



JOINT POLICY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting of February 15, 2008
Held at 10:00 AM at the BCDC McAteer Petris Room, San Francisco

Attendance:

ABAG

Mark Green
Rose Jacobs Gibson, Chair

BAAQMD

Chris Daly
John Gioia
Jerry Hill
Yoriko Kishimoto
Pamela Torliatt
Gayle B. Uilkema

BCDC*

Jim Bourgart
Geoffrey Gibbs
Anne Halstead
Charles McGlashen
Sean Randolph

*non-voting

MTC

Tom Bates
Steve Kinsey
Sue Lempert
Jon Rubin
Jim Spering

1. Call to Order

Chair Jacobs Gibson called the meeting to order.

2. Approval of the Joint Policy Committee Meeting Minutes of January 18, 2008

The Minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

3. Transportation 2035—Proposed Vision Policy Strategies

Doug Kimsey summarized the staff memo and proposed a set of questions to guide Committee discussion.

Committee members and public commentators contributed a number of observations, conclusions, ideas and proposals:

- Continued support for a performance-based plan and the use of strategic policies to help evaluate alternatives, noting that not all worthy investments are amenable to comparative quantitative evaluation;
- General agreement with a priority on maintenance of existing infrastructure except in a few incidents where new replacements are clearly superior;
- General support for congestion pricing as an effective transportation policy, acknowledging that public acceptance will be a huge challenge and noting that equity consequences need to be fully considered and dealt with;

- Agreement that focused growth deserves regional financial support, that good planning is particularly important, as are rewards for good projects that set examples that others can follow;
- Argument that the region should require or provide incentives to mixed-income and affordable housing in Priority Development Areas;
- Recognition that regional funding for focused growth requires that PDAs be subject to performance outcome expectations, just like other transportation investments, but that this needs to be an iterative process—that both our measures of PDA success and our criteria for PDA funding may have to change as we learn more;
- Suggestion that new sources of energy, some unconventional and contentious, will have to be part of our response to the greenhouse gas and fossil fuel challenge;
- Suggestion that the connections among transit use, focused growth, and climate change needs to be made strongly and persuasively and that public education to motivate behavior change is a priority;
- Observation that a number of both transportation and non-transportation investments are required to assure PDA success—e.g., safe routes to transit and schools; good bicycle and pedestrian connections; quality parks, open space and schools;
- Suggestion that changes in parking policy and supply are required to support desired change in mode split;
- Argument that we are not presently providing sufficient transportation infrastructure to service the areas where growth is actually taking place;
- Notice that the regional non-automobile mode split is essentially stagnant and that we are not doing enough to serve an untapped market and get existing residents out of their cars;
- Ideas for new potential revenue sources to facilitate PDA development—e.g., growth impact fees, extended parking meter hours, infrastructure financial districts using betterment levies on up-zoned property values to fund public investment;
- Proposal that HOT-lane revenues be used to fund transportation improvements in the county of origin rather than being redistributed to fund additional HOT lanes throughout the region;

- Argument for bottom-up community process to ensure genuine neighborhood livability;
- Suggestion that consolidation of transportation and transit agencies within the region could assist pursuit of strategic policies;
- Proposal to implement full-road pricing in preference to HOT lanes;
- Suggestion for a continued consideration of more aggressive transportation and land-use alternatives;
- Argument for a greater consideration of job location as part of the region's transit-oriented development policy.

4. San Leandro Downtown Transit-Oriented Development Strategy

Kathleen Livermore and Keith Cook from the City of Livermore talked about the new plan for downtown Livermore. The plan was completed over 20 months with the participation of over 200 residents, a number of community organizations, technical advisors, and consultant team. It provides for 3041 new residential units, 718,000 square feet of office space, and 120,000 square feet of retail space—all covered by a master EIR which will facilitate the subsequent development process.

The plan, financed in part by a station area planning grant from MTC, responds to a number of local and regional objectives, including reducing traffic, reducing air pollution and noise, contributing to a reduction in greenhouse gases, and anticipating future market trends. It will result in enhanced retail and an enhanced environment for both new and existing residents.

In the opinion of the San Leandro staff, a number of key factors contributed to the plan's successful conclusion: collaboration among a variety of individuals and organizations, the use of photo simulations to mitigate the fear of change and density, the creative use of parking strategy as a development tool, and the significant opportunity created by the nexus of the San Leandro downtown, the existing BART station, the planned AC Transit BRT route and a significant number of under-development sites.

A number of infrastructure challenges remain, including streetscape improvements and storm-water collection. Many, but not all of these can be covered by impact fees and the use of redevelopment authority.

The Chair thanked Ms. Livermore and Mr. Cook for their excellent presentation.

5. Performance Criteria for Priority Development Areas

Ted Droettboom summarized the staff memo on this subject.

In discussion, members of the Committee and members of the public raised a number of issues and ideas to be considered in the refinement of the criteria and in the further development of the FOCUS program in general:

- The need for a clear definition of “sustainability,” expressed as objectively as possible and including notions of community health;
- The importance of community amenities, particularly those geared to the after-school and transportation needs of children, in making PDAs livable for families and in mitigating the community impacts of modern family life (These amenities may constitute basic community infrastructure.);
- The inadequacy of VMT as a singular key measure of success (VMT is too narrow. Other measures of transportation outcome, including for example mode split, need to be considered, as do community attributes that directly contribute to positive transportation changes—such as the unbundling of parking and the provision of transit passes. We need to not just reduce VMT, but encourage the creation of communities founded on the principles of accessibility.);
- The need for citizen involvement, in addition to local official involvement, in the review of criteria;
- The need for a parallel consideration of employment growth and location to complement the PDA emphasis on housing development (While PDAs are intended to be mixed use communities, including some employment uses; reducing regional transportation demand will also require counteracting job sprawl, much of which occurs independently of the residential development which is the primary use within PDAs.);
- The need to consider commercial vehicle miles (particularly truck miles) in addition to private automobile miles as contributors to greenhouse gases and other transportation consequences;
- The recognition that not all criteria can or need to be weighted equally and that application may vary by context;
- Acknowledgement that performance criteria needed to be finalized before PDA capital funds became available through completion of the current RTP update.

After amendment, the recommendation in the staff memo was moved and seconded and become the decision of the Committee as follows:

THAT the JPC endorse the general content and structure of PDA performance criteria, as outlined in this memo for discussion with local elected and appointed officials and with public stakeholders in association with the discussion on performance targets for Projections 2009 and THAT there be a report back responding to the issues and ideas noted in this discussion and providing greater clarification of key concepts. (Underlining and ~~strikeouts~~ denote amendment.)

6. Priority Conservation Area Nomination Process

Mr. Kirkey's memo was received for information. A brief discussion clarified that natural features within urbanized areas (e.g., shorelines and creek sides) were eligible for Priority Conservation Area designation and that the preservation of these areas adjacent to urban development was of high importance. However, the provision of more developed urban parks (e.g., landscaped gardens, playgrounds, and playfields) would require a different process and different funding from PDAs. It was also confirmed that portions of the Bay Trail and Ridge Trail may be nominated for PCA status.

7. Public Comment

Public comment received in response to specific agenda items is included in the summary of the discussion of those items.

8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:20 PM.