

**San Mateo County Transportation Authority
1250 San Carlos Avenue, San Carlos, California**

**Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)
Meeting Minutes**

March 5, 2024

Members Present: B. Arietta (Chair), D. Bojack (left at 6:21 pm), I. Bucio (arrived 4:36 pm),
(In Person) G. Carlini, N. Enriquez, J. Fox (Vice Chair) (left at 6:15 pm), K. Kuklin,
S. Lang, J. Londer, G. Mattammal (arrived 4:38 pm), P. Ohtaki (arrived
4:52 pm), A. Paul (arrived 4:41 pm), M. Swire (arrived 4:34 pm)

Members Present: None
(Via Teleconference)

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: P. Skinner, P. Gilster, J. Manzi, J. Epstein, A. Linehan, J. Brook

1. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Barbara Arietta called the meeting to order at 4:31 pm and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Roll Call

Jean Brook, CAC Secretary, called the roll and confirmed that a quorum was present.

3. Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda

There were no comments.

4. Consent Calendar

4.a. Approval of Minutes of the CAC Meeting of January 30, 2024

TA Board Meeting Agenda for March 7, 2024

**4.b. TA Board Item 5.b Acceptance of Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for the
Period Ending January 31, 2024**

**4.c. TA Board Item 5.c Acceptance of Capital Projects Quarterly Status Report for 2nd
Quarter Fiscal Year 2024**

4.d. TA Board Item 5.d State and Federal Legislative Update

Mike Swire arrived at 4:34 pm.

Motion/Second: Fox/Lang

Ayes: Arietta, Bojack, Carlini, Enriquez, Fox, Kuklin, Lang, Londer (Items 4.b, 4.c, and 4.d), Swire

Noes: None

Abstentions: Londer (Item 4.a)

Absent: Bucio, Mattammal, Ohtaki, Paul

5. TA Board Item 5.a Approval of Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting of February 1, 2024

There were no comments.

Ivan Bucio arrived at 4:36 pm.

6. TA Board Item 10 Strategic Plan Workshop

Peter Skinner, Executive Officer, Transportation Authority, provided the initial part of the presentation with an overview of the Strategic Plan process.

Gus Mattammal arrived at 4:38 pm.

Allie Paul arrived at 4:41 pm.

Patrick Gilster, Director, Planning and Fund Management, provided the presentation, starting with program oversight and funding awards.

Peter Ohtaki arrived at 4:52 pm.

Jessica Epstein, Director, Government and Community Affairs, led the discussion and activities portion of the workshop.

Focus Area One: Measure A Goals & Measure W Core Principles

Activity One: Using three dots for Measure A and three dots for Measure W, place your stickers on the boards for the goals and core principles that are most important to you.

Mr. Skinner responded to questions about the process. Vice Chair John Fox clarified that they each had six votes and the color of the dots does not matter.

Mike Swire asked what was meant by “enhancement.” Ms. Epstein said helping people move around better.

Giuliano Carlini asked what kind of projects would be supported. Mr. Gilster said what is locally supported.

Peter Ohtaki asked if they should assume if they are looking at AVs (autonomous vehicles) exclusively. Mr. Gilster said it was up to each person’s interpretation. Ms. Epstein said it should cover the next five years.

Measure W Core Principles

There was a tie for the top two priorities: Invest in repair and maintenance of existing and future infrastructure and facilitate the reduction of vehicle miles travel (VMT) time and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

In second place, there was a three-way tie at five votes each for invest in a financially sustainable public transportation system; implementation of complete street policies; and environmentally friendly transit solutions that include green stormwater infrastructure. For fourth place, there were four votes for relieving traffic congestion countywide. After that, there was a tie vote for enhanced safety and public health; and shared ride multi-modal projects. In last place, there were two votes to maximize traffic reduction potential associated with the creation of housing in high-quality transit corridors.

There were no votes for economic vitality, development and the creation of quality jobs and maximizing the opportunity to leverage public private partners.

Measure A Goals

The top priority was enhanced safety. The next was meet local mobility needs, followed by regional connections, then reduce commute corridor congestion.

Discussion Question 1: What has been the TA's biggest accomplishment in the past five years?

Jeff Londer: electrification of Caltrain and improvements to 101.

Sandra Lang: increased information about grade separations, safety, and the TA's financial condition.

Mr. Swire: the biggest step forward was when the HNTB consultant said that the managed lanes project did not affect congestion.

Doug Bojack: grade separations and Caltrain electrification.

Ivan Bucio: Safe Routes to School and grade separations.

Nheeda Enriquez: impressed by the scope of the programs across multiple jurisdictions and learning and partnering with other agencies.

Karen Kuklin: the leadership transition over the last two years and the electrification of Caltrain. Also, the Express Lanes project, which works the way it was planned to work.

Mr. Ohtaki: the bike/ped Safe Routes to School program, which has touched every community in the County, and grade separations paired with electrification.

Chair Arietta: electrification and grade separations and hopefully soon, Manor Drive

Gus Mattammal: grade separations, safety, Express Lanes, and development of the multimodal trail on the Coastside.

Vice Chair Fox: Caltrain infrastructure investment and efforts to work on bike/ped mobility

Allie Paul: grade separations, electrification, smaller projects.

Mr. Carlini: every project that moves cars to any other mode, bike lanes, and Safe Routes to School.

Discussion Question 2: Where do you see the biggest opportunity for improvement for the TA in the next five years?

Chair Arietta: securing the funding and how to get the funding.

Mr. Mattammal: more focus on safety.

Vice Chair Fox: working on inter-system operations and regional connections seamlessly.

Ms. Paul: safety, smaller lower-budget projects that could be implemented faster.

Mr. Carlini: reducing VMT and greenhouse gas emissions; providing 20 percent of road project funds to active transportation; requiring safety in all projects; prioritize longer, cross-jurisdiction active transportation projects instead of smaller disconnected efforts.

Mr. Londer: anything to help the environment, bike ped, electric vehicles (EVs), etc.

Ms. Lang: more in-depth analysis of the health ramifications of many projects.

Mr. Swire: recognizing and acknowledging the negative equity impacts of projects that adversely impact low-income and diverse populations, e.g., highway expansion.

Mr. Bojack: staff take leadership position to go to cutting edge: creative solutions for congestion relief using non-traditional means.

Mr. Bucio: safety, ease of access for alternate modalities.

Ms. Enriquez: analysis on how we tackle bigger budget problems. How to better track and streamline projects. Examine metrics and trade-offs.

Ms. Kuklin: equity, access to transportation, regional connections.

Mr. Ohtaki: how do we prepare and incentivize the transition to EVs over the ten years for shuttles, etc. Mobility connections.

The meeting recessed from 5:42 to 5:48 pm.

Ms. Epstein said “equity” only recently become part of the general conversation. She said the TA had incorporated geographic equity and that projects get extra points if they are in the equity-priority zones. She noted that the TA implemented equity programs before it was mandated.

Discussion Question 3: How should equity continue to be considered or elevated by the TA for the next five years?

Mr. Carlini: ability to get around. Impediment is fare structure, the need to make fares more equitable, bus versus train cost, and travel time.

Mr. Londer: does not know the best way to close the equity gap.

Ms. Lang: how to engage community organizations.

Mr. Swire: identification and reporting on metrics that reflect equity of recent projects, e.g., asthma rates, life expectancy, traffic deaths.

Mr. Bojack: housing and transportation are the major costs for most people, how to align transportation with housing.

Mr. Bucio: funding. Some cities have less staff to submit project proposals; reach out to those smaller entities to assist them in vying for projects.

Ms. Enriquez: root cause of some of the imbalances. Reducing travel time

Ms. Kuklin: geographic distribution. Some smaller communities are more affected by weather. Develop an equity overlay to apply to all projects.

Mr. Ohtaki: hold workshops in less-affluent communities to get their input.

Chair Arietta: geographic equity is a priority on the Coastside. Completing projects that have been on the books for a long time over should be prioritized over starting new projects.

Mr. Mattammal: increase outreach to less-affluent communities. Increase bus service to those communities.

Vice Chair Fox: develop metrics to assess and quantify the effectiveness of equity programs.

Ms. Paul: continue to elevate equity considerations; they should be built into the project review process.

Focus Area Two: Roles of the TA

Jessica Manzi, Director, Project Delivery, provided the presentation (Slide 31)

Discussion Question 4: Are there areas TA Technical Assistance should be modified or expanded?

Mr. Bucio: what is technical assistance? Ms. Manzi said it planning, project management, and engineering services to help applicants deliver better projects for the County.

Ms. Enriquez: Bundle projects to save money and improve speed.

Ms. Kuklin: reach out to cities to better understand their needs.

Mr. Ohtaki: need a grade separations specialist due to grants and the cost has increased to approximately \$300 million currently. It would be beneficial to share efficiencies with other communities.

Chair Arietta: help cities that are not getting their projects funded quickly enough.

Mr. Mattammal: bundling projects for the sake of efficiency and cost savings.

Vice Chair Fox: helping cities prepare grant writers prepare better submissions.

Ms. Paul: expand technical assistance since the TA has a bird's eye view of all projects.

Mr. Carlini: help and assistance to those from disadvantaged communities. Countywide active transit projects so folks can get around without needing a car.

Vice Chair John Fox left the meeting at 6:15 pm.

Mr. Londer: suggested that the TA reach out to communities to let them know about the existence of projects and to provide technical assistance.

Ms. Lang: make sure staff are well-versed in the equitable principles being discussed.

Mr. Swire: massive projects, typically Caltrain projects, tend to dominate. TA should advocate better for the people.

Mr. Bojack: traffic engineers are not the right people to work on bike/ped projects – they tend to be more auto-oriented. The TA can help reframe the bike/ped projects through better community outreach and support.

Mr. Bucio: suggested having someone dedicated to going through all the cities in the County to help them come up with their own strategic plans.

Doug Bojack left the meeting at 6:21 pm.

Discussion Question 5: Should the definition of countywide significance be updated or expanded?

Mr. Mattammal: yes, if it has impact on equity.

Ms. Paul: yes, equity component.

Mr. Carlini: look at four items through lens of reducing VMT, GHG, and increasing equity.

Mr. Londer: include environmental impact.

Ms. Lang: reduce requirements regarding through traffic.

Mr. Swire: add mode shift, environmental concerns. Monitor competing buckets in making decisions.

Mr. Bucio: include different modes of transportation. Separate grading system for each priority.

Ms. Enriquez: minimize harm in deciding trade-offs.

Mr. Ohtaki: add equity considerations so the County could step in to help less-advantaged communities.

Mr. Carlini: increase safety.

Chair Arietta: more emphasis on public transit, especially on the Coastsides.

Focus Area Three: Envisioning the Next Five Years

Activity Two: On your handout, mark the top five priority project types you are excited about for the next five years.

Mr. Gilster collected the members' written answers.

Mr. Swire asked how can the TA facilitate similar transportation decisions across multiple municipalities to increase expertise, lower costs, and accelerate completion, e.g., for a "no right turn on red" policy, could the TA establish a model ordinance that would be adopted at the local level like the county template ordinances on plastic bag bans. Mr. Gilster said that they have done this in some cases [e.g., C/CAG's (City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County) model TDM (Transportation Demand Management) ordinances].

Mr. Carlini asked even if the TA cannot compel cities to make changes (e.g., no right on red), could the TA attach "strings" to funding, encouraging them to make these changes. Staff said that the TA can establish guidelines or incorporate these goals into evaluation criteria for projects.

Discussion Question 6: Are there any other actions or considerations for the next five years we should take into account that we haven't discussed?

Mr. Ohtaki: would like to do the exercise more often than every five years.

Ms. Lang: the process was very productive.

In the interest of time, the members submitted their written answers to staff.

Mr. Gilster reviewed the next steps in developing the new Strategic Plan. He said they would bring the progress of the Plan back in June to the CAC.

7. Report of the Chair

Chair Arietta thanked everyone who volunteered for the ad hoc committee to update the Rules of Procedure and announced that Nheeda Enriquez, Gus Mattammal, and Karen Kuklin had been selected.

8. Report from Staff

Mr. Skinner said the report was in the packet.

9. Member Comments/Requests

Mr. Carlini said he would send comments about the Report of the Executive Director to staff. He said he supported the San Mateo County Pathways project and Complete Streets in Burlingame. He said he supported having a CAC representative present the Report of the CAC at TA Board meetings.

Mr. Ohtaki said the editor of the *Palo Alto Daily Post*, Dave Price, put out an editorial encourage the next Congressional representative to get federal funding for grade separations and suggested that Ms. Epstein or Ms. Linehan to reach out to him.

Ms. Kuklin said that AVs should be part of the Strategic Plan.

Mr. Swire said Secretary of Transportation, Pete Buttigieg, has initiated an investigation of Caltrans to see if they adequately considered environmental concerns for proposed highway widening in Fresno. He encouraged members to read the article from *The Economist* he had shared regarding young people foregoing driving cars and noted recent pedestrian deaths in Redwood City.

Ms. Lang encouraged everyone to vote and to consider the “unseen” in the TA’s equity lens.

The members thanked staff for their workshop-planning efforts.

10. Date/Time of Next Regular Meeting

Chair Arietta announced that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday, April 2, 2024, at 4:30 pm in person at the SamTrans Auditorium and via Zoom teleconference.

11. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 6:50 pm.

An audio/video recording of this meeting is available online at <https://www.smcta.com/video-board-directors>. Questions may be referred to the CAC Secretary's office by phone at 650.508.6223 or by email to cacsecretary@smcta.com.