



MEETING MINUTES

CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION COMMITTEE (TCC)

David Gebhard Public Meeting Room
630 Garden Street, Santa Barbara, CA
Wednesday, June 21, 2017, 5:30 PM

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Blackerby called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

ROLL CALL:

TCC MEMBERS

Hillary Blackerby
Edward France
E. Howard Green
Susan Horne

Attendees

Present
Present
Present
Present

CITY STAFF PRESENT :

Rob Dayton, Transportation Planning and Parking Manager
Rebecca J. Bjork, Public Works Director
Brian D'Amour, City Engineer
Mindy Jackson, Administrative Specialist

LIAISONS PRESENT:

PUBLIC COMMENT:

1. Hillary Blackerby - No public comment for items not on the agenda.

CONSENT ITEMS

2. Approval of Minutes from the March 23, 2017, meeting of the Transportation and Circulation Committee, where a quorum was present.

A motion to approve by Ed France

Howard Green made a second motion with corrections to be noted - Name of Chair to be changed.

Mr. Green noted that he was late to the meeting but was present for most of the meeting.

MOTION: To approve the Minutes from the March 23, 2017, meeting.

Ayes: 4 Noes: 0 Abstain: Absent: 0

REPORTS

3. MTD Reports for Downtown Waterfront Shuttle - Monthly MTD Reports for March and April 2017, and the Traffic Mitigation Report for the quarter ending March 31, 2017.

Steve Maas from MTD was present to answer questions on the reports:

Rob Dayton – City Council renewed our five-year agreement with MTD and our partnership for the Downtown Waterfront Shuttle. MTD has a new vehicle on State Street and the Waterfront route. It will be a slightly longer vehicle but still open air. It has a little more capacity and the batteries operate a lot longer. Right now, the shuttles are older and need to be changed out. The new shuttles will be here in August.

Mr. Maas – We expect the first of the new vehicles to arrive in August and the rest will come in through the next couple months into October. There will be a combination of the new vehicles and current shuttles during that period of time.

Ms. Blackerby – Any questions on the reports?

Note that there has been interest in getting an update on a future agenda on the shuttle and what is going on with that in the City.

4. Presentation On Infrastructure Repairs and Community Service Needs

Mr. Dayton – The City has an enormous shortfall for infrastructure activities. This committee is aware of that as we are constantly talking about projects and the lack of money for projects. The roads are getting worse in regards to state of repair. Council is considering a ballot measure that would fund these projects. Rebecca Bjork, the Public Works Director, and also Brian D'Amour, the City Engineer, have been going to the Boards and Commissions and telling the story of what the need is. As our Boards and Commissions are often times talking with citizens and actively engaged in the leadership of Santa Barbara, we feel this is very important for you to hear. This is the reason for the special meeting tonight.

Brian D'Amour – I'm curious to know how many of you have heard the presentation before? (Ed France acknowledged that he is the only one who has not heard the presentation.)

Ms. Blackerby - For those watching at home, this may be their first time hearing this.

Mr. D'Amour – Infrastructure is being discussed at the national, state, and local levels. It is something that has been going on here at the local level for a number of years. In 2008 there was an Infrastructure Task Force that consisted of members of the public. Recommendations were made for improving the infrastructure. Many of those recommendations we were able to implement to improve our infrastructure. For one of their key recommendations however, the timing was not the best. It was the beginning of the recession. The recommendation was for a ½ cent sales tax for infrastructure. It was not implemented at that time. The issue didn't go away, and conditions continued to deteriorate. We made it through the recession and then in 2014-2015 an Infrastructure Subcommittee was formed, with Councilmembers Randy Rouse and Bendy White. They talked to the community and got feedback on priorities and talked to staff to try and come up with a dollar amount. At that time the amount about \$400 million. There was a consensus from Council on how to move forward. In 2016, staff worked with the Finance Committee and looked deeper at that number. We were challenged to come up with an amount that captures everything. The Finance Committee wondered if this amount would be enough and if in five to twenty years from now we would be saying that we needed more money. As you can see, it went up from \$400 million to \$546 million because we dug deep to make sure that we captured everything.

Projects that went into the \$546M

Streets - number one asset – The cost goes up dramatically as the condition goes down.

About 2/3 of them are rated as poor, at risk, or failed condition.

Slurry Sealing – a preventative maintenance measure, has been dropped due to lack of funding.

Right now we are putting funds toward the most traveled roads that are in the worst condition.

The arterials are getting a grind and overlay treatment. It's expensive, but we can't let those roads turn in to dirt roads.

How did we get ourselves into this situation? There are two factors that have been working against us. One, is that the funding source has been basically flat. We have 3 main funding sources for pavement maintenance: state gas tax, utility users tax, and Measure A.

Costs have gone up so our buying power has been greatly diminished.

What streets could be treated under different funding scenarios? Projected Street Repair over a 20 year cycle with current \$2M/year investment. Mostly arterials. Neighborhood streets aren't getting any attention under this scenario.

Projected Street Repair over 20 year cycle. Increasing to \$4M/year (additional gas tax revenue). For the most part, this is only getting in to 10 – 20% of the neighborhoods.

Street repairs with the additional revenue from a sales tax increase will cover every single street.

Mr. France – Is this annually?

Mr. D'Amour – Over 20 years something would happen. Grind and overlay, slurry seal, whatever the appropriate treatment is.

Mr. Green – What is the level of expenditures implied by this?

Mr. D'Amour – This is in the neighborhood of \$15M total per year. Some of the factors that go in to this when we apply the funds or we can frontload this program. If we can package a lot of it in the first six years, that's going to save us money down the road.

Mr. D'Amour – It's not just the street surface itself, there is a lot of street related infrastructure in the right of way, including sidewalks, bike lanes, storm drains, traffic signals, streetlights, and curb and gutter.

Mr. D'Amour – It's not just streets infrastructure, there are other infrastructure needs Citywide. One of the other needs we are feeling right now is the loss of the Redevelopment Agency about 5 years ago. That brought in about \$20M per year to the City. So, over 5 years there has been an estimated loss of over \$100M. This money would go towards downtown revitalization, infrastructure, and affordable housing. State Street relied on RDA to stay attractive.

Public Safety -

Police Department headquarters – Constructed in 1959 and the police had a staff of 85 in 1960 and now there are 212 in 2017. The City population has also gone up during that time. Highly constrained on space to operate out of that facility. It is an essential facility and modern building codes require that it be able to withstand a seismic event and fully operational following an event. There are needs for accessibility, plumbing, electrical, and all the things that you can expect in an older building.

Fire Department – Same kind of story, but they are not concentrated in one facility. Another opportunity is for the Fire Department to coordinate with the Forest Service

(Replacement of Fire Station #7 behind Sheffield Reservoir), a federal agency, to come up with a facility that serves the needs of both agencies and can best serve the community in that high fire hazard area. Without a funding source it is hard to get too far along in those discussions.

Parks and Recreation - has lots of different needs. They have aging facilities. An example is the Renovation of Thousand Steps.

The maintenance of State Street sidewalks and streetscape. With loss of RDA, we don't really have a funding source now. It needs to adapt to changing retail. There are other commercial corridors like Milpas Street sidewalks, upper State Street, Cliff Drive, De La Vina, that we would like to be able to plug funding in to. To maintain it those areas and also make them more attractive to residents and visitors to come to those areas.

Mr. D'Amour - This has been a really brief overview of the needs that we have, and a sampling of the different areas.

The estimated Unfunded Infrastructure need is \$25M per year.

Council is interested in a 1 cent sales tax increase and will decide on June 27 whether to place it on the November ballot.

The 1 cent sales tax increase per year would generate approximately \$22M dollars per year. It would pretty much fund the shortfall that we have.

The last Council action directed us to look into this some more and see what other agencies are doing. We also hired a polling consultant to gage the communities' level of support for this.

Of the current 7.75% sales tax, the City receives only 1%, the state takes most of the rest. So the increase of 1% would effectively double the amount that stays here locally.

The polling results, that was done by the consultant, showed that we received a lot of input from the community and the priorities were named:

- Maintaining police, fire, 911 emergency medical response
- Repairing local streets and potholes
- Upgrading outdated emergency communication systems
- Ensure police station & neighborhood fire stations are accessible and functional in a natural disaster.

Some of the most critical things that we heard back from the polling:

- All funds must be spent locally (We are required to spend it locally and the state or the federal government can't take it)
- Public disclosure of all spending to ensure funds are spent only as approved by voters
- Citizen's oversight
- Continue until ended by voters at future election.

Questions:

Susan Horne – It seems so long overdue and the longer we wait the more cost and the more damage is going to be done to our infrastructure. I'm glad to see this happening.

Mr. Green – I'm curious if the \$546M counts things like inflation. Is it a current value of the expected 20 years of work?

Mr. D'Amour – The sales tax growth would closely match the rate of inflation but no guarantees that would happen. Construction pricing can also be volatile – up or down.

Mr. France – What would the increase in the pavement quality index comparison be by where we currently are and where it would be with the increase in the sales tax?

Mr. D'Amour – With the extra from the gas tax, it will still continue to decline. The goal of the sales tax measure is to go from a pci of 61 to a pci of 70 by year six. Front load the first six years and get up to pci 70 and we wouldn't have to invest as each year but stay at that year until year 20.

Ms. Horne – A question about the state gas tax. As electric vehicles come on line, I wonder if there are fewer cars using gas, then the gas tax will decline. How is that taken into account or is it?

Mr. D'Amour – The measure that was passed to increase the gas tax is not only an additional tax on gas, but it also gets the electrical vehicles in the door. It could be argued whether they are paying their fair share or not, but at least they are in the game now.

Mr. France – In the terms of how this structure could ultimately end up, could there be a super majority or 66% or simple majority option. Is there any basic background on what those might end up being?

Mr. D'Amour – I can explain the difference between a general sales tax and a special tax. Right now under consideration is a general sales tax which requires 50% plus one of the voters to be passed. There are less strings attached on how you would use that funding. It's kind of the opposite of what would seem intuitive so if you wanted to create a tax that could only be used for specific purposes it is actually a higher threshold where you need 2/3, you need the super majority. The polling for this was in that mid sixty range and Council is looking at the general sales tax but trying to figure out a way of still doing it as a general sales tax but putting language into the ballot itself or do a resolution. It will be interesting to see how they tackle that.

Rebecca Bjork – The ballot language will be written either for a general tax or a special tax. So even if we got a super majority with a general tax, it would still remain a general tax. What the Council and the community is struggling with is the need for this tax is clearly infrastructure and that has been very clear from the beginning but in order to have a general tax it does have to be used for general purposes. So they are working to identify language that would make it clear in the ballot what the intended use of the money would be, it's not restricted, and then putting in place performance reporting measures that would allow the community to know how that money was that money was actually being used so that it couldn't be used on other ways without being public and transparent about that.

Mr. Green – Is there any thought as to where a new police headquarters might be?

Ms. Bjork – There has been studies. We have been looking at the Police Station since 1999 so there has been a lot of work on it. At this point in time, we will wait until we know whether we actually have a funding source before delve into where that would be. If at its current location, that will be part of its valuation.

Ms. Blackerby – We do have a few concrete streets. How do you see that fitting in with the rest of the plan?

Mr. D'Amour – With this measure we could finally do something with our concrete streets. It costly to touch them. Gutierrez is a good example of a concrete street that is need of some repairs. We will exploring different treatment options. It would probably be cost prohibitive to

demo the whole thing and repave it, but there's likely a way that we could put something similar to when we grind and overlay. It will be more expensive than maintaining asphalt, but once we get it into that appropriate state of repair than the cost to maintain them would be minimal. There has been a slower degradation than asphalt streets.

Ms. Blackerby – I have seen this addressed before and I feel that people have done their homework. This is the third time I have seen this. Being strategic and thoughtful and how that messaging goes is really important. I appreciate that it is a measured approach but also being honest about what we have to work on. I think more than the times before when this has been brought up I think people will believe you when you say that that is what you are going to spend the general tax on now. It would be foolish for it to pass and for the money to be spent on something other than infrastructure. I can tell that it is going to go toward infrastructure. I appreciate the depth that you go into here.

Mr. Green – I think Rob's letter leaves us the option of a resolution with a message that can be taken to Council that we are in support of this activity.

Mr. Dayton – Some of the other boards and commissions have.

Mr. Green – I move that the TCC support the sales tax increase that was presented to us today.

Ms. Blackerby – Discussion?

Mr. France – It is appreciated how sharply the City staff have prepared the needs that would be over 20 years through CIP and maintenance needs that would met by this funding source. It is unfortunate that there not more tools in the toolbox in terms of the source of funds. Sales tax funds are clearly not the ideal match in terms of roadway infrastructure and in some ways can be more of a regressive tax. But you got to do what you got to do in terms of meeting these needs.

On the theme of bringing in more resources in for essential City needs, one of the things that the City does really well is bringing in grant funding. Also, grant matching and other important things to bring in outside funding for other needs in the CIP are in existing plans have not been funded at the level that they had been in the past and I would hope that those funding levels would be restored so that all the needs in terms of infrastructure could be met. There will be changing needs in our infrastructure so I hope this frees us up not to just maintain infrastructure but free up other existing resources of funds to adapt to new challenges in the future. So, thank you for this and I will support the motion.

Ms. Blackerby – All those in favor of the motion.

MOTION: To support the sales tax increase that was presented to us today.

Ayes: 4 Noes: 0 Abstain: Absent: 0

Ms. Blackerby – Ralph Fertig, who was head of the Santa Barbara Bicycle Coalition for a long time, who passed away a few years ago, will have a class one bike path named after him and there will be a celebration at 4:30 tomorrow near La Conchita. The bike path is between the county line and Ventura on Hwy 101.

Chair Blackerby adjourned the meeting at 6:25 PM