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INTERAGENCY TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ITAC)

MINUTES

Thursday, November 18, 2004
1:30 p.m.

SCCRTC Conference Room
1523 Pacific Ave.
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

ITAC MEMBERS PRESENT

Sandra Coley, Pajaro Valley TMA
Mark Dettle, City of Santa Cruz Planning Proxy
Mark Dorfman, Santa Cruz Metro Transit District (2 votes)
David Fairchild, MBUAPCD
Steve Jesberg, City of Capitola Public Works and Planning Proxy
David Koch, City of Watsonville Public Works and Planning Proxy
John Presleigh, County Public Works and Planning Proxy
Charles Sanchez, Caltrans District 5
Chris Schneider, City of Santa Cruz Public Works

EXCUSED ABSENCE – Teresa Buika, UCSC

STAFF PRESENT

Grace Blakeslee
Pat Dellin
Rachel Moriconi
Karena Pushnik
Kim Shultz
Tegan Speiser

OTHERS PRESENT

Corinne Hyland, Community Traffic Safety Coalition
Chris Metzger, Nolte Assoc.
Donn Miyahara, Caltrans Local Assistance
Darleen Panico, Caltrans Local Assistance

Chair David Koch called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m.

1. Introductions -- Introductions were made.

2. Oral Communications

Linda Wilshusen announced her resignation as Executive Director to the Commission. She thanked the Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC) members for their continued service to the community. David Koch, speaking on behalf of the group, thanked Linda for her years of service.

3. Status of ongoing transportation projects, programs, studies and planning documents

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PVTMA – Sandra Coley reported that the TMA had hosted a luncheon on Measure J, did outreach to seniors on transportation options and continued other ongoing programs over the past month.

City of Santa Cruz – Chris Schneiter reported that construction of the Depot Site/Multimodal Station and Park project is nearly complete. The Beach Street bikeway project is under design and scheduled for construction in the Fall 2005. The Soquel Avenue bike lane project is scheduled for construction in Spring 2005. A revised design for the Broadway-Brommer project should be completed in late Spring 2005 at which point the project design and the Arana Gulch Master Plan will be forwarded onto the Coastal Commission for review.

SCMTD - Mark Dorfman reported that design of the River Street portion of the MetroBase project is nearly done and final right-of-way acquisitions are taking place for the project. He also noted that they have ordered additional Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) buses which will arrive in 1-1½ years.

Caltrans – Charles Sanchez noted that Caltrans is currently working on left turn channelization at Highway 129 and Sillman and storm damage repairs on Highway 17 south of the summit. The District has also recommended Headquarters approve a grant for Metro transit planning.

County of Santa Cruz - John Presleigh reported that construction continues on 7th Avenue and East Cliff at 9th Ave. He noted that the El Rancho Road Reconstruction project continues, though there was a minor fish kill recently. The Harkins Slough Bridge project is delayed into the Spring and project costs have risen due to the international steel shortage.

MBUAPCD – Dave Fairchild noted that his workload will be increasing because additional grant funding will be available for air quality improvement projects.

Capitola – Steve Jesberg noted that the 41st Avenue/Gross Road project is going back out to bid and the City hopes to award a contract for this project in January. The project will connect to the County Redevelopment Agency (RDA) project on Gross Road.

Watsonville – David Koch reported that additional sections of the Watsonville Sloughs Trails project are moving along. The City hopes to construct the bridge over Watsonville Slough on Harkins Slough Road in the near future.

SCCRTC – Pat Dellin noted that since Measure J did not pass, the Commission will initiate discussion in January regarding next steps. She also noted that during the City of Watsonville's November presentation to the Commission, several Commissioners were very impressed by the Watsonville Slough Trails project. Commission staff is planning on doing field trips to bicycle/pedestrian projects which have been built in sensitive habitats, including the Watsonville Sloughs project, the Capitola bridge between Rispin

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Mansion and the Nob Hill shopping center, and Wilder Ranch State Park, with the potential of doing a field trip in the future with elected officials. ITAC members were invited to participate in these trips.

- 4. Additions/Changes to the Agenda** – As an add-on to Item 10, staff distributed the current ITAC roster and excerpts from the SCCRTC’s Rules and Regulations regarding ITAC membership.

CONSENT AGENDA (Jesberg/Presleigh)

- 5. Approved Minutes of the August 19, 2004 Meeting**
- 6. Received Highlights of the September, October, and November Commission meetings**
- 7. Received Local Transportation Sales Tax Measure Results**

REGULAR AGENDA

- 8. Provided Input on Pedestrian Access Reporting Process**

Karena Pushnik noted that the Commission has been working with the Community Traffic Safety Coalition (CTSC) to develop a Pedestrian Access Report, similar to the Bicycle Hazard Report, as a means to identify and prioritize improvements and repairs needed to the pedestrian network. The Community Traffic Safety Coalition has agreed to take the lead on tracking the reports. The SCCRTC will collect the reports from the public and forward them onto the appropriate jurisdiction. Corinne Hyland, CTSC, handed out and reviewed the draft procedure form prepared by the CTSC and asked the ITAC for input on the form and the Pedestrian Access Report. Cory Irimes, Commission staff, distributed sample tracking sheets that are used for the Bike Hazard Reports.

Public works staff shared information on how each of their agencies informs property owners when sidewalk repairs are needed. Several jurisdictions inform property owners of the need to fix a sidewalk. If repairs are not completed by the owner, the agency fixes it and then bills the owner. Committee members recognized that repairs are not financially feasible for some property owners.

Ms. Hyland and Sandra Coley noted that the CTSC conducted a “Walkability Survey” in the past that identifies several problems, but recognized that most public works departments have limited funds to make repairs or add new sidewalks.

The Committee discussed if documentation of a problem increases liability. The Committee also discussed options for requiring facilities to be fixed when ownership changes on a property.

Tegan Speiser, speaking as a private citizen, noted that the cost of not doing anything is

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significantly higher, especially for elderly persons at higher risk of falling, when sidewalks are not in good condition, and urged public works departments to do whatever they can to improve walkways.

Dave Koch noted that each jurisdiction appears interested in getting input from the public on what pedestrian improvements are needed.

Ms. Hyland agreed to draft a sample ordinance that a jurisdiction could adopt to ensure repairs are made when a property changes ownership and to develop a summary sheet comparing the process used by each jurisdiction, including Caltrans, to inform owners and make repairs.

9. Received Transportation Funding Update

Rachel Moriconi reported that the region did an outstanding job obligating federal funds last fiscal year. However, she noted that it is very important for agencies to obligate the remaining \$1 million in federal funds that are more than one year old as soon as possible, especially Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) funds.

She noted that due to the State Budget shortfall, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) has not yet released State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funds to projects statewide this fiscal year and that this may impact the schedule for the Highway 1/17 Merge Lanes project. She added that it is unlikely that the CTC would use GARVEE bonds to fund the project.

Finally, Ms. Moriconi summarized the Self Help Counties Coalition “Rescue Transportation” proposal to create a firewall for transportation funds.

10. Considered Amendment to the Commission’s Rules and Regulations to Add the Highway 1 Construction Authority to the ITAC

Rachel Moriconi reported that since the ITAC is a staff-level committee that includes members from local agencies which are frequent recipients of SCCRTC funds it may be appropriate for the Highway 1 Construction Authority (HCA) to become a member and have two votes on the ITAC, consistent with the representation for the local jurisdictions and Metro.

Dave Fairchild, Air District, stated that it is odd that Caltrans only has one vote, but that the HCA would have two.

John Presleigh suggested waiting to discuss this proposal until next year when the HCA makes staffing decisions. David Koch agreed that a decision on adding the HCA to the ITAC should be postponed. He noted that the jurisdictions and SCMTD are already members of the HCA and suggested that adding the HCA staff to the ITAC would be duplicative.

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Other committee members noted that if the County Public Works Department is designated as staff to the HCA, then the County representative that attends ITAC meetings could essentially have four votes (one for the planning department, one for the public works department and two for the HCA).

By consensus, the ITAC recommended the Commission wait until the HCA is better defined before deciding whether or not to add the HCA as a member of the ITAC.

11. Discussed PA/ED Alternatives for the Highway 1 Widening/Carpool Lane Project

Kim Shultz reported that the Commission is in the process of selecting alternatives to be studied in the environmental document for the Highway 1 Widening/Carpool Lane project. A public hearing on which alternatives should be studied will be held in January. He summarized the four base alternatives that will definitely be studied:

1. One HOV lane in each direction with full standard shoulder widths
2. One HOV lane in each direction with reduced shoulder widths
3. Ramp Metering, Auxiliary Lane, Transportation System Management (TSM)
4. No Build.

Next, with the assistance of Commission consultant Chris Metzger, Nolte, Mr. Shultz presented information on possible additional alternatives: diamond interchange configurations, improved transit access, and a yet undefined hybrid. He noted that these alternatives were, in part, developed based on input received at community meetings held last April.

He noted that some Commissioners are very interested in TSM alternatives, especially in light of the failure of Measure J. Some ITAC members noted examples of where TSM alternatives had not worked in other regions.

David Fairchild suggested studying a reversible single bus lane. Some attendees noted that since congestion exists in both directions a reversible lane may not work.

Several ITAC members expressed concerns about the impacts ramp meters could have on local streets. Mr. Metzger confirmed that those impacts will be studied.

Mr. Fairchild suggested studying a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) alternative and noted that for all of the alternatives there would be a need for additional park and ride lots. The consultant noted that they would be included in the transit study for the document.

It was noted that the major expense for the project is the new ramps. Mark Dettle suggested studying an alternative that put extra lanes in only where existing space allows as a low cost alternative.

Mr. Fairchild questioned how the HOV lanes verses mixed flow lanes would be modeled, since it would require predicting how many people will choose to carpool or use transit rather than drive alone. Staff noted that they did not currently know the answer, but that

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Wilbur Smith, the same consultants that did the HOT lanes study, will be running the model.

12. Adjournment – Chair Koch adjourned the meeting at 3:04 p.m.

The next meeting of the ITAC is scheduled for December 16, 2004 at 1:30 P.M. in the SCCRTC Conference Room, 1523 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz.

Respectfully Submitted

Rachel Moriconi, Senior Transportation Planner