



DRAFT MINUTES

San Francisco County Transportation Authority

Tuesday, October 20, 2020

1. Roll Call

Chair Peskin called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

Present at Roll Call: Commissioners Fewer, Mandelman, Peskin, Preston, Ronen, Stefani, Walton, and Yee (8)

Absent at Roll Call: Commissioner Haney (entered at item 4), Mar (entered at item 4), and Safai (entered at item 3) (3)

2. Citizens Advisory Committee Chair's Report - INFORMATION

John Larson, Chair of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), reported out from the September 23 CAC meeting on the CAC's extensive discussion regarding program guidelines, programming and allocation requests concerning the Traffic Congestion Mitigation Tax (TNC Tax) which relates to item 6 and 7 on the agenda. He reported that CAC members inquired on the difference between the projected amounts of tax and the lower amounts actually collected prior to COVID impacts, the oversight of timelines and the budget delivery of projects, and prioritization on quick build projects, especially in the communities of concern. He added because priority is being given to quick build projects in vision zero high energy networks, the CAC unanimously approved the recommendations in support of the SFCTA's TNC tax goals of pedestrian bicycle safety.

With respect to Prop K requests for paratransit van replacement, Chair Larson reported there was a lack of familiarity amongst the CAC members on how services are provided by paratransit and whether communities of concern are being adequately served by the reservation bay system. He added, because the item focuses on replacing the vans at the end of their useful lives, the CAC recommended approval but requested a future presentation on paratransit service delivery focusing on the populations served, and distribution of service at a future CAC meeting. Chair Larson also shared that another CAC member suggested repurposing the disused vans to provide safe transportation for low-income San Franciscans. He added that SFCTA staff would work with Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) to see if there are other ways the vehicles could be used to benefit the community.

Chair Larson also reported on the CAC's discussion regarding the Van Ness BRT project. He shared that the CAC welcomed the conclusion on the sewage/utility work and added they wondered if the knowledge gained through discovery of the unknown vestigial utilities in the area can be helpful to future builders of the corridor. He added that SFMTA commented that the contractors performing the work provided as built drawings reflecting what was found and done in the area; in which is also accessible to anyone noticing a project in the area in the future. He added, CAC members still wished to see



more data and information regarding the impact and use of mitigation strategies, and the MTA agreed to prepare a more detailed report for a future meeting.

Lastly, Chair Larson shared that the CAC's September 23 meeting was adjourned in honor of Ernestine Weiss whom was a long time dedicated public advocate who pushed for public transportation, needs for the elderly, the homeless and marginalized communities.

There was no public comment.

3. Approve the Minutes of the September 22, 2020 Meeting - ACTION

There was no public comment.

Commissioner Walton moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Yee.

The minutes were approved without objection by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Fewer, Mandelman, Peskin, Preston, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, Walton and Yee (9)

Absent: Commissioners Haney and Mar (2)

4. Appointment of Two Members to the Citizens Advisory Committee - ACTION

Aprile Smith, Senior Transportation Planner for Policy & Programming, presented the item.

Commissioner Fewer expressed her support re-appointing David Klein for the District 1 CAC position. Commissioner Safai expressed his support for re-appointing Robert Gower for the District 11 CAC position.

There was no public comment.

Commissioner Fewer moved to approve the item, seconded by Commissioner Safai.

The item was approved without objection by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Fewer, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Peskin, Preston, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, Walton and Yee (11)

Absent: none (0)

5. State and Federal Legislative Update - INFORMATION

Mark Watts, State Legislative Advocate, and Amber Crabbe, Policy Program Manager, presented the item.

There was no public comment.

6. Adopt Traffic Congestion Mitigation Tax (TNC Tax) Program Guidelines and Program \$7,505,686 in TNC Tax Funds to Two Projects - ACTION

Kaley Lyons, Transportation Planner for Policy & Programming, presented the item.

Commissioner Yee asked if the \$15 million projection was the same as earlier in the year or if it was updated. Ms. Lyons responded that the projection was from May 2020. She added original projections were \$30 million dollars annually from the TNC Tax, which have since dropped to \$15 million for the year. She also added that the revised



projections assume \$500,000 a month from July through September and then \$1.5 million for the rest of the fiscal year.

Commissioner Yee asked if recent collections aligned with these projections. Ms. Lyons responded that collections have been received through July and those were pretty much at the \$500,000 level. She said she would follow-up with commissioners once collections were verified for August and September.

Commissioner Walton asked if he could have a copy of the presentation sent to him.

Executive Director Tilly Chang responded in the affirmative and noted that the presentation along with the other meeting materials is posted on the website (www.sfcta.org).

Chair Peskin thanked voters and the state legislature for supporting and passing the TNC Tax, the first in the State of California.

During public comment, Janice Li, Advocacy Director at San Francisco Bicycle Coalition, expressed support for the item, especially allocating the funds for quick builds and safety, and for prioritizing projects that benefit communities of concern.

Aleta Dupree expressed support for the item, especially for the responsible use of funding resources.

Commissioner Mandelman moved to approve the item, seconded by Commissioner Ronen.

The item was approved without objection by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Fewer, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Peskin, Preston, Ronen, Stefani, Walton and Yee (10)

Absent: Commissioner Safai (1)

7. Allocate \$5,897,303 in Prop K Sales Tax Funds, \$378,372 in Prop AA Vehicle Registration Fee Funds, and \$2,505,686 in Traffic Congestion Mitigation Tax (TNC Tax) Funds, with Conditions, for Five Requests - ACTION

Anna LaForte, Deputy Director for Policy & Programing, presented the item.

Chair Peskin made a motion to excuse Commissioner Ronen, seconded by Commissioner Walton. The motion to excuse was approved without objection.

During public comment, Aleta Dupree commented on the importance of paratransit vans for vulnerable populations, as well as fuel sustainability for the environment.

Commissioner Mandelman moved to approve the item, seconded by Commissioner Yee.

The item was approved without objection by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Fewer, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Peskin, Preston, Safai, Stefani, Walton and Yee (10)

Excused: Commissioner Ronen (1)

8. Authorize the Executive Director to Execute the Utility Relocation Agreement, the Right of Way Certification, Amendments to the Memorandums of Agreement (MOAs) with Treasure Island Development Authority (TIDA) for Both Right of Way and Construction



Phases, and All Other Related Project Agreements for the Yerba Buena Island (YBI) Westside Bridges Seismic Retrofit Project - ACTION

Eric Cordoba, Deputy Director for Capital Projects, presented the item.

There was no public comment.

Commissioner Haney moved to approve the item, seconded by Commissioner Fewer.

The item was approved without objection by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Fewer, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Peskin, Preston, Safai, Stefani, Walton and Yee (10)

Excused: Ronen (1)

9. Update on the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency's Red Light Camera Program - INFORMATION

Ricardo Olea, City Traffic Engineer at SFMTA, presented the item.

During the presentation, Chair Peskin asked about the reverse trends with citations at 4th/Harrison and Park Presidio/Lake. Mr. Olea responded that April and May should naturally be the lowest totals, based on travel patterns during the pandemic. He added that the camera at 4th and Harrison is the oldest, so he hopes the reduction in citations is due to behavior change from knowing the camera is there. Mr. Olea also explained that at Park Presidio, there is ongoing construction, and the intersection is not in its final design state. Mr. Olea said he hopes the citation trend is abnormal and will come down once construction is over. He reiterated that the goal of the program is not to have a lot of citations, so if they remain high, other treatments and adjustments will be considered.

Commissioner Stefani expressed support for the potential expansion locations at Presidio/Masonic and Franklin/Lombard. She asked about cost differences between installing red light cameras versus physical changes to the road. Mr. Olea answered that it depends on the type of improvements. Signal retiming is the most cost effective because city crews are utilized and it only involves labor costs. The most expensive is to redesign an intersection. Mr. Olea indicated that the capital cost of a red light camera is about \$200,000. He added that the exact construction costs are currently unknown, but they estimate the \$2 million dollars available will cover the 8 additional red light cameras referenced in the presentation.

Commissioner Stefani asked for red light camera installation at Geary and Gough streets, citing a recent tragedy wherein a father of two was struck and killed at this location. Mr. Olea acknowledged the request and indicated that it is possible to install a red light camera at this location, and there are plans to upgrade the signal to be more visible. He said he would consider this request as the expansion locations are finalized.

Commissioner Stefani asked how long it takes to install a red light camera. Mr. Olea said similar to other capital projects, it typically takes about 6-9 months to design, 6 months to advertise and evaluate bids, and about 9 to 12 months for construction.

Chair Peskin asked about the details of the collection for red light running fines, including the amount generated and how it is distributed. Mr. Olea answered that funds do not go directly to the SFMTA, rather SFMTA receives a pre-determined amount of about \$1.4



million annually, to cover operation of the program. He said he would follow up with details on annual revenue and how the program allocates funding.

Chair Peskin said it would be good to share information on the flow of funds for this program and to compare the pre- and post-pandemic revenue levels. He also asked whether drivers receive points on their record from a red light camera violation. Mr. Olea answered that if the driver accepts the fine, a point is added to their record, but if the driver attends traffic school, no point is added.

Commissioner Haney echoed Commissioner Stefani's request and said that many other locations needed red light cameras. He asked why the installation could not be done quicker than two years. Mr. Olea answered that the delay was due to a variety of factors such as contracting rules and the number of agencies involved. He also observed that if they try to set a more accelerated schedule, the costs tend to go up to pay for more equipment and staff.

Commissioner Haney asked if the agency has looked at red light running enforcement by San Francisco Police Department (SFPD) as an indication of where cameras are needed. Mr. Olea answered that 2020 will be a low year for enforcement given the impact of shelter-in-place orders on traffic volumes, and that a presentation was provided in October 2019 with the SFPD. He indicated that the agency forwards information about crashes to the SFPD, but the SFMTA does not have data about where red light running tickets are given. However, the city is working on a dashboard for locations of traffic citations. Mr. Olea also said that catching a driver running a red light is difficult and is labor intensive for the SFPD. He emphasized that there are many areas of the city without red light cameras, so enforcement by police is also needed.

Commissioner Yee commented that revenue generation seemed cost neutral and that excess revenue collected should go toward funding additional locations. He asked if the program would be expanded and who decided where allocations were made. Mr. Olea answered that the current expansion funding is \$2 million and once that is complete, the agency will look at further expansion. However, he noted there is a capital funding challenge at the SFMTA with significant declines in revenues. He indicated that red light cameras are only one way to address red light running, and there are also other traffic safety programs being looked at to decrease red light running such as signal upgrades. Mr. Olea indicated that the courts decide how funding is allocated and citation revenue goes directly to the courts.

Commissioner Yee requested that the SFPD speak on why citations have been decreasing over the past few years, and also requested multiple red light camera installations on 19th Avenue and Ocean Avenue.

Commissioner Stefani commented about the need to make sure resources are available if there is a reliance on enforcement by SFPD. She also indicated that red light camera enforcement is more cost effective than enforcement by the SFPD, especially in a time when police departments are being asked to do less.

Commissioner Preston asked about the timeline and budget to complete upgrades to the traffic signals and mast arms.

Mr. Olea answered that the most pressing need was to update pedestrian signals. He said he was not sure how many mast arms remained to be replaced, but about 10% of the



system, or about 100 locations, needed significant updates. He explained that traffic signals needed to be replaced regularly for state of good repair purposes, so some locations may not have been in need of upgrades, but needed to be replaced because of the condition. He said there was constant reinvestment in the system, but that construction costs were higher now than previously, and capital funding was threatened. He mentioned that the anticipated amount of funding from the TNC Tax was significantly less due to the COVID-19 pandemic and that the SFMTA had planned to use some of those revenues for signals. He said Prop K was the backbone of the signals program and thanked the voters for the sales tax and the Board for allocating the funds to SFMTA. Mr. Olea added that additional funding was needed to work on the remaining locations, particularly the downtown locations that tend to have more construction challenges.

Commissioner Preston said it would be helpful to have clarity and asked how many mast arms had been installed, how many remained, the installation timeline and how the timeline may have changed based on the budget realities. Regarding red light cameras, Commissioner Preston said he was also struck by the variations by locations and was interested in the theory behind some locations having low numbers. He mentioned the intersection of 6th and Folsom Street, which had low instances of red light running and asked if there was a camera malfunction or if it was a well-designed intersection. Commissioner Preston also added that there could be important lessons learned from the intersection.

Mr. Olea responded that he would speak with the team that tracked capital programming to determine the locations where mast arms were installed, and which locations remained. He added that SFMTA could produce a map to share with the Board and encouraged staff to continue to invest in the infrastructure to see the safety and state of good repair benefits. With respect to Commissioner Preston's question on red light cameras, Mr. Olea said SFMTA is studying the different violation patterns to determine what could be done to reduce the violations. He also said SFMTA increased the yellow light timing from three seconds to four seconds. For 6th Street, Mr. Olea said he would confirm that the camera was providing accurate numbers and theorized that the sequencing of lights and/or the design of the corridor may be slowing motorists down. He also said the signals in the South of Market neighborhood were upgraded to be more prominent and visible.

Commissioner Fewer thanked Mr. Olea for the presentation and said it was a no brainer to say that red light cameras are more cost effective than having the police do all the enforcement. She also requested collision information for Geary and Park Presidio and inquired whether a red light camera needed to be installed at that location. She said that she and Commissioner Mandelman worked with the police department on new training classes for the traffic division resulting in more police officers being able to give traffic tickets.

Commissioner Yee commented that it was a collective effort between red light cameras and police officer enforcement, since both serve different functions for traffic safety.

Chair Peskin requested Director Tilly Chang work with Mr. Olea to obtain the flow of funding information related to red light violations and present back to the Board at a future meeting.



During public comment, Aleta Dupree commented on the importance of red light cameras. She added

A caller commented red light cameras nationwide have been notorious for fraud and abuse so monitoring needs to be in place. He said that improving user behavior would be cheaper and more effective than red light camera installation. He suggested adding countdown timers to alert drivers how much time is left before the light changes. He attributed the drop in red light running in the late nineties to the installation of countdown timers. He also requested to see the criteria used to select locations for red light camera enforcement.

Jay Bain, a Richmond District resident and member of the Pedestrian Safety Advisory Committee expressed concern over the decline in police enforcement in traffic safety especially on the 'focus on five' citations that can save lives. He said he appreciated comments made by Commissioners Stefani, Yee and Haney today and that he looked forward to red light camera installation. He thanked staff and everyone involved in efforts in making the city safer.

Jodie Medeiros, Director of Walk San Francisco, thanked Mr. Olea, staff and the Board for presenting the information and said that red light cameras seem like a cost effective approach to red light running enforcement. Given the long lead time to get the cameras installed, she requested that the Transportation Authority ask SFMTA to bring regular updates on the list of proposed locations for potential installations to keep the pipeline full rather than waiting for the next 8 to be completed.

After public comment, Chair Peskin thanked everyone for being so engaged in this important issue, and thanked Commissioner Yee, Chair of the Vision Zero Committee for his leadership on this and pedestrian safety citywide. He said he will schedule a follow up hearing with information that many Board members have asked for and that Transportation Authority staff will work with SFMTA staff to get the requested information.

10. Update on the Van Ness Avenue Bus Rapid Transit Project Business Construction Mitigation Program - INFORMATION

Jada Jackson, Project Manager at the Office of Economic Workforce Development, presented the item.

Chair Peskin asked if Ms. Jackson could send over any additional information that can be distributed (e.g. included in newsletters) by commissioners whose districts are along the corridor, in the month of October. He added that he appreciated Ms. Jackson's work and outreach about the program and was glad that the modicum of relief will be forthcoming.

There was no public comment.

11. Update on the Caltrain Modernization Program - INFORMATION

Due to time constraints item 11 was deferred to November by the Chair.

There was no public comment.

Other Items

12. Introduction of New Items - INFORMATION



Commissioner Yee requested a presentation on autonomous vehicles being tested again in San Francisco at a future meeting, saying he wanted to know more about it, who is monitoring, what safety precautions we have, etc.

Chair Peskin echoed Commissioner Yee's request and said he has discussed this topic with SFMTA Director Tumlin and Executive Director Tilly Chang. He noted this topic involves police, fire, different transportation agencies, and the state DMV, which issues the permit. He said he would ask Director Chang to agendaize this topic for a November Board meeting.

Commissioner Ronen requested that Chair Peskin agendaize a resolution she will be submitting in opposition to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC's) recent addition of a telecommute mandate in the Final Blueprint of Plan Bay Area (PBA) 2050. She noted she served as the board's representative on the MTC and said that several weeks ago the MTC approved the Final Blueprint of PBA 2050 and at the last minute MTC added a strategy (EN7), a mandate that large employers with 25 employees or more and the ability to do their work remotely, must have at least 60% of employees telecommute on any given day. She reported that MTC staff stated that this strategy was needed to demonstrate how the region will meet the its 19% greenhouse gas reduction target for the year 2035 set by the California Air Resources Board. Commissioner Ronen said, left as written, the telecommute mandate will have negative impacts on San Francisco and on low income workers and people of color throughout the region. For instance, if a large portion of the workforce is no longer commuting, that will result in reduced transit revenues and further cuts in transit service, which would hurt low income workers who are more likely to have jobs that can't be done remotely and are more likely dependent on public transit. She said the proposed resolution would urge amendments to reframe and revise the strategy before the PBA final approval action at the end of December. Commissioner Ronen said that Mayor Breed and San Jose Mayor Liccardo issued a joint strategy opposing the telecommute mandate and the San Francisco state delegation had submitted a letter, as well.

Chair Peskin responded that the item will be placed on the October 27 agenda, perhaps with a first read approval given the time sensitivity.

13. Public Comment

During public comment, Roland Lebrun thanked Chair Peskin for deferring the Caltrain item, and asked if the presentation could be posted to the website.

Francisco Da Costa requested a needs assessment item and reporting on how bond proceeds are being used to support accountability and transparency.

14. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:20 p.m.