

AMADOR COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

MINUTES

August 19, 2009 – 6:21 P.M.

The Amador County Transportation Commission (ACTC) met at the County Administration Center, 810 Court Street, Jackson, California on the above date, and the following proceedings were had, to wit:

Present on Roll Call:

Greg Baldwin – Vice Chairman

Louis Boitano – Chairman

Pat Crosby

Richard Forster

David Plank

Dave Richards

Also Present:

Dan Brewer, Chief, Rural Planning and Administration, Caltrans District 10

Charles Field, ACTC Executive Director

Robyn Sheehan, ACTC Administrator

Neil Peacock, ACTC Planner/Program Manager

Agenda:

Motion: It was moved by Commissioner Baldwin, seconded by Commissioner Plank, and unanimously carried to approve the agenda as presented.

Public Matters Not on the Agenda: Commissioner Crosby disseminated copies of the California's Golden Chain map and reported that the Golden Chain Council, which originated in 1928, is being revived. The Council will have a website for commerce along Highway 49 to advertise their services. Membership will be approximately \$300 per county and 300 maps will be provided with the membership.

CONSENT AGENDA

Consent Agenda Item No. 7 – Wicklow Way Development Project: Commissioner Richards asked if anything new had occurred since the agenda memo was written. Mr. Field responded that he is not aware of any thing new happening.

Consent Agenda Item No. 8 – Caltrans Environmental Staff Reprioritization: Mr. Field stated that Caltrans will continue to give attention to seven projects in District 10 in addition to its American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) priorities. Three of these projects are in Amador County: the County road turnouts, Amador City bridge replacement, and Court Street/SR 88 intersection improvements. Commissioner Baldwin asked if the cities could provide assistance to the State. Mr. Field stated that the environmental work needs to be approved by Caltrans and therefore this is a State function.

Consent Agenda Item No. 10 – Plymouth SR 49/Main Street Intersection Project:

Commissioner Forster asked if the median in the proposed roundabout will be low enough for trucks to move over it if they can't make the turn in the roundabout. Commissioner Baldwin stated that the proposed roundabout should handle the largest federal truck legally allowable on the road.

Commissioner Richards expressed concern that traffic will not slow down.

Commissioner Plank advised that the roundabout in Truckee was the first test case by Caltrans and it is functioning very effectively

Consent Agenda Item No. 12 – Invitation to Department of Transportation Secretary Ray

LaHood: Commissioner Forster stated that the letter contains typos and, in the future, outgoing letters should be proof read more carefully.

Motion: It was moved by Commissioner Baldwin, seconded by Commissioner Plank, and unanimously carried to approve the consent agenda as presented and discussed.

REGULAR AGENDA

Caltrans Reports: Dan Brewer, Chief of Rural Planning and Administration, Caltrans District 10, advised that Ross Chittenden has assumed the District 10 Director position for a two year assignment. Mr. Chittenden comes from Headquarters with 26 years of Caltrans experience. District 10 Director Tony Tavares has moved on to Office Chief for Right of Way statewide. Kome Ajise's term at Headquarters has been extended and he will be heading the Public Private Partnership Program and overseeing the ARRA TIGER grants.

Commissioner Forster asked if Caltrans is involved in the meetings concerning the Regional Transportation Plan Guidelines Update and Regional Air Pollution Target Advisory Committees. Mr. Brewer responded that the California Transportation Commission is organizing the RTP Guidelines Update and Caltrans is intimately involved in these committees.

Commissioner Forster stated that, according to the Regional Council of Rural Counties staff, the MPOs, COGs and environmental interests are getting upset because their charge of creating a successful, sustainable community strategy could be a difficult task with land use authority remaining with the local government. He stated that he would not like to see local governments give up their authority on this matter. Mr. Brewer stated that this is where the authority lies today and this is understood at Caltrans. Commissioner Forster stated that some agencies and interests want this changed so that they can do the blueprinting and modeling easier without the local control of the land use process. Mr. Brewer encouraged the county, cities, and local agencies to remain engaged in this process and maintain a voice for local concerns.

Pine Grove State Route 88 Corridor Project: Mr. Field advised that ACTC Transportation Planner/Program Manager Neil Peacock will be providing monthly status reports in the agenda packets concerning the Pine Grove SR 88 Corridor project.

Mr. Peacock advised that the E-76 was received about 2-1/2 weeks after ACTC met with Caltrans Headquarters. He has advised the Upcountry representatives and he will be attending the Pine Grove town council meeting on September 2, 2009, to provide an update. A Project Development Team (PDT) meeting with Caltrans and ACTC consultant staff has also been scheduled.

Commissioner Crosby asked if the route has been selected. Mr. Peacock advised that the north and south bypass alternatives identified in 2002 exceed available funding so the focus is being limited to the through-town alternative.

Commissioner Plank suggested that the monthly report include a time line of the individual steps to give an idea of where we have been and what are the next steps ahead.

Gold Rush Ranch Development Project: Mr. Field disseminated an email dated August 18, 2009, showing ACTC's efforts with the City of Sutter Creek and the Gold Rush applicants' representative engineer. He stated that the conditions in the final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) do not satisfy or address the concerns that ACTC has observed in prior meetings. The main issues and concerns are that this project contributes significantly (basically more than 5 second delays) to a high number of intersections and roadway segments. With no CMX program set up for the Martell Area, the proposal is that Gold Rush will pay their fair share as a condition of approval. The proposed fair share amounts are small and the lack of funds from any other source mean that there is no assurance the improvement projects will get built. A second concern is that development of a fair share program could start a precedent for other developments and it will create a program that will not provide the infrastructure needed to support development in the time it is needed. Maintaining a fair share program with various rates and fees will also be very difficult to administer. ACTC staff has urged the Sutter Creek City Council to not lock in the fees at the rate of \$170 per trip end but give the City, County and region the ability to raise the rates over time so that each home will be paying amounts that can provide needed infrastructure over time.

Thomas Infusino, Foothill Conservancy, provided the Commission with a letter encouraging the Commission not to support the premature approval of the Gold Rush Ranch Specific Plan, prior to adoption of the CMX funding program. Mr. Infusion also provided a verbal summary of his letter.

Commissioner Forster clarified that the Transportation Policy Advisory Task Force (TPATF) has not approved the CMX Plan. Mr. Field stated that CMX has not been approved however the TPATF voted 3-1-1 to recommend Plan A. Commissioner Forster asked if the funding plans will change now that the Wicklow development project is out of the picture. Mr. Field stated that Wicklow's denial does cause a problem for the funding program; however, Wicklow has been General Plan designated for what is to be built and it should still be planned for that purpose.

There was discussion concerning the CMX alternatives A and D and the affect they would have on the Gold Rush project and the Martell improvement plan.

Commissioner Crosby stated that he does not have a problem with Gold Rush paying its fair share, whatever the amount may be, but the facilities need to be built at the start. He also expressed support for the proposed Allen Ranch Road.

Keith Sweet, resident of Jackson, advised that the intent of Plan D was to provide a program in which transportation and infrastructure is being paid for concurrent with development.

Ron Regan, G.R. Developments, stated that he has a project involved in the CMX process, and he stated that CMX would serve the County well. If the development community doesn't join in with the County and ACTC to find a reasonable monetary solution to the impacts, then there will be disarray and lower levels of service. If Sutter Creek allows Gold Rush to pay \$170 per trip end then it is not fair to the other developments that follow who will have to pay higher fees. Mr. Regan stated that the fee should not be set at this time and the complex should pay for itself.

Chairman Boitano expressed support for the CMX or a hybrid sub-regional program. He also stated that Sutter Creek should not lock in the fees. If the City chooses to lock in the fees, it should consider a smaller project. There needs to be fairness built in for all of the development community.

Commissioner Forster stated that it doesn't seem appropriate to lock in the fees if you are looking at 20 – 30 year build out. He also stated that the fee might be somewhere between \$170 and \$550 but you can't expect to build everything. If the fee is locked in, then it should be done in segments and each segment should be considered on an individual basis as the project moves forward.

Commissioner Plank questioned the fee study analysis.

Commissioner Forster stated that level of service for Amador County is different than level of service for Sacramento and this is not reflected in the CMX Program. Mr. Field stated that the ACTC may need to look at lower levels of service. The Commission will be reviewing the CMX plan and looking at options to reduce costs. Caltrans will also be providing input since it affects State highways.

Chairman Boitano stated that if these projects include internal circulation, then residents can travel from one project to another. He stated that if it is not done properly in the beginning, then it is not fair to the residents.

Commissioner Crosby stated that he is for fair rates for everyone but also full disclosure. He stated that Alternative D is the engineering study originally prepared and Alternative A is the political decision. Mr. Field stated that Plan A could be considered the political approach because it requires that all developers pay the same fee in order to make the program work.

Commissioner Baldwin stated that everyone lives here because Amador is rated as one of the ten best rural counties in the country. It is important to get this right or Amador will become one of the worst counties. He expressed support for Alternative A as the fairest approach. If the project gets approved, it should be approved in stages. All infrastructure should be in place when a developer builds the first house.

Mr. Field summarized the discussion by stating that ACTC should ask Sutter Creek to not lock in the fee. The CMX Program should be brought forth. There is debate about how to fund the CMX Program and there will likely be changes in the program.

Chairman Boitano stated that it should be fair to all the development community. If the fee is set artificially too low for one then it would need to be higher for others and they will not be able to compete.

Mr. Sweet suggested that CMX be presented to the Cities of Sutter Creek and Jackson first and then to the ACTC with the cities' input.

Mr. Field stated that the TPATF agreed the ACTC should hold public workshops first, then present it to the cities and county. He currently proposes that two workshops should be held with the Commission concerning the Martell Area Circulation Plan. The first workshop would explain the plan and ask what the agencies and public would like Martell to be like when built out. The second workshop would be to tackle the funding strategy

At 7:55 p.m. Chairman Boitano recessed the meeting until 8:04 p.m. at which time regular business was resumed.

Amador County General Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR) Notice of Preparation:

Mr. Field stated that additional development enabled by the proposed land use element will have significant impacts on transportation because there is a lack of transportation funding and because of environmental constraints. In addition, the EIR may be too broad and general to know if infrastructure can support the land use element. Mitigation measures should be realistic and the cities should be included in the EIR's traffic analysis.

Commissioner Richards requested that Mr. Field advise the Commissioners of the results of the meeting that will be held with County staff concerning this subject on August 24, 2009.

Commissioner Forster stated that policy direction, such as that given concerning Ridge Road in 2003, could affect the Traffic Impact Study. He also suggested that the level of service discussion should include a definition of level of service in a rural area versus an urban area. Commissioner Baldwin stated that the volume of traffic should also be taken into consideration. Mr. Field stated that Fehr & Peers provided a chart and description for the rural level of service in the 2004 Regional Transportation Plan.

Sutter Hill Transit Center: Project manager Matt Boyer, Dokken Engineering, reported that bids were opened on July 8 for construction of the Transit Center building. Rasmussen Construction was the lowest bidder but it has chosen to withdraw its bid. After meeting with LGM Construction, the recommendation to reject all bids is being modified to conditionally award the contract to LGM Construction, who is the lowest responsible bidder at this time. Concurrence from Caltrans Division of Mass Transportation will be required.

Motion: It was moved by Commissioner Richards, seconded by Commissioner Forster, and unanimously carried to conditionally award construction of the Sutter Hill Transit Center Building to LGM Construction.

Amador County Highway Chip Seal: Commissioner Baldwin stated that it appears a larger size chip and less sand slurry was used on the Highway 16 chip seal project and this creates significant and annoying noise. Commissioner Baldwin stated that, according to Dan Brewer, it may have been done to provide better braking although he did not agree. He asked that the Commissioners take special notice of the noise on Highway 16, discuss the matter at the next ACTC meeting, and consider asking Caltrans to reduce the sound level to a normal level.

Claims:

Motion: It was moved by Commissioner Forster, seconded by Commissioner Richards, and unanimously carried to approve the revised claim list as presented.

Adjournment:

At 8:27 p.m. Chairman Boitano adjourned the meeting to **6:00 p.m. September 16, 2009, at the Amador County Administration Center, 810 Court Street, Jackson, California.**

Louis Boitano, Chairman
Amador County Transportation Commission

ATTEST:

Recording Secretary

Note: Copies of referenced documents are available at the ACTC office.