

INTER-REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP MEETING

***Dublin Civic Center Regional Room
100 Civic Plaza
Dublin, California***

Wednesday, August 20, 2003
1 p.m.

MEETING-MINUTES SUMMARY

I. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS

Patterson Mayor Rich Dodds called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m. and welcomed everyone. He asked those in attendance to make self-introductions: In attendance were:

Inter-Regional Partnership Members

Councilmember Bob Wasserman, City of Fremont
Councilmember Denny Jackman, City of Modesto
Mayor Brian Swisher, City of Brentwood
Mayor Richard Dodds, City of Patterson
Supervisor Scott Haggerty, Alameda County
Supervisor Pete McHugh, Santa Clara County
Supervisor Jeff Grover, Stanislaus County
Supervisor Mark De Saulnier, Contra Costa County

Staff to the Inter-Regional Partnership

Gary Dickson, Executive Director, Stanislaus Council of Governments
Alex Amoroso, Senior Regional Planner, Association of Bay Area Governments
Christy Riviere, Regional Planner, Association of Bay Area Governments
Michael Smith, Regional Planner, Association of Bay Area Governments
Mike Swearingen, Senior Regional Planner, San Joaquin Council of Governments
Mike Vanden Bosch, Office Assistant, San Joaquin Council of Governments

Public Attendees

John Cadrett, San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District
Joel Elekman, Tracy Gateway
Andrew Malik, City of Tracy
Linda Maurer, City of Tracy
Tom Dumas, Caltrans
Rich Laiblin, San Joaquin County

II. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Dickson requested that he would like a change on the regional housing needs discussion from the May 21, 2003 meeting. There was a question over Mayor Bilbrey suggesting ABAG change a staff report related to HCD housing needs allocation. Mr. Dickson clarified that the report should have read IRP staff and the IRP, rather than just StanCOG staff. Mr. Dickson said he spoke with ABAG staff to get that change made, but the change did not get made. Due to a lack of quorum, no action could be taken on approving the May 21, 2003 minutes.

At the May 21, 2003 meeting, Mayor Dodds asked if everyone could receive a faxed update of certain bills. In reference to this, Mr. Jackman said he didn't recall receiving any faxes related to SB321. Mr. Amoroso indicated he didn't recall sending out any faxes related to SB321 because he stated he wasn't sure there was an update.

III. IRP UPDATE & FUTURE ACTIVITIES

A. Review of IRP's history and accomplishments.

Mr. Amoroso explained that the IRP is at a crossroads. He discussed the IRP's origin, from the early accomplishments of the ACE train and the Altamont lawsuit, to an organization whose efforts have produced legislation on inter-regional partnerships. Today, issues include transportation, air quality, housing to jobs ratio, and economic development. Mr. Amoroso spoke of incentive zones and developing inter-regional partnerships, and he touched on a commuter traffic study SJCOG conducted that is being utilized by Caltrans and other state agencies. Mr. Amoroso indicated the IRP is working on acquiring incentives in conjunction with the IRP Opportunity Zones.

Mr. Dickson said speaking from a valley perspective, the IRP has enabled StanCOG to get its issues on the table. An important achievement of the IRP was endorsing the expansion of the Smog Check II program prior to it becoming law. Mr. Dickson also said the IRP is at a crossroads; if board members want to see it continued, the COGs will continue to staff it.

Mayor Dodds said the Valley particularly appreciated the fact that Bay Area representatives spoke on behalf of the Valley's efforts to get Smog Check II passed, but he hadn't found it listed in the IRP's history. He lauded the IRP for taking on such a controversial issue and arrived at a solution, rather than taking it to the courts in the form of litigation.

Mr. Amoroso acknowledged that staff had not included Smog Check II in the IRP's history.

Supervisor McHugh said there has been merit in what has been accomplished. He posed a critical question to board and staff: will there be funding for the IRP?

Mr. Amoroso agreed it was a critical question and then shifted the discussion towards Agenda Item 3B with the permission of the board members.

B. IRP members to provide direction on specific activities and goals for continuation of the IRP.

Mr. Amoroso said staff has been working on the Pilot Project, which has funding in place through the end of the 2003-04 fiscal year. He indicated this state funding is focused on legislation mandating the IRP address the jobs-housing opportunity issue with an emphasis on state incentives. Legislation requires that the IRP hire a consultant to evaluate these opportunity zones. Moreover, Mr. Amoroso alluded to a jobs-housing study that will be ongoing in the next year. When the funding expires, however, he stated staff would like to continue to working on the IRP project, though at a scaled back level.

Mr. Dickson stated the IRP predates the state-funded Pilot Project, so there was a period of time where staff and board members still met, though on a shoestring operation. The infusion of state money for the Pilot Project certainly increases the ability of staff to perform work. It'd be appropriate to look for a funding source if IRP board members want to see this level of commitment continued.

Mr. Amoroso said when the IRP first met, each of the five counties (Stanislaus, San Joaquin, Alameda, Santa Clara and Contra Costa) contributed \$5,000, along with in-kind staff time.

Mr. Dickson said state funding does require a local match, so each of the COG's are subsidizing the IRP to the tune of 20 percent.

Mr. Jackman stated the time is right to take action within the five COGs to have a regional housing needs assessment and number allocation. He stated he would like to see the IRP get ahead of HCD so that housing numbers are more legitimate. He saw the IRP's role as very important.

Mr. Wasserman stated one of the primary reasons the IRP formed was due to the extreme imbalance in housing and jobs. Since that time, much has changed. If the IRP does remain in existence, it would be beneficial for the IRP to be able to be able to predict trends and track figures.

Mr. Dodds said much has changed. He stated the state's economy is not dead and that the IRP needs to continue to address the needs and issues that they've been dealing with for five years now, when the economy does recover. The group's purpose hasn't changed and does have a future, but just needs to plan for the possibility that state funding might not be there. If the IRP disbands and the economy recovers, it'd be difficult to bring all agencies and members back together. He urged members to keep the process going, even with the prospect

of limited funding, and to tackle the most pressing needs with diminished resources.

Supervisor McHugh stated there was a legitimate purpose in the group. He said a reduced work plan could work and then expand those programs when funding resurfaces.

Members briefly touched on the lack of a quorum. Mayor Brian Swisher indicated that the IRP had lost one board member, Councilmember Millie Greenberg of Danville, due to Greenberg's appointment to the 3rd Supervisorial District for Contra Costa.

Mr. Amoroso requested direction from the IRP members to identify the areas of biggest interest. By anticipating what might come down the line, Mr. Amoroso indicated that the IRP can pursue resources, assess trends, conduct evaluations and lay the groundwork for what the IRP would like to accomplish. He further stated he would talk to the other COGs and determine their level of interest and commitment as well.

Mr. Dodds said the IRP's focus should remain on where there is funding in order to take on projects. He wondered if there would be interest at the COG level to continually sustain the Pilot Project. He asked specifically if SJCOG was still supportive of the IRP.

Mr. Swearingen introduced himself and referred to affirmative dialogue he had had with SJCOG Executive Director, Julia Greene. He said SJCOG remains committed and very supportive and he has not heard anything to the contrary.

Mayor Swisher said he hadn't received much of an introduction to the IRP following his election in late 2002. He asked of the existence of IRP by-laws.

Mr. Amoroso conveyed that there were no by-laws and that membership consisted of one supervisor from each of the five counties, along with two city representatives from each county.

Mr. Jackman requested some type of framework and/or format wherein members RSVP or email staff to avoid a lack of quorum at a future meeting.

Mr. Dodds said by and large, board member attendance is very good.

Mr. Dodds desired to see a defined purpose and set of goals for the IRP, even in the face of limited funding, so that there is a feeling of accomplishment.

Since a quorum wasn't in place, Mr. Amoroso stated staff would create a work program that is feasible for the upcoming year beyond what that for which the IRP is funded for.

IV. IRP UPDATE AND FUTURE ACTIVITIES

A. Update of IRP Pilot Project related legislation, including AB723 (Matthews) and SB639 (Torlakson).

Mr. Swearingen stated AB723 had passed the Assembly. Language from property owners and involvement from taxing entities was in the bill. It was slated to go through the Senate prior to the end of the last session. However, the Senate will not hear any new bills until January 2004. Mr. Swearingen stated the bill had originally been expected to go before the Senate on August 19, 2003. There had been opportunity to make this bill appealing, educate people on it, and deal with questions related to AB723.

Mr. Amoroso explained that SB639, the IRP Pilot Project extension bill, is in the Appropriations Committee suspense file.

Mr. Dodds asked if the IRP was extended and no incentives were in place, would there be any harm or foul to the IR? He suggested that he wouldn't spend a lot of time and effort lobbying for SB 639. He reiterated his belief that there must be something in place that includes incentives.

(Supervisor Mark DeSaulnier arrived at 1:57 p.m., but a quorum was still short by one member.)

B. Update on the status of the HCD/ABAG contract regarding the Pilot Project, including the budget.

Mr. Amoroso explained that about two hundred thousand dollars in state funding remains. He stated the IRP plans to use this money over the next year.

Mr. Dickson said each COG has a share of the total contract. ABAG provides the primary staff to this project, does most of the writing and research; other COGs review and contribute. Mr. Dickson disclosed StanCOG has spent the least and isn't able to have all of StanCOG staff time devoted to IRP matters. He concluded that if they are unable to extend the Pilot Project, staff will be looking for creative ways to spend the money. StanCOG has a contract with ABAG regarding demographics and is currently using ABAG resources to address Stanislaus County projections.

C. The IRP is mandated to perform an evaluation of the IRP Pilot Program. IRP members will be asked to make a decision regarding program evaluation options.

Mr. Amoroso related that the Pilot Project legislation mandates that a consultant perform the project evaluation. He stated that staff would review the old RFP prepared a year ago to perform this work and come back at the next meeting with a refined scope.

Mr. Dickson relayed that due to a lack of state incentives, zone development is probably not where IRP staff would like for it to be.

Supervisor McHugh said there was a consensus for staff to proceed, just not a formal consensus due to a lack of quorum.

Mayor Dodds expressed a desire for the report to be honest and outline some of the program's highlights.

Mr. Wasserman asked for a report that would be positive and not minimize what has been accomplished.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

Joel Elekman of Tracy Gateway reminded attendees that the Bay Area has lost 350,000 jobs over the past two and a half years. During that time, the state has gone from a surplus to a deficit. The business park he represents is going to need some major incentives. He concurred with Mayor Dodds' sentiments that the state will eventually recover. He spoke of the constant rise in Bay Area housing prices despite higher unemployment rates and said the issue of bringing jobs to San Joaquin County and Stanislaus County has not been dealt with. He expressed his conviction that there must be some way to obtain funding as part of the opportunity zone concept.

Andrew Malik of the City of Tracy said Tracy has a year to keep an eye on AB723. If the IRP goes away, it casts into doubt the fate of AB723, especially if incentives are for IRP zones and the IRP were to disband.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 2:18 p.m. to the next scheduled meeting on October 15, 2003.