



# DRAFT MINUTES

## San Francisco County Transportation Authority

Tuesday, June 13, 2023

### 1. Roll Call

Chair Mandelman called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

**Present at Roll Call:** Commissioners Dorsey, Engardio, Mandelman, Melgar, Preston, Peskin, Ronen, Safai, and Walton (9)

**Absent at Roll Call:** Commissioners Chan (entered during Item 3) and Stefani (2)

### 2. Approve the Minutes of the May 23, 2023 Meeting - ACTION

There was no public comment.

Vice Chair Melgar moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Ronen.

The Consent Agenda was approved without objection by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Dorsey, Engardio, Mandelman, Melgar, Preston, Peskin, Ronen, and Walton (8)

Absent: Commissioners Chan, Safai, and Stefani (3)

### 3. Community Advisory Committee Report- INFORMATION\*

Kat Siegal, Vice Chair of the CAC, stated that the CAC heard presentations on the Ocean Avenue and Octavia Neighborhood Transportation Improvement Program (NTIP) plans and stated the CAC supported both as steps in the right direction but would have liked to see more robust ped and bike improvements. Vice Chair Siegal highlighted the CAC requests for more traffic calming improvements along Ocean and Holloway, and signal timing that would permit pedestrians to cross the full width of Octavia Boulevard. She continued to report that the CAC next heard presentations on the Prop L 5 Year Prioritization Program guidance and the Strategic Plan Baseline and members commented that they would like to see funding prioritized for Vision Zero, and for the NTIP, and Equity Priority Community programs in the near term.

During public comment, Roland Lebrun complimented the Transportation Authority on the CAC minutes and stated that the CAC should consider meeting two times a month due to the length of recent meetings.

### 4. State and Federal Legislation Update - ACTION\*

Mark Watts, Sacramento Advocate, presented the item per the staff memorandum.

During public comment, Francisco Da Costa commented on the legislation update and the budget and stated that the public should be given more time to voice their opinion.

Commissioner Dorsey moved to approve the item, seconded by Chair Mandelman.



The item was approved without objection by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Chan, Dorsey, Engardio, Mandelman, Melgar, Preston, Peskin, Ronen, and Walton (9)

Absent: Commissioners Safai and Stefani (2)

**5. Adopt the Ocean Avenue Mobility Action Plan [NTIP Planning] – ACTION\***

Aliza Paz, Principal Transportation Planner, presented the item per the staff memorandum.

Vice Chair Melgar thanked Transportation Authority staff and Commissioner Safai's Office for helping to put together a diverse committee, stating that the committee was a cross section of the community and included stakeholders from various neighborhoods, local schools, younger people, seniors, community organizations, and businesses among others and they participated in many in depth discussions. She stated that there are many students on Ocean Avenue due to the high number of schools in the area as well as a thriving business community that created a unique environment along the corridor. The Vice Chair noted that there had been many Ocean Avenue plans led by various agencies in the past that hadn't been implemented and it was therefore important to finally make decisions and move forward with recommendations, and she said it was encouraging that the community had consistent prioritization. The Vice Chair acknowledged that the plan did not include a protected bike lane on Ocean Avenue, but despite this she stated that the proposed recommendations bring improvements, connecting the neighborhood with planned development and working to support City College plans for a community center. Lastly, she noted that the recommended removal of the pedestrian bridge has been included in prior plans and was already environmentally cleared.

During public comment, John Winston, stated that he served on the task force and thanked Commissioner Melgar for convening the task force and staff for running efficient meetings. He believed that the task force was successful and called attention to the fact that Ocean Avenue was on the High Injury Network and had one of the worst fatality rates. He stated that substantial improvements needed to be made and transit needed to be prioritized in order to meet the City's Vision Zero goals.

Sara Barz, the District 7 CAC representative and task force member, commented that she supported the action plan and echoed Mr. Winston's comments.

Vice Chair Melgar moved to approve the item, seconded by Commissioner Chan.

The item was approved without objection by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Chan, Dorsey, Engardio, Mandelman, Melgar, Preston, Peskin, Ronen, and Walton (9)

Absent: Commissioners Safai and Stefani (2)

**6. Adopt the Octavia Improvements Study Final Report [NTIP Planning] - ACTION\***

Rachel Hiatt, Deputy Director for Planning, presented the item per the staff memorandum.

Commissioner Preston thanked Ms. Hiatt for her presentation, and expressed appreciation for the Transportation Authority, SFTMA, Market Octavia Community



Advisory Committee, and others efforts, and asserted the importance of the study's recommendations for local residents and commuters alike. Commissioner Preston asked a question raised by the CAC Vice Chair regarding signal timing to cross Octavia and asked Ms. Hiatt to address concerns about pedestrian safety for those attempting to cross Octavia.

Ms. Hiatt replied that the recommendation for traffic calming along the Octavia side streets is meant to address this concern, without reducing the amount of green light time for Octavia Boulevard. She stated that the recommendation was meant to give pedestrians a visual cue, by raising and painting the crosswalk so it felt like an extension of the sidewalk, to cross the side street first, giving pedestrians enough time to cross the boulevard when the light turned green. Ms. Hiatt emphasized that this is to balance between traffic flows and wanting to avoid bad driver behavior if traffic backed up too much along Octavia and safety issues.

Commissioner Preston agreed that these improvements would help but said that he still shared the concerns of the CAC, and stated he was curious as to why there could not be additional pedestrian crossing time. He asked what the harm would be in adjusting the traffic light times to facilitate longer crossing times as envisioned by CAC members.

Casey Hildreth, SFMTA, stated that the issue was not inadequate signal timing, rather that pedestrians were not comfortable waiting where SFMTA had planned when setting signal timing for pedestrians to cross. He emphasized that the intent of these concepts was to make crossing Octavia more intuitive, comfortable, and safe. Mr. Hildreth reiterated Ms. Hiatt's assertion on the need to balance moving traffic onto the freeway and providing a safe pedestrian environment. He explained that if the City extended the pedestrian crossing time, it would extend traffic congestion further back up the hill towards the freeway connection, possibly creating additional safety problems. He also added that part of the concepts being considered at the Fell Street intersection included not only traffic calming but potentially closing it off to traffic entirely.

Commissioner Preston suggested the City try out the extended pedestrian crossing times and expressed that he would like to continue working with SFMTA on this. He also commented his openness to the study's proposed western transit hub as a long-term regional strategy and reiterated his support for implementing an Oak Street transit lane. He said that creating a carpool lane on Oak Street would be the wrong approach, and asked whether further studies on Oak Street would include a transit and taxi-only lane alternative in their analysis.

Ms. Hiatt responded that they would and asserted that staff would need to consider occupancy and eligibility for the potential lane.

Commissioner Preston closed by stating there was an issue with cars crossing over from the side local lane on Octavia over to the center lane. He expressed to SFMTA the urgency of installing plastic diverters to prohibit this behavior and asked if that would be possible in the near term.

Case Hildreth stated that the funding would allow for a full analysis of the corridor and that SFMTA was also eager to find near term solutions to these issues.

Vice Chair Melgar expressed disappointment with SFMTA's decision to use plastic as



opposed to concrete or metal bollards when implementing Slow Streets and bike lanes. Vice Chair Melgar pointed out that plastic bollards often end up run over and broken by delivery vehicles or cars.

During public comment, Kat Siegal stated that Octavia and Oak are hostile to road users who are not in cars. She said that pedestrian safety was traded off for vehicle throughput in the design of these streets and she felt that the study recommendations largely did not challenge that tradeoff. Ms. Siegal said that she found this inconsistent with our values as a city and the stated goals of the plan. While she said she is supportive of the recommendations, Ms. Siegal urged the Transportation Authority and SFMTA to explore additional traffic calming on Octavia that targets speeding and aggressive driving in the center-running boulevard lanes. She explained that at a minimum, the signals should be timed to allow pedestrians to cross the entire width of Octavia so that folks don't get stranded in the median. Ms. Siegal added that the crosswalk lanes at Octavia and Oak are often blocked by cars trying to turn on Octavia, especially during rush hour, and that it is often not possible for a pedestrian to partially cross the street. She stated that she approved the proposed pedestrian bulb outs but would like to see them at every intersection on Oak and Fell, too.

A commenter asked whether this included extra time for people who cross more slowly.

Roland Lebrun recommended that the pedestrian crossing time be standardized at 1 minute and 13 seconds citywide.

Barry Toronto stated that the situation was very difficult to resolve due to high congestion for at least 10 hours a day and the removal of the entrance from Market to the freeway. He supported putting plastic barriers at the last block between Laguna and Octavia because too many vehicles were trying to merge to the right and also suggested during peak times of day a left turn arrow southbound on Laguna Street toward Octavia to alleviate left turn issues there.

Commissioner Preston moved to approve the item, seconded by Vice Chair Melgar.

The item was approved without objection by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Chan, Dorsey, Engardio, Mandelman, Melgar, Preston, Ronen, Safai, and Walton (9)

Absent: Commissioner Peskin and Stefani (2)

## **7. Adopt the Prop L Strategic Plan Baseline - ACTION\***

Anna LaForte, Deputy Director for Policy and Programming, and Amelia Walley, Program Analyst, presented the item per the staff memorandum.

Vice Chair Melgar thanked staff for the presentation. Vice Chair Melgar asked the extent to which the Transportation Authority was planning and coordinating with other regional transit agencies given the climate crisis and the work that would need to be done to support the Housing Element. She noted the seamless payment system across regional transit agencies in the Bay Area as an example of long-term planning and coordination.

Tilly Chang, Executive Director, responded that the backdrop for the Prop L programming work had been in the context of Plan Bay Area and the multi-agency



Connect SF long-range planning program. She noted that coordination and financial engineering was always a work in progress but that it was guided by considerations such as climate goals, the Housing Element, Vision Zero, and equity goals. She said that between the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and state funding, there was more money than ever to address the confluence of issues mentioned. She stated that the Policy and Programming Division worked to put together fund leveraging so that local sales tax funds would attract federal and state dollars and noted that leveraging was an element in the 5-Year Prioritization Programs that would be presented to the Board in upcoming months.

There was no public comment.

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

The item was approved without objection by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Chan, Dorsey, Engardio, Mandelman, Melgar, Preston, Ronen, and Walton (8)

Absent: Commissioners Peskin, Safai, and Stefani (3)

**8. Adopt Guidance for Development of the 2023 Prop L 5-Year Prioritization Programs - ACTION\***

Mike Pickford, Principal Transportation Planner, presented the item per the staff memorandum.

There was no public comment.

Vice Chair Melgar moved to approve the item, seconded by Commissioner Walton.

The item was approved without objection by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Chan, Dorsey, Engardio, Mandelman, Melgar, Preston, Ronen, and Walton (8)

Absent: Commissioners Peskin, Safai, and Stefani (3)

**Other Items**

**9. Introduction of New Items - INFORMATION**

There were no new items introduced.

**10. Public Comment**

During public comment, a member of the public stated that it was important to pay attention to potential conflicts of interest and the core of the issue should be addressed.

**11. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:23 a.m.