

California Consensus Meeting Minutes
November 10, 2008
Caltrans Headquarters Room 2116

Present for Conference Call: Will Kempton, Director, Caltrans
Ken De Crescenzo, Caltrans, Federal Liaison
Jerry Jeffe, CalCOG
Nathan Smith, Caltrans, Division of Transportation Planning
Jay Norvell, Caltrans, Engineering
Jesse Bhullar, Caltrans, Traffic
Fardad Falakfarsa, Caltrans, Budgets
Muhaned Aljabiry, Caltrans, Programming
Jila Priebe, Caltrans, Mass Transit
Joan Sollenberger, Caltrans, Division of Transportation Planning
Gale Ogawa, Caltrans, Mass Transit
Norman Fassler-Katz, California State Senate
Other individuals participated by telephone

The conference call was opened at 1:30 p.m. by Ken De Crescenzo followed by a roll call of participants. Referencing the agenda, he wanted to begin with getting a quick sense in terms of the new administration, talk about status of the Principles and progress on adoption, hear report on AASHTO's October meeting, and discuss the draft vision statement.

Congressional Outlook for 2009

Ken introduced Eric Swedlund of the Governor's Office in Washington, DC, who said that he would provide a sense of what has happened over the last couple of days in DC. The transition (of the Democratic administration and newly elected President) is underway. In the transportation realm, Mark Dalme is playing a major role. This is the period they are beginning to speculate on who will be the Secretary of Transportation. During the Primaries, the President-elect spoke favorably about transportation – recommending investment. President-elect Obama supports infusion of spending for transportation. Eric expects something to develop for a more robust infrastructure bank, a more robust freight program, as well as evaluating ways to encompass conservation.

With regard to Congress, most of the Committee Chairs will remain the same. On the House (of Representatives) side, California's delegation will be returning. For committees, we expect everybody we have dealt with in the past to return. He gave some speculative names for the position of Secretary of Transportation. In the past, Transportation has been a place to put someone from the other party.

Addressing the stimulus package, Eric speculated that we will see a larger package done in February. He commented that most stakeholders had been contacted by committee members looking for projects ready to go. In response to a question regarding whether committee sizes will stay the same, Eric said there has been discussion, that the ratios will change to reflect emphasis on the Democratic side.

Progress on Adoption of Document

Ken reported that there are currently 23 adopting agencies on the Authorization document. We will be sending out a letter asking for cities and counties to request support of Boards of Supervisors in adopting the document. Addressing the document itself, Ken pointed out that the principles remain the same, with a draft vision statement now included.

Regarding the calendar, he asked that he be informed of any noted changes. A Beta version of the Federal Liaison's Website is being tested and will soon post the calendar as well as fact sheets. It was noted that February 26 is ASLRRRA (American Railroad Shortline & Regional Railroad Association) Day at Capitol Hill.

There was question that as the Principles tend to get adopted, would it be possible for the districts to showcase their project successes under SAFETEA LU. Will Kempton responded, saying he thought that made a lot of sense.

AASHTO Progress

Will reported on the October 16 – 20, 2008, AASHTO meeting held in Hartford, Connecticut. Caltrans has re-engaged at the national level. We are involved in a number of organizations that Congress recognized. The Board of Directors approved a policy and authorization package, and he was glad that we had significant involvement in the process and influence on the outcome. It was in sync with our development of our authorization. What is contained in the AASHTO recommendation is very consistent with our Principles. Will commented that he was pleased that California was able to be actively engaged this time. The proposal included:

- \$545 billion overall
- \$375 billion Highway
- \$93 billion Transit
- \$42 billion Freight
- \$34.5 billion Intercity Rail

Noteworthy at this meeting, was Randy Iwasaki being recipient of one of AASHTO's most prestigious awards. Additionally, California will be host to the October 2009 AASHTO meeting in Palm Desert where we will be showcasing technology.

Will concluded his report with return to the topic of the Principles. He wanted to make sure that stakeholders are putting effort towards this endorsement piece.

Vision Statement

Ken commented that the draft vision statement is included in the latest version of the Principles. It was derived from discussion on coming up with a more vibrant vision statement, that would catch Congress's attention. The current version depicts where California is now, what is stable for the nation, and provides a general statement of things to be addressed in the future. It also says we are looking towards Congress for support and direction. He urged all the stakeholders to review and comment on the document. They should send their comments to him at ken_de_crescenzo@dot.ca.gov by **Friday, November 21, 2008.**

In further general discussion of the stimulus package, there was question if any of the money received from a stimulus package is repayable. Will responded that it would not be as there is no match funds required.

The next Consensus Meeting will be held **December 9, 2008 at 10:00 a.m. in Room 2116.**

The call was closed by 2:33 p.m.