
**SONOMA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

A G E N D A

**Monday, December 16, 2002
4:00 p.m.**

***Sonoma County Open Space District
747 Mendocino Avenue, Suite 100
Santa Rosa, California***

Directors

Jake Mackenzie, Chair
Rohnert Park

Paul Kelley, V. Chair
Sonoma County

Steve Allen
Windsor

Joe Costello
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Geoffrey Fox
Cotati

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Cloverdale

Mike Kerns
Sonoma County

Lisa Schaffner
Healdsburg

Tim Smith
Sonoma County

Sam Spooner
Sebastopol

Sharon Wright
Santa Rosa

ITEM

- I.** Introductions
- II.** Consent Items - **DISCUSSION/ACTION**
 - A. Approval of Minutes from November 18, 2002
 - B. Approval of Agenda
- III.** Announcements/Reports – **DISCUSSION**
 - A. Sales Tax Measures in November 2002
 - B. 2003 Meeting Schedule
- IV.** Project Updates – **DISCUSSION**
 - A. SMART
 - B. Highway 101
- V.** Countywide Transportation Capital Funding Partnership – **DISCUSSION/ACTION**
 - A. Staff Report
 - B. CAC Discussion and Recommendation to SCTA
- VI.** Announcements / Other Business - **DISCUSSION**
- VII.** Adjournment - **ACTION**

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**The next S C T A meeting will be held January 13, 2003
The next C A C meeting will be held January 27, 2003**

SONOMA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES November 18, 2002

ITEM

Chair Bob Anderson called the meeting to order. This was a joint meeting of the CAC and Paratransit Coordinating Committee (PCC) to discuss the 2002 Transit Forum.

I. Introductions

Introductions were made by the CAC and PCC members.

II. 2002 Transit Forum

Janet Spilman noted that SCTA did not receive many comments from people concerning the forum so there were not many to include in the final report.

May Huddleston said Joel Woodhull's remarks at the forum were very interesting. She said she was unhappy that so many of the remarks were critical in nature however.

Jim Caddick said there were a lot of incorrect statements made that went uncorrected, but it was more or less the only place for people to air their grievances.

George Ellman said that if it were a public meeting, then there would be some people who come and lodge complaints. He said that in summarizing the comments made, that it was clear that more service is needed. The bottom line is that it always comes down to money that the providers don't have. People will need to get on board when it comes time to pass a sales tax measure. Those measures need to be supported.

Linda Branscomb agreed with Mr. Ellman and said it was important to get people's feedback. We need to know their concerns.

Ms. Huddleston said she didn't think there were enough transit providers who attended the forum that were very high up in the ranks to hear the complaints being made.

Ms. Spilman thanked the PCC and CAC members for all their help in setting up the forum. She asked what they thought worked and what didn't (e.g., location, time of day, time of year).

Mr. Ellman asked that the SCTA Board comment on the report.

Dennis Battenberg said the report was being presented to the Board at their December meeting.

Chair Anderson asked Jim Ryan, Petaluma Public Facilities and Services, and Bryan Albee, Sonoma County Transit, if they have a set of benchmarks for tracking things from year to year.

Mr. Albee said their bus performance is tied mainly to paratransit. He had just given his first report to the PCC before the CAC joined the meeting. He said Sonoma County Transit is currently working on their budget for 2005. Both ridership and revenue has dropped for the first time in 13 years. He said there is room for improvement on coordination, while there is no room for inefficiencies in the system.

Chair Anderson said it was a good sign that there were few complaints regarding fixed route bus service.

Mr. Albee said improvements were needed on Sunday service and late night service and that there would be incremental improvements as money permitted. All the requests coming in now concerned paratransit bus service. It needs to be brought up to the same level of service as fixed route, however, to do that, money will have to come from fixed route service.

Mr. Battenberg asked about having the transit forum on cable television next year.

Ms. Spilman said that while the broadcasting was free, filming was not.

Mr. Caddick thought that the change to an afternoon time from the previous year was a good thing.

Mr. Battenberg said it might have been a little too late for people who worked.

Mr. Albee said when revenue is down marketing costs go down. He said the transit operators do want to hear from the riders about what is bad, so they can fix it, and what is good, so they can capitalize on it.

It was noted that there is a large 65+ population in Sonoma County and that group represents a large ridership base. Education on riding a bus is key. This applies to paratransit users and seniors. It's more likely they would use it if they were familiar with how it works.

Mr. Caddick said that programs like a free week should occur more often, not just once a year or on a one-time only basis. More frequent programs would encourage more ridership.

Mr. Albee said another good location for the forum would be right across from the Santa Rosa transit mall.

Mr. Caddick suggested having the next forum in the springtime, which would allow for longer daylight. Serving refreshments might also be good.

Mr. Albee said that if it was held in the spring, then he could talk more about the immediate financial picture.

Mr. Battenberg suggested advertising on the radio next time.

Mr. Caddick thanked Janet Spilman for all her hard work and long hours, particularly getting it filmed and having hearing devices available.

Chair Anderson asked that people be told about the final report being presented to the SCTA Board in December.

III. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Angela Caruso
Executive Assistant, SCTA



ROADS, RAILS AND REJECTION

November 20, 2002

Lee Hochberg of Oregon Public Broadcasting has the story of Washington State voters' thoughts on taxation and transportation.

[Click here to watch this segment in streaming video](#)

[Click here to listen to this segment in RealAudio](#)

LEE HOCHBERG: All over the country, as cities have spread to suburbs and suburbs to more suburbs, transportation issues are stirring up debate. In the recent election, there were 41 ballot measures in the recent elections, representing a potential investment of as much as \$117 billion. Election Day in Seattle, was the typical muddle on the region's freeways.

SPOKESMAN: Well, we have a lot of slow traffic. Boy, the northbound backup still starting right around Alboro up past I-90. Going to take you about 35 minutes to get through that mess.

LEE HOCHBERG: The Seattle area has some of the worst traffic congestion in the country. In the election, three ballot initiatives offered different approaches to the problem.

SPOKESMAN: It's bumper to bumper in Renton.

LEE HOCHBERG: Initiative R-51 was a measure to boost the state gasoline tax nine cents per gallon, raising almost \$8 billion for highway and transit projects. It was rejected overwhelmingly. Initiative 767 was a statewide anti-tax protest, cutting transportation funding by slashing the amount car owners pay to license their cars. Voters passed that measure. So there were two apparent anti- transportation votes. But City of Seattle voters, asked to pony up \$1.7 billion to build a 14-mile monorail line, approved that measure by a sliver-thin 800 votes. So that's one mandate-- a narrow one-- for transportation.

SPOKESMAN: With 51 not just failing, 51 getting trounced, 776 passes, that's going to strip a bunch of other transportation funding.

LEE HOCHBERG: In a state where transportation generally is considered the top public policy problem, citizens and civic leaders now are trying to make sense of the results.

SPOKESMAN: Where do we go from here amidst all of this chaos?

SPOKESMAN: Obviously we're very, very disappointed.

LEE HOCHBERG: Governor Gary Locke had supported the gas tax as crucial to repair and expand state highways. Voters and the state legislature three years ago had stripped billions of dollars away from transportation.

SPOKESMAN: Transportation remains a critical issue for our state. It simply cannot be ignored.

LEE HOCHBERG: Opponents of 51, a low-funded and unlikely coalition of anti-tax conservatives and liberal environmentalists, said the voters sent a clear message in opposing a road-heavy measure. Aaron Ostrom of the conservation group 1,000 Friends of Washington.

AARON OSTROM: The build-our-way-out-of-it approach to traffic doesn't work, and the public I think actually recognizes that. People are saying in large majorities, "we can't build our way out of it. We have to improve transportation choices if we're really going to deal with traffic."

LEE HOCHBERG: Yet despite the environmentalists' protest, measure 51 in some ways was pro-environment. It included \$1.2 billion for mass transit, the most the state has ever dedicated for that purpose. Democratic consultant Cathy Allen says there's a simpler explanation for the vote, in a state with the country's highest unemployment rate.

CATHY ALLEN: Perhaps what we have to learn is don't go asking the public for more when all they see is less. When they see less money, less jobs, the fact is that this is no time to give the public a new bill.

LEE HOCHBERG: Allen says the voters' second anti-transportation vote, reducing the price of car tabs and therefore slashing state transportation funding, was also a simple pocketbook vote.

CATHY ALLEN: This was a simple matter of reading the ballot title and deciding, "do I want to spend less? Yeah, I want to spend less." Fine.

LEE HOCHBERG: Nationwide as well, many voters rejected proposed funding measures for transportation. But a "Seattle Times" poll showed there was more to the voters' message. It found many Washingtonians were willing to pay a higher gasoline tax, but were unconvinced that it would be spent wisely. Measure 51, for example, would have raised money to replace Seattle's heavily traveled but earthquake-vulnerable viaduct along its waterfront, but not enough money to finish the job. Many voters feared they'd get stuck paying more later.

JIM IMPETT: I'm doubtful about the way the money is allocated. Nothing seems to be... going to be finished. They're going to study here and study there.

LEE HOCHBERG: Initiative 51's leaders say their statewide measure also may have been too broad, including transit for Seattle, highways for auto-dependent suburbs, and projects for the largely rural rest of the state. For every voter, there was something to be built elsewhere to vote against. State Transportation Commission Chairman Aubrey Davis.

AUBREY DAVIS: If you have a vote on something statewide, you have to appeal to an

awful lot, a variety of interests. By the time you do that, you're then accused of, "well, nothing for me in it," which is what some people were saying. I don't see that "nothing you're going to do is going to help me. Why should I vote for it?"

LEE HOCHBERG: With all of the wariness about paying taxes and how they're spent, how then did Seattle's monorail get approved? Even if it was by just a few hundred votes, it's a project that will build a single line connecting only one-quarter of the city to downtown. Co-sponsor Peter Sherwin suggests the answer may be that very narrowness of its mission.

PETER SHERWIN: It was very clear that that's what it was. One phase, 14 miles, that would be completed around 2007, 2009. There was one specific tax, it was dedicated to that.

LEE HOCHBERG: It helped that Seattle has a happy history with monorail, from its 40-year experience with a short route built for the city's 1962 World's Fair. Technology captured enough voters' imaginations to carry the initiative.

SANDRA FISCHER: It is kind of cool, and I think that you can build those easily in cities, you can put them on freeways, you can put them all over the place. And it's kind of cool.

PETER SHERWIN: You can't get a better candidate than the monorail. The monorail is great. People know it, they like it, it's fun. It's fun to ride. There's nothing wrong with transit, public transit, being fun.

SPOKESPERSON: Whoo! Vote yes for the monorail!

LEE HOCHBERG: And the monorail campaign had a grassroots origin that may have helped it eke out a victory. The idea for the project came from a Seattle cabdriver. It was approved by voter initiative three years ago, but ignored by the city council until another voter initiative forced the issue.

CATHY ALLEN: The monorail had a story. Where everyone else had facts and figures and whatever, they had a story: A taxicab driver with a lot of folks who wanted to beat city hall and build a train that could. And frankly, I think that's what people bought into.

LEE HOCHBERG: But monorail opponents say its narrow victory hardly amounts to people buying into transportation, and to transportation planners, the notion that mass transit needs to be packaged into a story to get public approval is alarming.

AUBREY DAVIS: Well, the monorail... we can't fund our highway system the way that... if we do one highway at a time, for one neighborhood at a time, we could probably get some money for that. But I don't know how we'd build a state system that way. I don't think that that process isn't going to work.

LEE HOCHBERG: Transportation official Davis fears the Washington State election and what it showed about what voters will approve, portend bad things for the nation's future transportation needs.

AUBREY DAVIS: Does it mean everybody has to have peanut butter so everybody gets a piece of everything before they vote yes? I do not think our society can succeed if we do

that. If we have to do only what the voters will vote for for taxes, it will be very few things that happen, I think.

LEE HOCHBERG: Washington's governor says he plans to take the voters' messages back to the state legislature and try again to get it to craft a transportation plan.



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Committee Meeting Dates for 2003

Month	SCTA	SMART	TAC	CAC	PCC	CBAC
January	13	15 Novato	23	27	28	None
February	10	19 Petaluma	27	24	None	3
March	10	19 Novato	27	31	25	None
April	14	16 Petaluma	24	28	None	7
May	12	21 Novato	22	19*	27	None
June	9	18 Petaluma	26	30	None	2
July	14	16 Novato	24	28	22	None
August	11	20 Petaluma	28	25	None	4
September	8	17 Novato	25	29	23	None
October	13	15 Petaluma	23	27	None	6
November	10	19 Novato	20*	24	25	None
December	8	17 Petaluma	18*	29	None	1

Meeting	Frequency*	Time	Place
SCTA Sonoma County Transportation Authority	2 nd Monday of each month	3:15 p.m.	PRMD Hearing Room, 2550 Ventura Avenue, Santa Rosa
SMART Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit	3 rd Wednesday of each month	2:00 p.m.	Alternating between: Novato City Council Chambers 908 Machin Avenue, Novato Petaluma Community Center 320 North McDowell Blvd., Petaluma
TAC Technical Advisory Committee	4 th Thursday of each month	1:30 p.m.	City of Santa Rosa Public Works, Rm. 5 69 Stony Circle, Santa Rosa
CAC Citizens Advisory Committee	Last Monday of each month	4:00 p.m.	So. Co. Open Space District, Suite 100 747 Mendocino Avenue, Santa Rosa
PCC Paratransit Coordinating Committee	4 th Tuesday of every other month	1:30 p.m.	So. Co. Public Works, Suite B 100 2300 County Center Drive, Santa Rosa
CBAC Countywide Bicycle Advisory Committee	1 st Monday of every other month	4:00 p.m.	So. Co. Transit, Conference Room 355 W. Robles Avenue, Santa Rosa

* Please note that some meetings dates have been changed from their regularly scheduled date due to holidays. Dates may also change due to unforeseen reasons. Changes will be noticed on meeting agendas in advance.

<p style="text-align: center;">CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE STAFF REPORT</p>
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DATE: December 16, 2002

TO: Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

FROM: Janet Spilman, Transportation Planner

SUBJECT: ITEM V: Countywide Transportation Capital Funding Partnership

ISSUE:

The SCTA has expressed interest in developing alternatives for a funding program that can generate revenue for projects that are affected by growth and are on a multi-jurisdictional scale. The SCTA has agreed to the basic necessity of a new funding mechanism and has also agreed that recipient projects would be taken from the list of projects in the 2001 Countywide Transportation Plan for Sonoma County. At the November SCTA meeting the CAC was directed to meet in December and consider the issue.

BACKGROUND:

At the October meeting the CAC discussed this issue. They considered the TACs recommendation of potential funding mechanisms:

- The first approach would require a negotiated agreement amongst all of the jurisdictions and would allow each jurisdiction flexibility in how they meet the requirements of the agreement. Arriving at an agreement will require the participation and approval of each jurisdiction. The level of funding from each jurisdiction for each project would be determined in the agreement, as would the method of participation. The agreements then would be amongst the jurisdictions and the SCTA. The SCTA would serve as facilitator and potentially a participant with matching funds. A similar procedure occurs amongst the transit operators through the Coordinated Claims process each year.
- The second approach calls for a countywide fee on new development. There are many possible variations on the implementation of a fee. A regional fee could be implemented or an arrangement can be made with each jurisdiction based on its fee structure. Fees could be attached on a universal basis to a per unit cost for residential development and per square foot cost for commercial development or they could be levied on a per trip basis.
A Joint Powers Authority or similar structure would be established enabling the SCTA to act as administrator of the fund and would collect and hold funds dedicated to specific agreed upon projects.

Both of these funding mechanisms require a fairly complex process. Staff is consulting with county counsel and outside consultants to determine the viability of these mechanisms and secondly the procedure for implementation.

CURRENT CONSIDERATIONS

Recent conversation with several consultants have led to the following questions:

- 1) Given development restrictions, will a transportation mitigation fee generate enough money to have a significant impact on funding the projects?
- 2) How does a fee affect passage of a sales tax measure? These mechanisms have been successfully linked in other counties.
- 3) What other fees or tax measures will be considered in the near future and what impact will that have on new development.

REQUESTED ACTION:

Consider the general merits and options for a Countywide Transportation Capital Funding Partnership and report to the SCTA in February.