



MEETING MINUTES

CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION COMMITTEE (TCC)

David Gebhard Public Meeting Room
630 Garden Street, Santa Barbara, CA
Thursday, August 23rd, 2007 6:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Cooper called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM

ROLL CALL:

TCC MEMBERS

William C. Boyd
Mark Bradley
Keith Coffman-Grey
Michael Cooper
Steve Maas
David Pritchett
David Tabor

Attendance

Present
Absent
Present
Present
Present
Present
Present

CITY STAFF PRESENT :

Browning Allen, Transportation Manager
Robert J. Dayton, Principal Transportation Planner
Kyle M. Rutkin, Administrative Specialist
Meryl Perutz, Administrative Specialist

LIAISONS PRESENT:

OTHERS PRESENT:

Sherrie Fisher, General Manager of MTD.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA: None

PUBLIC COMMENT:

1. None

CONSENT CALENDAR:

2. **Approval of TCC Minutes for July 26, 2007**

Mr. Tabor moved and Mr. Coffman-Grey seconded approving the July 26, 2007 minutes as amended.

Ayes: 6 Noes: 0 Abstain: 0 Absent: 1

REPORTS

3. June 2007 MTD Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle and Commuter Lot Shuttle and Annual Report; Crosstown Shuttle and Mesa Loop Fourth Quarter Report and Annual Report

Sherrie Fisher, General Manager of MTD, presented the June, 2007 MTD Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle and Commuter Lot Shuttle and Annual Reports. In addition Ms. Fisher presented the Crosstown Shuttle and Mesa Loop Fourth Quarter Report.

Ms. Fisher reported that in the annual report, it is reported that ridership of the Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle, is still down. Ridership closely tracks the motel/hotel occupancy rate in Santa Barbara, so when occupancy is down, shuttle ridership is also down. The good news is that the June ridership report shows an increase of .1 % and is moving in right direction. Also on the Downtown- Waterfront Shuttle, ridership was down as a result of the construction and repairs to lower State Street, as the shuttles were less able to get around. Now that renewal is complete ridership numbers should reflect an increase.

Ms. Fisher discussed several methods to accomplish increased awareness. The Conference and Visitors Bureau and Simple Shoes have teamed up to create GreenSantaBarbara.com, a web site specifically designed to promote the greener side of Santa Barbara. Joint mailings go out to the hospitality industry to get them involved and to remind them of green transportation alternatives that exist. MTD is featured prominently on their web site. The magazine, Santa Barbara, The American Riviera, goes out in a mailing, to over 100,000 people, including hotels, motels and the hospitality industry. Santa Barbara and MTD are prominently featured, in general about alternative transportation and more specifically shuttle services. MTD has revised the Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle shuttle card. Since there is a constant turnover in the hotel and motel industry, the new design of the shuttle schedule card now includes both summer and fall schedules on one card, ensuring that hotel and motels have the correct card for all seasons. The schedule still has tear off piece to stick in a wallet, is still the correct size for stands, and now it only has to be sent out once.

MTD is involved in First Thursday, having banners on the buses, saying "Take me to First Thursday". Ridership is not amazing yet. In February ridership started at 15 passengers for the first evening hour of First Thursday, and has climbed to 62 passengers in that same hour in August. MTD is developing a marketing plan to launch spring of '08 for the summer '08 talking about Downtown/Waterfront Shuttle service. MTD is very interested in feedback from the city about what they could be doing to increase ridership and how to get the information disseminated.

Ms. Fisher also reported on the Crosstown Shuttle and the Mesa Loop, which is new. (Mesa Loop began in March, 08.) It already has 29 passengers per hour, which is significant. On the Crosstown, there are about 23 passengers per hour. The Crosstown has lost some ridership to the increased service on the 1 and 2 buses but as a combination, the 1 and 2 going east-west, and Crosstown going east-west, ridership is up.

Committee Member Comments

Mr. Pritchett had a question regarding the Wharf/Woody Shuttle. Has the fare structure changed from 1998 to the present? **Ms. Fisher responded, it is free now, but... Fare explains rider Wharf/Woody ridership.** Woody now just on Saturday and Sunday. Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle roundtrip takes about 45 minutes from Sola to Dolphin Fountain, used to be between 30

and 35 minutes. Congestion on State Street and how fast the bus moves. Lower State Street sidewalk rehabilitation, any complaints about trees being removed? Mr. Pritchett inquired about complaints of trees being removed.

Mr. Boyd

State Street and increased congestion, which causes the bus down to slow down, have any methods been considered to increase speed of the shuttle, including traffic street light synchronization, or activated traffic lights? What kinds of things can city do to facilitate increasing the speed of traffic along State Street? Ms. Fisher said there are conversations between the city and MTD, including bus priority at traffic lights. Not a thorough discussion, less discussion about lower State Street and more about State and Hollister corridor, larger diesel bus service. But the subject that city and MTD staff are considering. Also support from an ITS group through SBCAG and Traffic Solutions on furthering the discussions. It's not a simple thing to do but also not terribly complicated. Mr. Boyd asked *Rob Dayton*, if the issues are different on main routes with larger buses than they are on State Street with the small electric shuttles, in terms of preemption. *Rob Dayton* responded that there was a big difference between the two streets. It's very different how it's handled it operationally. Lower State Street through downtown is more of a people street, than a cars-for-travel kind of street. There are so many people on State Street that they cause the congestion for the cars. Upper State Street is a travel street for cars, the bus and mass transit. We are treating it differently. As Director Fisher mentioned there is a preemption that we are working on with SBCAG. Pre-emption is a mechanism on the bus that works with a signal. The signal can see if a bus is approaching and will hold the green time a little longer to allow the bus through the signal, if it works with the cycle. It would work better in travel mode rather than pedestrian mode. Would not work on lower State Street where pedestrians are the dominant travel mode. Mr. Pritchett requested for a simple data table/chart, from MTD, showing graphically, how the round trip time for the downtown shuttle has changed over the last ten years. Dr. Cooper commented that when George Gerth installed On Demand crosswalk, it was due to excessive violations of jaywalking. George's approach was good. I think Rogers Horton would be willing to revisit it and synchronize mid-block intersection to help speed up the Shuttle, seems like it would be an easy thing for traffic engineer to accomplish. I would direct you to Councilman Roger Horton for help.

Ms. Fisher continues with discussion regarding traffic mitigation. The enhanced transit has been very successful, new report, shows that in the discussion of traffic mitigation for the Granada Garage, there was a requirement of mitigating 985 average daily trips and 229 peak hour trips. During April, May June, and part of March, there were 334 peak hour trips for the first month, and then 331, 346, which exceeded the required 229. The daily average was 1,300 surpassing the required 985 trips, it's not the mitigation but the people who rode the bus during those times periods. Those were extras trip on the buses during those peak periods and moving in the right direction. When school ended, in June, there was a difference in the ridership. This was the first report. Dr. Cooper asked for comment of committee members.

Dr. Cooper discussed the effectiveness of the advertising program, it's impressive and the numbers seem better this month which is "prime time" summer, but the numbers over the last 10 years do not reflect a cost-benefit ratio for the advertising dollars spent. Asked for information from Ms. Fisher about the firm we are using for advertising, and what it is costing. If marketing dollars aren't generating more business, then we should revisit the marketing plan, or maybe consider doing something else with those marketing dollars. (Side bar – Bicyclists downtown, and Ms. Fisher's accident.) Ms. Fisher will bring back a report and David Damiano, Manager of Marketing. MTD doesn't use an outside firm; everything is done internally except they do pay for printing fees. There is great cooperative advertising for example Old Spanish Days. There are

many ways we do cooperative work with agencies and including great success with city council wanting to advertise MTD and being supportive of the green movement. Does not have that number here today, more footwork and energy spent rather than dollars. It's hard to believe with all the issues affecting the city, congestion, fuel costs, the green movement and alternative transportation becoming much more popular that the numbers are far below the 1996-1997 in numbers of riders per hour. We need to look at it more closely, if four dollars a gallon doesn't do it, what it is going to take to drive people to MTD service. *Ms. Fisher* says they intend to survey passengers, communities, to see what they are missing, see what we can do differently. She thought the committee was going to ask her to reduce the distance of the State Street Shuttle service. Nothing that says the shuttle has to go to Sola Street, but it does connect the rider to regular service. There are ways to look at moving it faster, sometimes because you go a shorter distance. *Dr. Cooper* had a question regarding the work being done at the Transit Center. *Ms. Fisher* said the repair of the driveway caused some congestion, but things will be back to normal next week. *Dr. Cooper* pointed out the number of people waiting on the 1100 block of Chapala, where city parking lot # 4 is, is appalling, there's no place to sit, there are no trash receptacles, in the winter time it's dark, no lights, there's rain, it's dark cold. There are things you need to do for your customers. Let's give them a place to sit and trash receptacles aren't far behind. *Ms. Fisher* said that service is run by SBCAG and Traffic Solutions, but I'm sure that the city and MTD can cooperate to try to make it more comfortable out there. They coordinate with SBCAG, other than driveway MTD doesn't park buses there. MTD is aware of how important shelters are. There are things they can look at, and convinced there is something that can be worked out. *Dr. Cooper's* concern is with long distance haulers. MTD trash receptacle and benches north of the center, it would be good to have cover for heat in summer and rain in winter. People have shown that they want this type of transportation and the least we can do is provide something for comfort. *Ms. Fisher* agrees but also mentioned it costs about \$17,000 per shelter. The City has been cooperative, and MTD has put it in their budget request for additional funding, but there are 852 bus stops. It will take a long time to move in that direction. *Dr. Cooper*, if it is SBCAG responsible for long haulers, who would be responsible to get to SBCAG to respond? *Mr. Allen*: I can have somebody on my staff contact them. My understanding is that SBCAG find's an existing stop along a route and designates it as a stop for Clean Air Express. He is not aware of any Clean Air Express stop where they have put in any amenities. We can have that conversation with Traffic Solutions. The Environmental Service Program is looking to put receptacles on Chapala Street, not sure when, and *Ms. Fisher* is working closely with SBCAG about the Clean Air Express. *Dr. Cooper* stated that what is important is that other cities that participate in this program, according to Vic, have installed these facilities for their commuters, why haven't we? *Browning Allen* responded that he is not aware of other cities that have done that. It comes down to a budget issue. Our capital project funds are limited, and our capitol improvement program is focus on our repairing and maintaining our roads and right of way and we haven't put enough money into sidewalk repair programs that we have in previous years. Bus shelters are not our core mission. We are fortunate we got a grant for shelters on the east and Westside. They qualified for these types of grants. Bus shelters are not Public Works Department priority. We do not have extra money for shelters. *Ms. Fisher*: our project about a transit center renovation includes room for any all regional service that we can foresee.

Mr. Coffman-Grey The chart you have supplied for ridership goes from 1996 to 2007, is that when the shuttle charges changed from free to 25 cents? The answer from *Ms. Fisher* was yes. Prior to going to 25 cents we had a million riders. He admires the production at the Transit Center.

Mr. Boyd General question about captive ridership, what % of ridership total, is captive, i.e. people who need to take the bus for economic reason, vs. other types of rider. Ms. Fisher, can come back with a report showing what their status is and whether they can choose to ride, vs. necessary riders. Student, elder disabled. Boyd, it's important to understand the how and why people are using transit. With that information we can come up with reasons why people aren't using bus transit as much as we would like given the overall economic situation

Mr. Pritchett When will the Transit Center be "new and improved"? Ms. Fisher said MTD has a meeting with City Council, Sept. 11, to discuss it further and to come to an agreement. They will be putting out an RFQ for the development of that project. Ms. Fisher said she is sure it will take years. Mr. Pritchett, is it MTD and City as the redevelopment agency? Ms. Fisher said Redevelopment and MTD will partner with a housing developer. Mr. Pritchett suggested Ms. Fisher take a look at the news boxes near the Transit Center, and if they are going to visit the question of benches and trash receptacles. *Browning Allen*: That's something that will be referred to the engineering department. There is a section in the Chapala Street Guidelines about what a bus station should look like below Carrillo Blvd.

Mr. Tabor asked Ms. Fisher is we have we done everything possible to encourage our locals to take the bus? People are talking about the new buses. How can we use this to add a guilt factor to encourage more riders onto the buses? Ms. Fisher, finding a visitor takes more effort than finding a resident. We can market to resident's long term and take care of them. It is a target market we need to put more effort into.

4. **Plan Santa Barbara/Parking Master Plan Monthly Update**

Rob Dayton Parking master plan and moving it forward. He distributed an outline of the Master Parking Plan. Next month the Community Development staff will bring the results of the first round of workshops and you will be able to ask questions and hear about the next steps and the forums that will be occurring in the fall.

Steve Maas, asks Mr. Dayton about the General Plan, in the most recent Cal Planner, addressing the impacts of Global warming. Mr. Dayton says those issues are being incorporated into the general plan.

Two sheets were handed out for information item only, not for in depth discussion tonight, to give TCC an idea of what the Parking Master Plan might look like. Starts with an introduction, moves into history, then a status of today's parking and a new addition might be planning for the future. What are the challenges? At traditional chapter would be goals and policies. What is the next step for the Master Plan? Followed by chapter goals, and lastly an implementation. How do we make it happen, so that those who are involved become influential in implementing policies. The larger questions about parking will take place in Plan Santa Barbara framework. How does it fit in with forums in the fall and the scenario after the holidays, land use scenarios? Round 2 workshops will be talking about actual scenarios. Where does parking fit in? Does it fit into the Plan Santa Barbara or is it something TCC and planning commission talks about and then brings into Plan Santa Barbara. At this point we don't know.

Committee Member Comments

Mr. Maas commented that the outline looks good. The first three chapters look very good, and would be great background material as Plan Santa Barbara moves forward and would like to see some examples sooner rather than later. Mr. Dayton says they are thinking along the same lines,

the outline represents background data, not a decision point. They can talk about the challenges of parking today. The challenges embody the general plan discuss. How do we change course by looking at the challenges over the policy of the last two decades. Do we need to change course?

Mr. Boyd felt several issues were not addressed including public parking vs. private parking and how as a community we address that issue. Should we have more public parking in the upper State Street corridor? Should the City consider floating bonds to move that forward? Is that part of the overall plan, or is it a separate issue? Mr. Dayton said the question is relevant and will be addressed in Chapter 4. He continued by saying there are tremendous challenges in the Upper State Street area. There was disappointment that a lot of businesses did not participate.

Special parking issues for RV's and buses. If we continue to encourage tourism, we need to address the issue of providing parking for RV's. Also, there is the question of the homeless and where they park their vehicles. Mr. Dayton said Chapter 4 is specific to challenges in the future, what things need to change.

Mr. Pritchett noted the amount of space an RV needs to park. *Mr. Pritchett* asked if there was a difference between planning for RV parking for money-spending tourists vs. RV parking for local residents that have no place else to go.

Mr. Tabor agrees with earlier comments. We saw a lot of that discussion and information in your presentation several months ago in the joint meeting with the Planning Commission. You can almost plug a lot of the information in to chapters 2 and 3. At next months meeting we should start to look at some of the parking policies.

5. Staff Briefings on Current Topics;

Browning Allen said that bids were open for the Neighborhood Traffic Management program and anticipate them going to Council on Sept, 11. We have several bids under the engineers estimate, and we look forward to moving forward on that. As you drive around town you will see a contractor doing annual slurry seal. They will be here for a few more weeks, getting streets at a level where we don't have to do another major construction project in the future. The contractor will also be applying the "Share the Road" symbol on Milpas, to remind bicyclist and motorists to share the same lane. Going into upcoming agenda items, next month's meeting is all about Plan Santa Barbara, and Community Development staff will be at that meeting. Entire meeting devoted to plan SB, will include MTD report in agenda, but we won't discuss unless committee needs to. Plan Santa Barbara will go first but if you want to talk about MTD after we can. If there is time we can talk about the shuttle reports. At a future meeting will bring conceptual design for the improvement to State at De La Vine project. In its conceptual design. The design team of M & S will have some drawings that will be brought to the committee at a later date, probably by the November 8th meeting. Transportation Operations will be at that meeting as well to discuss that project as well.

Rob Dayton announced that at last Tuesday's council meeting, Council unanimously approved ON TRAC, which is a plan for "transit rail action for commuters". This is a work that came out of Council rail sub committee, made up of Council members; Schneider, House and Horton. They composed a plan, which we will get it to you at a future meeting. The plan addresses how the city will move forward in encouraging commuter rail between Santa Barbara and Ventura counties. Will bring it to you in the near future, with a presentation.

Mr. Allen reminded the TCC that the September TCC meeting will be devoted to an update on Plan Santa Barbara. *Mr. Pritchett* asks if this is simply a way to get AMTRAK to change it train schedules to an earlier more commuter friendly schedule, or are there other elements to ON TRAC. *Rob Dayton* replied it is one element of a broader project, to try and bring full commuter rail to Santa Barbara.

Mr. Pritchett noted that public comments, from numerous sources, on the future of transportation in Santa Barbara are scattered. He requested that there be a table to incorporate all comments, not by source but by comment content. *Mr. Pritchett* would like to have all of the information and data organized in a table, noting that the source of the material is nearly irrelevant. *Rob Dayton* answered that staff has done a great job of cataloging over 550 comments. There was a meeting as to have the information accessible to the committee. *Mr. Boyd* said regarding next month's TCC meeting, he would like to have materials in the agenda packet to members well ahead of time so they can be in a better position to know the material, to ask questions and raise issues. *Mr. Allen* responded we should have to material sooner because it will be available for several other city committee meetings, including Downtown Parking, ABR and HLC. *Mr. Allen* will ask Community Development staff to send it to all the boards Commissions at the same time. *Mr. Tabor* mentioned that the State of California budget was passed and some big ticket items were removed from budget. A large chunk of the state budget was removed from transit. Any comments? *Mr. Allen* said it was too soon, we will find out in the next few weeks. We will hear from SBCAG about how we will be impacted. A large chunk of money was removed from transit and put into the General Fund. It is bound to have an effect on MTD and transit all over the state. The money will be used for related issues but not really public transit.

6. Review of Upcoming Agenda Items

7. Committee Member/Sub Committee Comments.

There were no other Committee Member/Sub Committee comments.

ADJOURNMENT: 8:05 PM

Committee Members: Bill Boyd, Mark Bradley, Keith Coffman-Grey, Michael Cooper (Chair), Steve Maas, David Pritchett, and David Tabor (Vice-Chair)

Liaisons: Roger Horton (Council Liaison), Addison Thompson (Planning Commission Liaison)