
Planning Directors/Planning Advisory Committee

MEETING AGENDA

Thursday, August 20, 2015, 9:30 a.m.

Sonoma County Transportation Authority

SCTA Large Conference Room

Phone participation: (707) 565-3433

ITEM

1. Introductions
 2. Public Comment
 3. Administrative
 - 3.1. Approval of the agenda – changes, additional discussion items- ACTION
 - 3.2. Review Meeting Notes from July 16, 2015 – ACTION*
 4. Bay Area Case Studies of OWL VR, a Civic Engagement Technology for Transportation, Climate and Planning – presentation by Aaron Selverston, CEO and Founder, Owlized
 5. Round table members discussion
 6. Climate Action 2020 - DISCUSSION
 7. Moving Forward 2040- CTP Performance Assessment – Analysis of Transportation Policies
 8. SB 743 Update
 9. AB 52, Gatto. Native Americans: California Environmental Quality Act - http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201320140AB52
 10. Plan Bay Area Update - INFORMATION
 11. Other Business /Next agenda
 12. Adjourn
- *Attachment

The next **S C T A** meeting will be held **September 14, 2015**
The next **Planning Directors/PAC** meeting will be held **September 17, 2015**

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**PLANNING DIRECTORS/PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
NOTES**

Meeting Notes of July 16, 2015

Jurisdiction	January (November and December meetings cancelled)	February	March	April	June (May meeting cancelled)	July
Cloverdale						
Cotati					√	
County of Sonoma PRMD	√			√	√	√
Graton Tribe		√		√		
Healdsburg	√					
LAFCO			√		√	
Petaluma	√	√		√		√
Petaluma Transit						
Rohnert Park						
Santa Rosa		√			√	√
Santa Rosa CityBus						
Sebastopol	√	√		√	√	√
SMART	√		√	√	√	√
Sonoma County Transit						
Sonoma						
Windsor	√	√	√	√	√	√

ITEM

1. Introductions

Meeting called to order at 9:31 a.m. by Chris Barney in Janet Spilman’s absence.

Committee Members: Scott Duiven, City of Petaluma; Clare Hartman, City of Santa Rosa; Olivia Ius, SMART; Kim Jordan, Town of Windsor; Amy Lyle, Sonoma County PRMD; Ken Webster, City of Sebastopol.

Staff: Chris Barney, Nina Donofrio, Misty Mersich.

Guests: Bob Anderson, United Winegrowers; Stefanie Hom, MTC.

2. Public Comment

N/A

3. Administrative

3.1. Approval of the agenda – changes, additional discussion items- ACTION

Approved as submitted.

3.2. Review Meeting Notes from June 18, 2015 – ACTION*

Approved as submitted.

4. Round table members discussion

Town of Windsor: Kim Jordan reported that staff is starting the growth control process and is going

through the General Plan update. A community survey that was overwhelmingly positive was presented to the Town Council. The two major issues addressed were gang violence and affordable housing.

City of Santa Rosa: Clare Hartman introduced herself as the new Deputy Director of Community Development, noting that this is an opportunity to work with the City Manager to finance outreach and get both staff and outside perspectives.

SMART: Olivia Ius reported that construction is continuing and that staff hopes to release an RFP for Railroad Square TOD next week. Nelson Nygaard has started work on two SMART projects. Employers have also begun outreach to SMART regarding shuttle service to SMART.

Sonoma County PRMD: Amy Lyle reported that the Department has started opening on Fridays. She noted that the same planning projects are in progress as reported on at the last meeting.

A new citizen education program has been implemented, using videos to demonstrate activities and services provided by PRMD.

City of Sebastopol: Kenyon Webster announced the gradual return of regular full work hours for staff. Staff is working on a formula business ordinance for the City.

Discussion followed regarding staff work hours; Ms. Lyle noted that PRMD had building staff in on Fridays, but they were not open on Fridays.

MTC: Stefanie Hom reported on the PDA Grant Program; letters of interest are due tomorrow, July 17. She referred to an MTC memorandum on OBAG 2 regarding discussion of goals and targets.

5. Climate Action 2020 – DISCUSSION

Misty Mersich reported that staff has been working on the administrative draft; incorporating items that have been under discussion. It is expected to be ready next week for administrative review. Ms. Mersich noted that staff attempted to capture the flavor of each jurisdiction and to make it more concise.

Ms. Mersich announced an opportunity to compete for a \$3 million prize from SunShot for

accelerated (one-day) permitting and installation of solar energy projects. SunShot is an initiative sponsored through the U.S. Department of Energy to make solar energy competitive in cost with other forms of energy. She referred to a letter from ABAG inviting any interested jurisdictions/agencies in Sonoma County to collaborate in this competition with PG & E.

Discussion ensued regarding the permit process, the new, more cumbersome legislation that is resulting in increased bureaucracy, and the associated online application software.

6. Moving Forward 2040 – CTP 2015 – INFORMATION

Mr. Barney explained that a draft of this was presented to the Board at the July 13 meeting in PowerPoint format, noting that essentially the project assessment shows that transportation projects help reduce congestion, but have only a small impact overall in reducing GHG emissions or on other CTP performance measures. The next step in performance assessment will be a policy and technology evaluation to see what benefits result from these. Following this study, staff will present preliminary results to the Committee at the August meeting.

Staff plans to submit a project list at the next Board meeting.

7. Plan Bay Area Update - INFORMATION

7.1. Current topics – Regional Forecast Approach, Draft Goals and Performance Targets [Joint MTC Planning Committee with the ABAG Administrative Committee](#) July 2015 - seek approval in September.

Mr. Barney noted that this has been referred to previously; this link is provided for informational purposes.

7.2. ABAG Scenarios Timeline and request for feedback*

Mr. Barney referred to the flow chart and schedule, and explained that ABAG will be contacting jurisdictions for their feedback. The next step will be to evaluate various scenarios,

develop final scenarios by next March, and adopt a Preferred Scenario by June 2016.

7.3. One Bay Area Grant Cycle 2* -
<https://mtc.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>

Mr. Barney referred to the MTC memorandum on this proposal; it is of note that there is an overall decrease in revenues of 3%. Mr. Barney also pointed out changes to the distribution formula in OBAG 2 from OBAG 1 funding.

7.4. Vital Signs phase 2 – See MTC website
<http://www.vitalsigns.mtc.ca.gov/> for phase 1 – presentation by Stefanie Hom.

Ms. Hom presented a PowerPoint slide show briefly demonstrating and providing an overview of this interactive web portal, illustrating data at the regional, County and local levels, and how this compares to the national context. VitalSigns is a link to Plan Bay Area. She explained that Plan Bay Area makes projections and does forecasting, while VitalSigns uses historical data and trends, and tracks implementation of sustainability objectives in the region. She noted that the program has approximately 20 metrics, including land use and housing growth.

8. SB743 Update

Mr. Barney explained that a meeting with the State Office of Planning and Research (OPR) was cancelled the day prior to the meeting; therefore, staff does not have this information and he had nothing to report. A Bay Area Working Group will be meeting to discuss it. Mr. Barney stated he would try to get more information and update the Committee.

9. Other Business /Next agenda

Ms. Hartman recommended addressing the implementation of AB 52 in a future meeting agenda.

Ms. Jordan reported that staff just had their first meeting with the tribes on this, and that the tribes were supposed to advise staff of all agencies they are interested in. Staff expected to receive a list July 1 but did not get it.

Discussion ensued regarding interaction with tribes and AB 52; Mr. Barney confirmed that this could be addressed and included in the next meeting agenda.

Mr. Barney notified the Committee that there will not be a Board meeting in August, and that the next Committee meeting will be August 20. This agenda will include a

presentation on the policy aspect of the performance measures for Climate Action 2020.

10. Adjourn
10:23 a.m.

Staff Report

To: Planning Advisory Committee

From: Chris Barney, Senior Transportation Planner

Item: 2015 CTP Performance Assessment – Analysis of Transportation Policies

Date: 8/20/2015

Issue

The first phase of the 2015 CTP Performance Assessment analyzed project level impacts on plan performance measures. The performance assessment demonstrated that projects provided congestion and travel time benefits, but did not provide countywide benefits in other performance areas. The next phase of the performance assessment will focus on how transportation policies, technology, and behavioral changes can help SCTA meet CTP performance targets and goals.

Testing Policy Impacts

Innovations in transportation technologies, changes to how people travel, and transportation policies could reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT), reduce emissions and improve air quality, and provide other benefits that would help SCTA reach CTP performance targets. Staff will test the performance impact of the following policy approaches, improvements to technology, and changes to travel choice/behavior in phase 2 of the performance assessment:

1. *Transportation Pricing*: The cost of driving or traveling using different modes can have a significant impact on mode choice. Making driving more expensive and other modes less expensive could shift travel onto more efficient travel modes. Staff proposes testing the impact of transportation pricing using the following policy levers:
 - a. Cost of driving: Increase the cost of driving representing a combination of the following pricing policies: VMT tax, use based fees, pay as you drive insurance, congestion pricing, and/or fuel tax increases.
 - b. Parking pricing: Increase parking pricing in all downtown areas.
 - c. Lower transit fares: Assume lower transit fares.
2. *Alternative Commuting*: Travel to and from work represents 1/3 of daily travel in Sonoma County most of which occurs during the most congested periods of the day. Changes to when, how, and where commuters travel could have a big impact on future congestion, VMT, and other CTP performance measures. Staff proposes that the following alternative commute strategies be analyzed in phase 2 of the performance assessment:
 - a. Car-sharing
 - b. Increased telecommuting
 - c. Increased carpool/vanpool rates and use of dynamic ridesharing
 - d. Compressed work week

- e. Increased HOV lane utilization
 - f. Travel demand management implantation including: ride-matching, free transit passes, parking cash-outs, and other incentive programs.
 - g. Increased instant or digital delivery of goods and services including increased teleconferencing, online shopping and delivery, online media consumption, etc.
3. *Mode shift to non-motorized transportation:* Bicycling and walking are inexpensive and low impact travel modes and increased travel using these travel modes can help decrease VMT, emissions, and the cost of travel, and improve health and safety. Staff proposes that the following mode shift policies be analyzed in phase 2 of the performance assessment:
 - a. Build-out of the bicycle and pedestrian network
 - b. Continued implementation of Complete Streets projects
 - c. Improvements focused on making walking and biking a better experience including urban design, marketing, and improvements in technology.
 4. *Mode shift to transit:* Travel shifting onto transit from auto-based modes can reduce VMT and emissions, reduce the cost of transportation, reduce wear and tear on the roadway system and improve community health and safety. Staff proposes that the following policies that could encourage increased transit use be analyzed in phase 2 of the performance assessment:
 - a. Lower transit fares
 - b. Increased headways/improved transit service
 - c. Transit marketing and changes in public attitudes towards transit
 5. *Land Use:* The first phase of the performance assessment showed that housing and employment growth have a very large impact on CTP performance measures and will contribute to increased travel, congestion, emissions, accident rates, and travel times in Sonoma County. More efficient land use patterns could help reduce the impact of existing and forecasted growth in the county. Staff proposes analyzing the following land use policies in phase 2 of the performance assessment:
 - a. More development in priority development areas
 - b. Higher densities
 - c. Balanced housing and employment growth
 6. *System Efficiency:* Improved efficiencies could allow the existing transportation system to operate more effectively and could reduce future degradation of the transportation system and accessibility. The countywide transportation system could be improved and made more efficient through technological advances and implementation of programs and policies that encourage efficient travel behavior. Staff proposes that the following system efficiency improvements be analyzed in phase 2 of the performance assessment:
 - a. Intelligent transportation systems – Signal timing, corridor management, incident response programs, changeable message signs, metering improvements, traffic information communication programs. Etc.
 - b. Improvements in vehicle technology – smart cars, freeway vehicle platooning, driverless vehicles, fuel economy improvements, increased electric vehicle fleet, etc.
 - c. Freight improvements – more efficient vehicles, changes to distribution networks, route planning improvements.
 - d. Eco-driving training and marketing programs
 - e. Improved enforcement – HOV lane usage and speed limits.

Maintaining the System

SCTA has identified maintaining the existing transportation system as a priority and one of the five CTP goals. The Sonoma County Travel Model and available post-processing tools do not provide a way to estimate future system condition. Project sponsors have identified projects that are expected to improve roadway condition (PCI), transit system condition (average fleet age), or non-motorized facility condition. A list of maintenance projects will be included in the final CTP.

Next Steps

Staff will test policy based scenarios during July and August. The results of this analysis will be used to identify a package of projects and policies that could be implemented that would allow CTP performance targets to be met.

Policy Impacts

Policies that are shown to help SCTA achieve CTP goals and reach performance targets could be prioritized in the CTP or by the SCTA board.

Fiscal Impacts: No direct impacts at this time.

Staff Recommendation: Provide feedback on the list of transportation policies to be tested.

Staff Report

To: Planning Advisory Committee

From: Chris Barney, Senior Transportation Planner

Item: Senate Bill 743 – CEQA, Alternatives to LOS in Transportation Analysis – August 2015 Update

Date: 8/20/2015

Issue:

Senate Bill 743 requires that the California Office of Planning and Research (OPR) change the Guidelines Implementing the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA Guidelines) associated with the analysis of transportation impacts in the environmental review process.

Background:

Senate Bill 743 directs OPR to amend CEQA guidelines associated with the analysis of transportation impacts. OPR's work has focused on recommending an alternative metric to level of service (LOS) for measuring transportation impacts. OPR released a preliminary evaluation of potential alternative methods for addressing transportation impacts under CEQA in December, 2013 and accepted comments on the preliminary evaluation document through February 14, 2014. OPR released a preliminary discussion draft on this topic which recommends using a Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) based metric to assess transportation impacts on August 6, 2014. This document can be viewed online here:

[http://www.opr.ca.gov/docs/Final_Preliminary_Discussion_Draft_of_Updates_Implementing_S B_743_080614.pdf](http://www.opr.ca.gov/docs/Final_Preliminary_Discussion_Draft_of_Updates_Implementing_SB_743_080614.pdf)

OPR received many comments on the preliminary discussion draft and is preparing to release final revisions to the CEQA Guidelines in Fall 2015. OPR has indicated that much of the technical detail that was included in the preliminary discussion draft has been removed from the text of the proposed CEQA Guidelines and will be placed in a Technical Advisory.

OPR has emphasized that the contents of the Technical Advisory should be considered as advice or guidance only, and that lead agencies will need to make the final decision on the appropriate methods or thresholds that should be used within their jurisdiction and for particular projects.

Technical Guidance on VMT estimation in the Analysis of CEQA Transportation Impacts:

OPR's technical guidance document will cover:

- VMT calculation techniques - lead agencies are encouraged to choose calculation methods appropriate for measuring impacts of the project being analyzed. Professional judgment and appropriate modeling or estimation tools should be used to estimate VMT impacts, and VMT impacts to neighboring jurisdictions should be considered when possible.
- OPR does not at this time recommend analyzing VMT associated with goods movement and commercial vehicle trips.
- Travel demand models, sketch planning tools, spreadsheet models, and data to estimate VMT could all be appropriate tools for analyzing VMT impacts, but should be sensitive to project factors and characteristics.
- "Thresholds of significance" may be used to assist in the determination of the significance of an impact but should be considered as a starting point for analysis.
- Lead agencies will make the final decision regarding significance of impacts.
- Environmental analysis does not need to be perfect, but does need to be reasonably feasible, and analysis should be complete and make a good faith effort to disclose impacts and provide enough analysis to make this determination.
- Selection of mitigation for significant impacts is left to the discretion of the lead agency, and the updated CEQA Guidelines will not limit any public agency's ability to condition a project based on other laws or codes using Level of Service (LOS) or automobile delay.
- ***Mitigation for transportation impacts should reduce VMT. Examples include improving transit, improving access to goods and services, building affordable housing, improving bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, traffic calming, limiting parking supply, unbundling parking costs, travel demand management programs, etc.***
- The updated CEQA Guidelines will not prevent a lead agency from enforcing previously adopted mitigation measures.
- Development in a location where the Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy does not specify any development may indicate a significant impact.
- Projects located in transit rich areas, or with mixed-use development components may be considered to have a less than significant impact on VMT in some cases.
- ***Projects which generate fewer than 100 daily trips may generally be assumed to cause a less than significant impact on VMT.***
- ***Transportation projects which increase roadway capacity, such as addition of through lanes, including new general purpose lanes, managed lanes, peak period***

lanes, auxiliary lanes, and lanes through grade-separated interchanges should be considered to generally increase VMT and be subject to analysis.

- ***Transportation projects that would not be expected to add substantial increases in VMT include addition or reconfiguration of traffic lanes that are not utilized by through traffic, addition of capacity on local or collector streets, conversion of existing general purpose lanes to managed lanes, road diets, grade separations, installation or reconfiguration of traffic control devices, roundabouts, traffic calming, tolls, one-way to two-way conversions, removal of parking, parking restrictions, transit projects, active transportation projects.***
- ***Land use plans could be considered to have a significant impact on transportation if it is not consistent with the RTP/SCS.***
- SAFETY IMPACTS: Safety concerns should affect many people, safety concerns must be substantiated using project descriptions and data, mitigation for safety should not create other safety risks.

Guidance on setting VMT Thresholds:

SB 743 did not direct OPR to set thresholds of significance, but OPR will provide some direction on how levels of significance could be determined. The determination of significance and setting and use of thresholds is at the discretion of the lead agency. OPR has provide some detail on threshold guidance which is summarized below:

- Thresholds should address statewide GHG and VMT reduction goals
- The proposed guidelines indicate that projects that result in VMT greater than the regional average for a specific land use type may indicate a significant impact.
- OPR also recognizes that specific or general plans could be considered to have a less than significant environmental effect at the plan level if they are consistent with the adopted Sustainable Communities Strategy.
- OPR has recommended that VMT 15% below existing VMT may be a reasonable threshold of VMT impact for development projects. VMT could be calculated per capita at both the city and regional level.
- A screening tool showing average VMT for certain levels of geography (census tract, traffic analysis zone, etc.) could be used to determine if a project would likely lead to below-threshold VMT simply based on its proposed location.

Next Steps and Timeline:

OPR will be releasing final draft changes to the CEQA Guidelines associated with the analysis of transportation impacts and associated Technical Guidance in the Fall of 2015. OPR is planning on taking comments on the proposed changes for approximately 6 weeks. OPR will make revisions based on comments received and forward the final guidelines on to the Natural Resource Agency for inclusion in the CEQA Guidelines. The proposed guidelines will goe

Policy Impacts:

OPR's final recommendation will change the methods required for estimating transportation impacts under CEQA. LOS will be replaced by a VMT based metric for CEQA analysis. The change represents a shift away from measuring congestion reduction to measuring GHG reduction, multimodal transportation, and efficient access in the environmental review process.

Fiscal Impacts:

No direct fiscal impacts at this time.

Staff Recommendation:

PAC members may wish to consider how changes to CEQA guidelines may impact their jurisdiction.