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County  
Transportation  
Authority

*Keeping Sonoma County Moving*

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## **Transit - Paratransit Coordinating Committee**

### **AGENDA**

Tuesday, January 16, 2007, 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.  
PRMD Conference Room  
2550 Ventura Avenue, Santa Rosa

**ITEM:**

2:00 -2:45PM

- I. Introductions
- II. Public comments on items not on agenda
- III. Consent Items – DISCUSSION/ACTION
  - A. Approval of the agenda
  - B. Approval of Minutes: December 5, 2006
- IV. Election of TPCC Officers
- IV. Reports – INFORMATION
  - A. Transit Agencies
  - B. Other Agencies
  - C. SCTA Reports

2:45-3:30PM

- V. Intake for the Metropolitan Transportation Commission.  
Transportation needs of persons with disabilities, older adults, and persons of low-income status in Sonoma County with Jan Garrett of the Center for Independent Living Berkeley and Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates\*
- VI. Adjourn – ACTION

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The next **SCTA** meeting is February 5, 2007  
The next **TPCC** meeting is March 20, 2007

**Suzanne Smith**  
Executive Director

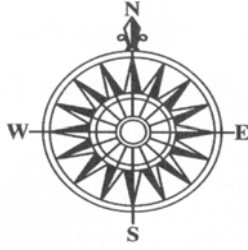
520 Mendocino Avenue  
Suite 240  
Santa Rosa, CA 95401  
PH: 707-565-5373  
FAX: 707-565-5370

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Click on "Meetings and Agendas," then "TPCC Agenda Packets"

The TPCC agenda is available in pdf format. Please call if needed in MS Word.



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## TRANSIT-PARATRANSIT MEETING MINUTES

December 5, 2006

Dennis Battenberg	TPCC
Robert Brown	Becoming Independent
Gail Burge	Petaluma People Services
Janice Duarte-Cordova	Southwest Adult Day Services
Jodi Curtis	Sonoma County Transit
Robert Cuneo	Citizen
Daniel Dionne	Pride Industries
Donald Hughes	Volunteer Wheels
Michael Ivory	City of Santa Rosa
Valerie McKamey	CA Dept. of Rehabilitation
Cynthia B. Petersen	Golden Gate Bridge, Highway & Transportation District
Rabon Saip	O.A.T.S. (Older Adults Transportation Survey)
Robert Silverman	O.A.T.S. (Older Adults Transportation Survey)
Claire Spector	American Philharmonic of Sonoma County
Katherine Taylor	Sonoma County Area Agency on Aging
Elizabeth J. Tipon	Area Agency on Aging
Jim Wagner	Sonoma County Transit

SCTA Staff Present: Nina Donofrio, Lynne March

I. Introductions

Introductions were made.

II. Public comment on items not on agenda

There were no public comments.

III. Consent Items – DISCUSSION/ACTION

A. Approval of the agenda

Approved as submitted.

B. Approval of July 18, 2006 Minutes

Approved as submitted.

#### IV. Reports – INFORMATION

##### A. Transit Agencies

###### *Sonoma County Transit:*

Jodi Curtis reported that the agency is looking into purchasing Trapeze Nova scheduling software to be installed in early 2007. This will increase productivity. They are also replacing most Paratransit sedans with six mini-vans, hopefully by 2007. It is possible that more express routes may be added to fixed route service in the future.

Jim Wagner announced that both the Windsor depot and Petaluma transit mall are in progress. They are looking into moving the Petaluma Transit Mall at Copeland and Fourth Streets around May or June. The project will consolidate city, county, and regional services into one location.

Groundbreaking for the Cotati Intermodal facility is scheduled to possibly take place after the first of the year. This project is expected to be completed in the spring of 2007.

###### *Santa Rosa:*

Mike Ivory reported that Santa Rosa has been awarded a grant for the Transit Mall. This will provide improved lighting and increased security. A new NEXT-BUS schedule system will be provided for some fixed routes that will show arrival times for buses. There will also be a new display of public art. MTC is also researching "Way Finder," a posted directional system to facilitate finding the transit area, which will be in place in a quarter-mile loop around the Transit Mall. Plans are under way for concessionaires, a newsstand, bicycle shop and a mobile transit kiosk that will have all transit information available to the public. It will have an area for the service representatives to be sheltered from the weather.

With regard to fixed route service, Mr. Ivory announced that one of the older buses has been changed to a gas hybrid vehicle as an experimental model to reduce fuel emissions. The original engine has been replaced, and the bus has been retrofitted, at an approximate cost of \$400,000. The bus will change from being considered a 1991 vehicle to being a 2007 vehicle. Mr. Ivory also reported that Santa Rosa has decreased emissions by 85% since 2002. The diesel is now without residue.

Paratransit service now has recording capabilities for MV Transportation, so that if there are any issues regarding scheduling, these recordings can be downloaded as a digital file and played back. Trapeze software has been installed and will go live December 8. The City is looking to add GPS, which will provide an automatic vehicle locator system, in order to be able to locate paratransit vehicles that are in service. Staff will be able to notify passengers of estimated time of arrival of vehicles.

In response to questions from the public, Mr. Ivory explained that increased security at the Transit Mall will consist of wireless cameras

connected to the Police Department, new lighting, a new police substation that is planned to be located at Courthouse Square, contracting with a private security patrol service, and hiring two new Transit Service Representatives. Four bicycle officers are also on duty.

Mr. Ivory also announced that the Transit Mall is now a non-smoking zone.

Mr. Battenberg asked Mr. Ivory if the hybrid bus renovation was a Santa Rosa funded project, or if this was funded through another agency. Mr. Ivory replied that it is a city project.

Mr. Rabon Saip asked if the City was looking into the possibility of using biodiesel fuel. Mr. Ivory said this is not taking place as of yet, but that it may be examined in the future. It is not certain at this time whether this fuel is approved for transit.

*City of Petaluma:*

Gail Burge reported that Petaluma is looking into new scheduling software (Trapeze) and that they have hired John Siragusa as their new Transit Coordinator. They are waiting on the delivery of two new paratransit vehicles.

*Golden Gate Bridge, Highway & Transportation District:*

Cynthia Peterson reported that the District has quarterly schedule changes for the fixed route service. Marin has made major route and schedule changes. Some of the evening service is to be reinstated. These are posted on their website. Ms. Peterson reported that for ADA purposes, their service area for paratransit can change relative to fixed route changes. Sometimes one leg of a trip can be ADA; the second not, so is regarded as a "stand-by." The next service change will be in March.

Ms. Peterson gave an update on Translink, explaining that the Bay area is trying to move to a fare card for fixed route service. The passenger swipes the card in front of a card reader after boarding the bus. Golden Gate Transit has volunteered to be the first to try this new service. A gradual change is being made over to this service.

**B. SCTA Reports**

*Way To Go Expo 2006 & 2007\** Ms. March reported that the Way to Go Expo for 2006 took place Thursday, October 19, at the Santa Rosa Veterans Memorial Building. This event grew out of the Transit Forums of past years to promote an array of transportation alternatives. The SCTA Board has expressed enthusiastic support in seeing the event continued in future years. The date has not yet been set for the 2007 event. We are looking into options for "piggy-backing" on another public event to increase attendance. Santa Rosa CityBus provided a shuttle service to and from the Transit Mall and the Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition provided a

bicycle valet. Mike Ivory reported that about 32 passengers took advantage of this service.

Ms. March presented the membership list for the Committee, and reported that election of officers of the Committee would take place at the next meeting. Several vacancies were noted on the roster.

Ms. March reported that the FTA 5310 program cycle is to be delayed about six months. Application, project selection criteria and guidelines are being revised. This is a program that provides funding for vehicles and equipment for non-profits and public agencies that provide services to seniors and people with disabilities. Becoming Independent and Pride Industries have been past applicants. Organizations receive points for demonstrating coordination, such as through the TPCC.

2007 Meeting Schedule\*Ms. March presented the proposed 2007 Committee meeting schedule. Discussion took place regarding rescheduling the November 20, 2007 Committee meeting because of the holidays. Staff will check on availability of the PRMD Hearing Room on November 27, 2007, as a possible date for the November meeting.

Ms March gave out handouts regarding Easter Seals Project ACTION. This is a nationwide organization focused on bringing together public transportation providers with people with disabilities to improve cooperation and education. The organization is funded by the USDOT and the Federal Transportation Administration (FTA), and offers a wealth of information. They have an 800 number for questions; a newsletter, and clearinghouse of resources. They offer technical assistance and free distance learning opportunities, one of which will occur December 13th called Pathway to Mobility: Assessing the Path of Travel for Transit Customers. One can register online and participate by audio conference call.

As an example, one of the Project ACTION's publications was handed out. It was a "Taxi Pocket Guide."

Chair Battenberg invited suggestions and/or recommendations for election of officers, and said to refer these to Ms. March. He also solicited comments or suggestions regarding other issues that the Committee should address. Ms. March concurred, confirming that meetings are an opportunity for public input. She stated that ways to add value to the TPCC are sought

Chair Battenberg also suggested the possibility of an ad hoc group to ride Bay Area fixed routes as observers, to offer their input and suggestions for improved service to transit operators.

Chair Battenberg reminded members that the meeting room is ADA-compliant, and accommodates the hearing-impaired. He invited attendees to advise the Committee of any special needs in this regard. Following discussion, it was determined that the seating arrangement be returned to an open circle (allowing access/space for wheelchairs).

Mr. Ivory offered to advertise the Committee meeting schedule on CityBus buses (car cards) to encourage public awareness and invite attendance, once 2007 meeting dates are confirmed. Other possibilities were placing the schedule in newsletters, such as CRI's and Earle Baum's.

Further discussed ensued regarding updating the distribution list for agendas for the TPCC meetings. It was suggested that the present mailing list be circulated among transit operators for their review, and to add to it.

Ms. Claire Spector addressed the difficulty of planning a trip on public transportation, particularly when transferring to different transit operators throughout the Bay Area, and that a trip from Sonoma County to San Francisco for one appointment takes virtually an entire day. Mr. Ivory responded that the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) has issued a Request for Proposal to upgrade their 511.org website, which would include the trip planner link. Ms. Peterson added that Golden Gate Transit is seeking suggestions for good practices for way-finding methods for the Larkspur Ferry station.

Valerie McKamey of the State Department of Rehabilitation addressed the Committee, explaining that her services include helping injured workers return to work. She asked if paratransit services can be utilized on a regular schedule for passengers going to work. She noted that her understanding (and that of the Department of Rehabilitation staff) is that this is more a service of the fixed routes.

Donald Hughes of Volunteer Wheels responded that they do have passengers who use their service to get to and from work. He said their service mirrors the fixed route service.

Chair Battenberg added that prior to ADA compliance regulations, Volunteer Wheels used to provide more subscription service. Now they are only allowed 50% in subscription services at any given time of day. Rides are scheduled up to seven days in advance.

Mr. Wagner stated that passengers can call paratransit and schedule regular service for work or school; however, they need the flexibility to be

able to handle other requests for service, also. It was noted that paratransit services can be used for any trip purpose.

Mr. Rabon Saip announced that he and Bob Silverman (both of Older Adults Transportation Survey or OATS) had been researching volunteer driver programs (such as ITN). He noted that the ITN model is basically for the affluent. He reported that he had spoken to Dr. Helen Kerschner of the Beverly Foundation, and was impressed by their model. He explained that, contrary to being competitive with the services provided by paratransit providers, this is a service for those who have to suddenly stop driving. It is designed to provide assistance during the interim period of adjustment from driving to learning to use other modes of transportation.

Chair Battenberg suggested that Mr. Saip and Mr. Silverman contact the Council on Aging (Shirlee Zane).

Mr Saip stated that he has contacted Ms. Zane, who serves on the MTC board, as he does. MTC is working on an Older Adults Mobility Plan.

He reported that Sonoma County is forecast to become the county with the highest population of retired seniors (over 65 years of age).

Ms. Taylor added that the Beverly Foundation is very involved with Easter Seals Project Action, and has created a new program for senior issues in Washington, D.C.

Chair Battenberg reported that AC Taxi Service has wheelchair access. Mr. Ivory added that they have wheelchair-accessible minivans.

Katherine Taylor of the Area Agency on Aging reported that they recently started a committee on transportation. They are interested in exploring new options for seniors. There are other efforts happening in the County. Palm Drive Hospital and Guerneville were mentioned.

Discussion followed regarding the polling of possible volunteer drivers for these services. Mr. Hughes observed that encouraging volunteers is mainly a matter of informing them that this does not need to be a major commitment of their time. Mr. Ivory raised the possibility of the Santa Rosa donating aging vehicles to these agencies.

Ms. Spector inquired into liability and driver training issues. Mr. Ivory suggested a central driver training location. He suggested having a qualified individual coordinate training for new drivers, so as to meet licensing requirements of the Department of Motor Vehicles. Ms. Peterson

added that this could involve different levels of training; e.g.; driving one's personal vehicle vs. a van or bus.

V. Adjourn– ACTION

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nina Donofrio

## **Introduction: MTC Coordination Study**

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The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) is currently conducting a Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan (Plan) for the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area. This Plan will identify the transportation needs of persons with disabilities, older adults, and persons of low-income status, and it will also offer strategies to address the gaps. The Plan is required in order for local agencies to receive three sources of federal funds to support programs for these groups. MTC has contracted with Nelson\Nygaard and its subcontractors (Consultants) to collect some of the information for the Plan.

An important aspect of the Plan is the public outreach portion, in which we as Consultants will hear from stakeholders who represent social service agencies, transportation programs, local governments, advocacy groups and others with an interest in the project. We therefore contacted your group or organization because it serves or represents persons with disabilities and/or seniors, and is familiar with the transportation needs for these populations. Thank you for allowing us to attend an outreach meeting with your group to present a brief overview of the Plan, and hear your thoughts about transportation gaps and barriers, as well as possible solutions.

## **Public Outreach: MTC Coordination Study**

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### **Public Outreach**

The purpose of conducting outreach is to directly solicit the views and opinions of older adults and persons with disabilities regarding transportation barriers they face.

The main goal of the public outreach effort is to reach groups or organizations that:

- Represent diverse and fresh perspectives
- Address multi-modal interests (i.e. use of public transit, pedestrian access, paratransit, driving)
- Directly represent constituent groups of interest to the study
- Have a direct interest in and can speak to transportation needs in their community
- Have been suggested by existing advisory groups (MTC's EDAC or the PTCC)

### **Outreach Meetings:**

The outreach meetings will include:

- A brief overview of MTC's Coordinated Public Transit - Human Service Transportation Plan
- A brief presentation of current research of senior and disabled transportation studies
- A feed-back gathering session where meeting participants may comment on transportation gaps in their county



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## Who We Are

[Training & Conferences](#)

### OUR MISSION: ACCESSIBLE COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION IN OUR NATION

[Free Resources](#)

America is home to more than 54 million people with disabilities who work, play, shop, vote, pursue an education, raise families, and volunteer in their communities. In 1990, Congress passed the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the civil-rights law that ensures individuals with disabilities access to employment, education, state and local government programs and services, businesses, telecommunications, and public transportation.

[Projects & Funding](#)

Congress originally commissioned **Easter Seals Project ACTION** in 1988 as a research and demonstration project to improve access to public transportation for people with disabilities. With the passage of the ADA two years later, our goals expanded to help transportation operators implement the law's transportation provisions.

[Frequently Asked Questions](#)

## Who We Are

### HELPING TWO GROUPS ACHIEVE ONE GOAL

[ESPA Staff](#)

Funded through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transportation Administration, Easter Seals Project ACTION promotes cooperation between the transportation industry and the disability community to increase mobility for people with disabilities under the ADA and beyond. We offer various resources, as well as training and technical assistance, in an effort to make the ADA work for everyone, everyday. More than a dozen years after our creation, our goal - and our name - remains unchanged: Accessible Community Transportation In Our Nation (ACTION).

[National Steering Committee](#)

[Job Opportunities](#)

[Welcome to Project ACTION, Lynne](#)

### GENERAL RESOURCES



- **Easter Seals Project ACTION 800 line**  
Information and resources are available Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. (EST) at (800) 659-6428 (voice). The Easter Seals Project ACTION staff can answer questions about ADA rights and responsibilities, direct callers to additional resources, and help members of the disability and transportation communities address diverse accessibility issues.
- **Easter Seals Project ACTION Update**  
Easter Seals Project ACTION's bimonthly newsletter offers the latest information on accessible transportation for people with disabilities. This publication is also a great source for funding news, publications, research, and upcoming trainings and conferences. **Contact us** to request your free print subscription to Easter Seals Project ACTION Update.
- **Easter Seals Project ACTION Clearinghouse**  
Our clearinghouse offers over 90 free print, video, and audio resources on numerous topics, including:
  - Eligibility Determinations/Functional Assessment
  - Consumer Education Training
  - Travel Training for People with Disabilities
  - Operator Awareness Training
  - Intermodal Trip Planning

THIS WAS A HANDOUT AT THE DEC 5, 2006 TPCC

- Customer Service Monitoring
- Transportation Strategies on Coordination
- Outreach and Marketing Strategies
- Disability- and Transportation-Related Technology

### TRAINING

To help put knowledge into action, our staff teaches individuals and communities how to build, use, and strengthen accessible transportation. Our trainers speak at transportation and disability conferences nation-wide, and local communities often host Easter Seals Project ACTION training events to address specific topics. In both cases, our staff members work with transportation providers and members of the disability community to develop practical applications of the ADA and beyond. Call or visit our web site to learn more about upcoming training opportunities.

### TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Technical assistance is available to communities that seek to develop and enhance accessibility for people with disabilities in their local transportation system. Easter Seals Project ACTION provides the in-depth support they need to make positive, long-term changes in their community's transportation system. Easter Seals Project ACTION training participants often use our technical assistance to reinforce what they learn in our sessions and further the modification efforts they begin there. Because Easter Seals Project ACTION does not enforce ADA compliance, our staff can provide equal support to transportation providers and members of the disability community to solve accessibility problems, assess community needs, build coalitions, and develop strategic plans.

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