

MADERA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

EXECUTIVE MINUTES

Date: Wednesday, June 23, 2004
Time: 3:38 P.M.
Place: Madera County Government Center,
Board of Supervisor Chambers

Members Present: Chairman Frank Bigelow - Supervisor, Madera County
Ronn Dominici – Supervisor, Madera County
Gary Svanda - Councilman, City of Madera

Members Absent: Vice-Chair Gordon Skeels - Councilman, City of Madera
Alfred Ginsburg - Councilman, City of Chowchilla
Gary Gilbert – Supervisor, Madera County

Policy Advisory Committee: Above Members present and Caltrans Representatives:
Alan McCuen

MCTC Staff Present: Patricia S. Taylor-Maley, Executive Director
Derek Winning, Planner II
Lester Koga, Planner I
Sheila Kingsley, Administrative Assistant

Due to the lack of a quorum, Action Items will be carried over until the next regular schedule meeting of the Commission.

- I. MCTC sitting as the Transportation Policy Committee.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

This portion of the meeting is reserved for person(s) wishing to address the MCTC on items within their jurisdiction but not on this agenda.

There were no public comments.

III. TRANSPORTATION CONSENT ITEMS

Transportation Consent Calendar Action: No Consent Items.

IV. TRANSPORTATION ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. ***Public Hearing: Draft 2004 Federal Transportation Improvement Program and Air Quality Conformity Finding***

The Madera County Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) is developed to satisfy Federal requirements. The FTIP is a three-year list of projects (Fiscal Years 04/05 through 06/07) that are programmed for Federal funding under the most recent Federal Surface Transportation Authorization (Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), or that are locally funded projects on a Federal route. Prior to adopting the FTIP, the MCTC Policy Board must make a finding that the FTIP projects cumulatively do not result in an increase of vehicle emissions (non-attainment pollutants or their precursors).

To meet the Federal air quality regulations, the United States Department of Transportation must approve a

new conformity analysis on the FTIP. The MCTC Policy Board will need to make a new conformity finding for the FTIP based on the final transportation conformity regulation. Without an approved finding of conformity on the FTIP, the existing program will expire on October 4, 2004. Failure to meet air quality requirements could result in a lapse of federal funding.

MCTC is required to submit the FTIP to Caltrans by August 1, 2004. FTIP management is performed through the Caltrans – CTIPS computerized database.

A Draft 2004 FTIP was included in the Commissioner's packet. A Final Draft 2004 FTIP will be scheduled for adoption on July 21, 2004. The FTIP includes projects programmed regionally for funding under the following programs:

- State Seismic Retrofit Projects
- State Transportation Improvement Program (Rail and Highway)
- Minor Programs (Lump Sums)
- State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP)
- Rail Protection Program and Rail Hazard Elimination Program
- Regionally Significant Projects
- Transportation Enhancement Activities (TEA) Program
- Transportation Demand Management (TDM)/New Technology Program
- Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality (CMAQ)
- Aeronautics Program
- Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Program
- Hazard Elimination Safety (HES) Program
- Highway Bridge Rehabilitation and Replacement (HBRR) Program
- Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP)

The FTIP must provide a priority list of projects to be carried out in the first three years and many include additional years for information purposes. The FTIP shall include a financial plan and be financially constrained by year, including capital, operating, and maintenance costs. "Financially constrained" is defined as including in the plan only those projects and services for which there are funds. For each project, the FTIP shall include:

- Sufficient descriptive material to identify project phase
- Estimated total cost
- Amount of Federal funds, by category, to be obligated per year
- Responsible agency
- Identification of Transportation Control Measures (TCM's)

Action: Review and Circulate only.

B. Draft – 2004 Regional Transportation Plan and Air Quality Conformity Finding

The Environmental Impact Report covering the 2004 Regional Transportation Plan Update was included in the Commissioner's packet. The report approaches the environmental impact assessment of the 2004 RTP Update from an overall programmatic perspective. Impacts resulting from specific projects will be addressed individually as each project advances.

2004 Regional Transportation Plan

Summary: The Draft - 2004 Regional Transportation Plan Update is included in your package. The RTP Steering Committee with assistance from our consultant, VRPA Technologies, conducted an RTP Project Prioritization Study for the 2004 RTP Update through a comprehensive planning process including participation from federal, state, and local agencies, various interest groups and the public. Public

workshops were held in Madera (2), Chowchilla, Oakhurst, North Fork, and Ranchos communities. A 30-day public review and comment period is required prior to the MCTC Policy Board scheduled adoption of the 2004 RTP/EIR, FTIP, and Conformity Determination on July 21, 2004.

FHWA, Caltrans, and the Valley RTPA's have agreed to an RTP/FTIP/Conformity schedule that requires these documents to be submitted to Caltrans by August 1, 2004. Regional Transportation Improvement Projects (RTIP) are compared to the RTP for consistency prior to being incorporated into the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

The Regional Transportation Plan addresses Madera County's transportation needs through the year 2030. The Plan is updated every three years. Any changes to the Plan that are required in the interim may be made by amendment.

2004 Air Quality Conformity Determination

Summary: An Air Quality Conformity Determination is required in non-attainment areas to ensure that transportation plans and programs are consistent with the state and local air quality plans and do not interfere with the timely implementation of transportation control measures. Results of the air quality emissions analysis show that the 2004 RTP and 2004 FTIP are consistent and conform with provisions of the State Implementation Plan (SIP).

Action: Review and Circulate only.

C. *FY 2004/05 Unmet Transit Needs – Staff Report and SSTAC recommendations, Resolution 04-09*

Included in Commissioner's packet was a copy of the Staff Report, SSTAC Recommendation, Chairman Letter to those who testified, and the Public Hearing Comment Summary.

On May 19, 2004, the Commission held the annual "Unmet Transit Needs" public hearing as required under the California Transportation Development Act. This legally noticed hearing was held to receive testimony from the public to determine if public transportation needs within Madera County will be reasonably met in FY2004-05 prior to approving claims of Local Transportation Funds for streets and roads.

Transportation Development Act - Local Transportation Funds are derived from the State Sales Tax. Of the six-cent tax per dollar on all sales, ¼ of a cent goes to the Local Transportation fund and may be used for transportation projects. In FY2004-05 the estimated Local Transportation Fund for Madera County is \$2,685,221 of which \$70,000 is programmed for administration and audits, \$85,811 for planning, \$52,304 for Article 3 bicycle and pedestrian and \$2,477,106 is available for Article 8 transportation projects.

Of the Article 8 Local Transportation Funds available for public transportation and streets and roads, priority must first be given to public transportation, the net difference is then available for street and road projects.

Pursuant to Section 99401.5 of the California Public Utilities Code, MCTC, as the Regional Transportation Planning Agency, must make a finding after holding a Public Hearing that there are no unmet public transportation needs within the jurisdiction of claimants which can be reasonably met before it may approve Local Transportation Fund claims for streets and roads.

The MCTC has determined that its definition of the term "**unmet transit needs**" includes all essential trip requests by transit-dependent persons for which there is no other convenient means of transportation, and the Commission has determined that its definition of the term "**reasonable to meet**" shall apply to all related public or specialized transportation services that:

- (1) are feasible;
- (2) have community acceptance;
- (3) serve a significant number of the population;

- (4) are economical; and
- (5) can demonstrate cost effectiveness

by having a ratio of fare revenues to operating cost at least equal to 10 percent, and the Commission has determined that its definition of the term “reasonable to meet” shall also apply to all service requests which do not abuse or obscure the intent of such transportation services once they are established.

The Social Service Transportation Advisory Council’s (SSTAC) role is to aid the MCTC Policy Board in its review of transit issues with emphasis on the annual identification of transit needs within Madera County. The MCTC’s establishment of this Advisory Council is consistent with State Law (SB 498, Chapter 673, 1987) which mandates both the purpose and minimum membership of this body. The purpose of the SSTAC is to:

- A. Annually participate in identification of transit needs (Unmet Transit Needs Public Hearing Process).
- B. Review and recommend appropriate action by the MCTC for a jurisdiction which finds, by resolution, that:
 - (1) there are no unmet transit needs;
 - (2) there are no unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet;
 - (3) there are unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet.
- C. Advise the MCTC on any other major transit issues, including the coordination and consolidation of specialized transportation services.

At the “Unmet Transit Needs” Public Hearing on Wednesday, May 19, 2004, the MCTC Policy Board opened the hearing to receive public testimony. The following staff evaluation is prepared in a cooperative effort with the SSTAC. The Chairman of the SSTAC will submit that body’s findings to the Commission under separate correspondence.

Discussion:

NARRATIVE OF EVALUATION

City of Madera

- 1. There are no unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet at this time.***

MCTC staff has reviewed and discussed testimony regarding the City of Madera’s transit services with the Social Service Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC). The recommendation from staff and the SSTAC is that there are no unmet need transit needs within the City of Madera that is reasonable to meet at this time.

The recommendation is based upon the definition of an unmet transit need, which includes any essential trip requests by transit-dependent persons for which there is no other convenient means of transportation. Testimony was received regarding frequency and on-time performance of the Madera Area Express (MAX) and the Madera Dial-A-Ride system; however, the comments reflect operational issues and not unmet needs. The MAX and Madera Dial-A-Ride provide transportation services that cover the entire jurisdiction of the city. The City of Madera will continue to monitor both services, particularly the on-time performance of the Madera Dial-A-Ride.

City of Chowchilla

- 1. No public testimony was received regarding the Chowchilla Area Transit Express (CATX) or the City of Chowchilla.***

The recommendation from staff and the SSTAC is that there are no unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet within the jurisdiction of the City of Chowchilla. The Chowchilla Area Transit Express (CATX) provides transportation services that cover the entire jurisdiction of the city. Additionally, the Madera County Connection (MCC) also provides service to the City of Madera and the Children's Hospital of Central California where a connection can be made with the Fresno Area Express (FAX) for trips into Fresno.

County of Madera

1. ***Requests that the Oakhurst and North Fork Areas need a demand response service.*** (Mia Brown – Oakhurst resident; Jim Flanagan – North Fork Chamber of Commerce)

Testimony was received that the Oakhurst and North Fork areas would benefit from a demand response service similar to the Dial-A-Ride service currently operating in the City of Madera. Many residents of the area are transit dependent and need a demand response service that can take them to work, school or shopping.

1. ***Requests that the Senior Bus expand its boundaries and allow the general public to use the service.*** (Jerry Oman – Oakhurst resident; Joanne Foster – Oakhurst resident; Mia Brown – Oakhurst resident)

Testimony was received that the Senior Bus needs to expand its boundaries since some residents are located beyond the designated boundary limit, therefore unable to use the service. Another resident requests that the service be open to the general public since the existing service is being under-utilized by its target demographic.

2. ***Requests that the Escort service expand its boundaries and use a wheelchair accessible van.*** (Jerry Oman – Oakhurst resident; Joanne Foster – Oakhurst resident)

Testimony was received that the Escort service needs to expand its boundaries since some residents are located beyond the designated boundary limit, therefore unable to use the service. An additional request is the need to use a wheelchair accessible van to accommodate disabled and senior residents. A former driver for the Escort service had to lift wheelchair residents by hand into the van.

MCTC staff has reviewed and discussed this testimony with the SSTAC. The recommendation from staff and the SSTAC is that there are no unmet transit needs that are reasonable to meet within the jurisdiction of the County of Madera.

The requests for demand response services for the Eastern Madera County areas of Oakhurst and North Fork are considered unmet transit needs, but are not reasonable to meet at this time. The County has applied for a Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5313 Grant for a comprehensive study of its transit services within Madera County (Dial-A-Ride; CATX; MCC; Senior Bus; Escort Service) to identify ways to operate more efficiently and effectively and to better coordinate its services with the Cities of Madera and Chowchilla. The reasonableness to meet this need in the future will be determined by this study. Both the North Fork and Oakhurst areas are currently served by the Madera County Connection and the Escort Service, with Oakhurst also served by the Senior Bus.

The request to expand the boundaries of the Senior Bus and also allow the general public access to the service are considered unmet transit needs, but are not reasonable to meet at this time. Currently, the boundary of the Senior Bus is as large as one bus can serve. The Senior Bus will also evaluate the possibility of opening the system to the general public. The County has applied for a FTA 5313 Grant to fund a comprehensive study of its transit operations within Madera County, which will determine the reasonableness to meet in the future.

The requests to expand the boundaries of the Escort Service and to use wheelchair accessible vans are considered unmet needs, but are not reasonable to meet at this time. Currently, the boundary of the Escort service is as large as one van can serve. The reasonableness in the future however, will be determined by the

County's proposed comprehensive transit study. The request to make the Escort Service wheelchair accessible is not reasonable to meet at this time since there is insufficient wheelchair ridership demand and cost. The Escort service is a voluntary driver program with a donated county van. The potential for a vehicle retrofit or alternative method to accommodate wheelchair passengers will be evaluated. The County will also evaluate its ADA obligations.

Maintain existing transit systems in Madera County.

Staff and SSTAC recommend that the current public transit systems continue to operate in Madera County. The existing transit systems meet an existing need for public transit services in the county. The existing systems are:

- Madera Transit System - City of Madera (Dial-A-Ride and MAX);
- Chowchilla Area Transit Express - City of Chowchilla;
- Eastern Madera County Escort Service; and
- Eastern Madera County Senior Bus.

RECOMMENDATION

The MCTC staff and SSTAC considered the hearing testimony and recommend the Commission find the following:

- 1. That the Madera County Transportation Commission finds that there are no unmet transit needs reasonable to meet at this time in FY 2004/05 within the jurisdictions of the City of Chowchilla, City of Madera and County of Madera.**

The Madera Area Express (MAX) and the Madera Dial-A-Ride provide transportation services that cover the entire City of Madera.

The Chowchilla Area Transit Express (CATX) provides transportation services that cover the entire City of Chowchilla.

The Madera County Connection (MCC) provides inter-city transportation from Chowchilla, Fairmead, Madera, La Vina, Madera Ranchos and Eastern Madera County to Children's Hospital Central California where a connection can be made to Fresno via the Fresno Area Express (FAX).

The Senior Bus Program and the Escort Service provides transportation to the Eastern Madera County communities, with the Escort Service also serving the Madera Ranchos area.

The County of Madera has applied for a Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5313 Grant for a comprehensive "Strategic Implementation Plan for Madera County Public Transit Services" to provide the County with a fiscally sound and effective plan for delivery of transit services over the next five to ten years. The County desires to develop a cost-effective, well-designed, proactive phased transit implementation plan which, at a minimum, will identify future County public transit needs, including operating, capital, maintenance, and financial requirements. Another important element of the study will be evaluating the potential for regional and inter-regional cooperation and collaboration and the feasibility of integrating services for greater economies of scale in delivering transit services throughout the County.

In the event the FTA 5313 Grant is not approved, the County shall either fund the study in FY2005/06 or provide an alternative evaluation focusing on the Unmet Transits Needs comments prior to the 2005/06 Unmet Transit Needs Public Hearing.

- 2. Maintain existing transit systems in Madera County: Madera Transit System (MAX and Dial-A-Ride) in the City of Madera; Chowchilla Area Transit Express; Eastern Madera County**

Escort Service; and Eastern Madera County Senior Bus.

Action: No action taken due to lack of quorum, continued to July 21, 2004 Policy Board meeting.

V. REAFFIRM ALL ACTIONS TAKEN WHILE SITTING AS THE TRANSPORTATION POLICY COMMITTEE

Action: No action taken due to lack of quorum, continued to July 21, 2004 Policy Board meeting.

VI. ADMINISTRATIVE CONSENT ITEMS

A. Executive Minutes of May 19, 2004

Included in the Commissioner's packet was a copy of the March 16, 2004 Executive Minutes for review.

Action: No action taken due to lack of quorum, continued to July 21, 2004 Policy Board meeting.

Administrative Consent Items: No action taken due to lack of quorum, continued to July 21, 2004 Policy Board meeting.

VII. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Final Transportation Development Act (LTF & STA) – Fund Allocations, LTF Resolution 04-10 and STA 04-11

Included in the Commissioner's packet was a copy of the 2004/05 Transportation Development Act (TDA) Fund estimates and apportionment's for each agency.

MCTC releases preliminary TDA apportionment estimates in February of each year to provide timely budget information for the City of Madera, City of Chowchilla, and County of Madera. The State has released the population and housing estimates for California cities and counties. Included in your package is the final TDA apportionment and reflects the population changes.

Local Transportation Fund (LTF): On February 1, 2004, the county auditor provided MCTC an estimate of moneys to be available for apportionment and allocation during the ensuing fiscal year. The estimate for FY2004-05 is \$2,685,221. The estimate includes moneys anticipated to be deposited in the fund during the ensuing fiscal year and the unrestricted balance anticipated to be available in the fund at the end of the current fiscal year. The unrestricted balance is the balance that is neither allocated, reserved, nor retained in the fund as an unallocated apportionment pursuant to Section 6655.1. The county auditor makes an estimate from such data including those which may be furnished by the State Board of Equalization. The county auditor will furnish a revised or updated estimate of funds available when requested by MCTC staff.

State Transit Assistance (STA): Pursuant to Public Utilities Code Section 99312.7, the State Controller is directed to send a preliminary estimate of STA Funds to each transportation planning agency. For fiscal year 2004/05, there is a \$101,280,432 budgeted according to the most currently information from the Department of Finance. STA allocation estimate for the Madera County area is \$186,678

Action: No action taken due to lack of quorum, continued to July 21, 2004 Policy Board meeting.

VIII. Miscellaneous

A. Items from Caltrans

Alan McCuen, Caltrans District 6 Deputy Director, briefed the Board members on the following items:

1. Acting Caltrans Director Tony Harris will resign effective July 15, 2004. The department's top three management positions are now vacant.
2. The Route 99 Corridor Master Plan is now available for public review at www.dot.ca.gov/dist6/99masterplan

Also there will be three public meetings - in Fresno, Bakersfield and Stockton – that are planned over the next several months. The document is intended to: help Caltrans adopt a universally accepted master plan for Highway 99 and guide public and private investment along it; create an identity for the route; and address the improvements necessary to keep the road safe.

B. Items from Staff

No items from staff.

C. Items from Commissioners

No Items from the Commissioners.

IX. Closed Session

Public employee performance evaluation, Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957 – Executive Director.

Report of Closed Session Actions. Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.1 and 54957.7, any required reports of closed session actions will be made at this time.

This Item will be continued until next the regular Board meeting due to lack of quorum.

X. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

Next meeting set for Wednesday, July 21, 2004.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia S. Taylor-Maley, Executive Director
Madera County Transportation Commission