

Active Transportation and Livable Communities (ATLC)

Advisory Group Meeting

Thursday, February 21, 2013 – 1:30 PM – 3:30 PM

California Department of Transportation, Headquarters

1120 N Street, Sacramento, CA -- Director's Board Room 2116

Meeting Summary Notes

1. Welcome and Introductions

Alyssa Begley, Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Division of Transportation Planning, Office of Community Planning, opened the February 21, 2013 meeting and requested introductions from the members present and on the telephone.

ATTENDANCE

External Agencies

Alan Telford, Urban Land Institute

Alan Wachtel, California Association of Bicycling Organizations (via telephone)

Barb Alberson, California Department of Public Health

Bob Planthold, California Pedestrian Advisory Committee

Dave Snyder, California Bicycle Coalition

Jacquolyn Duerr, California Department of Public Health

Jeanie Ward-Waller, Safe Routes to School (National Partnership)

Jennifer Armer, Institute for Local Government

Joshua Stark, TransForm

Laura Cohen, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

Natalie Popovich, California Bicycle Coalition

Paul Zykofsky, Local Government Commission

Sarkes Khachek, Santa Barbara County Association of Governments

Terry Preston, WALKS Sacramento

Wendy Alfsen, California WALKS

Caltrans

Kome Ajise, Deputy Director, Planning and Modal Programs

Katie Benouar, Division Chief, Transportation Planning

Adam Fukushima, District 5 (via telephone)

Alyssa Begley, Community Planning

April Nitsos, Local Assistance

Brian Alconcel, Traffic Operations

Chad Baker, Statewide Modeling

Chad Riding, District 3 (via telephone)

Clem Bomar, Rail

Dennis Agar, Traffic Operations

Emily Mraovich, Community Planning

Eric Fredericks, District 3 (via telephone)

Jane Perez, Mass Transportation

Janice Benton, Traffic Operations

Karla Sutliff, Project Delivery

Kevin Herritt, Design

Kevin Pokrajac, Local Assistance

ATTENDANCE

Leslie Mazzeo, Community Planning
Mary Burns, Local Assistance
Mike Pickford, District 11 (via telephone)
Pam Korte, State Planning
Rick Franz, District 9 (via telephone)
Sarah Chesebro, Travel Forecasting Analysis
Seth Cutter, District 11 (via telephone)
Stephen Kent, Regional and Interagency Planning
Ted Davini, Local Assistance

2. Opening Comments

Kome Ajise, Deputy Director for Planning and Modal Programs, introduced Katie Benouar as the new Chief, Division of Transportation Planning. Katie comes to this new assignment with a broad based background having worked for Caltrans since 1992 when she started in the Rail Division as an Associate Transportation Planner. She has worked in transportation planning and program administration in several Caltrans programs and divisions. Karla Sutliff has been appointed as California's Chief Engineer. Karla has been with Caltrans for 26 years, and over the past 11 years, she served as the chief over several Caltrans divisions, including Design, Traffic Operations, and Project Management. Dennis T. Agar has been appointed as Division Chief for Traffic Operations. Dennis brings 23 years of diverse and valuable Caltrans experience with a wide variety of managerial, supervisory and technical experience from the district and headquarters.

3. DOTP Complete Streets Work

Alyssa Begley, Transportation Planning, discussed the proposed budget changes that affect Complete Streets work within Planning. The Department of Finance (DOF), together with Caltrans, was able to identify workload needs within the Department. A portion of Complete Streets resources will be redirected to do federally mandated Native American liaison work. This was done in part because the Complete Streets policy is four years old and there was much success during that time in streamlining complete streets work into the regular workload. The Department is still working on what the Complete Streets workload will look like in the 2013-14 fiscal year but is confident that the work will continue despite the redirected resources. The proposed budget changes will take effect on July 1, 2013.

Laura Cohen, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, asked what the redirection of complete streets work means. Does this include staff time?

Alyssa Begley, Transportation Planning, responded that yes, there will be a redirection of positions and dollars.

Kome Ajise, Deputy Director for Planning and Modal Programs, explained that the Department didn't lose the resources, just the ability to direct those resources in certain areas.

Alyssa Begley, Transportation Planning, added that ATLC work would not be affected by these changes.

Paul Zykofsky, Local Government Commission, asked if District staff will be affected by the redirection of Complete Streets work.

Alyssa Begley, Transportation Planning, responded that Complete Streets resources will be retained at the districts but will be used for various other planning work.

Jacquolyn Duerr, California Department of Public Health, asked what steps has the Department taken to incorporate Complete Streets into Caltrans' processes. Is there a work plan for this?

Alyssa Begley, Transportation Planning, responded that there is work being done now to determine what the Complete Streets workload in Planning will look like.

Jacquolyn Duerr, California Department of Public Health, asked if the safety and injury reduction benefits of complete streets was discussed with DOF.

Alyssa Begley, Transportation Planning, explained that all of the pieces of work that Planning does in implementing complete streets and the issues and benefits of this work were discussed with DOF.

Wendy Alfsen, California WALKS, asked if the proposed budget changes will affect the work and training related to the Project Development Procedures Manual (PDPM).

Alyssa Begley, Transportation Planning, stated that each Caltrans division will continue to complete the action items included on the Complete Streets Implementation Action Plan, including the PDPM.

ACTION ITEM:

Alyssa Begley, Transportation Planning, will request that Mary Beth Herritt, Design, provide ATLC with an update on the PDPM at the next ATLC meeting being held on May 16, 2013.

4. Construction Evaluated Work Plan for Bicycles

Kevin Herritt, Design, provided an update on the Department's design guidance as it relates to Assembly Bill 819. The Division of Design is continuing work to complete design guidance for all travelers; pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers. Assembly Bill 819, which was passed last year, includes language that requires the Department to establish procedures for exceptions in areas of the Streets and Highway Code related to the design and development of bicycle projects. For example, cities, counties, or local agencies that are responsible for the development and operation of bikeways or bicycle facilities that are not on the highway system and are not federally funded currently do not have procedures to follow in order to get exceptions to the guidance that's in the Highway Design Manual (HDM) or the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. Working through a new committee and the bicycle community, the Department is highlighting an experimentation process. The California Bicycle Facilities Committee will be composed of representatives from the League of Cities, California State Associations of County Representatives, Federal Highway Administration, as well as Caltrans' Division of Traffic Operations, Local Assistance, and Design. Lessons learned from these projects may be incorporated into the HDM and will be shared with the public. Design will be working with the City-County-State-Federal-Cooperative Committee in March to talk about issues and begin developing the process. The implementation deadline is June 30, 2013.

Dave Snyder, California Bicycle Coalition, asked if a design change was proposed that is not approved by the HDM but is approved by industry standard, can it be done?

Kevin Herritt, Design, responded that yes, it can be done. No law currently states that design specifications for local communities must abide by Caltrans regulations. The bill proposes allowing each local community to carry out their own guidance.

Wendy Alfsen, California WALKS, expressed her concern with conflicts that have arisen from a change in rules of right of way. She feels that right of way belongs in Design and that there needs to be consistency with standards.

Alan Wachtel, California Association of Bicycling Organizations, asked why Caltrans is developing an ad-hoc committee when one already exists. Why not use the California Bicycle Advisory Committee for the committee?

Kevin Herritt, Design, responded that Caltrans in part is developing this new committee to include cities and counties in the process since there is no committee currently established that involves them.

Alan Wachtel, California Association of Bicycling Organizations, would like to discuss the committee further with Caltrans Design.

Bob Planthold, California Pedestrian Advisory Committee, cautioned Caltrans to research the public process for separated bike tracks in local jurisdictions because civil rights complaints have been raised. Bob will send Kome Ajise, Deputy Director for Planning and Modal Programs, more information.

Jacquolyn Duerr, California Department of Public Health, added that there is value in having pedestrian involvement as regards balancing the needs in shared roadways.

5. California Transportation Plan Modeling

Pam Korte, State Planning, and Chad Baker, Statewide Modeling, presented the PowerPoint [California Transportation Plan 2040 Overview and Modeling](#). The California Transportation Plan (CTP) is a statewide, long-range transportation plan for meeting future mobility needs. The CTP defines goals, policies, and strategies (in-line with MAP-21) to achieve the Department's collective vision for California's future transportation system. It integrates the statewide model plans that Caltrans prepares and builds on regional plans. It also assesses the performance of Caltrans' plans using new statewide modeling tools. A new part that was added by Senate Bill 391 now requires that the plan address how the State can achieve climate change goals. The current CTP is now being updated for a 2040 planning horizon and is due December of 2015. See the [California Transportation Plan 2040 Fact Sheet](#) for more information. Caltrans is using the preferred land use scenario from the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)/Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS). The RTP/SCS analysis process may evaluate multiple land use scenarios during the RTP/SCS analysis process. Caltrans is not comparing multiple land use sets and thus is not using urban footprint.

Jacquolyn Duerr, California Department of Public Health, encourages Caltrans to consider incorporating the miles and minutes traveled for walking and biking into modeling. This data would be helpful to the process.

Chad Baker, Statewide Modeling, stated that the model system being used will track activities and mode (i.e., walk, bike, transit, rail, air). The California Household Travel Survey will be used in cooperation with the 2010 census data to reflect California travel patterns in the future.

Dave Snyder, California Bicycle Coalition, asked what the Department thinks the percentage of bike trips to work will be in 2040. He stated it should be close to 10%; however, he is skeptical that the Department's model will reflect that because it is based on behavior of people that rarely use a bicycle for their trips. His observation of any activity-based model has been a reflection of little to no growth of bicycle trips. What can be done in the Department's model to account for behaviors that are not in the past?

Chad Baker, Statewide Modeling, stated that it is very difficult to predict mode shift (i.e., expense of tolls and parking doesn't necessarily mean people will bike).

Jacquolyn Duerr, California Department of Public Health, recommended including people who are practitioners on changing behavior through policy, infrastructure, and programming to increase safety. She also asked how the big generation change is being factored into the modeling system.

Chad Baker, Statewide Modeling, responded that model inputs can be changed to reflect this data.

6. MAP-21 Implementation: Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)

Janice Benton, Traffic Operations, presented the PowerPoint [Highway Safety Improvement Program](#) and provided a high level overview of the changes to HSIP through MAP-21. Previously, the federal funds for HSIP under SAFETEA-LU were split equally between state and local; \$65 million each. Caltrans manages and administers HSIP for the State Highway System and local roads. The notable change from SAFETEA-LU to MAP-21 is the size of the program from \$130 million to \$200 million. MAP-21 maintains the current HSIP structure and adds the requirement for regular updates of the Strategic Highway Safety Plan. It also establishes requirements of performance measures and targets and expands eligibility requirements to include non-infrastructure as well as infrastructure type projects.

Wendy Alfsen, California WALKS, suggested using the adopted countermeasures in the Strategic Highway Safety Plan as a starting point for prioritizing projects.

Barb Alberson, California Department of Public Health, stated that the data related to pedestrian exposure issues is foundational to the methodology in increasing safety.

Janice Benton, Traffic Operations, acknowledged that the challenge is obtaining the appropriate exposure data in order for the Department to prioritize projects. Without this data, the Department must focus its limited resources on those locations which are experiencing statistically high incidence rates.

Barb Alberson, California Department of Public Health, added that the methodology should also take into account rural and low income communities that typically feel left out of the decision making process.

7. MAP-21 Implementation: Active Transportation Program

April Nitsos, Local Assistance, presented the PowerPoint [Active Transportation Program](#) which covers the Program's purpose, details of funding sources, funding programming breakdown, proposed project types, selection criteria, and guidelines. The Active Transportation Program (ATP) was released under the Governor's 2013-14 proposed budget. It consolidates five existing programs into one and provides \$134.2 million annually in federal and state funds. The ATP focuses to make California a national leader in active transportation and to support the implementation of local Senate Bill (SB) 375 sustainable community strategies.

Laura Cohen, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, stated that ATLC members have concerns about the language in the Governor's proposed bill. She hopes that Caltrans will support including advocates being part of California Transportation Commission's (CTC) work to shape guidelines as well as in the project evaluation and selection process.

Kome Ajise, Deputy Director for Planning and Modal Programs, expects that the CTC would have a very open process that would include representation from all stakeholder groups.

Wendy Alfsen, California WALKS, asked if there is a mechanism in which clarifying language can be submitted for the trailer bill.

Kome Ajise, Deputy Director for Planning and Modal Programs, responded that Caltrans is not adding any language to the bill, however, there is still time to become involved before the bill is passed to add language through another bill.

Laura Cohen, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, asked if the ATLC group could obtain an accounting of the money borrowed from the Bicycle Transportation Account (BTA) and the status as to whether or not the BTA was fully repaid.

Kevin Pokrajac, Local Assistance, responded that the repayment has been delayed and is rescheduled to occur before June 30, 2017. He offered to send Laura a copy of the fiscal year 2012-13 Final Budget Summary.

Jacquolyn Duerr, California Department of Public Health, stated that SB 375 objectives cannot be met solely on bicycle and active transportation and hopes that Caltrans will carry forward the language through all of its methods and initiatives.

Kome Ajise, Deputy Director for Planning and Modal Programs, responded that the Department has reconfigured its programs to address green house gases. The ATP program allows regions to come forward with more federal resources to do bigger projects that otherwise would not be done.

8. Open Discussion and Closing Remarks

Kome Ajise, Deputy Director for Planning and Modal Programs, emphasized that Caltrans considers all comments made by ATLC members and takes them seriously. He thanked everyone for their time and input.

Future Agenda Items:

CA Bicycle Coalition Strategic Plan

CA State Rail Plan

Update on the Project Development Procedures Manual

Status of the Construction Evaluated Work Plan for Bicycles

Next 2013 Meetings – May 16, August 15, November 21

Caltrans Contacts

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