

MADERA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

EXECUTIVE MINUTES

Date: Wednesday, April 20, 2005
Time: 1:05 P.M.
Place: Madera County Government Center,
Board of Supervisor Chambers

Members Present:

Chairman Gordon Skeels - Councilman, City of Madera
Vice Chair Gary Gilbert – Supervisor, Madera County
Robert Poythress - Councilman, City of Madera
Max Rodriguez – Supervisor, Madera County
Alfred Ginsburg - Councilman, City of Chowchilla

Members Absent:

Frank Bigelow – Supervisor, Madera County

Policy Advisory Committee:

Above Members present and Caltrans Representatives:
Alan McCuen

MCTC Staff Present:

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

MCTC sitting as the Transportation Policy Committee.

I.

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

A.

REMOVE II Grant Program

On March 17, 2005 the Air District Board approved the REMOVE II program (REduce MOtor Vehicle Emissions), which was formerly introduced and named the Mobile Source Emission reduction Incentive Program (MSERIP). The REMOVE II program provides incentives for projects included in six different categories (detailed descriptions were included in the Commissioner's packet):

- E-Mobility (telecommunications)
- Bicycle Infrastructure
- Public Transportation and Commuter Vanpool Passenger Subsidy
- Alternative Fuel Mechanic Training
- Light-and-Medium-Duty Vehicle
- Light-Duty Vehicle Retirement

On March 28, 2005, the Air District made applications for the program available. Applications will be accepted beginning on April 22, 2005 and will be funded on a "first-come, first served" basis. Therefore, it is recommended that applications be completed and returned to the Air District as soon as possible. It is expected

that projects will be approved as early as June 2005.

The Air District estimates that approximately \$3.7 million will be available in the first year of the program. MCTC staff will continue to work with the Air District to identify additional categories, including traffic flow improvements, that could be eligible for REMOVE II funding. Please use the Air District website (www.valleyair.org) or contact MCTC staff for additional information.

Action: Information and Discussion Only.

B. *San Joaquin Valley Intelligent Transportation Systems Architecture Maintenance Plan – Resolution 05-04*

Released in 2001, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Final Rule and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Policy requires regions, which use Highway Trust Funds, to establish a regional Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Architecture/ Strategic Deployment Plan that complies with the National ITS Architecture. In response, the eight counties within the San Joaquin Valley developed and adopted the San Joaquin Valley ITS Strategic Deployment Plan in September 2001. The plan fosters the integration of regional ITS systems and defines the system components, key functions, stakeholders and information sharing. It guides the development and deployment of ITS projects and safeguards against the loss of future funding for projects.

The Final Rule/ Policy further required the development and implementation of an Architecture Maintenance Plan by April 2005. Over the past seven months, the eight Valley MPOs have been working with Caltrans and FHWA to develop a Maintenance Plan that would fulfill federal requirements. As ITS projects are implemented, the regional ITS Architecture will need to be updated to reflect new ITS priorities and strategies. The goal of the Maintenance Plan is to guide controlled updates to the regional ITS architecture baseline, so that it continues to accurately reflect the region's existing ITS capabilities and future plans.

Included in the Commissioner's packet was a copy of the ITS Maintenance Plan.

Action: Approve the San Joaquin Valley ITS Maintenance Plan by Resolution 05-04.

C. *Safe Routes to School (SR2S) – 6th Cycle*

Applications for the 6th Cycle of SR2S funds are now being accepted and are due June 30, 2005. Details can be found at the following website <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/saferoute2.htm>. Included in the Commissioner's packet where the revised guidelines and application form. A workshop on the Safe Routes to School (SR2S) funding will be held on May 3rd in Fresno. The workshop will review the guidelines, discuss the evaluation process and review what comprises a good application. It was recommended that those who wish to submit an application attend the workshop. The workshop will be at the Caltrans Manchester Office from 1:00pm – 3:00pm.

Action: Information and Discussion Only.

D. *Memorandum of Understanding – Comprehensive Federal Transportation Planning – Madera County Transportation Commission / State of California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) – Resolution 05-05*

In its role as a federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and state designated Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA), the Madera County Transportation Commission (MCTC) is required to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the State of California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) that covers the roles and responsibilities of both the MPO and Caltrans in federal planning and programming processes. As part of a comprehensive review of all 18 California MPO's Overall Work Programs for FY 2004-05, the FHWA directed Caltrans and all California MPOs to review and update their MOUs if necessary. FHWA identified a deadline of June 30, 2005 for execution of the agreements. As a result of this review, a revised and updated MOU (included) was developed by the involved stakeholders.

In general, the MOU covers state and MPO requirements for long range planning and programming activities, federal clearinghouse requirements, public participation, consultation with Native American Tribal Governments,

data collection, project cost estimates, air quality conformity responsibilities and certification requirements. From an administrative perspective the MOU is necessary to ensure the continuous flow of various state and federal transportation revenues to both the MCTC and its local agencies. A copy of the MOU was included in the Commissioner's packet.

Action: Approve Memorandum of Understanding – Comprehensive Federal Transportation Planning – Madera County Transportation Commission / State of California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) by Resolution 05-05 and authorize the MCTC Policy Board Chairman to sign the agreement.

Transportation Consent Calendar Action: Upon motion by Commissioner Ginsburg, seconded by Commissioner Gilbert, to approve the Transportation Consent Calendar (Item III-A thru D). A vote was called and the motion carried.

IV. TRANSPORTATION ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Public Hearing: “Unmet Transit Needs” within Madera County for FY 2005-06 – Video Conference Locations: Oakhurst Community College, North Fork Public Library and Chowchilla Public Library

This time is reserved for public comments related to the Public Hearing on “Unmet Transit Needs” within Madera County.

Under the California Transportation Development Act, this hearing opportunity is provided annually to take testimony on potential unmet transit needs within the region. The Commission must, subsequent to the hearing, make a determination whether the needs presented are “reasonable” to meet. After all “reasonable” needs have been met through the expansion of existing services, or the creation of new transit systems, the Commission may release remaining TDA funds for street and road purposes (repair, reconstruction, etc.).

The public, interested agencies, and civic groups are encouraged to appear and state those transportation needs which they feel are not currently being met by existing transit services. Testimony should be as specific as possible with regard to those citizens, or groups of citizens, not currently served by transit, the requested type and amount of transit service, the geographic area in which service is needed, and any other supporting evidence of information which will help in the evaluation of the “reasonableness” of the requested service.

The Social Service Transportation Advisory Council (SSTAC) will meet on April 28, 2005 to review the testimony from this hearing and will make their recommendation along with MCTC staff at the Commission's next Board meeting on May 18, 2005. At that time the MCTC Policy Board must determine that public transportation needs within Madera County will be reasonably met in FY 2005/06 prior to approving claims of Local Transportation Funds for streets and roads purposes.

1:10 p.m. Chairman Skeels opened the floor for public comment.

Testimony received is as follows:

Chowchilla

Jenny Wyburg (DSS Chowchilla)

Would like to see public transportation between Madera and Merced. Currently, it is hard to find employment in Chowchilla. As a result, many Chowchilla residents look for employment in neighboring Merced and Madera. The hours of the MCC service do not work with what's needed for Chowchilla residents. 200 families are in DSS services, with 65-70% needing help with transportation. Longer and later hours are needed. Most clients do not work 8-5. There is too long of a wait to get a return bus back to Chowchilla.

Commissioner Ginsburg: How are those people in DSS getting to work now?

There are 200 families in the welfare to work system. The 65-70% that need help with transportation includes those who are seeking work. Some workers have vehicles, but they are unreliable. Transit stops at schools of

higher education are needed as well (Merced and Madera Junior Colleges).

Oakhurst

Marissa Holsman (Clinic supervisor for Mental Health)

Getting clients from Oakhurst down to Madera is a problem. There is only one opportunity for transit to Madera. Mountain residents have to stay in Madera for a long time to catch a bus back home. This is a problem for mothers with children.

Stigma of senior bus; clients in recovery do not want to disclose they are with behavioral or mental health services. Another bus is needed to reduce the stigma.

There is not enough time allowed to get to other areas. Youth in North Fork do not have a way to get from North Fork to the recreational activities in Oakhurst.

Gwen Gadberry (Senior Citizens Assembly Representative)

Supports the UTN Process. Happy about regional study that is going to take place.

Joanne Foster (Sierra Senior Center)

Worries about wheelchair bound seniors who have difficulty getting to the city of Madera. Escort does not have a wheelchair lift.

Madera

Juan Sanchez

Buses do not come on time (MCC and MAX), which causes him to be late for school.

Maria Maya

The bus often comes late on Saturdays. It's supposed to arrive at 10, but sometimes does not arrive until 11:30 or 12.

Benches and shelters are needed to shield passengers from the elements. There are a lot of elderly riders and mothers with children. She needs to take the bus everyday.

MAX needs a stop at Magnolia/ Yosemite.

Paula Contreras

There needs to be another stop from Yosemite (North). Magnolia and Yosemite needs a stop.

She feels endangered by homeless mission near Flume. It would be safer for a stop to be located on Magnolia for senior citizens in the Senior Citizen apartments on Mace.

Marti Martz

Yosemite Manor senior living center

Accessibility and timeliness are issues for the MAX. Rarely are MAX buses on time. Perhaps two MAX buses with lifts would allow the MAX to be on time.

Rarely are DAR buses within the 30-minute time window. Bad dispatching is a possible cause. She would wait at a stop and see two DAR buses drive by – sign of poor coordination. She used to be a police dispatcher, so she knows how dispatching should work. An analysis of how buses are dispatched and scheduled is needed.

The MAX bus stops one block away from the Camarena Health Center. The Northbound stop is two blocks away. The bus should stop at Camarena Health Center, much like it stops at the Frank Bergon Center. Southbound passengers from Bergon have to walk one block to catch the bus.

The connection times to the Fresno Area Express (FAX) is a problem. It is near impossible to get to Fresno via

connection to the Valley Children's Hospital. The MCC bus that connects at the Children's Hospital from Fresno gets to the Downtown Intermodal too late for a ride home. Extra time should be added before and after.

The Movie Theater in Madera is open from 2pm to the evening. There would be a lot of seniors riding the MAX if it could divert from Wal-Mart and go to theater.

Why are the radios and dispatcher radios so loud? Isn't this a safety issue?

Baldwin Moy CRLA. (Assistance to low income farm workers)

Possibility of publicly funded/subsidized transportation for farm workers. Need to look into vanpools.

Casino workers: danger of driving to and from work. Are often preyed upon as well. A resident was followed and targeted for crime. Possibility of providing transit for the workers.

Complaints from Spanish riders of Bilingual capabilities of dispatchers and drivers. Culturally insensitive/ rude to passengers. Wrote a letter about this issue one year ago and still sees the same problems.

Environmental issue as well of single drivers.

Janet Sanchez, Madera County Community Justice,

Her agency provides food services every Friday to Lake Street. Covers do not protect from sun and benches are unusable. Does not cover the riders.

Family works for the Casino could not make it to the hearing because of time. Her sister worked the graveyard shift and was followed from work. Once a month there is a car accident coming down from the casino. Workers try to carpool, but have a hard time coordinating with shifts. If petitions are needed, she will provide them. It is a lot safer if there is a crowd of people rather than singular.

Commissioner Gilbert: Could Casino provide shift and potential ridership info?

350 riders from Madera and 150 from Chowchilla.

Gloria Durado

Need more big MAX buses because the small ones get full fast going to Wal-Mart and WIC. Sometimes the small buses get full everyday. The first week of the month is the busiest. Waited an hour later for the bus to pick her up.

Yolanda Garcia Garcia

Wanted to come and represent workers from Chuckchansi Resort and Casino. She has been driving for one year to the casino and it is very dangerous. Drivers get very sleepy when going home at night. There are a lot of accidents because of a lack of sleep. Lack of sleep has caused her to almost go off the road four times. Many workers would like a bus to the Casino because they need to work. If you (MCTC Policy Board) could think it over, it would be good for the people. She has the name of workers who could not come because they were working.

Commissioner Gilbert: could you get shift info (to better understand when most riders need transit)?

11pm-7am. In the kitchen where she works, there is herself and three others.

Frank Bonilla

The MAX bus is very full so he has to stand up and hold to the rail. On swap meet days, the MAX is very full. Will the MAX bus go to the other side of the shopping area as well?

He has a problem with the benches. When it is raining and sunny the bus does not provide any shelter.

A shelter/bench is also needed at Wal-Mart.

He has problem going to Kaiser hospital in Fresno. Difficulty leaving from Children's hospital. He has epilepsy and cannot drive a car.

Everyone should ride the bus and see what it is like.

Deborah Van Allen

More bike racks on the buses are needed.

Mary Glenn,

Asked by many community residents to express the need for a MAX stop at Ellis Street and the James Munroe School. Currently, the MAX bus does not go out that way (North part of the City of Madera). MAX stops 2 miles away (5 or 6 blocks). A senior complex in that same area also needs a stop.

Buses are often late. When people don't have their money ready, it further delays the buses. You need to extend the stops by more time to accommodate loading passengers.

More buses and bus drivers are needed. The bus drivers need to be recognized for their work as well.

Being no further comments, Chairman Skeels closed the public hearing at 2:20 p.m.

Action: Receive Testimony – Information and Discussion Only.

B. *Public Hearing: 2004 Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) Amendment No. 5 – Resolution 04-13 Amendment No. 5*

This amendment adjusts existing projects to conform to federal financial constraint requirements in addition to programming FY 04/05 through FY 06/07 Congestion Management and Air Quality (CMAQ) program apportionments. The affected projects are attached to Resolution 04-13 Amendment No. 5 for your review. This amendment is complex, is undergoing last minute changes and is expected to require further refinements prior to the meeting; therefore, the final program of projects will be handed out at the meeting.

Chairman Skeels opened the public hearing at 2:21 p.m. Being no public comments, the public hearing was closed at 2:22 p.m.

Action: Upon motion by Commissioner Gilbert, seconded by Commissioner Poythress to approve Resolution 04-13 Amendment No. 5. A vote was called and the motion carried.

C. *Public Hearing: 8-Hour Conformity Analysis for the Federally Approved 2004 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) & 2004 Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) – Resolution 05-06*

The U.S. EPA designated the San Joaquin Valley a Serious Nonattainment area for the new 8-hour ozone standard, effective June 15, 2004. Conformity for the 8-hour ozone standard applies one year after the effective date (June 15, 2005). EPA issued a final rule on July 1, 2004 that amended the transportation conformity rule to include criteria and procedures for the new 8-hour ozone national ambient air quality standard.

Section 93.109 (e) of the conformity rule addresses regional conformity tests in 8-hour ozone areas that have 1-hour ozone SIPs. The conformity rule indicates that 8-hour areas with adequate or approved 1-hour budgets must use these budgets for 8-hour conformity before 8-hour budgets are available.

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).

Chairman Skeels opened the public hearing at 2:23 p.m. Being no public comments, the public hearing was closed at 2:24 p.m.

Action: Upon motion by Commissioner Gilbert, seconded by Commissioner Rodriguez to adopt the 2005 8-Hour Ozone Air Quality Conformity Determination by Resolution 05-06. A vote was called and the motion carried.

D. *Madera County Transportation Commission Expedited Project Selection Process*

The programming of projects in the Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) is subject to Federal Financial Constraint guidelines which require that MCTC limit programming to the apportionment level of each year for each funding Program in the three year triennial element. Apportionments not spent in three years are subject to lapse per AB 1012. Projects can only be obligated from the current year of the triennial element; however projects can be advanced from the second and third triennial year to the first by administrative amendment provided that financial constraint is maintained. The constraint requirement implies that a corresponding dollar value in projects would move back in the FTIP to make room under the programming limit for the advanced project(s).

Implementation of these regulations is more difficult than it sounds in that not many agencies are willing to move their project back in a timely manner. When a project schedule is delayed it is difficult for MCTC staff to determine in advance that the delay has occurred and by the time it becomes apparent it may be too late to process amendments to advance an alternative project prior to funding lapse. In an effort to provide an alternate method of dealing with this type of situation, FHWA and Caltrans allow MPO's to adopt an Expedited Project Selection Procedure which establishes criteria for advancing projects within the financially constrained triennial element. The need for a more flexible and timely procedure is a product of the much more rigorous financial constraint scrutiny implemented by FHWA as a result of the state budget crises. In short, once this procedure is adopted, projects in the second and third year of the triennial element can be advanced and obligated without amendments. Staff must continue to monitor the program to insure that the triennial element remains financially constrained, however much needed flexibility is created by this expedited process.

Action: Upon motion by Commissioner Ginsburg, seconded by Commissioner Poythress to authorize the Executive Director to sign and submit the MCTC Expedited Project Selection Process to Caltrans and FHWA. A vote was called and the motion carried.

E. *California Transportation Commission State Transportation Improvement Program – Fund Estimate Workshop*

The California Transportation Commission held a 2006 State Transportation Improvement Program Fund Estimate Workshop in Stockton on Wednesday, April 13, 2005. Included in the Commissioner's packet was a copy of the Draft 2006 Fund Estimate Assumptions to be presented at the workshop. Staff provided a verbal report.

Action: Information and Discussion Only.

F. *Rural Roads More Dangerous – Study Says*

At the request of Commissioner Gilbert, included in the Commissioner's packet was a copy of an article from the California Chamber of Commerce - "Rural Roads More Dangerous". The article was included in the Commissioners packet for discussion.

Action: Information and Discussion Only.

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

Action: The Commission unanimously approved to reaffirm all actions taken while sitting as the Transportation Policy Committee.

VI. ADMINISTRATIVE CONSENT ITEMS

A. *Executive Minutes of March 23, 2005*

Included in the Commissioner's packet was a copy of the March 23, 2005 Executive Minutes for review.

Administrative Consent Calendar Action: The Commission unanimously approved the Administrative Consent Calendar (Item VI.-A). A vote was called and the motion carried.

VII. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

No Administrative Action/Discussion Items

VIII. Miscellaneous

A. *Items from Caltrans*

Mr. McCuen updated the Commission on current projects in Madera County.

B. *Items from Staff*

Staff reported that the bus schedule and information is now available on the Commission website at www.maderactc.org.

C. *Items from Commissioners*

Commissioner Gilbert reported that construction begins on the new Government Center in August and that the old parking lot will be closed. Parking will be diverted to Yosemite Ave. Commissioner Gilbert's concern is for the safety of the public crossing Yosemite Ave. He suggested that a temporary traffic light be installed.

IX. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

Next meeting set for Wednesday, June 8, 2005.

Respectfully Submitted,

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