

APPROVED MINUTES

SHASTA COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AGENCY (MPO)

Tuesday, February 26, 2002 4:00 p.m.
City of Redding, City Council Chambers
777 Cypress Street, Redding, 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 Clarke, Connick, McGeorge, Hawes, Duryee, Wilson and Alternate Member Stegall were present. Agency Member Kight was absent. Representatives of the RTPA, Shasta County staff, Caltrans, City of Redding, City of Anderson, Shasta Senior Nutrition Programs (CTSA) and RABA were present.

1. Call to Order:

Chair Connick called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m.

2. Public Comment Period:

Vivian Brant, residing at 5550 Trish Court, Redding, read a letter into the record concerning the need for a safety barrier on the east side of the freeway by Country Oaks Subdivision. The letter stated that North bound I-5 to West bound 299 has a 50 foot embankment that is at the edge of Country Oaks Subdivision. Residents are concerned that if a vehicle was to go over the embankment, a number of homes would be in peril of fire, especially if it's a semi-truck. If there was a chemical spill, it could go into the sewer/storm drain at the bottom of the embankment. There have been three vehicle accidents so far, but none went down the embankment. Ms. Brant presented a petition with 100 signatures from residents of the subdivision.

Executive Officer Kovacich explained that although the Agency could not address this unagendized item at this time, he would be happy to forward the letter and petition to Caltrans for their review.

Ray Prettyman, residing at 1198 Denton Way, Redding, spoke to the Agency concerning the need for noise abatement along I-5, by the Churn Creek, Cypress and South Bonneyview area. He has been talking with Caltrans for the last couple of years re: the noise level along I-5. Caltrans conducted a study that determined the noise level to be higher at that location.

Caltrans indicated they can't take action unless the RTPA adds this project to the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) list.

Executive Officer Kovacich explained that noise abatement is a big issue state wide. He stated that this location would be STIP eligible. Staff can put it on the agenda but it will compete with other projects for funding. Staff was informed of this issue, but not until after the projects were already put together.

The Agency directed staff to agendize this item for further consideration.

Consent Calendar

- 3-1 **Minutes of December 11, 2001, RTPA Meeting**
- 3-2 **Future RTPA Meeting Schedule through February 2003 - Information Only**
- 3-3 **Accept Performance Audits for Three Year Period Ending June 30, 2000**

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

Regular Calendar

- 4. **Update on Trial Transit Services - Information Only:**
Executive Officer Kovacich reported that the Cottonwood and Airport Road Corridor Express transit routes so far do not have ridership near the threshold needed for continued service beyond the trial period.

Agency member Clarke stated that there is a senior mobile home park on Airport Road where people need access to the street to be able to catch the bus. She will be meeting with residents and park manager to try to work out a way to gain access to the street.
- 5. **Consider 2002/03 Transit Needs Assessment and Conduct 2002/03 Unmet Needs Hearing - Consider Action:**
Executive Officer Kovacich stated that after this meeting, staff will evaluate the suggestions made by the public and put together recommendations for the next RTPA meeting in April.

Bill Ramsdell gave a presentation explaining the methodology for evaluating new requests for public transit services. He showed by a graph where and how the needs for transit services are determined and met.
- ☐ **Fixed Route and Demand Response** which fell slightly below the farebox ratio RTPA set in 2000/01.
- ☐ **Cottonwood, Airport Road and Intermountain Trial Express**
- ☐ **Shingletown and Burney Express.** The Shingletown Van Pool at this time is out of service due to lack of volunteers who operate this service. However, a group in Shingletown is working on getting it going again.
- ☐ **Consolidated Transportation Service Agency (CTSA)** also provides service. Bill showed where it goes and who it serves.

- ❑ **Lifeline Services** are contracted between Shasta County and the Shasta Senior Nutrition Center, serving the elderly and disabled in the outlying areas.

Mr. Ramsdell then explained RABA's short and long range transit plan. He noted that no action will be taken today concerning the public's suggestions, but will be addressed at the next RTPA meeting in April.

Chair Comnick opened the public hearing for 2002/03 Unmet Transit Needs. The following people spoke.

- ◆ Mike Evans, Chair of the Social Services Technical Advisory Committee (SSTAC), explained that the purpose of SSTAC is to assist RTPA in identifying what unmet needs still exist that are reasonable to meet and to work with the RTPA to help meet those needs. Mr. Evans reported that:

The SSTAC would like RABA to consider extending the trial period for the Cottonwood, Airport Road and Intermountain trial express routes from one to two years. The Committee is concerned that the statistics do not reflect the true potential ridership because the trial run started later than planned. The statistics indicate that ridership is growing; however, they believe it will take a while for ridership to build up.

Supports RABA's request that the farebox ratio be reduced to 16.5%. The City of Redding will probably have to supplement it.

Keep price on monthly passes as is or lower because it's hard for people on fixed incomes to afford the passes.

Supports Sunday service and extended hours. There are enough people to run the busses after 6:30 p.m. Sunday service has a high demand, especially from the transit dependent.

Bus stops/shelters and benches: Several are not handicap accessible, some are hardly visible for riders to know that the stops exist.

Would be a good idea to get the community engaged in this. Would like to see promotional activity, something besides just television and radio. Would like to see the RTPA or RABA handle promotion since they are the professionals and know what's going on. Believe promotion is the key to building the farebox ratio.

Need additional services to more outlying areas such as Lakehead, Happy Valley, Palo Cedro and Bella Vista. Maybe these areas could do the same as the Shingletown Van Pool with volunteers.

Need a wider search of the whole system to see what the needs are of the transit dependent.

The costs associated with Demand Response do not seem correct. Senior Nutrition has much lower rates.

- ◆ Shelly Anderson, representing the disabled community of Shasta County, advised that RABA needs longer bus hours and Sunday Service. She noted that Chico is a smaller town than Redding and has longer hours. The City of Redding can help get better service.
- ◆ Isabelle Cordova, consumer advocate for Far Northern, stated that RABA needs longer bus hours and Sunday service. She uses Demand Response for transportation to her job. She works until 7:30 p.m. on Wednesdays and has a hard time getting home, because Demand Response doesn't run that late. Ms. Cordova would like Demand Response to run on Sundays so she can go to church. She stated that she is limited by transportation issues, not her disability. She suggested that possibly the taxi cab companies could be subsidized to help fulfill that transportation need.
- ◆ Sandra Van Larsen, from Independent Living Service, thanked the RTPA for the work they've done to meet transportation needs in Shasta County. Her clients would like to see longer hours and Sunday service. They would also like to see transit to Lakehead. They believe the Lakehead run would be successful if available only two days a month, on the 1st and 15th when their checks come.
- ◆ Melinda Brown, representing People of Progress (POP), recognized the improvements made by the RTPA in the last few years. Supports reduced farebox ratio. They support the new express routes going two trial years instead of just one. She thanked the Agency for going beyond their obligation on the Airport Road express by extending the run to Anderson. She emphasized the importance to get the word out about the pilot express routes. POP is working with Social Services to promote these routes. She stressed getting out in the community to promote RABA; television and radio alone won't work. She thanked CalWorks for bringing their funds to the table.

There being no one else to speak, Chair Cornnick closed the public hearing.

Agency Member Clarke stated the two year extension is a funding issue. The original funding came from Social Services not TDA funds. The issue would need to go back them for consideration.

Executive Officer Kovacich reminded the members of the public that public comments would be held open until Friday, March 1, 2002, if anyone would like to call or send a letter regarding unmet transit needs.

By motion made, seconded (Clarke/Wilson) the staff recommendation passed unanimously.

6. Accept 2002 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) Project Prioritization:
Executive Officer Kovacich recommended that the Agency accept the 2002 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) project prioritization as submitted to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) on 2/25/02 (the deadline for submittal).

Dan Little explained the RTIP projects and how the CTC wanted a prioritized list. Mr. Little explained that the CTC will be constrained on their funding this year, but hopefully the ones prioritized will be approved. The bottom line is that new projects will have program delays of two years. Staff's goal is to proceed and try to get the maximum amount of dollars possible.

Agency Member Stegall asked how projects were prioritized.

Dan Little reviewed the list in the staff report and noted that they were prioritized in order of:

1. If environmental studies were already started.
2. If they were already ranked.
3. Base allocation projects are on bottom of list.

By motion made, seconded (Hawes/Clarke) the Agency accepted the report.

7. Consider Request by Redding Area Bus Authority (RABA) to Establish Lower Farebox Requirement - Consider Action:

Executive Officer Kovacich reported that staff received a letter from RABA requesting relief from the 19% farebox requirement. Staff recommended a temporary reduction that will return to the 19% ratio in 2005. This action is similar to action taken by the Agency in 1998 reacting to a request by RABA for relief from the statutory farebox standard.

Agency member Duryee stated she supported the 16.5% permanent reduction. Demand Response will get bigger and bigger because we have an aging population. The public transportation is going to become a bigger issue.

Alternate Member Stegall also expressed support for the permanent 16.5% reduction. She was also supportive of the pay increase for bus drivers.

Agency Member Hawes indicated the need to keep the farebox ratio the same. Because the Agency has an obligation to the tax payers.

Member McGeorge expressed support for the permanent reduction. He noted that unemployment isn't going to improve in the near future and people need a reasonable means of transportation. Also a high population of seniors live in Shasta County.

Agency Member Clarke stated we need to improve the inefficiency and cost effectiveness of Demand Response. She indicated she would not support a permanent reduction. She recommended support of staff's recommendation for one year; with the understanding it would be brought back for consideration in one year. She noted the Agency has a responsibility to the taxpayers who pay for these services.

Chair Connick indicated she serves on both the RTPA and RABA boards. She stated she was not in favor of a permanent reduction.

Member Stegall moved for the 16.5% farebox reduction, Duryee seconded. Members McGeorge, Duryee and Stegall voted in approval, members Clarke, Wilson, Hawes and Connick opposed. Motion failed.

Member Clarke motioned for RTPA's staff recommendation in farebox revenue, Hawes seconded. Members Clarke, Wilson, Hawes and Connick voted in approval, members McGeorge, Duryee and Stegall opposed. Motion passed.

There being no further business to discuss, Chair Connick adjourned the meeting at 5:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel J. Kovacich, Executive Officer

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