

## MEETING SUMMARY

### NORTH COUNTY MEASURE D POLICY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Wednesday, September 12, 2007

9:00 a.m.

Central Coast Water Authority  
255 Industrial Way  
Buellton, CA

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL:

**Members Present:** Joni Gray, Supervisor, Fourth district; Joe Centeno, Supervisor, Fifth District; Russ Hicks, Councilmember, City of Buellton and committee chairperson; Dick DeWees, Mayor, City of Lompoc; Lupe Alvarez, Mayor; City of Guadalupe; Bob Orach, Councilmember, City of Santa Maria; Jim Richardson, Councilmember, City of Solvang; Rich Krumholz, Caltrans, District 5 (ex-officio member)

**Members Absent:** Brooks Firestone, Supervisor, Third District;

**Advisory committee members proceeded with self-introductions. Policy Development Committee members in attendance included:** Hamid Bahadori, Auto Club of Southern California; Vibiana Saavedra, PUEBLO; Deborah Brasket, Santa Barbara County Action Network; Andy Caldwell, COLAB; Don Oaks, Santa Barbara County Taxpayers Association; John Peterson, Buellton Chamber of Commerce; Linda Jackson, Solvang Chamber of Commerce; Harrell Fletcher, Santa Maria Chamber of Commerce.

**SBCAG Staff Members Present:** Jim Kemp, Executive Director; Steve VanDenburgh, Deputy Director of Programming & Project Delivery; Kent Epperson, Director of Traffic Solutions; Gregg Hart, Public Information Officer; Fred Luna, Transportation Engineer; Sarkes Khachek, Transportation Planner

#### 2. REVIEW OF AGENDA AND MEETING OBJECTIVES

Jim Kemp reviewed the meeting agenda and meeting objectives.

#### 3. August 1 MEETING REVIEW

Jim Kemp presented the meeting summary from the August 1<sup>st</sup> meeting and there were no comments.

Jim Kemp reviewed the meeting overview and presented the responses to questions received from committee members after the August 1<sup>st</sup> meeting.

#### **4. REGIONAL TRANSIT, PARATRANSIT AND TRAFFIC DEMAND REDUCTION**

Austin O'Dell, City of Santa Maria Transit Manager, gave a presentation on the Breeze Intercommunity Transit Service.

Sherrie Fisher, SBMTD General Manager, gave a presentation on the Valley Express Transit Service. Based on comments and questions from the committee, Ms. Fisher provided the following information:

- Farebox recovery ratios varied by each route on the Valley Express

Kent Epperson, Director of SBCAG's Traffic Solutions Division, gave a presentation on the Clean Air Express and Coastal Express Regional Transit Services. Based on comments and questions from the committee, Mr. Epperson provided the following information:

- The Clean Air Express is currently experiencing a Farebox Recovery Ratio of 80% while the Coastal Express was experiencing a lower farebox recovery ratio because bus depreciation is included in the farebox recovery formula and the service is bi-directional and operates daily.

Jim Talbott, General Manager of Santa Maria Organization of Transportation Helpers (SMOOTH), gave an overview of the Guadalupe Flyer. Based on comments and questions from the committee, Mr. Talbott provided the following information:

- City of Guadalupe is expending all transit funding available including Transportation Development Act Funds.
- Increased housing units in Guadalupe in the near future will increase demand on the Guadalupe Flyer.
- The current Farebox Recovery Ratio for SMOOTH is 19%

Following the overview of the Guadalupe Flyer, Mr. Talbott provided an overview of paratransit services provided by SMOOTH. Based on comments and questions from the committee, Mr. Talbott provided the following information:

- Santa Maria Organization of Transportation Helpers does not currently receive any Measure D funding.
- Santa Maria Area Transit operated by the City of Santa Maria provides paratransit services required to meet the federal Americans with Disabilities Act. SMOOTH carries passengers who don't qualify for ADA service.

Kent Epperson gave a presentation on services provided by Traffic Solutions. Based on comments and questions from the committee, Mr. Epperson provided the following information:

- Traffic Solutions is comprised of 3 staff members.
- Majority of staff time is devoted to outreach to employers and commuters regarding available traffic demand reduction programs.

The committee then discussed the importance of Measure D funding for funding regional transit services.

#### **5. MEASURE D 2008 – NORTH COUNTY INVESTMENT PLAN PROPOSAL**

Sarkes Khachek reviewed the Draft North County Investment Plan Regional Project List. Staff noted that the Guadalupe Flyer is eligible for interregional transit program funding as are new interregional services.

Following the presentation, the committee discussed the following issues:

- Whether to include alternative transportation projects in the regional list to have a balanced plan that could be presented to the voters. The Coalition for a Fair Measure D distributed copies of its platform and alternative transportation funding priorities were discussed.
- Developer funding contributions to regional transportation projects. **The committee requested more information on contributions to projects.**
- Whether to include a Buellton Circulation Improvements project on the regional project list similar to regional projects included in the plan for Guadalupe and Solvang.
- A concern was raised that the estimate for the Highway 246 Santa Ynez River Bridge project was too low.

Following discussion of the regional project list, committee members reviewed the proposed local program allocations and eligible projects as prepared by staff. Discussion related to including minimum percentages allocated to alternative transportation projects within the local Measure D program similar to the proposal in the Measure D 2006 plan. Under the proposal, each local agency would determine which alternative transportation projects would be funded to meet the minimum.

***Committee members requested information on funding available to local jurisdictions for Safe Routes School Projects through Federal and State grants.***

Committee members discussed the importance of local control for jurisdictions in determining how funds are spent.

The committee then reviewed a recommendation letter from the Santa Barbara County Transit Advisory Committee (SBCTAC). SBCTAC recommended increasing funding for the Breeze service to accommodate the extension from Lompoc to Buellton and a guarantee of funding for specialized transit services. The committee discussed whether increased funding for transit and paratransit services should come from a small reduction in the local program, but members agreed that funding would not be guaranteed specifically for transit from the local program—this would be left to the discretion of each local agency.

Committee members discussed whether to raise the local program base allocation from \$50,000 to a higher amount. ***Members of the committee requested that staff return with a local program allocation reflecting a \$200,000 base allocation for Solvang, Buellton and Guadalupe and retaining the existing \$50,000 base for the County, City of Santa Maria, and City of Lompoc.***

## 6. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was a request from the public to have more detailed project descriptions for projects included in the regional list.

**7. CONFIRM NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING DATE**

The committee agreed to scheduling two meetings in October.

The next meeting will be October 3, 2007 from 9:00am to noon with meeting location to be determined. The second meeting will be held October 17<sup>th</sup> from 9AM to Noon at the Central Coast Water Authority.

There being no other business, the committee adjourned.