

**CALIFORNIA
RURAL COUNTIES TASK FORCE**

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March 10, 2017, 12:30 pm-3:30 pm

Caltrans HQ Room 2116, 1120 N. Street, Sacramento, CA

DRAFT MINUTES

A. Self-Introductions All

Introductions were made by all.

B. Approve Minutes of January 13, 2017 W. Deloria

The minutes of January 13, 2017 were approved by consensus.

C. Information Sharing/Topics of Significance All

- On the morning of the May meeting, Laurie Waters will provide an ATP workshop to discuss ways to help rural agencies.
- Future morning workshops will include Administrative Guidebook Training. Other ideas should be forwarded to Maura for scheduling.

D. Introduction of Chief, Division of Transportation Planning W. Deloria

The new Division Chief of Caltrans Transportation Planning, Chris Schmidt introduced himself to the RCTF.

E. OWP Guidelines E. Thompson

Erin Thompson, Office Chief for the Office of Regional Planning provided an update on Caltrans efforts to update the Regional Planning handbook.

- Since the training that took place in January, Caltrans has reached out to RCTF members (Lisa, Maura and Marcella) in an effort to clarify things discussed at that workshop.
- Caltrans intends to redesign Appendix A (Sample Eligible and Ineligible Regional Transportation Planning Activities) by MPO and RTPA activities. The RTPA version may be a general statement verifying that RPA funds are eligible to support the RTPA transportation planning process in support of the RTP and RTIP. Caltrans has asked that comments on Appendix A be submitted in the next couple of weeks.
- Caltrans will send out a draft for a group to review with the final release in June.
- There may be excess RPA funds available for a joint RCTF project or small grants to RTPAs. There is approximately \$280,000 available. Members discussed a project directed on an analysis of the implementation of SB 743. Ideas will be discussed at the May meeting.
- Caltrans had divided the Regional Coordination and Grant and Fiscal Management Division into two separate divisions: the Regional Coordination and Grant Management Division, led by Jackie Hodaly and the Grant and Fiscal Management Division, led by Rosie Flores.

- The California Planning Conference, to take place May 3rd through the 5th in Walnut Creek has more of a rural emphasis this year. RCTF members are encouraged to attend.

F. State Budget Update**A. Gliddon**

There was no State Budget Update.

G. CTC Update**L. Waters**

- Adoption of the MPO component of the ATP is scheduled for the March CTC meeting.
- The draft California Freight Improvement Program Guidelines are out and will be discussed at the March CTC meeting. Final adoption is schedule for the May meeting.
- The CTC staff is aware that rural agencies are not doing well in the ATP. The next cycle is in 2019 so there is time for rural input to improve the process. As discussed earlier, Laurie is working on scheduling a workshop for the morning of the May 12th RCTF meeting. Staff is looking to adopt the next set of guidelines in January of 2018. Possible changes include:
- Separate applications and evaluations for smaller projects, and non-infrastructure projects and plans.
- Caltrans is getting pressure to move to more of an electronic submittal process (no hard copies).
- The APT TAC discussions have been that the criteria are fine, but may recommend changing the point assignment and questions.
- DAC's remain a struggle. Although the severity point application worked out well, it did not when it came to the option for a regional definition.
- CTC staff would like to devote less time on the guidelines and more time on scoring and eligibility.
- Caltrans is looking to do more of a technical evaluation.
- CTC staff would like to know where applicants are finding the major cost in applying. This would be where we could streamline the process for the smaller projects.
- The Cost/Benefit Ratio model is up for consideration again. The group discussed the disadvantages to rural agencies with respect to Cost/Benefit requirements.
- Tony Dang, from California Walks, has worked on guidelines for Active Transportation Plans. Some may be put in the next set of guidelines.

H. Mass Transit**N/A**

- No one was present to report on this item.

I. Draft 2018 State Rail Plan**A. Cook**

Andy Cook, Chief from Caltrans Rail Planning Branch, gave a presentation on the State Rail Plan. The release of the public review of the draft will be in April. Revisions will take place between June and August with CTC review in September. Submittal to the Legislature is scheduled the Winter 2017/Spring 2018. RCTF members requested a meeting in Redding as part of the public outreach.

J. Legislative Update**M. Twomey**

- Maura discussed legislative proposals discussed at the Legislative Day for the California Coastal Coalition meeting with Janet Dawson, Chief Consultant to the Assembly Transportation Committee and Randy Chinn, Chief Consultant to the California Senate

Committee on Transportation and Housing. The discussion focused on AB1, SB 1, and the Governor’s proposal.

- The take home message from the meeting was one of being “guardedly hopeful” that transportation funding legislation will be passed. There is basically a 50/50 chance.
- The legislature is looking at combining all three proposals (SB1, AB1 and the Governor’s proposal) into 1 legislative measure. The goal is to have it done in a couple of weeks.
- There is a self-imposed deadline of April 6th to get legislation passed before the spring recess. If it is not successful by then, there is very little chance of it passing this year.
- Rachel Moriconi thanked those who responded to an information request on the use of STIP funds. She requested that agencies send letters to the administration regarding the importance of STIP funding.
- Mike Woodman reminded everyone to comment on the State bike plan regarding language in the draft that stated the disadvantaged communities should be considered in all funding programs. Mike offered to email the group once the draft is out for public comment.
- The group also discussed AB 174, legislation that would require the appointment of a California Transportation Commissioner representing counties with fewer than 100,000 people. The group discussed concerns that additional parceling of the Commission could be counterproductive in addition to the fact that the Governor would most likely veto such a bill since he already has the ability to appoint members.
- Maura relayed a message from Melissa White requesting follow-up letters on comments made via email on pending bills.

K. Local Assistance Update

J. Hoole

No one was from Local Assistance was in attendance.

J. Miscellaneous

All

- Phil discussed the total misapplication of the CAL EnviroScreen tool. It is being applied to almost every grant opportunity, even Caltrans Sustainability grants. There was agreement that the RCTF should start pushing back on this issue.

