

DRAFT

Technical Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes July 8, 2009

The following minutes are submitted for a meeting of the Technical Transportation Advisory Committee (TTAC) held at 2:00 in the SLOCOG conference room at 1150 Osos Street, Suite 202, San Luis Obispo.

TTAC Members Present

Rob Strong	City of Arroyo Grande
Russ Thompson	City of Atascadero
Mike Ford	City of Grover Beach
Rob Livick (Chairman)	City of Morro Bay
Ditas Esperanza	City of Paso Robles
Dwayne Chisam	City of Pismo Beach
Tim Bochum	City of San Luis Obispo
Frank Honeycutt	County of San Luis Obispo
Cindy Utter	Caltrans District 5

SLOCOG Staff Present

Ronald De Carli	Executive Director
Peter Rodgers	Programming Director
Michael Harmon	Program Coordinator
Geiska Baker Velasquez	Transportation Planner
Jessica Berry	Transportation Planner

Guests

Mike Giuliano	Caltrans D5, Deputy Director
Steve McGrath	Port San Luis Harbor Master

Call to Order: Committee Chairman Rob Livick called the meeting to order at 2:p.m.

- 1. Public Comments:** There were no public comments.
- 2. TTAC Minutes of May 27, 2009:** Chairman Livick asked if there were any corrections to the minutes of the May 27th meeting; there were none. **Ditas Esperanza then motioned to approve the minutes; seconded by Dwayne Chisam and approved.**

Ronald De Carli asked the committee for permission to take an added agenda item regarding SLOCOG projects funded under the Federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The committee agreed to take the item out of sequence; and he briefly summarizes the status of the projects programmed by SLOCOG and the importance of assuring that all required actions are completed by March 2010. He introduced **Mike Giuliano** of Caltrans District 5, who reiterates the importance of assuring that projects submitted by local agencies are ready to be delivered. He noted that if a project may not be ready to go by March 2010 that a substitute project must be identified and action taken by December 15, 2009 to program the substitute project. **Mike Giuliano** further noted that SLOCOG has completed all necessary actions,

including submittal of its FTIP for approval and submittal of the Federal project authorization (Form 1511). He also noted that Caltrans District 5 is still trying to federalize the Willow Road interchange project in order to make it eligible for ARRA funding.

Mike Giuliano indicated that District 5 staff is anxious for local agencies to identify back-up projects just in case previously programmed projects are not able to move forward. Since project bid openings are coming in with costs 40% lower than the original estimate it will be possible to program additional projects. **Frank Honeycutt** asked if it is possible for the County to get additional funding for one of its road paving projects that is seeing higher costs than originally estimated. **Mike Giuliano** responded that this is possible but that SLOCOG has the authority to decide such issues. **Frank Honeycutt** inquired what policy Caltrans or the CTC has regarding the possibility of surplus funding being exchanged between counties or regional agencies. **Mike Giuliano** replied that he is unaware of any specific policy on this issue. He noted that there are a number of very important actions that the Federal Government is requiring of local agencies to document the progress being made on the ARRA funded projects. He noted these actions are designed to assure that the projects are moving forward and that they are producing the employment that was estimated. He stressed that in order to conform to this requirement, SLOCOG is required to complete a Form 1585 for each project at the start of each month verifying the status of the project and a Form 1587 on the 8th of each month. In addition, contractors will be required to fill out a form identifying how many direct jobs have been created by the project. It is important for local agencies to send their requests for authorization to begin project construction as soon as possible after completing all pre-construction steps. **Ronald De Carli** thanked **Mike Giuliano** for his help on this issue and noted that as this is an information item no action by the Committee is necessary.

3. Items on the July 15, 2009 SLOCOG agenda:

A-1 Ride-On Transportation Presentation. **Peter Rodgers** distributed a handout showing PowerPoint slides that **Mark Shaffer**, Ride-On Transportation Director, prepared for a presentation to the SLOCOG Board at the upcoming meeting, and noted that Mark was unable to attend the TTAC meeting. **Peter Rodgers** briefly summarized the various programs that Ride-On provides, noting that this is an information item only.

A-2 Highway 101 Proposed Median Barrier Projects. **Geiska Baker Velasquez** briefly reviewed the staff report, noting the history of SLOCOG policy on median barriers and Caltrans plans for upgrading various median barriers throughout the region. She noted that SLOCOG staff has worked with Caltrans staff and the affected local agencies to help identify appropriate methods of addressing local concerns, including elimination of landscaping, while assuring that high priority safety policies are implemented. SLOCOG staff spent a lot of time working with the City of Paso Robles and Caltrans to address local concerns regarding a proposed concrete barrier on US 101 through the city, and that major progress has been made to reduce the negative impacts of removing the mature landscaping that currently exists. She then introduced **Deb Larson** from Caltrans District 5, who noted that **Steve Price** is scheduled to give a presentation on the median barrier program to the SLOCOG Board at the July 15th meeting.

Deb Larson reviewed Caltrans policies on the construction of median barriers, emphasizing that the highest priority is achieving a safe working environment for Caltrans workers. She noted the other major priorities, including reducing the number and severity of cross median accidents. **Deb Larson** also reviewed the various criteria Caltrans uses to determine where an upgraded median barrier is warranted and what type of barrier is required. These include warrants for collision volume, width and gap closure. She summarized Caltrans policies for paving the median, which allows paving medians up to seventeen feet wide between the edge of the traveled way and the median barrier. She highlighted Caltrans worker safety statistics, emphasizing the high priority given to worker safety, minimizing maintenance and repair costs, and avoiding disruption to the traveling public during lane closures.

Ronald De Carli thanked **Deb Larson** for her presentation, noting that the SLOCOG Executive Committee requested that various concerns about proposed median barriers be discussed to assure that the needs and desires of local agencies, and in particular the City of Paso Robles, were addressed as Caltrans moved forward with its proposed projects. He noted that there are a number of issues that need to be addressed in regard to future median barriers proposed to be constructed through the City of San Luis Obispo and in the South County area. SLOCOG staff wants to give local agencies an opportunity to review and comment on a comprehensive set of policies to govern the construction of median barriers anywhere in the County in the future. **Rob Strong** asked what justification there is for removing the limited existing landscaping along

US101 in the South County. He stressed the need to provide locals an opportunity to review and comment on proposed barriers.

Jim Lopes brought to attention various concerns that County Planning has regarding the impact of the proposed concrete median barriers may have on the scenic quality of the US 101 corridor. He noted that if a concrete barrier is required, it should have a design based on the barrier constructed on Highway 1 from San Luis Obispo to Morro Bay. He reviewed the policies that County staff developed that should be used when considering construction of a median barrier, including the need to differentiate between urban and rural areas. **Jim Lopes** said it is not just a design issue but an economic issue because any action that reduces the scenic character of San Luis Obispo County, particularly along the US 101 corridor, is critical to the economic success of the region. **Ditas Esperanza** pointed out that staff from the City of Paso Robles would like to be provided with warrant data specific to the barrier proposed for US 101 through the City, and not just statewide statistics. **Deb Larson** indicated that Caltrans could not provide segment specific data.

Frank Honeycutt suggested that Caltrans provide the City with a warrant analysis, and Ditas Esperanza agreed. **Tim Bochum** asked if all the existing landscaping in the median on US 101 through the City of Paso Robles will have to be removed. **Ronald De Carli** responded that Caltrans is now proposing the replacement of the large existing Oleanders with a small variation that will be easier to maintain. **Deb Larson** noted that in addition to removing the large oleanders, it will be necessary to remove a number of the oak trees that exist through the area.

Geiska Velasquez noted that although much has changed and the visual impact greatly reduced since Caltrans first proposed the median barrier through Paso Robles, the extent of proposed paving and the removal of existing landscaping is still a high priority. This is why the issue is being taken to the SLOCOG Board for review and action. **Frank Honeycutt** said he used to work on median barrier projects when he was a Caltrans employee and emphasized that the need for median barriers has largely grown out of the large increases in traffic volume that have been seen on US 101. He asked that the list of policies that staff has developed be expanded to include safety, citing the serious cross median accidents that took place on Highway 1 north of the City of San Luis Obispo prior to the construction of the existing median barrier.

Rob Strong inquired about the justification for paving up to seventeen feet of the median along US 101. **Frank Honeycutt** responded that he could not defend this policy, but that there may be a justification. **Tim Bochum** asked if it is possible to develop a common countywide barrier design theme for the county that could be used by Caltrans early on in the design process. He also noted that he is ready to work with Caltrans staff to develop a design for the barrier proposed for the City of San Luis Obispo. **Deb Larson** noted that there are a number of issues to be considered, including the flood zone in the southern portion of the city. She then distributed a list of web links that would provide local agencies with additional information about median barriers. **Ronald De Carli** thanked **Deb Larson** for coming to the TTAC meeting. He briefly summarized the issues under consideration, noting that possible solutions will continue to be evaluated. **The Committee received the information presented and directed staff to prepare specific recommendations.**

B-1 2010 Project Programming & Schedule Update. **Ronald De Carli** summarized the staff report, noting the current status of programming projects in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and the expectations for the reauthorization of the Federal Surface Transportation Act (SAFETEA-LU) when it expires this September. He indicated that there may be a delay in the reauthorization and that there are a number of very important issues that need to be addressed, particularly whether and how adequate funding will be provided. He brought to attention that an additional staff report on transit funding is being included in an agenda addendum, and it is distributed at this meeting as a handout. He said there is still a significant amount of transit funding provided in Proposition 1B of 2006 that remains to be programmed. **Peter Rodgers** stressed that it is important to begin considering what transit projects should be funded and that actions need to be taken soon to assure that applications are completed by October. He said the proposed schedule has already been distributed to local transit staff. **Ronald De Carli** noted that SLOCOG staff will be working with each local agency to assure that project funding applications are properly completed, pointing out that this is an information item only. **No action was taken; the Committee received the information as presented.**

B-2 2009 State Legislative Update. **Michael Harmon** briefly reviewed the staff report noting that this update includes the status of 31 bills that the Board adopted positions on at its April meeting and eight newly identified bills that staff considers to be of importance to the region. He then summarized the provisions of

several bills that have been identified as being of particular importance to the region, including: AB 522, AB 949, ACA 9, SB 406 and SB 575. He also reviewed the staff recommended position for each. **Steve McGrath**, Port San Luis Harbor Master, asked if staff is aware of SB 802, which would restrict a local agency from withholding more than 5% of programmed project funding (as opposed to 10% which is the current standard) until construction of a project is completed. He noted that this is a particularly bad proposal because it does not take into account a range of circumstances that can arise during construction, which may result in cost overruns or other circumstances that require a larger retention. Staff responded that it appears that a position in opposition to the bill may be appropriate. **Dwayne Chisam motioned to approve the staff recommendations, with the addition of SB 802, with an “oppose” position; motion seconded by Russ Thompson and approved unanimously.**

B-3 Update on FY 2009-2010 State Budget & Transportation Implications. **Michael Harmon** briefly reviewed the staff report, noting that there has not been much progress during the past week. He reviewed the status of several major issues and the estimated impacts on the San Luis Obispo region. **As this is an Information item, no action was taken. The Committee received the information as presented.**

C. Consent Agenda:

- C-1** SLOCOG Board Minutes.
- C-2** Request for Proposals (RFPs)-Transportation Development Act Triennial Performance Audits for South County Area Transit (SCAT), Cities of Atascadero, Morro Bay and Paso Robles
- C-3** Specialized Transit Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310 Capital Grant Applications
- C-4** San Luis Obispo (SLO) Regional Rideshare Program Update
- C-5** Grants for Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery “Tiger Discretionary Grants”
- C-6** Correspondence and News Articles

Ditas Esperanza motioned to approve the Consent Agenda, seconded by Frank Honeycutt, and approved unanimously.

C-5 Grants for Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery “Tiger Discretionary Grants.”

Jessica Berry distributed a Handout – “ADDENDUM – TIGER (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery) Discretionary Grants. She reviewed the Grant program and calendar. **Ronald De Carli** noted that the chance of getting any of the money is small. Caltrans, SBCAG, and SLOCOG support the Santa Maria Bridge project. San Luis Obispo City is pushing for LOVR Interchange project. **Frank Honeycutt** noted that projects have to be a minimum of \$20m.

- 4. Member Comments.** There were no comments.
- 5. Chairperson Rob Livick** adjourned the meeting at 4:21 p.m.

Next scheduled meeting: August 19, 2009 (tentative)

Minutes prepared by Michael R. Harmon