

**COUNCIL OF SAN BENITO COUNTY GOVERNMENTS
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

March 1, 2007

2:00 PM

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jerry Lo, Public Works Director, San Benito County; Bill Avera, Development Services Director, City of Hollister; Steve Wittry, Engineering Manager, City of Hollister; Marc McCumsey, Regional Planner, Caltrans District 5; Arthur Henriques, Planning Director, San Benito County; Brent Newman, Captain, California Highway Patrol; Lisa Rheinheimer, Executive Director, Council of San Benito County Governments

STAFF PRESENT:

Mary Dinkuhn, Transportation Planning Manager; Veronica Lezama, Transportation Planner; Monica Gomez, Secretary

CALL TO ORDER:

Lisa Rheinheimer, Executive Director called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

CERTIFICATE OF POSTING:

Upon a motion duly made by Arthur Henriques and seconded by Bill Avera, it was unanimously approved to acknowledge the Certificate of Posting as submitted.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

REGULAR AGENDA:

1. Approve TAC Meeting Minutes dated February 8, 2007.

Upon a motion duly made by Bill Avera and seconded by Arthur Henriques, the committee unanimously approved Item #1.

2. Discuss Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments' Regional Blueprint Plan and Selection of Ad-Hoc Committee

Ms. Dinkuhn reported that COG staff had an initial meeting with AMBAG staff to discuss coordination and participation with the City and County planning agencies throughout development of the Blueprint Plan. AMBAG provided an outline of tasks that will be completed under Phase I. Phase I will include GIS data collection, development of regional forecasting and visioning tools, updating of regional forecasts for population and

employment, and collaboration with local agencies regarding the blueprint process.

Ms. Dinkuhn stated that the scope of work calls for AMBAG to establish a Forecast Technical Advisory Committee. This Committee will include representatives from all AMBAG member agencies, including San Benito County, COG, the City of Hollister, and the City of San Juan Bautista. As a result, staff has determined that an ad-hoc committee of the TAC is not necessary at this time. Any additional information on the Blueprint process will be brought to the entire TAC for discussion when necessary.

3. Consider 2006 State Transportation Improvement Program Augmentation and Recommend Program for Consideration by the COG Board

Ms. Dinkuhn provided TAC members with two different funding scenarios for the 2006 State Transportation Improvement Program Augmentation.

Scenario 1 would fund the PS&E phase of the Highway 25 4-Lane Widening project in fiscal year 2008/09. Scenario 1 would also fund the Transit Vehicle Replacement phase in 2007/08 for \$200,000 and \$500,000 in 2009/10.

Scenario 2 would fund the construction phase of the Highway 25 Safety and Operational Enhancements in fiscal year 2007/08. Scenario 2 would also fund the Transit Vehicle Replacement phase in 2007/08 for \$200,000 and \$500,000 in 2009/10.

Staff recommended that the committee consider these funding scenarios and recommend a preferred scenario to the COG Board.

After some discussion amongst TAC members the committee voted to recommend Scenario 1 to the COG Board.

Upon a motion duly made by Steve Wittry and seconded by Jerry Lo, the Committee voted to recommend Scenario 1 to the COG Board.

4. Recommend Council of Governments Approval of Project Nominations for Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Funds

Ms. Lezama reported that San Benito County's Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality apportionment under SB 1587 is \$926,575. In order to use these fund apportionments, federal spending authority is needed. The San Benito County regional spending authority for federal fiscal year 2006/2007 is \$675,098. The spending authority is provided on an annual basis and must be used in the federal fiscal year it is provided.

Caltrans requires that regional agencies submit a plan to the Department identifying which projects the region plans to obligate before the end of the federal fiscal year. The plan is due to Caltrans by May 1, 2007 with requests for spending due by July 1, 2007.

Ms. Lezama noted that eligible projects include rideshare programs, transit capital, bicycle and pedestrian facilities and traffic signalization projects to provide priority for transit vehicles.

Ms. Lezama provided a list of projects that meet the criteria of the Congestion Mitigation program and can be obligated through Caltrans in a short amount of time.

The first project on the list is the San Juan Highway Bike Lane through San Benito County which would provide \$100,000 for right of way. The second project is the Regional Rideshare Program through COG with \$250,000 that would be spent over a 5-year period. The third project would be updating the San Benito County Bikeway and Pedestrian Master Plan also through COG. The fourth project would provide funds to purchase bus shelters.

Mr. Wittry stated that the County Bikeway Master Plan lists other areas for potential use of funds. The City of Hollister has some grant funding for a bike lane from McCloskey to Fallon Road, however the bike lane does not extend into the downtown area.

Mr. Wittry stated that this is a potential project that should be considered for CMAQ funding. A portion of the funds may be used to continue the bike lane from McCloskey down to San Felipe Road into the Santa Ana Road area which would better serve the community. Mr. Wittry noted that this project would be a fairly simple project to complete because it is already an improved area. The right of way on San Felipe Road is already there and it would only require the bidding process and adding the design work to the current designer's scope of work.

Ms. Rheinheimer noted that all the design and environmental documents would have to be completed as well because requests for authorizations would have to be submitted to Caltrans by July 1st.

Ms. Lezama stated that the bike lane project will be submitted to the COG Board for consideration.

Ms. Lezama noted that the remaining balance can be obligated to the City of Hollister's Sunnyslope Bike Lane Project and/or fund the purchase of a public works vehicle for the City of San Juan Bautista. COG Staff is investigating the eligibility of funding San Juan Bautista's vehicle purchase with these funds.

Mr. Lo asked if the funds may be used to purchase carpool vehicles and/or to expand the Park & Ride lot at Veteran's Park.

Ms. Lezama stated that the funds may be used to purchase vehicles however CMAQ funds only cover an alternative fuel vehicle or the difference between the purchase of a hybrid vehicle or a regular vehicle. Ms. Lezama stated that she will research whether the funds may be used for the expansion of the Park & Ride lot at Veteran's Park.

Ms. Lezama stated that staff will be presenting funding that it is also available through the Air District at the next meeting. The Air District has awarded hybrid vehicles to other counties in the past.

Mr. Lo stated that he is definitely interested in funds that are available for the purchase of a hybrid vehicle and will further discuss with Ms. Lezama.

Ms. Lezama stated that upon approval by the COG Board, staff will forward the list of projects to Caltrans. Projects will also be forwarded to the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments for inclusion in the Federal Transportation Improvement Program.

5. Receive Report on Grant Opportunity through the Highway Safety Improvement Program

Ms. Lezama reported that Caltrans is now accepting grant applications for the Highway Safety Improvement Program, replacing the Hazard Elimination System.

Approximately \$27 million is available statewide for federal fiscal year 2006/2007. The Highway Safety Improvement Program requires a 10% match. Grant awards are limited to a maximum of \$900,000 per project.

Ms. Lezama noted that for a project to be eligible a specific safety problem must be identified for correction and the project must correct or substantially improve the condition.

Ms. Lezama provided a list of examples of eligible projects.

Mr. Lo stated that his department is looking at upgrading the guardrails and bike lanes on Fairview Road.

Ms. Lezama mentioned that applications are due to Caltrans District offices by April 13, 2007. Projects that can be designed and advertised for construction prior to October 1, 2007 will be given high priority. Caltrans will release an approved list of projects by May 15, 2007.

Upon a motion duly made by Arthur Henriques and seconded by Steve Wittry, the Committee voted to adjourn the TAC meeting.

ADJOURN TO MEETING OF APRIL 5, 2007 AT 2:00 p.m.