



MEETING OF THE
TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY OF MARIN
CITIZENS' OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

November 15, 2021

5:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting

Zoom Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87691369661?pwd=QTI4VHRiQkpXU3dVN0hVc1gzUGluZz09>

Webinar ID: 876 9136 9661

Passcode: 111521

MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Peter Pelham, Major Marin Employers (Chairperson)
Kevin Hagerty, League of Women Voters (Vice-Chairperson)
Jeffrey Olson, Central Marin Planning Area
Charley Vogt, Northern Marin Planning Area
Debbie Alley, Southern Marin Planning Area
Allan Bortel, Marin County Paratransit Coordinating Council
Zack Macdonald, School District

Alternates Present: Kay Noguchi, League of Women Voters
Kingston Cole, Taxpayer Groups
Nancy Okada, Environmental Organizations

Auditor Present: Bin Zeng, Senior Auditor, Moss, Levy & Hartzheim LLP

Staff Members Present: Li Zhang, Deputy Executive Director/Chief Financial Officer
Derek McGill, Director of Planning
Grace Zhuang, Accounting and Administration Specialist
Helga Cotter, Senior Accountant
Jennifer Doucette, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board

Chairperson Peter Pelham called the Citizens' Oversight Committee (COC) meeting to order at 5:06 p.m.

1. Introductions and Welcome

Chairperson Pelham asked Grace Zhuang, Accounting and Administrative Specialist, to conduct the roll call. Ms. Zhuang did so and confirmed that a quorum was not yet present.

Ms. Zhuang stated the meeting order rules and instructions for the public to provide comments and confirmed that a quorum was present.

2. Open Time for Public Expression

No public expression was received.

3. Review and Approval of October 25, Meeting Minutes (Action)

Vice-Chairperson Kevin Hagerty moved to approve the October 25, 2021 Meeting Minutes. Member Allan Bortel seconded the motion, and the Minutes were approved unanimously.

4. TAM Staff Report (Information)

Li Zhang, TAM's Deputy Executive Director/Chief Financial Officer presented the staff report. She stated that Executive Director Anne Richman was at the San Rafael City Council Meeting where TAM staff was presenting the Northbound (NB) US-101 to Eastbound (EB) I-580 Direct Connector project. Ms. Zhang confirmed that staff is also scheduled to provide the presentation at the Transportation Committee Meeting of the Golden Gate Bridge Highway & Transportation District (GGBHTD) on November 18 and will provide an update to the TAM Board at its December 13, 2021 meeting.

Ms. Zhang provided an update on State Route (SR) 37. She stated that the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) will lead the Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment (EIR/EA) and that a public scoping meeting has been scheduled for November 17, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. She noted that the public comment period is open through December 2, 2021.

Ms. Zhang stated that Caltrans released the bid request to construct the final segment of the high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane for the Marin-Sonoma Narrows (MSN) project on October 25, 2021. She also stated that construction is expected to begin in the spring of 2022 and be completed by the end of 2024.

Vice-Chairperson Hagerty and Ms. Zhang discussed funding options if the bids are higher than expected. Ms. Zhang stated that other funding sources would be sought if there were insufficient funds for the project.

Ms. Zhang discussed the 2020 Pavement Condition Index (PCI) score for Marin County. She stated that local street conditions in 4 jurisdictions were considered in good condition with a score between 70-79; 6 jurisdictions in fair condition with a score between 60 – 66; and 2 jurisdictions in an at risk condition with a score between 50-59. She stated that the average score for the County is 66%, which is 1% below the Bay Area average, and noted the importance of the Local Streets and Roads category in the Expenditure Plan, which funds road improvements.

Ms. Zhang discussed the funding opportunities from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), which was passed on November 5 by the US House of Representatives. The funding includes an estimated \$4.5 billion that the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) should receive for the Bay Area, \$4.25 billion State funding for bridge repairs and dedicated funding sources for zero emission vehicle and resilience projects. More detailed funding information will be out in the next few months.

Ms. Zhang confirmed that the TAM Holiday Party will be held in person at McGinnis Park and that the date will be confirmed shortly. In response to Member Charley Vogt, Ms. Zhang confirmed the party would be a luncheon event on either Wednesday, December 8 or Thursday, December 9.

Member Vogt stated that the road surface on Francisco Blvd. East has significantly improved travel conditions in the area. Ms. Zhang confirmed that TAM is very involved in this project for funding and planning.

Chairperson Pelham and Ms. Zhang discussed a pension dispute, which might result in federal funding being withheld from transportation agencies in California. Ms. Zhang noted that Marin Transit is not a member of CalPERS.

5. US 101 Part-Time Transit Lane Feasibility Study (Discussion)

Derek McGill, TAM's Director of Planning, presented the staff report. Mr. McGill confirmed the TAM Board approved the final US 101 Part-Time Transit Lane (PTTL) Feasibility Study at its October 28, 2021 Board Meeting.

He explained that the purpose of the study was to determine the feasibility of using the shoulder lane as a part-time path of travel for transit buses.

Mr. McGill provided background information on the study for which Caltrans had provided a grant for \$308,000. He noted that the PTTL Program had previously been referred to as the Bus-on-Shoulder Program.

Mr. McGill stated that the PTTL Program would provide modifications to the shoulder lanes to allow buses to bypass heavy congestion southbound in the morning and northbound in the afternoon during peak hours. Buses would be allowed to travel at a maximum speed of 35 miles per hour (mph) or 15 mph above the existing speed of travel, and would use the lanes if they were not blocked by broken-down vehicles or being used by construction vehicles or California Highway Patrol (CHP). He also noted that peak congestion occurs between De Long Avenue and San Pedro Road, where the part-time transit lanes would operate and which are part of the study.

Mr. McGill discussed the benefits of PTTL, which will improve bus travel times and provide a reliable and consistent service through the corridor. PTTLs reduce congestion and emissions and encourage more commuters to use public transit. They will also support low-income Marin County residents, many of whom use public transit along the US 101 corridor. Mr. McGill noted that the PTTL project would be more cost-effective than a traditional highway capacity project because existing shoulders will be used or repurposed for PTTLs.

Mr. McGill stated that PTTLs are used throughout the US and that a number of projects are proposed in the Bay Area, including a project by Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) along the US 680 corridor, and others at SR 84 Dumbarton Corridor and Hwy 1 Monterey/Santa Cruz.

Mr. McGill discussed vehicular use of the Marin corridor of US 101 from a study that was conducted in 2019. He stated that there were 350 bus trips on each weekday and that 22 buses travel southbound during the peak commute hours. Mr. McGill noted that southbound traffic delays were significant and there were no travel time advantages by using the HOV lane. Mr. McGill confirmed that traffic forecasts prepared by MTC, Caltrans and TAM show that traffic is expected to increase in the future.

Mr. McGill discussed the capital improvements that will be needed, including restriping the existing lanes on the highway, signage, repaving and storm drain improvements. He added that CHP has expressed significant concerns about PTTLs.

Mr. McGill stated that impacts to existing drivers should not be significant and changes to the highway would be minimal and mostly restriping. He noted that the number of lanes or capacity of the lanes would not be reduced and emergency vehicles and stalled cars would maintain priority for use of the shoulder lanes. Buses would be traveling at a relatively slow speed, which would enable them to merge into traffic to avoid stalled vehicles. Mr. McGill confirmed that PTTLs would increase equitable transportation options for those without a vehicle and would significantly improve services for bus riders.

Mr. McGill discussed the estimated costs of the capital improvement needed, which are expected to be between \$6 million to \$7 million, and should be eligible for various state and federal funds and provide potential cost savings for transit operators. He stated that TAM has worked closely with a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) with representatives from regional and local partners, including MTC, CHP, Caltrans, and City of San Rafael.

Mr. McGill discussed the next steps in the process, including the need to apply for funding through Senate Bill (SB) 1 Competitive Grants Program and proceeding to the environmental process once funding has been secured.

Member Bortel and Mr. McGill discussed ramp metering in relation to the PTTL Program. Mr. McGill confirmed that ramp metering should be beneficial to traffic flow and that the study indicated it would also benefit buses by allowing them to merge on to the onramps. He noted that implementation of the ramp metering project will take many years and the first phase of the ramp metering project will be implemented in Southern Marin.

In response to Member Zack Macdonald, Mr. McGill stated that the intention is for PTTLs to be used solely by public transit buses, but that the California vehicle code might prevent public transit buses from exclusively using the lanes. In response to Member Macdonald, Mr. McGill stated that the travel lane on Lombard Street is exclusively used by public transit because it is a dedicated bus lane and not a shoulder lane.

In response to Member Jeff Olson, Mr. McGill confirmed the project would improve local bus operations that run on US 101 and regional service operations from Golden Gate Transit because the buses could utilize the PTTLs. Mr. McGill confirmed that PTTLs could not operate in Southern Marin because the shoulder width is inadequate south of San Rafael.

In response to Member Vogt, Mr. McGill stated that the school bus service was excluded from the study because it serves a different market at different hours and was not identified as a potential service that could utilize PTTLs.

In response to Alternate Nancy Okada, Mr. McGill stated that the study was restricted to US 101 and did not include SR37, which he noted currently has no transit services. Mr. McGill confirmed that ramp metering is in place westbound/southbound from SR37 to US 101 but will not be operational until phase 2 of the ramp metering project goes into effect in approximately 2028. Mr. McGill stated that the purpose of the PTTL study was to improve existing conditions on US 101. Alternate Okada and Mr. McGill discussed traffic backups from northbound US 101 to the Central San Rafael exit and Mr. McGill confirmed the PTTL would end at the Civic Center Drive location.

In response to Member Debbie Alley, Mr. McGill confirmed the feasibility study has been completed and that a 4-year pilot program could be operational in 3 to 4 years, pending funding availability and other approvals.

In response to Chairperson Pelham, Mr. McGill stated that the existing rules for the HOV lane would need to be enforced. He noted that CHP has expressed concerns about PTTLs.

6. Review and Acceptance of the 2021 Measure A/AA Compliance Audit Results (Action)

Ms. Zhang introduced the 2021 Measure A/AA Compliance Audit Results item, which asked the COC to review the 2021 Measure A/AA Compliance Audit Results and refer them to the TAM Board for approval.

Ms. Zhang introduced Bin Zeng, Senior Auditor from Moss, Levy & Hartzheim LLP, to co-present the item. Ms. Zhang explained that the Compliance Audit is necessary to ensure that Measure A/AA funds distributed to partner agencies and consultant teams are spent in accordance with the requirements of the Expenditure Plans and the funding agreements/contracts with TAM. She stated that the COC helped staff to draft the policy in 2010, which was revised in 2020 when Measure AA was approved.

Ms. Zhang discussed Measure A funds that remain in some of the categories, including Transit, Safe Pathways to School and Major Roads. She noted that Measure A funds for the US 101 Gap Closure project, Local Roads, and Safe Access to School have been used.

Ms. Zhang discussed the frequency of audits for each of the strategies/categories under Measure A/AA. Ms. Zhang noted that the Major Roads set aside is a new off-the-top Category created under Measure AA to complete the funding commitments to the Major Road Projects under Measure A, and that the interest funds are combined with Measure A and AA and are audited every 3 years

Ms. Zhang discussed the audit process, which starts with the TAM Board approving the list of auditees at the May or June Meeting annually, followed by a workshop for all funding recipients to review the requirements and processes, and then auditee meetings and field work. She stated that staff presents the final results to the COC for review and approval first before takes it to the TAM Board for review and approval.

Mr. Zeng confirmed that the 2021 audits were all conducted remotely and there were no material weaknesses or findings for any of the auditees. He discussed the projects that were audited, including Marin Transit Measure A/AA funding, San Rafael's Third Street Rehabilitation project, which received Measure A FY2019-20 funding for the

engineering and environmental review phase, Belvedere's FY2020-21 Measure A Reserve and Measure AA funding for its Golden Gate Lane Public Stairway project, FY2018-19 through FY2020-21 funding for the Safe Routes to School (SR2S) contract awarded to Parisi Transportation Consulting, and Corte Madera's FY2020-21 Measure AA funding for its Pixley Ave and Redwood Ave project.

Vice-Chairperson Hagerty thanked Ms. Zhang and Mr. Zeng for an excellent report. He asked staff to confirm when the auditees for the 2022 cycle will be chosen. In response, Ms. Zhang stated that staff expects to present a list of possible auditees at the COC's May meeting and noted that the 2021 list was presented in June 2021 in conjunction with the budget.

Vice-Chairperson Hagerty moved to accept the 2021 Measure A/AA Compliance Audit Results and refer them to the TAM Board for approval. Member Vogt seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

7. Formation of FY2020-21 COC/2021 TAM Annual Report Development Subcommittee and Approval of Draft Development schedule (Action)

Ms. Zhang presented the staff report, which recommends the COC form a 5-member subcommittee to guide staff with the development of the FY2020-21 COC/2021 TAM Annual Report and adopt the report development schedule. Ms. Zhang discussed the timeline for the production of the Annual Report. She stated that staff anticipated the first meeting of the subcommittee to take place in December 2022; development of the draft report completed in time for presentation to the COC at the January 2022 meeting, and presentation and acceptance of the final report by the TAM Board at its February 24, 2022 meeting.

Ms. Zhang stated that Vice-Chairperson Hagerty has agreed to serve on the subcommittee and thanked Alternate Kay Noguchi for her many years of help with proofreading. Members Macdonald, Olson, Alternate Kingston Cole and Chairperson Pelham also volunteered to join the subcommittee.

Member Vogt moved to appoint Chairperson Pelham, Alternate Cole, and Members Hagerty, Macdonald and Olson to the FY2020-21 COC/2021 TAM Annual Report Development Sub-Committee. Member Olson seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

8. Committee Member Hot Items Report (Discussion)

Member Olson discussed his concern that an intersection on Fifth Avenue and California St. in San Rafael near Sun Valley School is unsafe for children who walk and ride bikes, and he sought advice on safety improvements for the intersection. Vice-Chairperson Hagerty recommended he contact Lauren Davini and Rafat Raie of the City of San Rafael's Public Works Department. Ms. Zhang noted that TAM staff might be able to provide assistance through the SR2S Program and asked him to update staff after he has spoken with the Public Works Department.

Ms. Zhang stated that Member Kate Power could not join the meeting today so she will provide the Marin Transit report at the next COC meeting.

Alternate Noguchi asked and Ms. Zhang confirmed that the crossing guard ads in the Marin Independent Journal helped fill more than half of the vacant positions.

9. Discussion of Next Meeting Date and Recommended Items for the Agenda

The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for Monday, January 24, 2022. Potential items included the review of the draft FY2020-21 COC/2021 TAM Annual Report.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

THIS PAGE LEFT BLANK INTENTIONALLY