



JOINT POLICY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting of July 18, 2008 Held at 10:00 AM at the MetroCenter Auditorium, Oakland

Attendance:

ABAG

Jane Brunner
Mark Green, Acting Chair
Scott Haggerty
Gwen Regalia

BAAQMD

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

BCDC*

Geoffrey Gibbs
Richard Gordon
Anne Halsted
Charles McGlashen
Sean Randolph

*non-voting

MTC

Tom Bates
Steve Kinsey
Sue Lempert

1. Call to Order

Acting Chair Green called the meeting to order.

2. Approval of the Joint Policy Committee Meeting Minutes of May 16, 2008

The Minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

3. Transportation 2035: MTC Decisions

Doug Kimsey, MTC Planning Director, supplemented the staff memos with a PowerPoint presentation. His presentation summarized the financially constrained investment plan as approved by the MTC Planning Committee and recommended to the full Commission, showed how the investment plan responded to the performance targets as identified at the beginning of the present RTP process, and identified a number of policy questions to be addressed as the planning process proceeds.

In discussion, Committee members and those making public comments touched on a number of issues, including:

- Support for walking and bicycling improvements to reduce VMT and help increase transit ridership;
- The possibility that some previously committed projects, particularly those which expand roadway capacity, may not be consistent with this plan's

climate-change objective—that there may be conflict between reducing congestion and reducing CO₂;

- The need to advocate for more money to address the core objectives of the plan;
- The potential for AB 32 and follow-on regulations and legislation greatly changing our approach to transportation planning and our mix of transportation investments;
- The inability of many suburban residents to access non-automotive transportation options;
- The need to balance long-haul express transit service with good local transit service for existing communities, particularly those developed at appropriate transit-supportive densities;
- The continuing need for the plan to address trip reduction as a core objective, but also to provide infrastructure that supports new technology (e.g. stations for alternative fuel, power outlets for plug-in cars);
- The need to be specific about the committed projects that may be inconsistent with current priorities;
- The small number of committed projects for which there is sufficient regional discretion to change direction;
- The possibility of conditioning all increases in road capacity on congestion-pricing/tolling regimens;
- The continuing recognition that the financially constrained plan will not take us far enough, that infrastructure is not enough, that land-use and pricing initiatives are even more important to achieving our transportation objectives;
- The acknowledgment that not all road expansion is bad, that idling automobiles sitting in congested traffic contribute to our emission footprint;
- The desirability of increasing the investment amounts specifically addressed to climate change in addition to integrating the climate imperative into all expenditures;
- The importance of an equity lens through which to view all investments— noting that as we restructure our transportation priorities and our approach to funding transportation improvements, there will be huge equity impacts, both from investment choices and revenue sources;

- The recognition that the plan is a multi-objective one, requiring compromise and balance among nominally contradictory aims, but also letting single investment categories serve many different purposes;
- The necessity to use limited funding to not just buy infrastructure, but also to provide incentives for the pursuit of regional policy, conditioning funds to support desirable development or other performance objectives;
- The delicate balance between using HOT revenues to support improvements in the corridors that generate the revenue, versus using some revenues to expand the system regionally;
- The fallibility of our models and projections and the uncertainty of our metrics.

4. AB 32 Draft Scoping Plan, Pending State Climate Legislation, and Local Climate Actions

Bruce Riordan, consultant to the *Regional Agencies Climate Protection Program*, introduced this topic by reviewing a number of regional and local initiatives and recent trends related to climate change and energy use. Significant regional initiatives included the introduction of a regional greenhouse-gas permit fee, the launching of the Spare the Air Every Day Campaign, the multi-agency climate protection program, FOCUS, and pioneering consideration of climate adaptation, particularly related to sea-level rise. Local initiatives are multitudinous and are detailed in a database Bruce has put together. This database documents that the Bay Area is making considerable voluntary progress. Notable trends include the marked increase in Spare-the-Air days, the increase in PM due to wild fires, and the stark decrease in gasoline consumption tied to the increase in gas prices.

Mr. Riordan then described the draft Scoping Plan prepared by the California Air Resources Board pursuant to AB 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006. AB 32 sets an aggressive target of returning greenhouse-gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. While this politically established objective is daunting, it is a mere stepping stone on the way to the more scientifically based goal of reducing greenhouse gases to 80% below 1990 levels by 2050. The draft Scoping Plan has elicited two principal concerns relative to the JPC's climate protection work and focused growth: the inappropriate lumping together of local government operations with regional-level transportation and land-use planning, and a sense that the target established for the latter may be too low to inspire action.

In discussion, the following additional observations were made:

- While of immense long-term significance, the real potential to have substantial climate impact through land use by as early 2020 is limited. We need to start making land-use changes now if we are to make a

difference over time, but by 2020 non-land-use initiatives are likely to be more powerful;

- The Bay Area is way ahead of the rest of the state, and our expectations for the state overall may be somewhat inflated by our own experience;
- Congestion pricing, behavior change, and education may be among the most influential short-term actions we can take;
- The Scoping Plan does not mention zero-waste initiatives and other waste-sector activities as affecting greenhouse gas emissions;
- We should be considering regional impact fees (e.g., indirect source fees) to change land-use behavior;
- The Scoping Plan seems to place a high reliance on new technology that may not develop; and even if it does develop, it will not be enough;
- Implications for health need to be spelled out;
- VMT reduction is critical and expansion of roads is contrary to our climate objectives;
- Smart growth will never be successful if it does not deal with local quality-of-life issues;
- It's not just about transit, but about walkable communities;
- We need to get electric vehicles and other modes of transport that do not depend on fossil fuels.

5. Public Comment

All public comment was made with reference to specific agenda items and is summarized in the discussion of those items.

6. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned just before Noon.