

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

Thursday, September 21, 2006

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

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Susan Rose, Supervisor, Second District; Joni Gray, Supervisor, Fourth District; Russ Hicks, Councilmember, City of Buellton; Donna Jordan, Councilmember, City of Carpinteria; Jonny Wallis (SBCAG Vice-Chair), Mayor, City of Goleta; Lupe Alvarez, Mayor, City of Guadalupe; Dick DeWees, Mayor, City of Lompoc; Marty Blum, Mayor, City of Santa Barbara; Marty Mariscal, Councilmember, City of Santa Maria; Ed Skytt, Councilmember, City of Solvang; Rich Krumholz, Caltrans District 5 Representative

Members Absent: Salud Carbajal, Supervisor, First District; Brooks Firestone, Supervisor, Third District; Joe Centeno (SBCAG Chair), Supervisor, Fifth District.

Staff Members Present: Jim Kemp, Executive Director; Stephen VanDenburgh, Deputy Director of Programs; Michael Powers, Deputy Director of Planning; Fred Luna Transportation Engineer; Gregg Hart, Public Information/Government Affairs Coordinator; Cathy Muneio, Board Clerk; Kevin E. Ready, Sr., Senior Deputy County Counsel.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Wallis called for the pledge of allegiance.

Chair Wallis requested that there be a moment of silence in remembrance of Bill Traylor, former Mayor of Buellton who passed away.

3. RECESS TO CLOSED SESSION

The board recessed to closed session at 8:35 a.m.

4. RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION AND REPORT FROM CLOSED SESSION

Counsel Ready reported there were no reportable items from this meeting, but that he did have a report from the previous closed session relative to Grandrud vs. Holland. He explained that while SBCAG was not a named defendant in the case, nine of the ten respondents named in the lawsuit were SBCAG Boardmembers or former Boardmembers in their capacity as individuals, and therefore he would not be able to represent them in his capacity as government counsel, but the services of a private attorney were retained on a pro-bono basis. Mr. Ready said he had successfully intervened on behalf of SBCAG in the case and defended the ballot language for Measure D. Counsel Ready said that there were four different County Counsel attorneys involved in the hearing in different capacities and that they were successful in winning the lawsuit on all issues. He said that Measure D will go on the ballot as it is.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilmember Mariscal moved to approve the minutes of August 17, 2006. The motion was seconded by Mayor Alvarez and carried with Supervisors Gray and Rose abstaining.

Member Agencies

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

6. APPROVAL OF CONSENT CALENDAR

Supervisor Gray asked that Item 6C – Route 154 Operational Improvements – Group II be pulled for discussion. She stated she had attended the Santa Ynez Valley Plan hearing the previous Wednesday and one of the big issues was the speed traveled on Hwy 154 for travelers coming from the north on Hwy 101 at a speed of 70 mph and the need to reduce their speed to 55 mph. She requested there be heavier highway patrol presence to insure that people maintain the 55 mph speed limit. Councilmember Hicks requested an update from Caltrans on that item during their report.

Councilmember Hicks stated that at the North County Subregional Planning Committee meeting that was held the previous Monday there was a discussion with Caltrans on the Baseline and Edison intersection and that they said a four way stop will be placed at that intersection by the end of October.

Councilmember Mariscal asked to comment on Item 6D – Freeway Service Patrol. He said he had been skeptical about this type of program but now could see that it was part of the grouping of concepts that would help alleviate congestion on Highway 101 in the south coast.

Mayor DeWees and Mayor Alvarez stated that they were glad the skepticism had been overcome and that the program was a success.

Mayor Wallis asked to discuss Item 6E – Project Management Database. She asked if the local agencies would be able to tap into that software to monitor their projects.

Mr. VanDenburgh stated that they would.

Supervisor Gray moved to approve the consent calendar. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Mariscal and carried unanimously.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT

Supervisor Gray thanked Rob Rebstock, the attorney that represented the board members as individuals in the Grandrud vs. Holland case.

8. MEASURE D REGIONAL PROGRAM BOND FINANCING

Mr. Luna presented the staff report. He stated that this bond financing will enable SBCAG to complete the remaining regional projects by their delivery dates (Milpas/Hot Springs and the Ortega Hill projects.) Mr. Luna indicated that the board authorized staff to put together a finance team to assist in the bond issuance. He stated that they had retained the services of Municipal Management Capital as the financial advisor and Kutak Rock as bond counsel to assist with this bond financing.

Mr. Luna said the historical average of a five percent growth projection was used in determining whether they had the ability to pay off the debt and complete the projects by the end of the current Measure D. He said the board had expressed some concern at the previous meeting about what would happen if there was an economic downturn and how it might affect the ability to pay for the debt and complete the projects. He said that SBCAG staff and the finance team reviewed a scenario of one percent annual revenue growth for the remaining years of the program and with that revenue growth scenario there still was the ability to deliver projects and

pay off the debt. He noted, however, that the ending program balance would be smaller under this scenario. He also stated that they would be obtaining a bond insurance policy for the amount of the debt service that would act as a surety for repayment of the bond interest and principal balances if SBCAG has insufficient revenues.

Mr. Luna stated that SBCAG had a very high rating with Standard and Poors and Moody's, and the recommendation before the Board was to adopt the resolution before them.

Councilmember Hicks moved to adopt a resolution authorizing the issuance of a maximum of \$8.2 million in limited tax bonds (Series 2006 bonds) on the Measure D Regional Program. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Rose and was approved unanimously by roll call vote.

9. NORTH COUNTY TRANSIT PLAN

Mr. Powers provided a brief background and introduced Lynda Rhine with Nelson Nygaard Consulting Associates.

Ms. Rhine explained the purpose of the plan was to improve both the long term and short term regional service. She noted that it was a practical and phased plan that will extend out for ten years. She described some of the recommended service changes for North County, including the extension of the Breeze service to Buellton and reverse commute service from Santa Barbara to Santa Maria. Another recommendation was the creation of a formal Transit Coordinating Committee that would include regional transit operators which would meet on a regular basis and be coordinated by SBCAG. Ms. Rhine explained that the plan also calls for transferring management of the Clean Air Express from SBCAG to the cities of Santa Maria and Lompoc and that these transit agencies have expressed interest in assuming administration of the service beginning in July 2007. She described two sets of service recommendations—short term priorities and long term enhancements.

Counsel Ready said one of the items discussed was the possibility of using TDA funds to backfill Measure D funds. He identified the condition under which TDA funds are available for spending on public works projects, which is that there are no unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet. Mr. Ready noted that should Measure D not be renewed, Measure D funds will not be available to spend on local or regional transit. He noted that as long as there are TDA funds being used for non-transit purposes, discontinuing existing regional transit services would not be possible. Since these are established, successful services with high ridership and farebox recovery, this would trigger a finding that they are unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet. Without Measure D funds, TDA funds currently used for streets and roads purposes would have to be used to continue these services.

Mayor DeWees asked if Measure D is not renewed will some of these transit projects need to be financed by local agencies.

Ms. Rhine stated that if Measure D is not reauthorized then there would have to be a backfill of funds and that the local funds would be one of the sources that could be utilized.

Mr. Kemp said with some of the existing regional services if Measure D did not pass, and if there were no funds to subsidize those services, then it might be necessary to use TDA funds to fill those needs since an unmet need would be created.

Counsel Ready added that TDA funds in the past have been used for roads since there were no unmet transit needs that were reasonable to meet, but if Measure D funds were not available an unmet need that is reasonable to meet would be created if these services were terminated.

Councilmembers Mariscal and Skytt thanked Ms. Rhine and said that she and her staff had been very responsive to the input of the North County Subregional Committee. Councilmember Mariscal said it was a ten year plan and some of the short term recommendations will be difficult to implement. In the long term he said that the North County will need consolidated transit services from the standpoint of efficiency and effectiveness. The idea of establishing inter-city transit will become more crucial as the North County grows. He said he hoped that other people that live in other areas will come to Santa Maria and spend their income as the North County grows. He expressed disappointment that the only element of transportation used in the transit plan were buses, and requested that consideration be given to other types of transportation, including a monorail system.

10. SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS REGIONAL PLAN

Steve Devencinci with SLOCOG presented the status of SLOCOG's Regional Blueprint Planning program known as Vision 2050.

Supervisor Gray said that the experience SBCAG had when they discussed regional land use planning came with a large amount of resistance because the local jurisdictions did not want to lose their local control. Supervisor Gray asked if San Luis Obispo had to deal with that type of problem, and if so what they did.

Mr. Devencenzi said addressing those types of concerns began in the 1990s and that while there were sensitivities this wasn't an insurmountable issue. He said that the key was to communicate with those jurisdictions.

Supervisor Rose stated that the differences in culture and politics between the north and south counties in Santa Barbara County were significant.

Mr. Devencenzi said they also had to deal with the difference in politics and culture between the northern part and southern part of San Luis Obispo County. He said they divided the county into four areas and have been working on that issue. They set up steering committees with elected officials to guide the process along and meet monthly with the planning directors.

Mayor Alvarez asked if there was modeling done for the Woodland project.

Mr. Devencenzi said that this project was tied to a local EIR.

Councilmember Hicks said that this was discussed at the Community Leaders breakfast with Will Kempton and the board may want to revisit the preparation of a Regional Blueprint Plan and jointly submit a request for a grant with SLOCOG since it has become apparent that state funding will be easier to obtain with this plan in place. He said the local jurisdictions need to recognize they will still have their local authority.

Supervisor Rose said that the SLOCOG blueprint plan has been well thought out and asked how long it took to get to this point.

Mr. Devencenzi stated that they started the plan in the mid 1990s when the county did some vision exercises and discussed smart growth

Supervisor Gray asked if the Geographic Information System (GIS) was fully developed.

Mr. Devencenzi said that it was a constant work in progress. He said they had placed all of the city plans on the GIS map.

Supervisor Rose asked how they defined build out.

Mr. Devencenzi stated that they spent a lot of time with the county assessor and looked at the demand and existing development beyond the incorporated areas.

Supervisor Rose said it appeared to be a practical way to deal with the Regional Housing Needs Assessment.

Mr. Devencenzi said prior to having this in place when they disagreed with the state on the housing number they did not have anything to back their argument up with. He indicated that they hope to use the plan as the basis for establishing the county's housing allocation.

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Councilmember Mariscal said it looked like this presentation was an effort to move forward with San Luis Obispo in coordinating with the city of Santa Maria.

Mr. Powers said that this presentation was to provide information and explained that the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments was applying for a grant and they were inviting SBCAG to be part of this grant, but assured the SBCAG board that they will set the parameters.

Councilmember Mariscal commended SLOCOG for their efforts and expressed concern about not wanting San Luis Obispo's land use policies to affect what the City of Santa Maria does.

Councilmember Mariscal left at 11:22 a.m.

Mr. Devencenzi said that the deadline for submittal of the grant was in October.

Mayor Alvarez said he was in favor of obtaining the grant and continuing communication.

Mr. Kemp suggested that SLOCOG formally submit the grant indicating that this grant proposal was presented to the SBCAG board and at the SBCAG October meeting it will be brought back as an action item to request that a letter be submitted to the state by SBCAG board in support of the grant application.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Powers reported on the LOSSAN meeting.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Kemp reported on the Community Leaders Breakfast that was held in conjunction with the CTC meeting on September 6. He said that the meeting was well attended and that the attendees included a member of the CTC, the CTC Executive Director and many local community leaders. Will Kempton, Director of Caltrans was the guest speaker and made a presentation about the upcoming state ballot measures and their relationship to the renewal of Measure D. Mr. Kemp said that Mr. Kempton and Mr. Krumholz also attended the groundbreaking ceremony in Santa Maria for the six-lane widening project. SBCAG held a welcome reception for all of the CTC commissioners, Regional Transportation Planning Agency representatives and Self-Help county people. Mr. Kemp reported that at the CTC meeting the

following day SBCAG staff gave a presentation on the 101 in Motion effort to solve the congestion problems on Hwy 101. Many of the commissioners were aware of the public controversy that had occurred in the 1990's when widening Hwy 101 was first discussed but the commissioners were impressed with the consensus that has occurred during this process.

On another note, Mr. Kemp stated that Steve VanDenburgh had just completed his term as moderator for the RTPA group and was recognized at the CTC meeting for his outstanding job representing regional agencies before the commission.

Supervisor Gray said she was not one to advocate that the board take a position on propositions but in the case of the state transportation bond measures on the November ballot she would like to request that discussion on this be placed on the next SBCAG agenda. She asked that an agenda item to consider taking positions on Propositions 1A and 1B, be placed on the October SBCAG agenda.

Mr. Kemp said as part of the public information program authorized by the board an informational brochure on Measure D has been prepared. The brochure had been reviewed by County Counsel and Councilmember Mariscal per the board's direction. The brochure will be mailed to 160,000 households and included in local newspapers as an insert. Copies of the draft brochure had been distributed to board members at the meeting. Board comments were welcome, but no board action is required.

One more positive piece of information Mr. Kemp provided was that Assembly Speaker Nunez appointed Assemblyman Pedro Nava to chair the Assembly Transportation Committee.

CALTRANS DISTRICT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Rich Krumholz said that he had heard only positive comments on the presentation made by SBCAG at the CTC meeting, and noted that Mr. Kemp had done a good job of answering some tough questions asked by the commissioners. He said that the 101 in Motion plan was a sample of how the CTC would like corridor plans developed.

Mr. Krumholz stated that Hwy 154 is an important route for the state of California and is the primary access to the Santa Ynez Valley. He said that Caltrans always tries to keep unique needs in mind as they develop improvement on interregional routes. He said they did do a follow up on the Measure D Phase 1 improvements completed by SBCAG and saw a decrease in traffic accidents and said they were confident they would see the same results with Phase 2.

Relative to the Caltrans Report, Mr. Krumholz said that the Castillo Street undercrossing was very close to completion and the final striping would be completed in the following week.

Mr. Krumholz said the Santa Maria six-lane widening groundbreaking ceremony at River Park had great media coverage and was very successful. He said he noticed all of the construction signs had been put up at the interchanges and they were ready to start the project. He requested that the public be patient as they drive through the construction zone.

COMMUNICATIONS

Councilmember Skytt reported that the city of Solvang had begun work on Copenhagen Drive. He also said he had a chance to take the Amtrak train to the League of California cities.

ADJOURN

Chair Wallis adjourned the meeting at 11:50 pm.