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INTERAGENCY TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ITAC)

MINUTES

Thursday, February 17, 2005
1:30 p.m.

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

ITAC MEMBERS PRESENT

Teresa Buika, UCSC
Sandra Coley, Pajaro Valley TMA
Mark Dettle, City of Santa Cruz Planning Proxy
Keith Hinrichsen, Caltrans District 5
Gine Johnson, Santa Cruz Area TMA
David Koch, City of Watsonville Public Works
John Presleigh, County Public Works and Planning Proxy
Maria Esther Rodriguez, City of Watsonville Community Development Proxy
Chris Schneiter, City of Santa Cruz Public Works
Majid Yamin, City of Scotts Valley Public Works and Planning Proxy
Kathy Urlie, AMBAG

EXCUSED ABSENCE – SCMTD staff

STAFF PRESENT

Grace Blakeslee
Rachel Moriconi

OTHERS PRESENT

Donn Miyahara, Caltrans Local Assistance
Linda Puzziferro, Santa Cruz Area TMA

Chair David Koch called the meeting to order at 1:33 p.m.

- 1. Introductions --** Introductions were made.
- 2. Oral Communications –** None.
- 3. Status of ongoing transportation projects, programs, studies and planning documents**

City of Santa Cruz – Chris Schneiter reported that construction of the Depot Site/Multimodal Station and Park project is nearly complete. He noted that several other projects are currently under design. He also announced that the City will be hosting the American Public Works Association (APWA) dinner at Pasatiempo in March.

County of Santa Cruz - John Presleigh noted that applications for the APWA “Project of

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the Year” are due on March 15. He noted the County may submit an application for the East Cliff Seawall project. He reported that construction continues on 7th Avenue. The Calabasas and Amesti Road curb/gutter and sidewalk safety projects near schools are in need of additional funding. He reported that the Redevelopment Agency (RDA) is fronting funds for pavement work in Live Oak and Soquel, but that no funding is available to meet the pavement needs of the rest of the County. The County’s work on the El Rancho Road Reconstruction bridge project continues, but Caltrans has decided to put the Highway 17 portion of the project on hold for now. The Harkins Slough 400 foot bridge project is the largest bridge project the County has ever done and should be completed within the next month to month and a half. In the interim, the Lee Road temporary HBRR-funded steel bridge is in place and he encouraged others to check out the project. He noted that the Harkins Slough project had been delayed due to the international steel shortage. It was noted that the new high school in Watsonville will open in August.

Scotts Valley - Majid Yamin reported that sewage and pavement work on Kings Village Road was completed recently.

Watsonville – Maria Rodriguez reported that construction of the Slough Trails system is underway and that information on the “Wetlands of Watsonville” is available on the web. She added that the two HBRR-funded bridges over Struve Slough and Harkins Slough will go to construction over the next two years.

UCSC -- Teresa Buika reported that the signal at Hagar and Coolidge is under construction.

SCATMA – Gine Johnson reported that the Air District approved changes to the AB2766 grant program so that engine conversion projects, such as those for agricultural equipment, will be funded by other grant programs, thereby making more AB2766 funds available for other air quality improving programs. The TMA is hopeful that this may increase their opportunities to receive funding from the Air District.

PVTMA – Sandra Coley reported that the TMA has been working on the Latino Outreach project. The project entails coordinating efforts with other agencies to translate information into Spanish. AMBAG is taking the lead on the program. There was a conference with the media and various agencies on implementing the program.

Caltrans – Keith Hinrichsen introduced himself as the new Caltrans representative to Santa Cruz County. He noted that in the past he has worked with San Luis Obispo. He is involved in development reviews for Santa Cruz and San Benito Counties and is working on getting up to speed on the various Santa Cruz County transportation projects and issues. He noted that Charles Sanchez is now working with the Traffic Modeling division.

AMBAG -- Kathy Urlie reported that the new regional travel demand model is ready for use and that agencies will need to sign a use agreement to access the model. AMBAG’s

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Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) was released on February 15.

SCCRTC – Rachel Moriconi reported that the RTC has signed a Letter of Intent with Union Pacific to purchase the Santa Cruz Branch Rail Line for \$19 million. She also reported that the Commission recently released a revised Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Recreational Rail project between Capitola and Seascape. A public hearing will be held the evening of March 17 on that document. The Commission is also researching if the existing Roaring Camp/Big Trees train to the Boardwalk can be used to access the Proposition 116 funds.

4. **Additions/Changes to the Agenda** – None.

CONSENT AGENDA (Presleigh/Schneider)

5. **Approved Minutes of the November 18, 2004 Meeting** - Kathy Urlie abstained.
6. **Received Commission Staff Roster and List of Major Assignments**

REGULAR AGENDA

7. **Received Information on Caltrans District 5's Draft District System Management Plan**

Keith Hinrichsen reported that Caltrans' District 5 has prepared a Draft District System Management Plan that sets general assumptions regarding population, growth, and traffic upon which other planning documents, such as Transportation Concept Reports, are based. It provides a broad brush of the transportation system in District 5 and provides guiding principles for more specific projects developed in the future. He noted that this document has been under development for several years and that Dan Herron worked to get this document into this draft format. In the past, this was an internal document, but in an effort to reach out to partner agencies and the public, the document is now available for review online at www.dot.ca.gov/dist05/planning/dsmp/publicdraft.pdf. Comments are due March 15, 2005.

In response to questions from ITAC members, Mr. Hinrichsen noted that there is general discussion of relinquishments in the document, but no specific routes are identified as candidates for relinquishment. Design standards and exceptions to design standards are covered in a separate Caltrans document.

He noted that through a separate effort, Caltrans' Community Planning Branch has announced a new pilot program to set standards for gateways into communities. The program will include guidelines to help communities identify what can be done within the Caltrans right-of-way. City of Watsonville staff noted that they are interested in a gateway project and reviewed a draft of the guidelines approximately a year ago. Mr. Hinrichsen agreed to work through RTC staff to distribute details on the program to

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ITAC members once they are available. Caltrans staff will present more information on the program at the next ITAC meeting.

After further discussion of challenges agencies have had working in Caltrans' right-of-way in the past, Mr. Hinrichsen encouraged everyone to contact him first, then he will carry proposals to upper management at Caltrans, such as Rich Krumholtz and Gregg Albright. David Koch noted that he is encouraged by the new Caltrans Director's emphasis on context sensitive designs.

8. Received Information on Governor's Proposed FY05/06 State Budget

Rachel Moriconi reported that the Governor's proposed FY05/06 State Budget again proposes to suspend Proposition 42, which will further impact the States ability to meet commitments in the 2004 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). As a result, the Highway 1/17 Merge Lanes project is likely to be delayed, local jurisdictions will not receive funds for local pavement repair projects, and there will likely be a two-tiered 2006 STIP. The first tier would assume no Proposition 42 revenues and would result in deprogramming of some projects in the state. The second-tier would assume loan repayments, but is still unlikely to include significant levels of new funds for transportation projects. The Governor's budget proposal does include a provision to repay past loans from transportation to the General Fund over a 15 year period, starting in 2007/08.

Mark Dettle commented that the region should talk about implementing a local gas tax and local assessment districts to pay for road improvements. John Presleigh noted that some regions in the county have property assessment districts, but that there remains a huge shortfall to keep local roads in working condition. David Koch noted that there should be a statewide measure to raise funds for roadway repairs, since everyone in the state is having problems maintaining local roads. Mr. Dettle noted that several State Legislators are opposed to any new taxes. Keith Hinrichsen recommended that the region consider regional developer fees.

Gine Johnson noted that one of her concerns about Measure J was that it would not have raised enough to maintain local roads. John Presleigh responded that had Measure J been approved it would have significantly helped improve local roads.

Ms. Moriconi noted that the *Draft 2005 Regional Transportation Plan* includes information on the funding deficits for roadway maintenance and that in the future the Commission will consider various options for raising new funds for local transportation projects, which may include a short-term quarter-cent tax for local road maintenance and developer fees.

9. Received *Draft 2005 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)* and *Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR)*

Grace Blakeslee reported that the Commission sent out copies of the *Draft 2005 Regional*

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Transportation Plan (RTP) and EIR on February 15, 2005. The Commission coordinated timing of the document with the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) and Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC). Notices were sent to community groups, schools, and others. A public hearing on the document will be held on the morning of March 17, 2005. Staff is available to give presentations on the document to local councils and groups.

The document updates the project lists, funding projections and text from the *2001 RTP*. The EIR evaluates the documents prepared by SCCRTC, TAMC, and AMBAG. Final adoption of the document is scheduled for May 2005. Rachel Moriconi added that the document assumes that a new sales tax will be approved in the next few years. Comments on the draft documents are due by April 1, 2005. She noted that the ITAC will have the opportunity to provide collective comments at the March 17, 2005 ITAC meeting.

10. Receive “Use it or Lose it Deadline” Information and Recommend Programming Plan for CMAQ Funds

Rachel Moriconi reported that the region will no longer be able to program Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) funds after June 15, 2005. She encouraged past recipients of CMAQ funds to obligate their funds as soon as possible. She noted that it is unknown exactly how much additional CMAQ funding will be available to the region for FY04/05, but that the Commission should program the maximum estimated amount of additional CMAQ funds that may be available in order to avoid losing any of these funds. Due to timing constraints and the uncertainty about the exact amount of CMAQ that will be available, staff is not recommending a competitive grant funding program at this time. Instead Ms. Moriconi recommended that the ITAC recommend the Commission:

1. Release the \$123,000 in CMAQ originally programmed at its June 2003 meeting to the Pajaro Valley and Santa Cruz Area TMAs for FY05/06 expenses;
2. Deprogram remaining funds for the Don't Drive One in Five Program;
3. Trade \$596,000 in CMAQ funds for STIP funds programmed to the Commute Solutions Rideshare program for FY05-06 through FY08-09, in anticipation that STIP funds for those fiscal years may not be available;
4. Program the remaining projected CMAQ funds and de-program the equivalent amount of RSTP funds for the Highway 1 Widening/Carpool Lane project's Project Approval/Environmental Document (PA/ED); and
5. Reprogram the freed-up STIP from Commute Solutions and RSTP funds from the Highway 1 Widening/Carpool Lane project as part of a competitive grant process in the *2006 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP)*, once the region's final FFY04/05 CMAQ apportionments are known.

Chris Schneider noted that the City of Santa Cruz will not be able to obligate \$380,000 in CMAQ funds programmed to the West Cliff Path Widening project and \$62,000 in CMAQ programmed to the Broadway-Brommer Bike Path project by June 15, 2005 and

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requested that those funds be traded for RSTP funds from the Highway 1 Widening/Carpool Lane project.

Some members noted that they might have projects on which they could use the CMAQ funds. Staff responded that since the total amount of CMAQ funds available is limited, there are not sufficient funds to distribute to the variety of projects each agency might have and that there is not sufficient time for a competitive process, as amendments must be submitted to AMBAG by the end of March in order to meet FHWA's June 15, 2005 deadline. Ms. Moriconi also reminded members that CMAQ funds are federal funds and that trading the funds for STIP funds from Commute Solutions and RSTP funds from the Highway 1 Widening/Carpool Lane project would free up these more flexible funds, which do not have the time constraints that CMAQ funds have, for future programming.

The ITAC unanimously approved the staff recommendations (Schneiter/Presleigh), with the addition of trading CMAQ funds for RSTP funds for the City of Santa Cruz's Broadway-Brommer and West Cliff Drive projects.

- 11. Adjournment** – Chair Koch adjourned the meeting at 2:51 p.m.

The next meeting of the ITAC is scheduled for March 17, 2005 at 1:30 P.M. in the SCCRTC Conference Room, 1523 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz.

Respectfully Submitted

Rachel Moriconi, Senior Transportation Planner

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