

SANTA CRUZ METROPOLITAN TRANSIT DISTRICT

SPECIAL JOINT Meeting Minutes- Board of Directors/MAC

October 19, 2007

A SPECIAL JOINT Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District and the METRO Advisory Committee (MAC) met on Friday, October 19, 2007 at the District's Administrative Office, 370 Encinal Street, Santa Cruz, CA.

Chair Tavantzis called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

SECTION 1: OPEN SESSION

1. ROLL CALL:

DIRECTORS PRESENT

Jan Beautz
Donald Hagen
Michelle Hinkle
Kirby Nicol
Mike Rotkin (arrived after roll call)
Pat Spence
Mark Stone
Marcela Tavantzis

DIRECTORS ABSENT

Dene Bustichi
Emily Reilly
Dale Skillicorn
Ex Officio Donna Blitzer

MAC MEMBERS PRESENT

Mara Murphy
Dennis Papadopulo
Dave Williams
Robert Yount, Chair

MAC MEMBERS ABSENT

Heidi Curry
Naomi Gunther
Stuart Rosenstein

STAFF PRESENT

Ciro Aguirre, Operations Manager
Angela Aitken, Finance Manager
Mark Dorfman, Assistant General Manager
Mary Ferrick, Base Superintendent
Debbie Kinslow, Asst. Finance Manager

Robyn Slater, Human Resources Manager
Tom Stickel, Maintenance Manager
April Warnock, Acting Paratransit Superintendent
Les White, General Manager

EMPLOYEES AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WHO VOLUNTARILY INDICATED THEY WERE PRESENT

Robert Betts, Wilbur Smith Associates
Teresa Buika, TAPS, UCSC
Marlene Connor, WSA
Ian McFadden, Transit Planner
Jim McLaughlin, WSA
Bonnie Morr, UTU

Terri O'Connor, WSA
Steve Prince, UTU
Tegan Speiser, SCCRTC
James Taylor, UTU
Art Zamudio, UTU

2. WORK SESSION WITH WILBUR SMITH ASSOCIATES REGARDING METRO'S SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN

Marlene Connor of Wilbur Smith Associates introduced her partners in this project Robert Betts, Jim McLaughlin, and Terri O'Connor and distributed copies of METRO's Short Range Transit Plan "Project Update and Ideas for Discussion", which is attached to the file copy of these minutes.

DIRECTOR ROTKIN ARRIVED

Summary:

A PowerPoint presentation of the handout began with Ms. Connor explaining that an SRTP is a planning process which provides regular opportunity to do both internal and external evaluation of METRO.

Robert Betts reported on the Baseline Conditions including key demographic trends showing continued future population and development growth in south county and employment percentages remaining constant with Santa Cruz being the dominant city for employment. Other issues looked at included future infrastructure funding, which will continue to be monitored.

Approximately 1700 Comprehensive on-board surveys were conducted identifying trip origins, trip purposes, trip frequency, personal vehicle ownership, fare media used, and gender, age group and household income of riders. The riders surveyed indicated they felt that the maintenance of the service was the highest priority and that service frequency was lowest. Jim McLaughlin explained that the outcomes of the surveys are similar to other transit properties, but slightly skewed because of the high percentage of UCSC ridership METRO has.

Terri O'Connor spoke about the Public Involvement Process which included stakeholder interviews, focus group meetings, and an online survey for Cabrillo College students. Jim McLaughlin reported that the Public Involvement Findings indicated that Highway 17, UCSC and direct route service to Watsonville are well received by the community across the board, however, local connections were a mixed bag and seen as an area needing improvement. Another point made, particularly from local area agencies and stakeholders, was the perception that METRO executive staff was overextended making it difficult to plan and interact with them.

Other findings in the Public Involvement Process included that in general, the public feels that the fact that existing traffic congestion is bad now and will get worse should be an opportunity for METRO to attract new riders. Lower income riders complained of poor service connections within Watsonville and of high fares and not enough options regarding fare media. UCSC service was perceived both positively and negatively and there was a general positive perception that growth of the overall region and activities should be positive opportunities for METRO.

Marlene Connor explained that the general perception of METRO's services is that they operate well within the resources available, but that maybe resources could be used a little differently. Regarding the Moving METRO into the Future topic, Ms. Connor stated that this process would suggest tools and practices by which the Board could prioritize service issues, know how to best utilize available resources, and how to measure performance in a consistent format by developing local goals and objectives, then monitoring performances. Ms. Connor reported that the establishment a Performance Measurement Program is beginning to become more of an industry standard and that it can help METRO guide its services, changes, discussions and decisions around consistent goals and objectives that define METRO's local priorities.

Spreadsheets were distributed containing four initial suggested Performance Measurement Priority goals, their objectives, what is being measured and how to measure it. The suggested goals are:

- 1) METRO shall provide a family of services that connects key activity centers, provides transportation alternatives, and allows for system expansion;
- 2) METRO shall provide safe, reliable and accessible transportation;
- 3) METRO shall work cooperatively with local communities, residents, and other affected agencies and groups to develop the best family of services within resource limitations;
- 4) METRO shall consistently work to improve its operating efficiency and service delivery effectiveness.

Robert Betts, Jim McLaughlin and Marlene Connor reported on how these Goals and Objectives would be considered around a series of measurable Service Standards that include Service Availability, Service Delivery, Community Measures, Travel Time, Safety and Security, Maintenance and Construction, Economics, and Capacity. Each Objective has measurable Current and Suggested Target Performance, Reporting Frequency, and Data Collection and Analysis Method methods. The benefit of consistently measuring quantitative and qualitative performance on an ongoing basis against specific Service Standards appropriate to each type of service was emphasized.

Discussion:

There was a discussion about METRO's current service standards being appropriately different for the different types of services provided. Bonnie Moor, UTU, suggested that one of the goals should be to emphasize public transit as the preferred alternative form of transportation and that it facilitates other forms of transportation.

Summary:

The next part of presentation focused on Organizational Structure and Staffing suggestions to establish a structured internal planning program or process which would coordinate all internal planning related functions, ensure regular coordination with other regional agencies and communication with the community, and make sure METRO's services and programs are in concert with its goals and objectives.

The final segment of the presentation addressed Service Concepts, Service Design Concepts and Service Framework. This part of the study looked at factors as they relate to METRO's current and future services including topography, physical infrastructure, locations of major attractions and destinations, and local feeder routes vs. major trunk routes.

Discussion:

Les White reported that he would be presenting an amended 5-year budget projection to the Board in November, which will show the ability for future service enhancements. However, if all aspects of one service area were improved, such as Highway 17, Watsonville, or UCSC, it would consume all of the resources available. Priorities and ratios need to be identified in order to allocate funding for service improvements for the best use of available resources.

Director Nicol thanked Wilbur Smith Associates and stated that he believes METRO can go a long way in re-evaluating its service and reallocating its resources.

Vice Chair Beautz commented that the car vs. bus convenience and cost issue is the deciding factor for the non-transit dependent.

Director Stone expressed interest in looking into reallocating resources and stated that subtleties need to be looked at regarding local feeder routes vs. trunk routes.

Tegan Speiser, SCCRTC, commented that bikes on buses works and that more Bike & Ride and Park & Ride facilities are needed to safely store bikes and cars.

Director Hagen suggested developing a partnership with San Jose State University similar to the one with UCSC.

Chair Tavantzis suggested a new partnership with the SCCRTC to share the cost of marketing public transit.

Teresa Buika, UCSC TAPS, stated that there is a lot of potential to reach the non-transit dependent by marketing.

Director Rotkin suggested looking at limited stop express service to UCSC and that UCSC staff ridership needs should be considered different than student ridership needs.

Director Spence suggested more local Watsonville service.

Director Nicol stated that the way to get people out of their cars would be with fast, easy, and inexpensive Bus Rapid Transit (BRT).

Tegan Speiser stated that she was impressed recently with the technology in efficiently dispatching appropriate vehicles to meet transit needs in Washington State.

Summary:

The last presentation slide covered Next Steps and Timelines. Today's input will be used to finalize the Goals, Objectives, and Performance Measures over the next few weeks. The Preliminary Service Plan and updating other plan sections will also be completed in the next few weeks with the goal of presenting the Draft SRTP in December.

Discussion:

Les White and Chair Tavantzis suggested adjusting the timeline in order to have an Administrative Draft provided internally sometime after the first of the year, rather than in December, to be reviewed by the Board, Staff, and MAC, which will provide another opportunity for their input before being distributed publicly. Wilbur Smith Associates agreed to this adjustment.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, Chair Tavantzis adjourned the meeting at 11:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

CINDI THOMAS
Administrative Services Coordinator