

January 2003 CTC Meeting Highlights

The January CTC Meeting was held on the 22nd and the 23rd in Sacramento. All members were present except Commissioner Hallisey. There is still one vacancy on the Commission.

The Commission held a transit workshop on the 22nd. The California Transit Association, Alameda County Transit District, Metropolitan Transit Development Board (San Diego), Metropolitan Transportation Commission, San Diego Association of Governments and Council of Fresno County Governments participated in the workshop. Each group talked about the importance of transit in their region and the challenges they face in providing a transportation system that has to deal with political, managerial and operational issues while convincing the transportation decision makers that investments in the system are needed and worthwhile.

The regular Commission meeting was on the 23rd. The agenda included 56 items for information, consideration and action. The agenda for the January meeting is accessible through our website:

<http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/transprog/ctcliaison.htm>

Highlights from the meeting include:

Presentation of the Governor's Proposed FY 2003/04 Budget (Item #7): Bob Sertich, Division Chief for Budgets, made a presentation on the Governor's Proposed FY 2003/04 Budget. The presentation included a discussion on the Department's budget with the loss of General Fund support (TCRP), and actions taken to balance the State Highway Account. The presentation also reinforced that although times seem difficult now with the state of the economy, the capital outlay authorizations in the budget are 72% higher than in the 1997-98 department budget, and higher than three of the prior six years.

The Presentation on the Governor's Proposed FY 2003/04 Budget can be accessed from our website:

<http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/transprog/ctcliaison.htm>

Suspension of Delegated Allocation Authority (Item #13): Commission Staff formally presented to the Commission the resolution suspending until the end of fiscal year 2002/03 the allocation authority delegated to the Department for the following:

- Project Development Components of Local Grant State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) projects
- Local Roadway Rehabilitation STIP projects
- Planning, Programming, Monitoring projects in the STIP
- CMAQ/RSTP/TEA Match Reserves programmed in the STIP
- Rideshare projects in the STIP
- State Highway Operation Protection Program (SHOPP) Roadway Rehabilitation Projects

Pending Allocations (Item #14 and 15): At their December meeting the Commission agreed that project allocations would be held until at least the February meeting to allow time to deal with the cash flow issue. At their special meeting on January 17, it was suggested that the allocations be held until the April meeting. The discussion on these items identified 93 highway/transit pending project allocations totaling \$169 million and 21 TCRP pending project allocations for \$145 million that are ready for an allocation of funds. The Department recommended that the Commission consider allocating funds in February for a very few projects that have special circumstances. The Commission agreed to work with the Department and the Regional Agencies to come up with a consensus on the projects that could possibly get an allocation at the February meeting. This, of course, is contingent on the availability of cash. The Commission will hold another special workshop in March to discuss the cash flow issue, criteria for allocation priorities, when funds can be allocated and if there will be funding limits.

Consent Calendar (Items #24 through #38): The Commission added Item #47 minus Director's Deed #3, and Item #51 the Transportation Finance Bank to the consent calendar. Item #37, Adoption of Commission Bylaws was deleted. Included in the consent calendar are items #31 and 32 for Minor A and SHOPP safety allocations. The Commission approved the consent calendar as amended.

Transportation Enhancement Activities (TEA) Program Reform (Item #52): Commission Staff presented a recommendation for TEA Reform. This item was requested by the Commission after the TEA Advisory Committee made their last report at the August Commission meeting. The item caused some controversy. Currently, the TEA Program is a "stand alone" program. The recommendation would revise the program and treat TEA funds like other Federal funds, programming them through the STIP after deducting some of the funds for the SHOPP "off the top". The Regions felt that there needed to be more discussion on the issue and asked that the item be tabled until the April Meeting. The Commission concurred.

Draft California Transportation Plan (Item #53): Brian Smith, Deputy Director of Planning and Modal Programs, presented the Draft of the California Transportation Plan. The discussion centered on the need for the Plan, the public involvement process undertaken by the Department in developing the Plan, and what exactly is in the Plan. Commissioners Lawson, Lindsey, and Lawrence all expressed concerns that the Plan seems to have been developed without comments from the goods movement industry, and agreed to identify potential representatives that could be added to the advisory group.

Environmental Streamlining (Item #54): Gary Winters, the Division Chief for the Division of Environmental presented a discussion on the Department's efforts on Environmental Streamlining. The discussion was on "time savings" in relation to the environmental process and covered the Department's efforts with the Federal Highway Administration and various Resource Agencies. Included in the discussion was the Department's success in getting approval to work directly with the Resource Agencies instead of having to go through FHWA. Additionally, the presentation covered the Department's efforts internally to streamline the environmental process. Specifically,

that the Department is emphasizing quality in their environmental products to reduce the review and approval time by FHWA and the Resource Agencies.

Final Agenda Items for the February meeting are due by February 3, 2003. Scheduled due dates for later meetings can be viewed at:

<http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/transprog/ctcliaison/2003/Internet%20Schedule.pdf>

If you have any questions regarding these highlights or have other questions about the meeting, please call me at Calnet 8-464-4013. Or, please call Mr. Greg Wong at Calnet 8-464-2503. The final actions taken report will be posted on Programming's web site soon.