel from Hwy. 37 to Sir Francis Drake Blvd. With the HOV lane open, this same trip was taken on March 6, 2009 and it took 12 minutes for a 35-minute savings in travel time. He added that both trips were taken at approximately 7:30 a.m. on the same day of the week. Regarding data for travel in the carpool lane, it took 33 minutes to travel the above stated route in March 2007; however, in March 2009 it took only 11 minutes for a 22-minute savings in travel time. Congestion peaked at the 8:00 a.m. hour due to school trips.

At the request of the Chair, Mr. Do agreed to calculate the cumulative time savings on an annualized basis and report back to this committee.

The Chair thanked Mr. Do for his report.

Connie Fremier reported that the northbound HOV lane is on schedule for an April opening. Regarding Segment 4 on Hwy 101, some large sinkholes were discovered in the median north of Linden Lane which has created drainage issues. Emergency work is being conducted at a cost of \$750,000 which the state is paying for through an emergency fund. Planned work items necessary to open the lane include paving and striping which must be done at night and is temperature dependent.

Ms. Fremier announced a grand opening celebration for the HOV lanes has been scheduled for the week of April 27. The exact date is to be determined pending the availability of Mr. Will Kempton, Director of Caltrans. She clarified that the date of this celebration and the date of the actual opening of the northbound lane will not be one and the same.

Regarding Linden Lane, she said that work on the bridge continues and is not weather dependent so it is on schedule to re-open in June.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Fredericks regarding the sinkhole issue, Ms. Fremier said that the repair is being treated as an independent emergency repair project and is being paid for by a special fund source. Additionally, a specialty contractor is doing the work.

The Chair asked what techniques staff will employ, once the HOV lanes are operational, to ensure that the other pieces of the project including the SMART line, additional grading, drainage, and the soundwalls will be completed on schedule.

Ms. Fremier said that staff will continue to monitor all aspects of the project on a weekly basis through to its completion of the job. However, a final completion schedule has not been issued but she expects to receive one from the contractor soon. She added that the estimated completion is in late summer/early fall.

The Chair asked that, at a minimum, staff should request a completion timeline from Caltrans and provide it to the Committee at its next meeting in order to track and gauge their progress.

6. 2009 Legislative Program (Action)

Gus Khouri, TAM's legislative analyst, and David Chan presented this item which requested the Executive Committee recommend to the full TAM Board the adoption of the following: 2009 State Legislative Platform, recommended positions on the 2009 State Legislative Bills, and letter to the Governor on STA funds.

Mr. Khouri provided a brief review of the Draft 2009 Legislative Platform that was prepared by Mr. Khouri's firm, Shaw/Yoder and TAM staff. The five provisions within the platform include: 1) infrastructure bond; 2) transportation funding; 3) project delivery; 4) air quality; and 5) alternative modes (transit, bicycles, livable communities and ridesharing).

Commissioner McGlashan requested that the acronym "SAFETEA-LU" be changed to the program's new name, "Authorization of MAP-21."

Responding to a question from Commissioner Breen regarding including SMART as part of the Alternative Modes provision, Mr. Khouri said that it was an oversight and he will include it.

Commissioner McGlashan suggested adding, in the second provision, language from the county's legislative program which states that transportation operations funding should be pursued under the auspices of the climate change bill.

Mr. Khouri agreed to work on that language.

Karen Nygren raised four points: 1) Regarding item no. 6 in Provision 2, she suggested the language change from, "Consider supporting..." to, "Consider monitoring..." since the TAM Board has yet to decide if it will support HOT lanes; 2) Regarding item no. 14 in Provision 2, she suggested that, "Support legislation..." be changed to "Monitor legislation..."; 3) Regarding items 2 and 3 in Provision 3, she requested, again, to change the word, "Support" to "Monitor"; and 4) item no. 4 in Provision 4 she suggested adding, "...as long as SB 375 does not override local control for environmental review" at the end of that item.

In response to a question from Jim Schmidt who asked if the entire TAM board members agree to each point as listed in the document, Chair Kinsey said that this item is being presented to this Committee as a discussion item. Further, if the Committee decides to adopt the recommended action, this item will be presented to the full TAM Board for their consideration.

Commissioner Fredericks suggested replacing the word, "support" with the phrase "consider support." Commissioner Breen said that he thinks TAM needs to provide guidance to Shaw/Yoder in cases where issues are not controversial. He suggested that the words "Consider legislation be inserted in items 2 and 3 of Provision 3.

Commissioner Boro asked if it was appropriate for TAM to consider supporting the authorization of a new regional fee authority if, in fact, Caltrans is creating or is using another agency for the same purpose. Mr. Khouri said that he would discuss that matter with ED Steinhauser.

Mr. Khouri highlighted bills in the 2009 State Legislative Bills Summary, the second attachment for this item including ACA 9, AB 670, and SB 205:

1. ACA 9, sponsored by Assemblyman Huffman, which would reduce the vote threshold for local sales tax and bond measures from 66.67% to 55% (a supermajority) in order to provide more tools and authority at the local level to fund priority projects.

Shaw/Yoder and TAM staff recommend a support position on that bill. The Chair took a vote and the Committee voted unanimously to support the bill.

2. AB 670 would authorize Caltrans and local authorities to permit exclusive or preferential use of high-occupancy vehicle lanes to be used by a vehicle driven by a veteran or by those on active duty in the military.

Shaw/Yoder and TAM staff recommend an oppose position on that bill. The Chair took a vote and the Committee voted unanimously to oppose the bill.

3. SB 205 would increase the vehicle registration fee up to \$10 to fund congestion management within each county.

Shaw/Yoder and TAM staff recommend a support position on that bill. The Chair took a vote and the Committee voted unanimously to support the bill.

Mr. Khouri briefly mentioned the third attachment, an informational document, which was a list of propositions that will be included in the May 2009 statewide special election.

Mr. Khouri noted that the fourth attachment, was a letter from the TAM Chair to the Governor pursuant to Commissioner McGlashan's request, at the January board meeting, admonishing the state for the drastic funding cut to transit funding.

The Committee agreed to forward the letter as written.

Commissioner McGlashan motioned to forward to the full TAM Board the recommendation to adopt the following: 2009 State Legislative Platform including the modifications agreed upon at this meeting, recommended positions on the 2009 State Legislative Bills, and the letter to the Governor on STA funds which was seconded by Commissioner Lundstrom. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Mr. Schmidt asked if the TAM Board would consider request to legislators to abolish the Congestion Management Plan requirement in light of SB 375.

The Chair said that this idea would not be incorporated into today's action but that he would direct staff to discuss the issue with MTC.

7. Central/Southern Marin Transit Study (Discussion)

Jean Hart and David McCrossan, consultants to TAM, presented this item and requested the Committee to provide input on 1) the completeness of the proposed draft list of improvements, 2) feedback on evaluation criteria; 3) proposed format for the workshop on 3/26.

David McCrossan reviewed the six improvement concepts, analysis conclusions, and the initial set of evaluation criteria used to develop the draft list of transportation improvements. He referred the

Committee to the agenda packet so each could follow along as he reviewed each of the improvements including the multi-modal green hubs, Hwy 101 key pads and ramps transit program, arterial speed and reliability program, local stop enhancement program, and key bidirectional corridor enhancement opportunities.

Mr. McCrossan discussed bus pad access reconfiguration which, at select locations, would facilitate direct freeway access and at-grade connections with local service while minimizing local arterial street impacts.

In response to a question from Commissioner Boro who asked if this study envisions improving the accessibility to the freeway pick up spots, Mr. McCrossan responded affirmatively. He said that the study conducted a comprehensive overview and have identified where improvements could be made to improve pedestrian access.

Commissioner Lundstrom suggested adding "safe pedestrian access to bus stops" to the list of components since she estimates there are more people walking to bus stops than there are bikers.

In response to a question from Jim Schmidt who asked him to define, "Green Hub", Mr. McCrossan said that is a hub which encourages broader mobility and the environmental goals of the community.

He concluded his presentation by providing a list of the estimated cost for the each of the improvements and noted a total price tag in the vicinity of \$25 million.

He indicated that the next steps for this study include a Workshop which will take place before the TAM board meeting later this month. Also, during the meeting, a presentation will be made and the board will be requested to provide input on the draft list of improvements and the qualitative and quantitative evaluation criteria. Changes based on the Board's input will be incorporated into the final draft improvements list.

Commissioner Lundstrom reminded the consultants that the bus pads along Hwy 101 are shared by the Marin Airporth which reduces traffic by taking these riders out of their cars. She requested that this service be called out in this study. She also requested that this study consider the transit dependent riders and school trips that use these local bus stops along the freeway.

Commissioner McGlashan said that the parking lot between Sir Francis Drake Blvd. and Center Blvd. in Fairfax tend to be a parking spot for transit riders as does an area on Miller Avenue in Mill Valley as a result of motorists coming out of the canyon. He asked Mr. McCrossan if he could offer any suggestions about non-motorized access investments that could be considered for those parking areas. Additionally, he noted that there is excess parking capacity in the parking lot on Felton Street – across from the Manzanita lot in Mill Valley. Mr. McCrossan said that he would contact the Commissioner to discuss ways to publicize the Felton Street lot.

Karen Nygren noted that the study analyzed reverse commute travel in Sausalito and Mill Valley but failed to add Corte Madera, Tiburon and Belvedere. Also, she stated that there is a Golden Gate Transit bus that crosses the Golden Gate Bridge in the direction of the Marin Headlands area and stops at Fort Baker. She suggested that this would be a good transfer spot from San Francisco. Regarding the Manzanita parking lot, she said that this location floods but the parking lot on Felton does not flood. She finalized her comments but asking if the study analyzed possible funding sources for the \$25 million price tag.

Mr. McCrossan responded by saying that the next task in this study is to look at funding sources. He went on to say that using the GGNRA as a connection spot was not analyzed since recreational travel was not included a part of the scope for this study. Roger Roberts stated that the GGNRA is doing its own planning study, so he would like to see this study integrated with that of GGNRA.

The Chair reminded the audience of the public workshop on March 26 and asked Ms. Hart to advise the next steps for this study.

Ms. Hart said that the qualitative and quantitative comments received at the workshop will be applied to the list of transportation improvements and prioritize them. Additionally, more detailed cost estimates for each of the projects will be worked up and potential funding sources will be identified. She anticipates returning to this Committee in either April or May with a draft list of recommendations for review followed by review and acceptance by the full TAM Board.

Responding to a question from the Chair regarding the involvement of the public works' directors at the local jurisdiction level, Ms. Hart said that many DPW staff sit on the Study's TAC. However, she is attempting to set up one-on-one discussions with staff from the County, San Rafael, and others to discuss corridor improvements that are consistent since the locals would have the operational responsibility. She added that a process for implementing a TSP will be included, so while the actual document defining a TSP may not be completed, a process outline for reaching that goal, considering governance issues, will be included.

The Chair thanked Ms. Hart and Mr. McCrossan for their report.

8. California High-Occupancy Toll (HOT) Lane Business Plan (Action)

Dan Cherrier and Chris Metzger presented this item which requested the Committee to direct TAM staff to continue review of the Caltrans HOT Lane Business Plan, and direct staff to provide comments that retain the role of regional agencies such as MTC along with local agencies such as Congestion Management Agencies and/or Sales Tax Authorities as a key partner in the development, design, tolling authority, and operation of Express Lanes.

Mr. Cherrier stated that the draft plan was issued in mid-February with the assistance of Kimley-Horn and Associates. Comments were due by February 25 and a state-wide conference call took place on February 26 to capture comments. Many comments dealt extensively with the short time frame associated with the comment period.

Mr. Metzger said that due to the short comment period, staff reviewed the document and categorized their comments by: governance, design implementation and flexibility, lack of support for statements made in the plan.

The Chair stated that his overall impression of that document is that it is completely off track and asked if staff had an opportunity to review the comments of the regional agencies.

Mr. Cherrier said that he had not seen the comments but that MTC, participated on the February 26 conference call.

The Chair said that he was going to allow the committee and public to comment but that he did not want to spend a lot of time on this since due to the inadequacy of the plan.

Commissioner Boro said he believes that where the plan states that congestion pricing supports the shift of gas taxes to user-based fees represents a huge shift in public policy.

Commissioner Breen said that CSAC and the League of Cities should be involved in this study. Additionally, he suggested that TAM request a copy of the original RFP to better understand the motivation behind this plan.

Commissioner Lundstrom said that the plan is fundamentally flawed and suggested that staff craft bullet points with assistance from the Chair and Vice-Chair to get the message out for the full TAM meeting.

Commissioner Fredericks offered to carry such a message to the California League of Cities of which she is a member.

Chair Kinsey requested that the League agendaize it and that TAM will provide points for her.

In response to Commissioner Boro's question as to how Shaw/Yoder could assist in understanding the document process, Mr. Khouri said that he would contact the Director of Caltrans as well as TAM's legislators.

Chair Kinsey directed staff to formulate a letter that condemns the effort as well as a letter that could be presented to CSAC and the League of Cities.

Karen Nygren expressed a number of concerns with the Plan which, when summarized, does not support the draft plan.

9. Open Time for Items Not on the Agenda

Seeing no others wishing to speak, the meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m.