

## MINUTES

### SANTA BARBARA COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

Thursday, September 16, 2004

Board of Supervisors Hearing Room  
511 East Lakeside Parkway  
Santa Maria, CA

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#### 1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

**Members Present:** Susan Rose, Supervisor, Second District; Gail Marshall, Supervisor, Third District; Joni Gray, Supervisor, Fourth District; Joe Centeno, Supervisor, Fifth District; Bill Traylor, Mayor, City of Buellton; Richard Weinberg, Mayor, City of Carpinteria; Jack Hawxhurst, Councilmember, City of Goleta; Sam Arca, Mayor, City of Guadalupe; Dick DeWees, Mayor, City of Lompoc (SBCAG Vice-Chair); Dan Secord, Councilmember, City of Santa Barbara; Marty Mariscal, Councilmember, City of Santa Maria; David Smyser, Mayor, City of Solvang; Rich Krumholz, Caltrans District 5 Representative (Ex-Officio member).

**Members Absent:** Naomi Schwartz, Supervisor, First District (SBCAG Chair).

**Staff Members Present:** Jim Kemp, Executive Director; Michael Powers, Deputy Director of Planning; Stephen VanDenburgh, Deputy Director of Programs; Bill Yim, Transportation Planner; John Asuncion, Transportation Planner; Gregg Hart, Public Information/Government Affairs Coordinator; Karin Hodin, Transportation Planner; Cathy Muneio, Executive Secretary/Board Clerk; Kevin E. Ready, Sr., Senior Deputy County Counsel.

#### 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice-Chair DeWees called for the pledge of allegiance.

#### 3. RECESS TO CLOSED SESSION

No closed session items.

#### 4. RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION

#### 5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Supervisor Centeno moved approval of the August 19, 2004 minutes. The motion was seconded by Mayor Weinberg and carried with Supervisor Gray abstaining.

#### 6. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

Councilmember Mariscal arrived.

#### 7. CONSENT CALENDAR

Member Agencies

Buellton ■ Carpinteria ■ Goleta ■ Guadalupe ■ Lompoc ■ Santa Barbara ■ Santa Maria ■ Solvang ■ Santa Barbara County

Supervisor Gray moved approval of the consent calendar. The motion was seconded by Mayor Traylor and carried unanimously.

**8. CALTRANS DISTRICT DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Rich Krumholz reviewed the District Director's report with the Board. He said that Caltrans would be doing some removal of diseased Eucalyptus trees on Hwy 101 in Santa Maria and that this would cause intermittent lane closures. Mr. Krumholz said that Caltrans was working closely with SBCAG and County staff to develop a cooperative and maintenance agreement for the Ortega Hill project.

Supervisor Centeno said that since Hwy 101 was redone from Santa Maria to Santa Barbara it made it really nice to travel.

Supervisor Gray thanked Caltrans for the work they did on Hwy 135 from McCoy to Goodwin.

Mayor Weinberg asked who was doing the work on the three bridges on Jameson Lane and noted that this work was taking a long time. He expressed concern that when the operational improvements are done that this work would possibly be a waste of money.

Mr. Kemp said that it was a county project and said that he would check on the status of the project with the county.

Supervisor Marshall said she had discussed with Caltrans the need to be kept apprised of accident statistics at Edison Avenue and Hwy 154 and the status of installing a stoplight at that intersection. She said that this needs to be presented to the public as soon as possible.

Supervisor Gray stated she just had a staff member who was injured in a car accident at Edison Street and Hwy 154. She said there were many accidents there and suggested the speed be reduced to 45 mph.

Mr. Krumholz said he was not aware of the accident history on Edison Street and Hwy 154. He said he would report back to the board the accident history and look into signal warrants and would engage the community as much as possible to find the best alternative.

Mayor Smyser thanked Caltrans for working with the community on the encroachment permit to fix the storm drain issues in Solvang and for coming up with a solution that everyone could live with.

Vice-Chair DeWees recommended coming back to Item 9 at 10:00 a.m. since this was a time certain.

**10. EASY LIFT TRANSPORTATION RESOLUTION OF COMMENDATION**

Mr. Kemp introduced this item and then asked Mr. Westwick with Easy Lift to report on the accomplishments of Easy Lift Transportation.

Councilmember Hawxhurst and Mr. Ready arrived.

Mr. Westwick reported on the success of Easy Lift. He said that Easy Lift is able to serve one hundred percent of its ride requests this year. He stated that passengers are surveyed to ensure that drivers are treating their clients respectfully and considerately, and said the drivers received very high marks from those who responded. He added that Easy Lift has very high safety standards.

Mr. Westwick said that some of their buses were as old as 1989 and that there was a need to purchase new ones. He reported that Easy Lift, with the assistance of SBCAG, received the highest state score for Section 5310 grant funding and would receive three new vehicles. He said that due to the very positive and collaborative relationship Easy Lift has with MTD that they were discussing the possibility of cooperating on maintenance to keep their costs down. He noted that Measure D funding has been an important component of the Easy Lift operating budget.

Councilmember Secord suggested that Easy Lift piggyback with one of the governmental agencies to purchase buses.

Mr. Westwick responded that the Section 5310 program does exactly what Councilmember Secord suggested through the State.

Mayor Weinberg commented that Easy Lift has done a marvelous job and Easy Lift complements the MTD service in the community.

Mr. Kemp said that assuming that the Board adopted the resolution it would be appropriate to appoint a south coast SBCAG board member to present the resolution at the Easy Lift 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event scheduled for September 21.

Councilmember Secord volunteered to make the presentation.

Supervisor Gray moved to adopt a resolution of commendation for Easy Lift Transportation in recognition of 25 years of service to the South Coast communities. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Centeno and carried unanimously.

## **11. TRAVEL MODEL**

Mr. Powers presented the staff report.

Mr. Kemp added some contextual comments. He said that this report had been presented to the Board at the previous meeting and that a good deal of time and money went into developing the model as a tool. He acknowledged the work of Bill Yim of SBCAG staff in developing the model. He said this model is intended to be used to determine travel demand and that it was just one of the tools to be used in the transportation planning process. Mr. Kemp stated that the model is an imperfect predictor of human behavior but attempts to predict what future travel demand will be. Mr. Kemp said this was a work in progress and would be updated and refined as necessary. He noted that the model has been under development for 2 years and that it is ready to use on important projects like 101 in Motion. He said that this report tried to address the concerns of Mr. Siegel and that this report has gone before TTAC where the model was determined to be ready for use.

Mr. Siegel thanked staff for responding to his comments and said he disagreed with many points that were made relative to the accuracy of the model. He expressed concern in using the new model for the 101 in Motion since he felt that this model was incorrect due to the use of a peak hour rather than a peak period. However, Mr. Siegel said he recommended that the Board go ahead and adopt the staff recommendation.

Councilmember Hawxhurst thanked Mr. Siegel for his comments. He said that the scope and quality of this report was much better than the previous report of five years ago. He said that the next forecast should include information on peak spreading and alleviate his concerns about

using the information to make decisions. He noted that if we kept going as predicted there would be twenty-four years of traffic growth occurring in four years. He questioned why the Board was being asked to approve this report, rather than receive it.

Councilmember Secord said he was in favor of receiving the report as opposed to approving it due to certain flaws present in the report. He had concerns that the model was not accurate enough and people would rely too heavily on the model for decision making.

Mr. Kemp said the action was not to approve the Travel Model but that the board was being requested to allow SBCAG to use the model in various applications.

Councilmember Hawxhurst moved to receive the report and authorize moving ahead to distribute it to state and federal agencies, use it in air quality/conformity analysis and other regional travel analysis, including 101 in Motion. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Secord.

Under discussion, Councilmember Mariscal said that it would appear certain transportation improvements would not be as necessary if land use were taken into consideration, He said that peak spreading would be necessary and the ability to update data was also important. He recommended looking at regional land use issues that may affect the future. He commended staff and requested that the report be reviewed to correct any grammatical or spelling errors.

Supervisor Marshall thanked Mr. Siegel for using his expertise and spending time to attend meetings and for participating and commenting on the Travel Model and working with staff.

The motion was reread and passed unanimously.

## **12. 101 IN MOTION PROJECT**

Bob Bramen presented the alternative packages developed by the Stakeholder Advisor Committee and Technical Advisory Group in preparation for public outreach.

Several Board members asked about the definition of "capacity".

Mr. Bramen said that SBCAG identified a "D" Level of Service when additional traffic could be accommodated, but that there is more and more stop and go traffic. He said the goal is to get a relative smooth rate of flow.

Supervisor Rose said she was having difficulty with the goal that was being set.

Mr. Powers said that this was the level the Board had adopted in the Congestion Management Plan. He said it was based on more and more dense traffic, along with minor incidents due to congestion. When it gets to Level E, that's when the traffic becomes very slow.

Councilmember Secord asked what the speed would be when you are in a D Level of Service.

Mr. Yim said it would be approximately 40-45 mph at LOS D, but then drops dramatically at LOS E.

Supervisor Gray asked if there was a history of Union Pacific relinquishing its right-of-way for the busway type of project.

Mr. Bramen responded that the use of Union Pacific right-of-ways has been a challenge in other areas and that Union Pacific would be a cost if they granted the authority to use it.

Supervisor Gray asked if there was any place where any railroad allowed for the building of a bus lane in their right-of-way. Mr. Bramen replied he didn't know of any.

Supervisor Gray asked if transit down the middle of the freeways was an option.

Mr. Bramen said yes, bus use of shoulders and High Occupancy lanes were among the full range of options that should be looked at.

Due to a time certain Vice-Chair DeWees said it was time to go to Item 9.

**9. 2004 FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

John Asuncion presented the report. He said that there were two comments received and that they would be adding two projects. One includes traffic signal improvements on Calle Real. This project was funded in 2003/04 but was being moved to 2004/05. The other addition was a project to add enhancements to the Goleta Amtrak Train Station. This project is scheduled to start in fiscal year 2006/07.

Mayor DeWees asked where the funding came from for these two projects.

Mr. Asuncion responded that the first project had received funding from Caltrans and the request was to move it forward a year. The other project will receive funding from the California Transportation Commission (CTC).

There were no comments from the public during the public hearing portion of this item.

Mayor Weinberg said he was not clear on the 24 projects that would be added to the FTIP after an air/quality conformity analysis was completed for each of these projects. He wanted to know what happens to these projects from a priority standpoint.

Mr. Asuncion responded they would go right back where they are scheduled.

Mr. VanDenburgh said that there were four projects that could potentially be impacted by being left out of the FTIP. They were the Cabrillo-Milpas Operational Improvements, 101 Northbound Auxiliary Lane Evans\Sheffield, Santa Maria six-lane widening, and the Evans Avenue\Ortega Hill intersection in Summerland.

Mayor Weinberg asked if the funding for these four projects comes could it be accepted but not used until January or February after the air/quality conformance analysis has been completed.

Mr. VanDenburgh said they would ask the California Transportation Commission for a delay if the funds did become available, but that this was unlikely to happen.

Supervisor Rose asked if the Beacon project could be explained. Mr. Ready said this project was for beach access and nourishment.

Councilmember Mariscal said that the CTC has placed the Hwy 101 six-lane widening project in Santa Maria at the top of their list.

Mr. VanDenburgh said funds might be delayed until the air quality conformity analysis is completed and that this left a very small window of risk if the funding becoming available prior to the project being listed in the FTIP. He said that the CTC did not think funding would be available for STIP projects programmed in the current year until at least January.

Mayor Weinberg asked what the reason was for these projects not being listed in the FTIP.

Mr. VanDenburgh responded that the projects not yet listed were capacity increasing projects which made it necessary to perform an air quality conformity analysis prior to their being listed in the FTIP. He explained that they could continue with the design work previously authorized, but would be unable to move to the next phase until these projects have been placed back in the FTIP.

Supervisor Centeno said that the Board had approved the tool necessary to prepare the air quality conformity and is concerned about potential project delays. He asked what would be done between now and January to allow this project to get placed in the FTIP.

Mr. Powers stated that this delay was due to a lot of different issues. He said there was a new Federal Clean Air Plan on that affects the conformity analysis, the current FTIP conformity was determined using the old travel model that is not longer supported, and the feds made the determination that once the FTIP goes into lapse the RTP goes into lapse. He said that the RTP needs to be developed to address federal requirements and the process has become increasingly complex.

Supervisor Centeno asked what was being done right now to complete this process by January.

Mr. Powers said that the next step would be to get approval to use the new model from the federal and state agencies and then to use the model to complete the conformity analysis.

Supervisor Gray said that she understood that if the Travel Model had been approved there wouldn't have been a lapse. She said they could have called an emergency meeting.

Mr. Kemp said it wasn't simply that there was no approval action but that the model was not yet complete.

Supervisor Gray asked if SBCAG staff knew when the model needed to be completed.

Mr. Kemp responded that staff knew they needed the Travel Model completed in order to do the air quality conformity analysis.

Supervisor Gray asked what the Board had done wrong.

Mr. Kemp said he was not sure the travel model could have been completed any earlier than it was based on the complex nature of the product.

Councilmember Secord said that staff has been working on the model for two years and that the Board was unaware of the jeopardy of not completing the model in time.

Mr. Kemp said that the risk of losing funds was small because a lot of things would have to fall in place before the CTC has STIP funding that could be allocated.

Supervisor Gray requested a report at the next meeting on what delayed the process.

Councilmember Hawxhurst stated that earlier it was mentioned that there were plans for a new rail crossing at the Santa Claus Lane area and said he hoped that there would be an extensive public notification process since rail crossing disturbs a large area. He also said it was a surprise to him that Goleta would be receiving funding for the Goleta train station. He said that there were better uses of funds than updating a very barren and mislocated train station such as a transit center located in the city of Goleta that could serve the university.

Mayor Smyser said that back in 1987 the City of Solvang spent some funding on the Alamo Pintado Creek Bridge project and this year the City of Solvang had requested funding from the Chumash to assist in this project. He suggested that as the body that prepares its request from the Chumash that they might want to look at the impacts on trips per day to the valley, particularly across the Alamo Pintado Bridge since this bridge was aggravated when the casino opened. He encouraged SBCAG to speak with the county supervisors and encourage them to join with the city in the application for funds.

Mayor Weinberg asked why they were discussing spending \$600,000 for the Goleta Amtrak station which is something Goleta doesn't want.

Mr. VanDenburgh said this project was proposed by Caltrans and was funded out of the 30 percent of the STIP which is not controlled by SBCAG. He said a match was needed to proceed with this project. He said he had informed Goleta that there was a programming cycle coming up in March and if they wanted to submit an application for the \$80,000 match, that would be the time. He said the project includes purchasing right of ways to increase the bus turning radius at the Amtrak station. He said that this was programmed in the State Transportation Improvement Program and Caltrans asked that it be programmed in the FTIP document.

Mayor Weinberg said the CTC doesn't pay attention and puts projects in a different priority than SBCAG does.

Mr. VanDenburgh said that the funds programmed to the project are not funds this board controls and the CTC has discretion over those funds. The issues regarding right-of-ways and whether the station was worth investing in would be explored in February or March.

Mr. Krumholz stated that the Caltrans role is managing inter-city rail and that STIP money is pursued when it is appropriate to upgrade stations, and it was their opinion that this was a prudent use of money.

Mayor DeWees asked if it was Caltrans' policy to put forth a project without informing a city as Councilmember Hawxhurst was just informed about the Goleta rail project.

Mr. Krumholz apologized. He said they would not to pursue a project without talking to the local jurisdiction.

Mr. VanDenburgh said that he had been told by Caltrans' Rail Division that they had discussed this with City of Goleta staff.

Supervisor Marshall asked for traffic counts at the Alamo Pintado Bridge and asked how that information could be retrieved. She said this would add weight to any future grants coming for roadwork.

Mr. Kemp said that SBCAG staff did not have the answer but that he could check with the county.

Supervisor Marshall said that the whole process was a grid and that there were a number of puzzle pieces that would have to fall in place before the whole picture is there, and that this process is never straightforward. She said staff needed to be encouraged to make good use of their time.

Supervisor Centeno asked staff to review the process, including the public comment process. He said he thought the timeline needed to be assessed as to the length of time items should be discussed with the public and reviewed by the Board so that funding will not be lost due to the failure to get documents to the federal and state agencies at the appropriate time.

Supervisor Marshall moved to adopt a resolution approve the 2004 Interim Federal Transportation Improvement Program with the addition of two projects, the addition of a signal on Calle Real and the Amtrak train station enhancements, and to approve a resolution approving the exempt project list from the 2001 Regional Transportation Plan as the 2004 Interim Regional Transportation Plan. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Secord and carried unanimously.

## **12. 101 IN MOTION PROJECT (cont.)**

Chair DeWees opened the item for public comment.

Barry Siegel referred to the chart in the staff report that makes the assumption that if you add a lane in each direction it will not get you to a level of D. He said that this should be done before submitting it to the public.

The public comment period was closed.

Mr. Bramen said that they were doing what Mr. Siegel asked for adding a lane to see what the model's reaction is to proposed projects. He said they will see how the model performs under those conditions.

Supervisor Rose asked for an explanation on the difference between commuter rail and light rail.

Mr. Bramen said that light rail is usually an inter-urban service with frequent stops, it's a smaller vehicle, is electrified but runs as trains do. Commuter trains can run as small units and be added based on demand and are for long distance commuters. Commuter trains usually operate only during peak periods between urban areas. He said light rail is something you see within urban areas with a service that runs typically 15 minutes between trains in peak periods and 20 minutes in off peak periods. Light rail has to operate on its own track right-of-way separate from the UP tracks. He said that cost wise there is a huge difference.

Supervisor Rose asked about package six. She said that one of the elements is completing Calle Real. She said there is a huge townhouse complex right in that area. She said that public works had done some modeling and impacts on this area.

Mr. Bramen said he had received the report.

Councilmember Hawxhurst said that the types of options included in the packages usually involve one or two contributors to capacity and a whole lot of minor contributors. He said that ramp metering doesn't let cars get on the freeway so it dumps them into the side streets and this concerns him. He said a lane keeps on delivering every hour and handles peak spreading in a way that none of the other options do. He said the closest solution was reducing fees for car and vanpools.

Mayor DeWees asked how this program could be monitored. Mr. Kemp responded that there were different ways to subsidize high occupancy vehicles, particularly by employers. He said the SBCAG Traffic Solutions division has provided subsidies to help start new vanpools, and said the hope was once the habit was established people would continue using this type of transportation without a subsidy.

Mayor Weinberg said the question was what to do in the interim. Right now bridges are out in Montecito and there are no traffic alerts on the status of the freeway. He suggested approaching radio stations and television stations to let the public know the freeway condition.

Councilmember Mariscal said that people might be able to understand the definition of capacity if it was explained on a subjective level. He said that frustration is what drives the process.

Mr. Bramen said they would be doing this.

Mayor Smyser said interstate travelers use Hwy 101. He said as they look at some of the possibilities he didn't see over arching goals for moving commuters and travelers. He said that the previous week at the CAL LAFCO meeting, the Regional Transportation Plan for San Diego was reviewed. He said the difference in their plan was that they were including CAL LAFCO and other agencies to address land use concerns. He said it would be beneficial to start talking with other agencies involved in the jobs/housing issues.

Mr. Bramen said that the principal goal of the 101 In Motion project was to solve commuter traffic during the peak periods since the information they have states that the problem is mostly with commuter traffic. He said this will define how well they will do with other type of problems on the freeway.

Mayor Smyser said that what is needed is for the corridor to be relieved and to provide relief for commuters on a daily basis. He said his guess was that if the projections for population growth were correct that means there will be a huge number of people using this corridor that are not commuters. He said he thought this process would be looking at the long range.

Mr. Bramen said he was looking at this.

Mr. Kemp said there were follow up programs that would be coming back to the Board.

**13. CLEAN AIR EXPRESS OPERATOR CONTRACT COMMITTEE**

Mr. Kemp requested that this item be removed from the agenda.

**14. BOARD WORKSHOP MEETING**

Mr. Kemp reviewed with the Board the possible items for discussion at the upcoming Board workshop on September 29 which included the status of Measure D local and regional transportation program, reporting to the public on the use of Measure D funds, and the 101 Operational Improvement projects.

Mayor DeWees said he was concerned that the current operational improvement projects should be projects that won't be torn down as the result of the 101 in Motion project.

Mr. Krumholz said they are making sure that this issue is being looked at as they move along in this process.

Supervisor Gray suggested that some time is given to review the structure of SBCAG as a whole. She questioned if SBCAG hasn't grown enough to keep functioning effectively. She said she would like to review the whole structure of the meetings.

Supervisor Marshall said he was in agreement with Supervisor Gray. She said a workshop is where structural issues should be discussed.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

None.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Mr. Kemp reported that with regard to the Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District South Coast Priorities Project that the Board had received an update the previous month from Ms. Fisher indicating that the requested changes to the FTIP would be on October board agenda. He said that MTD had not finished meeting with all of the involved agencies to date and thought it would be best to wait until this was done.

Mr. Ready passed out to the Board a response to questions submitted by Mission County Formation Commission that were asked of SBCAG that addressed legal issues and different options for SBCAG relative to forming of a new Mission County.

Mr. Kemp reminded the Board of the joint meeting with SCAG, VCTC and VCOG on November 11<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Kemp said he had arranged for several of the VCOG Board members attend the South Coast Subregional Planning Committee meeting to be held on October 6<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Kemp reported that the following Friday he would be attending the CALCOG delegates meeting and that the CALCOG delegate for SBCAG, Russ Hicks, was aware of this meeting.

Mr. Ready reported on the result of the questions submitted by the Mission County Formation Commission. He said in this memo he was challenging the issue that the Mission County Review Commission has any authority to mandate any changes to the SBCAG body. He said subsequently that their counsel concurred and as a result of that their staff is recommending that any determinations regarding SBCAG be left up to its member agencies. He said that there was an affirmative recommendation that revenues that revolve around Measure D continue to go to SBCAG because of the nature of the bonds.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:22 a.m.