

EXPENDITURE PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Draft Minutes – October 23, 2017

**MEMBERS
PRESENT:**

Debbie Alley
Sue Beittel
Lisel Blash
Monique Brown
Allan Bortel
Robert Burton
Bill Carney
V-Anne Chernock
Joh Dahlgren
John Eells, Alternate
Kevin Hagerty
Ken Lippi
Cynthia Murray
Vince O'Brien
Nancy Okada, Alternate
Peter Pelham
Kate Powers
Scott Tye
Lynn Von Der Werth

**MEMBERS
ABSENT:**

Javier Flores
Roberto Hernandez
John Horniek
Paul Roye
Coy Smith
Joanne Webster

STAFF

PRESENT:

Dianne Steinhauser, Executive Director
Bonnie Nelson, Facilitator
Molly Graham, Public Outreach Coordinator
Joanne O'Hehir, Coordinator

1. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Chernock opened the meeting at 6 p.m. and welcomed the committee members.

2. Recap of previous meeting minutes, acceptance of the minutes, overview of materials requested, response to outstanding questions

Molly Graham, Public Outreach Coordinator, stated that the minutes had not yet been circulated electronically, and that action would be taken at the next meeting.

3. Update on Senate Bill 1 and Regional Measure 3, Dianne Steinhauser, TAM Executive Director

Executive Director Dianne Steinhauser discussed the materials that have been provided, including a list of needs and whether they can be funded from SB1 or RM3, noting that state and federal fund sources usually need to be spent on capital projects. She stated that sales tax is important for funding local services, such as the crossing guard program.

ED Steinhauser discussed the needs that will potentially be funded from SB1, including \$125 million for the Marin Sonoma Narrows, \$135 million for the Direct Connector from NB Highway 101 to EB Interstate 580, and \$100 million towards Highway 37. RM3 projects also include \$30 million for the rebuilt Bettini Transit Center, \$40 million towards the SMART extension from Santa Rosa to Windsor, and \$150 million for Bay Trail improvements from which TAM might be awarded a project. She noted RM3 improvements are part of a package of Bay Area wide candidates that would need to be approved by voters, likely in June 2018.

ED Steinhauser discussed SB1, (Road Repair and Accountability Act), which she said would guarantee Local Streets and Roads and STIP funding, and would likely provide approximately \$500,000 in partnership funding to TAM due to the existence of Marin's sales tax.

In response to a committee member, ED Steinhauser confirmed that SB1 guarantees several sources of funds to Marin: Local Streets and Roads, Local Partnership Program, State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), and State transit revenue, called State Transit Assistance. She said that STIP funds might be linked to housing production, and confirmed that local jurisdictions will receive as new Local Streets and Roads funds approximately \$8 million of additional funding.

In response to a committee member, ED Steinhauser stated that a project is being developed for next year, out of separate funds, to widen the current off-ramp from Northbound Highway 101 to eastbound Hwy 580 at Bellam.

ED Steinhauser briefly discussed some additional grant opportunities, including SB1 Active Transportation Program funds for the Lifeline Transportation Program for low income communities, such as Marin City, the Canal Neighborhood and parts of Novato.

A committee member commented on the need to address a problem with rental cars that are registered out of state and fleets that do not contribute to the State VRF.

In response to a committee member, ED Steinhauser noted that the Golden Gate Bridge Highway and Transportation District (GGBHTD) is not part of the state-owned highway system. She also mentioned that she does not believe the CHP's grant for freeway service patrol would be divided between jurisdictions. She noted that Golden Gate Bridge has its own patrol funded from their revenue sources, likely their own tolls.

In response to a committee member, ED Steinhauser said that funds are already being distributed and guidelines being drawn up by CTC as a result of SB1. It was noted that

there is an appeal of the new gas tax and fee is underway and the outcome of that effort is unknown. She noted that TAM has already submitted applications for Local Streets and Roads projects, and local planning grants, and that applications for local partnership projects will be ready to submit in December.

4. Brief Recap - Turning Transportation Needs into an Expenditure Plan – Dianne Steinhauser, TAM Executive Director

- Review needs list and revenue projections

Facilitator Bonnie Nelson provided a brief recap on the previous discussions, noting that the members had defined the four strategies in an extension of the expenditure plan only (transit, local roads, highways and safe routes to schools), and the amount distributed to each group. Ms. Nelson noted that 3 of the groups identified mainly the same needs as the current plan, while the remaining group identified a different priority to reduce the funds provided to local transit through Marin Transit by nearly 10% and reallocate the funds to Local Streets and Roads.

Ms. Nelson explained that tonight's discussions would focus on allocating funds to the sub categories within the four strategies. She confirmed that Marin Transit receives 55% of Measure A funds, and she discussed the distribution of those funds, including 37%, currently allocated for operating local transit services in the County.

Ms. Nelson discussed the groups' desire that the funds should be spent wisely to reduce congestion and provide mobility, with a new category dedicating funding to school bus services. She noted that concern has been expressed that the measure might not pass if too much emphasis is placed on public transit, while there is equal concern that the measure might not pass if funds for transit are reduced, which could also result in organized opposition.

Ms. Nelson stated that the measure must be approved by the TAM Board of Directors.

ED Steinhauser noted that Marin Transit requested an additional \$15.5 million for their needs, including \$10 million for their maintenance operations center, and GGBHTD requested \$15 million as a one-time request for a new ferry.

In response to a committee member, ED Steinhauser confirmed that TAM has never provided funds for a ferry boat.

A committee member suggested funding more local city transit shuttle services because he said that people have been asking for a local shuttle in Mill Valley.

A committee member suggested that they should focus more on providing transit that people would use, and said that the current bus ridership numbers are not sustainable. She suggested more consideration is given to rideshare services and that the plan should

recognize the future evolution of transit, instead of continuing to fund the current model of transit options that are not well used.

Ms. Nelson discussed the results of the break-out groups' previous study session relating to transit expenditure, which includes a new category of 1.5% towards a new ferry or access to the ferry. Ms. Nelson said that the members could change any of the percentages or eliminate a category if they so wish.

Ms. Nelson discussed the planning principals, which include the need for Marin Transit to work with TAM to identify and update the productivity standards for each of the transit system elements. She said that if 7 passengers per hour are unacceptable, Marin Transit could identify alternatives to fixed route transit and also look at new ways to provide services in communities where transit is not efficient and effective.

Ms. Nelson discussed the reallocation of 7.5% of funds for the completed Gap Closure project in San Rafael. She said that other needs identified by the groups include ensuring matching funds for funding the Marin Sonoma Narrows and the Hwy 101-580 interchange.

Ms. Nelson stated that three of the groups expressed an interest in providing some funding for transportation demand management to reduce congestion, which includes car sharing services for first and last mile, carpooling, employer programs, etc.

Ms. Nelson discussed the allocation of 7.5% for the highway category. She said that Hwy 37 is not included because the exact project is unknown and RM3, if passed by voters, would provide \$100 million of funding to start the project.

In response to a committee member, ED Steinhauser said the \$12.4 million of funding for MSN would provide matching funds to attract RM3 or SB1 funding. She noted that the main priority for the Marin Sonoma Narrows is to complete the carpool lane and that most of the bike and pedestrian path is completed.

Discussion among some of the members took place regarding whether the need existed for carpool lanes, noting that they are not used by a large section of the population who are retired, and that enforcement is sporadic. ED Steinhauser noted that the amount of funding proposed for highway improvements would attract additional funding, that it was heavily leveraged.

ED Steinhauser discussed other funding needs, including transportation demand management (TDM), and confirmed that improvements to interchanges are a top priority indicated by the Godbe survey, the first and last mile access to SMART (noting that TAM has 6 months of funding), and the possibility of attracting a bikeshare grant from MTC that needs a large amount of matching funds.

A committee member discussed the need to consider technology and changes in demographics when considering the new expenditure plan.

Facilitator Bonnie Nelson discussed the category belonging to Local Streets and Roads, which she said is needed to gain support from the cities to get the measure on the ballot. Ms. Nelson discussed her proposal to reallocate the 26.5% to Local Streets and Roads, including 22% distributed by formula to the cities and towns, 3% for Safe Routes to School Safe Pathways, and ½% to support innovative technology.

In response to a committee member, ED Steinhauser provided examples of innovative technology, such as adaptive signal controls.

In response to a committee member, Ms. Nelson clarified the requirement to get a tax measure on the ballot. ED Steinhauser noted that if a major city does not approve the ballot measure, the TAM Board might not give their approval.

A committee member discussed the need to acquire approval from all towns to avoid opposition. It was agreed that the goal is to receive approval from all jurisdictions, beyond the minimum requirements.

A committee member discussed the need for road maintenance for future autonomous vehicle use, better signage, and the use of innovative road maintenance materials, which might attract a demonstration grant or matching funds.

Facilitator Nelson discussed the fourth category, relating to the maintenance and expansion of Safe Routes to School and the Crossing Guard program, noting that she is proposing to increase funding of the crossing guard program by redistributing the funding for Safe Pathways. Ms. Nelson said there is a need for more funding for Crossing Guards, since the program experiences rising costs and does not attract matching funds and that it would attract voters.

ED Steinhauser discussed safe pathway projects. She said that funding is still needed for approximately 15 small projects each year each costing approximately \$15,000 - \$20,000, and she added that local jurisdictions are being encouraged to undertake safe pathway projects.

Ms. Nelson explained to the committee members that they would be dispersing in the same break-out groups that they formed at the last meeting. She clarified the information they would be using and reminded the members that they are discussing an extension of the sales tax measure, and not an increase, which would be part of a future EPAC meeting.

5. Breakout Groups – Development of Expenditure Plans, for both Renewal and Increase of the Current ½-cent Transportation Sales Tax

The committee members formed their break out groups. The groups focused on a Renewed Sales Tax plan.

The groups disbanded after 30 minutes and the committee members took their places round the tables.

6. Report out on Break-out Groups and Large Group Discussion

Summary of Expenditure Plan Advisory Committee Break-out Group Discussions – October 23, 2017

Yellow Group

Transit:

- Remove ferry allocation;
- Suggest minor adjustments School Transit (4) and Clean Transit (5) so that Operations can be maintained as close to 37% as possible.
- Outreach to ensure voters know what multi-model services the tax is funding, otherwise they might not vote for the tax measure.
- Institute performance standards
- Less funding for school buses; re-evaluate the program because it hasn't proven itself.
- Re-assess percentages of all programs in 5 – 10 years.

Highways:

- Highways: No change because adjustments could be made over time.

Local Streets and Roads

- No changes

Safe Routes to School

- Concern expressed for public funding for crossing guards at private and religious schools

Red Group:

Transit:

- Define clear criteria and productivity standards that could trigger a change service if criteria are not met
- Maintaining 55% overall will require a very big marketing effort to ensure people understand the benefits of the service
- Allow flexibility, especially considering new technology and the 30-year time frame of the Expenditure Plan. The Expenditure Plan will need to be reevaluated based on new options for mobility services and percentages of the funding should be able to be modified. Transit definition and services need to be able to adapt and be nimble.
- The current plan is more rigid than what will be needed from the future plan with so many unknowns.
- Acknowledge changing demographics for School Bus service and the need for funding may change/decrease

Highways:

- No significant comments
- Noted that matching funds are critical to attract funding and that demand management strategy is considered important.
- Support for not including SR 37

Local Streets and Roads

- Sea-level rise/resiliency and innovative technology categories should assume matching funds from other sources and would assume an ebb/flow of need (ie: funds could roll-over to await projects and may not be expended each year.)
- Overall it was thought that the percentages for these Sea-level rise/resiliency and innovative technology categories would make little difference, but they were retained to attract matching funds.
- Suggest combining these two categories to add value.

Safe Routes to School

- Increase marketing to ensure people are aware that the sales tax pays for programs, specifically crossing guards.
- This category and school transit should be responsive on projected demographics and the school age population will influence the budget needs.
- More data should be made available during this process since it is a 30-year tax, or include caveats, similar to transit, and the programs should be nimble and responsive to changes.
- Noted that the Crossing Guard Program is necessary, could be expanded and would be a good selling point.

Ms. Nelson noted that the groups are still struggling with transit and suggested the expenditure plan could be reviewed every 10 years, for example. She confirmed that it is not necessary to lock into a plan for 30 years.

Blue Group:

Transit

- Reallocate ferry funds to transit funds because transit is local whereas the ferry facilitates people moving through or out of the county.
- Concern expressed that local services could get cut, such as first and last mile from SMART, in favor of higher volume and higher frequency routes. Support to continue providing local services to neighborhoods.

Strategy 2 and 3 – No changes: Discussion on how maintaining local roads and mass transit would facilitate congestion relief, rather than funding highway projects.

Strategy 4 - No changes

Green Group

Transit:

- Retain the 55%. There had been previous discussion about reducing transit funding by 10%, but there was concern that this might attract opposition.
- Reallocate the ferry funds and reallocated the 1.5% to school transit.
- Concern continues that transit is just not performing, too many empty buses. Need checks and balances. They suggest TAM re-assess sub-categories and consider re-allocation every three years

Highways

- No change and there was support for continuing to fund the TDM program.

Local Streets and Roads

- Interest in retaining Safe Pathways at 3.5% (increase from suggested 3%)
- Increased the category to 27% to capture the .5%
- General consensus that Safe Pathways should be separately identified.
- Concern allocating Safe Pathways to this category rather than where it is in the current measure, under Safe Routes to School.

Safe Routes to School

- Reduced safe routes education from 4% to 3.5% to increase funding for Safe Pathways.

The Breakout groups reassembled and the TAM team captured their input and percentages. Ms. Nelson explained she will be taking the group input and developing a final version of the Renewed Sales Tax Expenditure Plan, for final review at the next meeting.

7. Public Open Time

There were no additional comments from members of the public

8. Adjourn

The Chair V-Anne Chernock adjourned the meeting at 8:10 PM