



JOINT POLICY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting of July 20, 2007 Held at 10:00 AM in the MetroCenter Auditorium, Oakland

Attendance:

<u>ABAG</u>	<u>BAAQMD</u>	<u>BCDC*</u>	<u>MTC</u>
Jane Brunner	Chris Daly	Jim Bourgart	Tom Bates
Mark Green	John Gioia	Geoffrey Gibbs	Sue Lempert
Scott Haggerty	Jerry Hill	Larry Goldzband	Ken Yeager
Rose Jacobs Gibson	Pamela Torliatt	Anne Halsted	
Sam Liccardo	Gayle B. Uilkema,	Charles McGlashen	
Gwen Regalia	Chair <i>pro tem</i>	Dena Mossar	

*non-voting

1. Call to Order

Chair *pro tem* Uilkema called the meeting to order.

2. Approval of the Joint Policy Committee Meeting Minutes of May 18, 2007

The Minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

3. Bay Area Regional Agency Climate Protection Program

Ted Droettboom made a short presentation summarizing the staff memo. This presentation is available online:

<http://www.abag.ca.gov/jointpolicy/Climate%20Protection%20Program.pdf>

Committee discussion and public comment identified a number of ideas and issues for consideration:

- Our objective should be to simply “reduce driving,” noting that the qualifier “unnecessary” was subject to a variety of different and escapist interpretations and that we needed to send a strong and unambiguous message about travel behavior;
- Plug-in hybrids may be a technological innovation worthy of regional encouragement;

- An important part of making a difference will be inventorying what individuals can do and providing tools for individuals to assess and change their own carbon footprints, being careful not to duplicate what other organizations are providing in the way of self-assessment and change assistance;
- The region already has the authority to levy up to a ten-cent regional gas tax; and, subject to legal interpretation and voter approval, this might be used to fund carbon- reduction initiatives;
- However, any tax on transportation will be highly regressive and must be accompanied by viable transportation options for the currently auto-dependent working poor;
- It is also essential that any taxation or fee proposal be accompanied by a very specific list of activities and investments which it would fund, including especially improved transit;
- Efforts to improve CEQA should not be purely project-oriented but needed to be very conscious of regional and state context;
- We are still projecting a business-as-usual tone, and we need to be more direct and frank in communicating that difficult and consequential changes will be required—dealing on the margins will not be enough;
- Adaptation requires more attention and more funding—even with our best mitigation efforts, there will be unavoidable consequences that will require massive adaptation plans and investments;
- We need to be serious and realistic about driving—it will continue to be the dominant mode well into the future;
- We need to not just reduce driving, but also reduce the impact of the driving which will continue;
- Our strategy needs to be more conscious of regulation and particularly of cap-and-trade policies;
- Getting the auto-dependent working poor into less polluting automobiles might be facilitated by a state program which facilitated low-cost access to cars turned over in rental-car and corporate fleets;
- Everyone is now working on climate change—it is essential that we not reinvent wheels and duplicate the work of others but that we clearly add real value to the many other initiatives planned and underway;

- With the possibility of drought imminent, we need to be conscious of water conservation strategies and of the energy required to move water around the state;
- Emissions from railroads, ships in port, and air traffic also need to be part of our strategy;
- With the probability of wild fires increasing and the wild fires themselves a significant source of carbon emissions, fire prevention may be an increasing concern;
- Our transportation initiatives need to be considered within the context of the Pavley vehicle emission standards;
- Simultaneous and uniform adoption of common standards and regulations across local governments has considerable merit in reducing jurisdiction shopping and destructive competition.

After discussion, it was moved and seconded and was the decision of the Committee:

THAT the title for Strategy Element 4 be amended to read “Reduce Driving and Promote Alternative Modes of Transportation;

THAT two recommendations be added as follows:

- S. THAT equity consequences be integral to the consideration of all climate-change adaptations and climate-protection initiatives,
- T. THAT regional initiatives aimed at reducing transportation-sector carbon emissions include measures directed at the railroad, maritime and air-travel sub-sectors;

THAT, with the above amendments, the memo titled “Bay Area Regional Agency Climate Protection Program,” including recommendations and all text, be approved in its entirety as an expression of regional agency climate-protection policy and intention.

A straw poll of non-voting members confirmed that BCDC representatives also concurred with this motion.

4. FOCUS: Priority Development Area (PDA) Applications

Ted Droettboom summarized the staff memo. He noted the very encouraging level of local-government interest in PDA designation as indicated in the high number of applications received, and he observed that a first-cut calculation suggested that the current batch of PDAs may accommodate as much as forty-six percent of the region’s projected housing growth to the year 2035. This compares very favorably to the

region's unofficial target of accommodating fifty percent of growth in locations near transit.

He then elaborated on the policy issue before the Committee: whether individual local government resolutions should be required to accompany collective PDA applications from government consortia, particularly CMAs.

This motion was moved and seconded, but failed on a tie vote:

THAT local-government resolutions will continue to be required for all PDA and Potential PDA designations

This following motion was moved and seconded and was approved by nine votes to five:

THAT a resolution from the applicable Congestion Management Agency (CMA), applying as a federation of relevant local land-use authorities, will be accepted as qualifying an area for Potential PDA designation and making it eligible to compete for planning funds; and THAT upon meeting all entry criteria and upon resolution from the local government(s) having direct land-use authority, an area will receive full PDA designation and will be eligible to compete for capital funds.

5. Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

Lisa Klein and Ashley Nguyen presented a progress report on the RTP visioning process. Their presentation may be viewed online:

http://www.abag.ca.gov/jointpolicy/T2035_JPC_7-20-07_v2.pdf

Discussion questioned whether the approach of modeling and evaluating three alternative project scenarios would adequately identify the choices required to effectively address the issue of climate change. In particular, it would not result in a maximum effort to reduce driving. Staff responded that the sensitivity analysis, including land-use and pricing strategies, would be more aggressive than any policy alternatives yet considered in an RTP, including the 2005 TRANSDEF scenario.

Commentary cautioned that a business-as-usual, project-list based approach was inappropriate to the climate-change challenge, which should be the central driver of the entire RTP. Some members argued that the VMT reduction goal was modest and that a much more dramatic shift in driving behavior was required; that dealing with our continued ability to live on this planet should trump any momentary concern with traffic congestion.

However, a member also noted the conundrum that traffic congestion was a large impediment to the smart growth which may be required to reduce VMT. Communities' principal objection to higher-density infill development was the traffic which they associated with that development.

A committee member also identified the potential for litigation resulting from unrealistic targets which the region would be unable to meet. Staff noted that the current targets were provisional and for the purpose of analysis only. Further the proposed targets, while based on existing or proposed legislation, were not driven by specific statutory requirements for MPOs, as was the case for earlier targets that had resulted in law suits.

The adequacy of the PM target was questioned. MTC and BAAQMD staff will work together to resolve this.

As a quorum was not present at the conclusion of this discussion, no action was taken on the recommendations contained in the staff memoranda. However, staff agreed to take the Committee's comments into account in its analytic work over the next couple of months and to provide a report back to the JPC at its September meeting.

6. Public Comment

All public comment was received relative to specific agenda items and is incorporated in the summary of those items.

7. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:20 PM.