

EXPENDITURE PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Draft Minutes – September 18, 2017

MEMBERS

PRESENT: Sue Beittel
Lisel Blash
Allan Bortel
Bill Carney
V-Anne Chernock
Joy Dahlgren
Javier Flores
Kevin Hagerty
Roberto Hernandez
Cynthia Murray
Vince O'Brien
Jeff Olson (Alternate)
Nancy Okada (Alternate)
Peter Pelham
Kate Powers
Paul Roye
Coy Smith
Scott Tye
Lynn Von Der Werth
Joanne Webster

MEMBERS

ABSENT: Debbie Alley
Monique Brown
Robert Burton
Jon Horinek
Ken Lippi
Paul Premo

* Friendly reminder for members to brief alternates and alternates to brief members as needed.

STAFF Bill Whitney, Deputy Executive Director
PRESENT: Molly Graham, Public Outreach Coordinator
David Chan, Manager of Programming and Legislation
Joanne O'Hehir, Coordinator

STAFF Dianne Steinhauser, Executive Director
ABSENT: Bonnie Nelson, Facilitator

1. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Chernock opened the meeting at 6 p.m. and welcomed the committee members. Each committee member introduced themselves and their representative group, and introductions were made by public works officials present for a later presentation and members of the public.

2. Recap of previous meeting minutes, acceptance of the minutes, overview of materials requested, response to outstanding questions

A motion was made, seconded and passed with 6 abstentions to approve the minutes of August 23, 2017.

A motion was made, seconded and passed with 1 abstention to approve the minutes of September 6, 2017.

Chair Chernock asked the committee members to complete a sign-in sheet, and she confirmed there would be several presentations and no break-out sessions during this meeting. Break-out sessions would continue in subsequent meetings.

1. Update on activity for Senate Bill 1 and Regional Measure 3, Dianne Steinhauser, TAM Executive Director

Deputy Executive Director Bill Whitney, provided updated information on Regional Measure 3 (RM3), noting that it was passed by the Senate last week and is expected to be on the ballot next year. He confirmed the measure, which is a fee, must be passed with 50% plus 1 to be successful, and that the likely toll would be incremental with a total of \$3 over time. Mr. Whitney reported TAM is sending a letter of support to Governor Jerry Brown, urging him to sign the legislation.

Mr. Whitney also provided an update on Senate Bill 1 (SB1). Guidance is currently being reviewed by the California Transportation Commission (CTC). He noted that the programs have not been finalized and that staff should be able to provide an update at one of the October meetings.

In response to a committee member, Mr. Whitney said that a group hoping to have SB1 overturned is not gaining much support.

Mr. Whitney noted that the list of projects included in RM3 is included in the packets. He confirmed the original list of projects continues to be included in the legislation although the amounts of funding were revised. He reviewed the amount of funding noted in the legislation: Marin Sonoma Narrows (MSN): \$120 million; State Route 37: \$100 million (which should cover environmental and design phases); San Rafael transit center: \$30 million; Richmond-San Rafael Bridge connector: \$210 million, increased from \$135 million, with \$75 million to go towards improvements on the Contra Costa County side of the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge including the toll plaza.

In response to a committee member, Mr. Whitney said that staff would provide more details on the toll plaza improvements.

In response to Chair Chernock, Public Outreach Coordinator Molly Graham said individuals and agencies can send letters of support for RM3 urging the Governors approval. Chair Chernock and committee members, including Cynthia Murray and Joanne Webster, confirmed they had already sent a letter of support on behalf of their organizations.

4. Follow-up presentation from Marin Transit including Local Transit, Senior Transportation and School Transportation - Nancy Whelan, General Manager and Robert Betts, Director of Operations and Planning

General Manager Nancy Whelan provided an overview of the presentation they gave at the meeting on July 17th, including the services they provide, and said they have returned to provide more information on their future funding needs.

Director of Operations and Planning Robert Betts discussed planning documents, including the Short-Range Transit Plan, a School Transportation Study and Marin Access Strategic Analysis which he said provide details of the projects and expenditure plans he will be discussing tonight.

Mr. Betts discussed the number of transit trips in relation to congestion relief, which include 4,000 daily student trips. Through Measure A, Mr. Betts noted that they have seen a 121% increase in their fixed route and Marin Access Programs, and that they have been able to provide a frequent rural stage coach program in addition to other programs, including a partnership with the State Park service for the Muir Woods shuttle. To their knowledge, Marin Transit is the only public transit agency in the country that manages and funds Yellow Bus School services.

Mr. Betts went on to discuss the increase in use of the Marin Access Program for seniors and those with disabilities, and the implementation of subsidized taxi programs and a volunteer driver program. Capital improvements include “greening” their fleet and improving bus stops and facilities, including ADA and sidewalk improvements. Mr. Betts noted that Measure A funds have enabled them to maintain the same base fares that were charged 15 years ago, in addition to providing programs for those in financial need, including the Homewood Bound partnership and a low-income student program.

Mr. Betts discussed the evaluation of their programs, which is directed by Measure A, and he discussed their future needs that are included in the short-range transit plan. He said their goals are to make transit convenient, and that they would like to invest more in the congested corridors and provide first and last mile services in relation to SMART.

Mr. Betts noted that their costs rise faster than revenue streams. He said their aim is to stabilize costs by investing in a new Operations and Maintenance facility to control operating costs, and the use of competitively bidding their services.

Mr. Betts discussed their future funding needs for their three main programs – fixed routes, student bus transportation, and senior and ADA services, and he discussed ways in which technology will affect future transportation options in Marin, including in the reduction of auto ownership, and the ways we can help relieve congestion with fixed route transit, rail and ferry services.

Mr. Betts discussed future transit with continued financial support, including the development of an integrated system of local connector services and expanding the school bus service. Overall, Mr. Betts said they believe there could be double the number of bus users in the future, which he noted would help relieve congestion.

Mr. Betts summarized Marin Transit's need for the continuation of Measure A funds, which include the fixed route and paratransit services they currently provide, increasing the school bus service, enhancing the first and last mile services, and improving their services to seniors and those with disabilities.

In response to a committee member who asked which of the services they would expect to change in the future, Mr. Betts said that finding a partner for a first and last mile service to replace the community shuttle programs and provide a more on-demand service would enable them to invest resources in other areas.

In response to a committee member, Ms. Whelan explained that a new Operations and Maintenance facility would improve efficiency and costs because it would be owned and maintained by Marin Transit. Currently, she said they do not have their own maintenance facility and they need to contract with a provider and find a facility every 5 years. Ms. Whelan noted that they have 8 storage yards, many of which are not updated or suitable. They would like to build their own facility to store and maintain their own fleet, to reduce costs and to provide certainty. She said that they have received a federal grant to buy land.

In response to a committee member, Ms. Whelan said they anticipate needing two sites, one for maintenance and another for storage, given that they have 98 buses and there is limited land in Marin.

In response to a committee member who suggested combining the Yellow School Bus service and the Student program where students use regular buses, Mr. Betts explained that high school students are more independent than students in K – 8, and are therefore able to use a regular service. Mr. Betts noted that Marin Transit does not own the yellow school buses, and he discussed the collection of fares under yellow school bus and fixed route programs.

In response to a committee member who said she has heard complaints about coordinating buses for the beginning of classes when siblings attend K-8 and high schools, Mr. Betts said they understand the issue and would like to provide more coordination with the school districts. He noted that they have worked with the school districts in Ross Valley and Mill Valley about adjusting their bell times to allow buses to be used more efficiently and reduce traffic congestion.

In response to a committee member, Mr. Betts said they use double buses for school routes in the Canal between 7:30 am – 8:30 am.

A committee member noted that the areas that are most congested are those that are subject most to the effects of climate change, and he commented on reduced frequency of pick up services in some areas that include those that need it most, such as the Redwoods, which he thought should be addressed.

In response to a committee member, Mr. Betts discussed the provision of real time information through 511.org and noted there will be additional marketing and outreach.

In response to a committee member, Mr. Betts said they are reassessing their service areas on the fixed routes and hope to increase the service to paratransit commuters beyond the current 3/4 mile requirement.

In response to a committee member, Mr. Betts acknowledged the need for better transit options for workers in the service sector who need late night and weekend transportation. He said they are exploring the possibility of using rideshare services like Lyft and Uber to potentially fill the void.

In response to another committee member, Mr. Betts said they would study the use of autonomous vehicles when the technology has arrived. He noted that drivers offer support to riders beyond driving the bus.

A committee member stated that it might not be possible to continue funding the transit district to the extent necessary, and that there is a need to consider funding beyond what the tax measure can provide.

In response to a member of the public, Mr. Betts said that there is an ongoing monitoring process for bus ridership and that it is common for buses in certain areas to have few rider, especially when the route is at the end of the line. He confirmed there is diversity in the style of buses to fit the routes and ridership.

2. Overview of Local Streets and Roads funding and needs – Craig Tackabery, Chief Assistant Director of Public Works, Ernest Klock, Principal Civil Engineer and Margot Yapp, Nichols Consulting Engineers, on behalf of Marin's County, Cities, and Towns Public Works Departments

Craig Tackabery, Chief Assistant Director of Public Works, introduced the public works staff present. He said that Margo Yapp would provide a presentation with a focus on the needs and evaluation methodology of the county and local facilities, and Ernest Klock would provide information on complete streets and how projects are delivered.

Ms. Yapp noted that there are 1,000 miles of roads owned by the cities and the County in Marin, with less than 10% owned by Caltrans (Hwy 101), and she said that the cost of replacing all roads would be approximately \$1.2bn. She discussed the maintenance of roads using a scale to provide examples of good and bad roads. Ms. Yapp said that the condition of Marin's roads when Measure A was passed in 2004 was at a Pavement Condition Index (PCI) of 60, whereas they are presently at a PCI of 66, which is considered fair. She discussed examples of the stages of deterioration, and noted that ¼ of the roads in Marin are in poor condition, which needs to be addressed.

Ms. Yapp discussed the financial needs of road repair, noting that \$19 million is needed per year to fix sidewalks, storm drains and medians, signs, etc., while \$8.6 million is spent on maintaining roads. She discussed a study that indicates the PCI will drop to 62 within the next 10 years if \$27 million continues to be spent annually on roads.

Ms. Yapp discussed the results of deferred maintenance, which continues to grow if roads are not maintained. She noted that an estimated \$47 million annually is needed to maintain roads in their current condition and that, in order to improve roads by 5 points, an estimated \$55 million annually would be needed, although preventative maintenance would be cheaper. Ms. Yapp said that to fix all roads and achieve a PCI of 81 would require \$71 million annually. She noted that MTC has a desired goal for the region to reach a PCI of 70, and stated that a quarter of all roads will fail by 2026 with the present level of investment.

Ernest Klock discussed the amounts spent on a road project. He said that for every \$1, 60% is spent on the roads and the remainder on other project elements, such as drainage and underground utility improvements. He said there is interest in improving roads to achieve a PCI of 71. However, with additional SB 1 funds, the total available for roads would be \$35 million, which is \$20 million short to attain a PCI of 71. Mr. Klock discussed the importance of fixing deferred maintenance and said that losing Measure A funds would have a severe impact.

Mr. Tackabery discussed two Local Streets and Roads programs that are funded by Measure A: Local infrastructure program providing money directly to cities and counties, and Major Roads Projects that take a long time to be developed and constructed, Miller Avenue in Mill Valley. Mr. Tackabery noted that the committee members might want to discuss the continuation of these programs and the 50/50% split between Major Roads and Local Roads programs. He confirmed his belief they are important programs with different functions, albeit the amount collected is insufficient.

Ms. Yapp said she agreed with a committee member who said that autonomous vehicles will not operate well on roads that are not in good condition.

In response to a committee member, Ms. Yapp confirmed that if all of Marin's roads were brought up to a PCI of 71, then less would be spent on road maintenance.

Ms. Yapp and a committee member discussed the use of recycled road materials, which she noted provide a cost saving, and green materials that absorb carbon, for example. Ms. Yapp noted that the technology is available to lay roads that could last 100 years but that the costs are typically much higher than a road that typically lasts between 20 – 40 years.

3. Overview of Major Roads funding and needs – David Chan, TAM Manager of Legislation and Programming (15 minutes)

TAM Manager of Programming and Legislation, David Chan, discussed funding through Measure A of the Major and Local Roads categories, noting that 26.5% of funds are allotted equally between these two categories. Mr. Chan said the Major Roads funds could be used for infrastructure and items such as bike and pedestrian paths, and that \$3 million - \$3.5 million is raised annually. He described the funding process for projects covered by these funds, which he noted are not significant, but have the advantage that TAM does not need to provide a bond.

Mr. Chan discussed the five planning areas in Marin that receive Measure A Major Roads funding. The funding is distributed based on a formula 50% based on population and 50% based on lane miles. Mr. Chan discussed how these sales tax funds attract matching state funds.

Mr. Chan discussed the 15 corridors that were listed for potential improvements in the five planning areas. He said the Technical Advisory Committee and Marin Public Works Association ranked the projects to prioritize funding. He noted that Measure A was not expected to fund all 15 projects and therefore the ranking helped choose most important projects in each the planning areas. In northern Marin, Novato Boulevard project is underway, and that the remaining 4 projects identified in northern Marin are unlikely to be completed through the current Measure A funding.

In the Central Marin planning area, Mr. Chan said that the Fourth Street project is completed and that preliminary engineering work is underway on Third Street.

In Ross Valley, Mr. Chan said that the two County projects on Sir Francis Drake, from highway 101 to Ross both ranked No. 1, are in progress.

Mr. Chan noted that, in Southern Marin, the Miller Avenue project is in progress and that some funding should remain that can be allocated to an East Blithedale Avenue project.

Mr. Chan addressed two successful projects in the West Planning area. He noted that the County completed a project at Samuel P. Taylor Park in 2010 and that the second prioritized project from Samuel P. Taylor Park to the Fairfax town limit is in progress with funding from Measure A and a \$4 million injection by the County.

Mr. Chan summarized the Measure A funds of \$66 million, noting that TAM has allocated \$27 million and that the remaining \$39 million is already allocated to the projects underway, including \$11.4 million for Novato Boulevard and the remaining \$12.4 million allocated for the Third Street project. All of the Third Street funds will likely be needed due to challenges of the project including the future transit station and difficult traffic circulation conditions.

Mr. Chan noted that funds remaining from the Miller Avenue project in Southern Marin might be sufficient for the preliminary engineering and environmental plans for Blithedale, but that the funds will not cover any construction costs.

Mr. Chan said that the committee must decide if the program should continue, since not all roads have received funds or been improved. Mr. Chan said that there might be other projects that are considered more important if reauthorization is successful.

In response from a committee member, Mr. Chan confirmed the 15 corridor projects under the Major Roads category were identified in 2004, which Mr. Tackabery discussed. He noted that no one expected all the road projects listed to be completed after Measure A passed, so a TAM Technical Advisory Committee and Marin Public Works Association identified the projects considered the most important.

In response to committee member, Mr. Chan confirmed that some of the Major Road projects could not be undertaken because there were no other sources of funding available.

In response to a committee member, Mr. Chan noted that most local streets and roads projects need to be funded locally and state funds that are released after a state of emergency is declared rarely reach local streets and road projects. They discussed leveraging of funds for local streets.

In response to a committee member, Mr. Chan said that it would cost approximately \$300 million to complete all the projects on the list. Mr. Whitney said that the committee must decide if a larger portion should be allocated to Major Roads.

4. Overview of Highway 101 Interchanges and needs – Bill Whitney, TAM Principal Project Delivery Manager (20 minutes)

TAM's Bill Whitney discussed interchanges that have been the subject of various studies that are included in the Regional Transportation Plan. He noted that many of the Southern Marin interchanges were constructed in the 1950s without standard features, and lack pedestrian and bike facilities.

Mr. Whitney discussed a Caltrans 2004 project study report on the Tiburon-East Blithedale interchange, noting that some improvements have been completed, such as the southbound off-ramp improvements. He said that TAM has recently completed a study of the interchange identifying short, medium and long-term improvements for bicycles and pedestrian improvements as well as traffic improvements through the interchange.

Mr. Whitney reported that Caltrans has built improvements in this area including widening the northbound on-ramp, and TAM is working with the County and Mill Valley to determine more traffic improvements that Caltrans is considering in addition to their ramp metering program. He noted that average daily traffic counts are 120,000 – 166,000 cars, with 80,000 cars approaching the interchange from both local roads.

Mr. Whitney discussed a 2007 TAM study relating to the Tamalpais/Paradise Drive interchange, which studied the removal of the loop ramps and the addition of east and west side intersections with an auxiliary lane on the northbound on-ramp up to Sir Francis Drake Boulevard.

Mr. Whitney reported that there is potential for on/off ramp improvements on Second Street in central San Rafael and the addition of a second lane.

Mr. Whitney noted that the Merrydale/North San Pedro interchange is congested, which TAM has been asked to study as part of RTP planning exercise. He said that Manuel T Freitas has a confusing traffic pattern, and that a 2003 planning study on Lucas Valley and Smith Ranch Road concluded that the loop ramps should be removed and the interchange converted to a diamond interchange.

Mr. Whitney noted that state highway improvements are very expensive, and that all the interchanges have deficiencies. He said staff recommends a portion of any new or renewed Measure A is set aside for initial studies on interchange improvements.

Mr. Whitney responded to a committee member and noted there is a need to replace loop ramps for better merging and traffic safety. He said the off- ramps north of Lucas Valley are not included on the list because they are newer.

In response to a committee member, Mr. Whitney said that Caltrans is responsible for interchanges and is interested in improving them. He noted that Caltrans hope to make accessibility improvements to the Tamalpais interchange and that they are involved in every project relating to the highway.

In response to a committee member, Mr. Whitney stated that interchange improvements improve traffic flow in both directions, particularly in conjunction with ramp metering.

A committee member stated that the process would benefit from a collaboration of agencies working for the good of the county and mobility, which they would recommend.

5. Roundtable discussion and request for additional material / upcoming EPAC activity

No requests

5. Public Open Time

No one from the public commented.

6. Adjourn

Chair Chernock adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

