

APPROVED MINUTES

SHASTA COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AGENCY (MPO)
Tuesday, July 22, 2003, 4:00 p.m.
John Beaudet Community Senior Center
1525 Median Avenue, City of Shasta Lake, California

(Note: These minutes are not intended to serve as a transcript or verbatim record of the proceedings of the Shasta County Regional Transportation Planning Agency, but rather as a record of meeting time, place and attendance; the order and general nature of discussion; Agency deliberations; and action taken, if any.)

Agency Members Kight, Connick, Clarke, Hawes, and Duryee were present. Agency Members Wilson and Mathena were absent.

1. Call to Order:

Chair Kight called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

2. Public Comment Period:

There was no one who wished to speak during the Public Comment Period.

Consent Calendar

3-1 Minutes of April 22, 2003, RTPA Meeting

3-2 Future RTPA Meeting Schedule Through July 2004 - Information Only

3-3 Consider Revision to the 2003/2004 Unmet Needs Findings Resolution 03-03

3-4 Consider 2001/2002 Transportation Development Act (TDA) True-Up Instructions and Amended Claims
THIS ITEM HAS BEEN PULLED AND WILL BE PRESENTED AT THE OCTOBER MEETING

3-5 Amendment #1 of Policy 6-5 for Community Transit Service Claims

3-6 Consider Adopting a Resolution Making Required Findings and Certifications and Adopting a Priority List for the Annual Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310 Program for Transit Capital Projects

3-7 Award Audit Engagement for Fiscal and Compliance, and Performance Audits

By motion made, seconded and carried, the items on the Consent Calendar were approved.

Regular Calendar

Chair Kight acknowledged the RTPA, and Executive Officer Kovacich made introductions of the RTPA staff.

4. Receive Presentation on Transportation Needs and Funding Sources

Executive Officer Kovacich explained that the purpose of this presentation is to identify the transportation needs in the region, and the funding streams that have been identified to meet those needs. Mr. Kovacich explained that after the presentation he will then be asking the Agency to give staff direction on where to go from here.

Executive Officer Kovacich continued to explain that the 2001 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) included a prioritized listing of regional projects to be funded with STIP money that was projected to be received by the region. At that time it was assumed that STIP revenue would be \$10 million a year.

The RTP adopted included more than \$600 million in improvements that will be needed on the road system by 2025. That amount far exceeds the amount of money that was projected to be received from STIP. For various reasons, the STIP money identified will not be realized. Unless some other revenue stream is identified, it will not be possible to add capacity to our system. Additionally maintenance may decline on the current network due to lack of additional resources. The current revenue stream is not expected to increase. As a result of inflation the purchasing power of the current revenue stream will be reduced.

Executive Officer Kovacich explained how the gas tax works and why it is so important to the region. The gas tax has not been increased since 1994. Since vehicles are more fuel-efficient the revenues from the existing gas tax has not kept up with inflation.

Virtually all transportation funding within our region comes exclusively from gas tax, with few exceptions. The lack of growth in the gas tax is reflected in the operating budgets of the County and the three cities. The Cities of Shasta Lake and Anderson don't have dedicated road maintenance workers; their road workers also maintain water and sewer plants. The City of Redding has not added a street maintenance worker since 1978. The County has significantly reduced their forces in the last 25 years. This is because State and Federal gas tax has not kept up with inflation.

Dan continued to explain that this funding crisis is not unique to Shasta County. The State of Oregon has established the Oregon Road User Fee Task Force. Their goal is to come up with a system to replace gas tax. Oregon has decided on three potential solutions: A vehicle miles traveled fee, at 1.2 cents per mile; congestion pricing in urban areas; and a new facility toll, when a new bridge is built.

Seventeen Counties in the State, representing over 80% of California's population, have implemented special sales tax levies of 1/2 to 1% earmarked for transportation purposes. Additionally, State and local agencies throughout the nation are issuing more bonds to pay for needed improvements. This borrowing delivers improvements today, but limits future improvements as the gas tax will need to retire the debts incurred.

Most sales tax measures were enacted under the 50 percent requirement and span 10 to 20 years. Many of these measures are nearing their sunset date. To reauthorize these measures today will require approval by 2/3 of those voting. Many counties with these measures are having difficulties reaching the 2/3 adoption threshold.

The needs study looked at identifying maintenance and transit costs, in addition to needed capacity. Local agencies and Caltrans provided the costs, projected through 2025, at a 3 percent escalation factor. The gas tax was projected to increase by 2.81 percent. The study results indicated the projected needs will exceed the projected revenues.

Three potential solutions or strategies have been identified to this funding shortfall. These strategies by themselves, or all of these strategies together, would not meet all of our needs. In all urbanized areas residents just have to live with a certain amount of congestion.

The first solution is to maintain the status quo. The current status quo functions very well. There is predicted congestion during commuting and lunch times. Congestion will increase as traffic increases. It is predicted that traffic is increasing at about 2.1 percent per year.

Dan showed some video clips of Bonneyview and I-5, to show one of the hot spots of our area today. Dan then showed a simulation of what the same area is projected to look like in the year 2025. The simulation is based on traffic counts taken this year by Caltrans and inflated by 2.1 percent through the year 2025. It simulates the busy hour between 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Cars traveling Northbound are going approximately 14 miles per hour. Cars traveling

Southbound are going about 5 miles per hour. A motorist going Northbound to the Cypress Avenue exit from this point, at this time of the day, would take between 10 to 25 minutes. Going Southbound to the Knighton Road exit would take about 36 minutes. Motorists will react to this by getting off the freeway and jamming the surface streets, since traffic will always follow the path of least resistance. The simulation shows what could happen under the do nothing or status quo scenario.

Another option would be to increase traffic impact fees. This Agency has no authority over that; it is strictly a local agency action. Traffic impact fees only go so far, developers pay the impact fees associated with the development. It does not address the funding deficiencies in maintenance or transit.

The third and most popular option throughout the State of California is a local sales tax proposal. The benefits of sales tax funding transportation, is that it raises a lot of money and is the least controversial politically. It provides direct local voter control. The voters locally decide whether to tax themselves or not. Sales tax measures typically have a life of 15 to 20 years; San Francisco and Los Angeles have permanent measures in place. There is generally a specific list of transportation projects or programs, so the voters know what they are voting for. There is an authority in control of how the money gets spent. This could be a City Council, The Board of Supervisors, this Agency or a separate agency. A half-cent sales tax increase is estimated to be equal to an eight-cents per gallon gas tax increase.

The mechanics of implementing a sales tax measure was briefly discussed. The City of Redding and one of the other cities would have to authorize a sales tax, and then the Board of Supervisors would have to authorize it.

Executive Officer Kovacich stated that, in his opinion, the Shasta County region is not ready for a sales tax measure at this point. However, it is time for the Agency to start laying a foundation for putting in place some groundwork to eventually put a measure in front of the voters. The public, the business community and other stakeholders would need to be engaged for a measure like this to succeed.

Other preconditions required before considering placing a sales tax measure on the ballot, is to assess the condition of our transportation network today and to develop a list of projects to be funded. These tasks should be done after extensive public involvement. Finally, a sales tax authority would need to be set up.

It is hoped that the threshold for implementing this tax is reduced to less than two-thirds. Legislation has been drafted but not yet implemented.

Executive Officer Kovacich continued to explain that the time will be right for a sales tax measure when, for example, people start to complain about losing time in traffic or when the radio gives traffic updates during commute time. This tells you that there is interest in traffic congestion among the public. The time for a sales tax measure is probably not now, as motorists don't yet spend any time in congestion.

Dan made recommendations that: 1.) A review should be completed of the pavement condition, region wide, to get an objective opinion of the condition of our roadways and bridges and what it would cost to maintain them in the desired condition. 2.) The Cities and County should be requested to review their traffic impact fees; and, 3.) The Agency should consider assisting the local agencies with planning dollars in their efforts to look at traffic impact fees. He then recommended that the issue be revisited when the pavement review is completed.

Board Member Hawes stated that any of the choices end up with the taxpayers paying. The impact fees from developers only cover the lots that they build houses on.

Chair Kight agreed that the traffic impact fees only address a small portion of the needs. Our roads are in bad shape and are only going to get worse. The County and Cities should be asked to review their traffic impact fees.

Board Member Clarke agreed that it would be a good idea to look at the traffic impact fees. She continued to say that she had a concern that if we come up with extra money, the State will give us less money. The local voters will need to be assured that the sales tax is not replacing State and Federal money, and that an additional tax at the local level is a valid thing to do. If the money the voter is already paying is spent appropriately and the government is already providing the things people can't do for themselves, we have enough taxes.

Executive Officer Kovacich addressed Board Member Clarke's comments by agreeing that in order for a sales tax measure to pass in Shasta County, the voters have to be convinced that the dollars being spent today are being spent properly. That would be part of the Pavement Management System. A study would be done, presumably by an outside consultant that would have objectivity, and present a convincing picture of the need for additional revenues. A tremendous amount of work would have to be done with all

kinds of different groups within the County to get their support for a measure like this. About 30 percent of the population vote no to any tax increase regardless of its merits.

Board Member Clarke noted that 30 percent will vote no, 30 percent will vote yes, and 30 percent in the middle. That only gives opportunity to get 60 percent of the votes and we need two-thirds.

Executive Officer Kovacich stated that some urban areas where the measure has ended, can't get them reauthorized, because they can't get over the two-thirds threshold, it is very difficult.

Board Member Clarke noted that it wouldn't hurt to do a pavement condition analysis. That's something that gets questioned on a regular basis and it would be good information. Clarke continued to say that staff should be directed to move in that direction and then come back with the information. By motion made and seconded (Clarke/Kight) it was unanimously decided for a pavement condition analysis to be done in the Cities and County.

Board Member Hawes complimented Executive Officer Kovacich for a good presentation.

5. **Conduct Public Hearing and Approve Amendment #1 to the 2002 Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP)**

Staff Member Dan Little explained that this amendment is for the Federal Transportation Improvement Program. It is to true-up the program to be consistent with the Regional Transportation Improvement Program that the Agency acted on at the April 2003 meeting. Caltrans emergency projects are also being changed, one of which is Interstate 5 over Shasta Lake at Lakehead. Staff recommendation is to approve the amendment subject to the resolution.

Chair Kight opened the public hearing. There being no one who wished to speak either for or against the item, Chair Kight closed the public hearing.

By motion made and seconded, the staff recommendation passed unanimously.

6. **Adjourn**

There being no other business to discuss, Chair Kight adjourned the meeting at 4:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel J. Kovacich, Executive Officer

/jac