

## **Interview with Tink Miller, Executive Director of Placer Independent Resource Services and Coordinator of Best Steps Collaborative**

Auburn, October 29, 2009

Conducted by Nancy Kays of MIG and Tad Widby of HNTB.

The meeting started with a basic overview of HOT lanes and the different forms they can take, given by Tad Widby. He then asked a series of probing questions.

### **What experiences have you had with tolling or HOT lanes?**

- Has used toll roads. In places where HOT lanes are in place, how many have made a profit? (Answer – SR 91 profits used for highway improvements.)

### **General Impressions, Comments and Questions**

- HOT lanes sound good for emergency evacuations. (Tad – yes, they can serve a number of purposes).
- Concern about backups on SR 65 (Miguel Urkovich of Loomis is concerned).
- HOT lanes can be a viable solution. Interested in the opportunity to get transit (for example PCT trip on I-80 to light rail station) to its destination without getting bogged down.
- Good idea for emergency vehicles.
- Doesn't know how willing people are to pay the toll.
- Can private transit operators use it? (Answer – yes)
- Electronic tolling would be better than non-electronic
- Equity – corporations might subsidize employees
- For fixed income individuals, the terms "entitlement" and "privilege" come to mind, but better bus service will be liked.
- Many with disabilities work or go to school and could take advantage of more transit.
- Are there federal dollars with rules that apply? (Answer – so far in Calif. there are no restrictions except nexus rules that are broad).
- There would be an advantage in generating local dollars, could be leveraged.
- Depends on how you define the corridor how the revenues are shared (Tad – it's to be defined how accounting is done, for example what to include in O & M).
- Revenues gong for transit ensures a level playing field. If that could be undone, that would be bad.
- Skepticism about rule-changing. Who gets to define?

- Concerned about transit – STA operating funding has been eliminated, there are discussions of a sales tax in Placer County.
- When senior/disabled transit is cut, it can snowball downward (e.g. farebox recovery ratio of 10% is required by TDA or service can be cut).
- Retirees expect transit, and baby boom generation will have huge needs.
- Would want tamperproof source of funding for transit.
- As long as HOVs can use, HOT lanes are fine.
- Likes scalable tolls, management of lane.
- Doesn't increase the number of trips, but redistributes them.
- Would it reduce air pollution? (Answer – maybe).
- The overall political reaction to HOT lanes in Placer County – this is a very conservative county among the general public.
- Concerned about the governance, who controls the road (would be opposed to private contractor control).
- Concerned over possible changing of the rules.
- Overall, a lot of information would need to be provided to the stakeholders and public. When you know something but not everything, you have more questions!
- People who don't benefit won't want it (a "tax"). Issue of who's paying and who's benefiting (WIIFM – what's in it for me).
- Need to spell out the benefits for the community, for organizations
- The overall political reaction to HOT lanes in Placer County – this is a very conservative county among the general public.

#### **Who would have an interest?**

- Chambers, environmentalists, law enforcement, transit, residents of area.
- Developers of new university in Roseville (Tskopulous Group, Sac. State), ag, slow growth interests.