

WCCTAC Informer

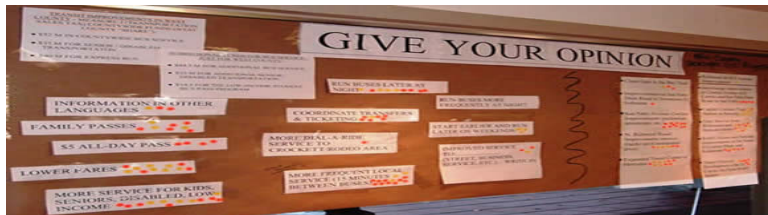
May / June 2006

Success at the Summit!

WCCTAC Presented the Go I-80 Transit Summit 2006 on May 11th



And you rallied to the call!



You gave us your opinion about transportation issues in West County
and you honored our Bike Commuter of the Year, Rob Hawks

Youth speakers from the Hercules Teen Youth Council and Richmond High School Youth Together spoke clearly and passionately about what they wanted in a transportation system: lower fares/free passes, less crowded buses, more frequent buses, more late night and weekend service, more courteous drivers, better security on buses, kids acting more respectfully and giving up their seats to senior citizens. (A more detailed report will be available at a later date.)

Agencies represented at the Transit Summit: WCCTAC, 511 Contra Costa, City of San Pablo, City of Hercules, City of Richmond, East Bay Bicycle Coalition, WestCAT, AC Transit, Street Smarts, Capital Corridor, Senator Perata, Water Transit Authority, Assemblywoman Loni Hancock, Hercules Teen Youth Council, Bay Area Rapid Transit, Richmond High School - Youth Together, West County Transportation Center, Contra Costa Transportation Authority, Enterprise Rideshare, Representative Ellen Tauscher, Contra Costa Health Services, Mark One, Contra Costa College - ASU, El Portal Garden Fellowship Club, Ditching Dirty Diesel - Asthma Program, Contra Costa Health Services

Here, in abbreviated form, are the 4 reasons why citizen involvement is important from Keynote Speaker: Meeky Blizzard, Advisor for Livable Communities to Congressman Earl Blumenauer, Oregon

1. Citizens are the experts in their communities. They know how the community functions and what it needs. They know what their communities' challenges are and what is likely to work there - or not.
2. Citizens are 'generalists' not specialists. Their lack of training as transportation professionals allows them to see the bigger picture - something that most technical experts often don't have the time or inclination to explore. Because they tend to describe transportation problems more in terms of what their community needs, citizens can often offer broader solutions that may work better than the traditional transportation 'fix.' And they often have the ability to raise questions that elected officials or other governmental agencies don't have the latitude to ask, offering an opportunity to move beyond the status quo without putting an elected official's - or staff member's - office or job at risk
3. Citizens are essential to the success of any solution. They are especially important when the proposed solution is something unusual or creative. Citizens know how their community is likely to react to new approaches. Even more important, they have the credibility to present new solutions. Without community support, any solution is doomed to failure.
4. Citizens are not going to go away. They are heavily invested - financially, emotionally, socially - in their communities and are likely to continue to work and live there long after specific plans and proposals, elected officials and even staff have come and gone. This means that they also carry the 'institutional memory' or context of past plans and projects - why decisions were made - which can form a useful basis for the next round of plans and projects.

So get involved in your community and make a difference!

How do you define transportation?

In the more than fifteen years that I have been working in the transportation field, I have had the opportunity to work with many practitioners. The definition and scope of transportation are defined in different ways, dependent mostly on the background, education, employment, history, and point of view of the definer. In West County, I am often asked who WCCTAC is and what we do. I can easily explain the history and origins of the agency (the Measure C transportation sales tax passed in 1988) and the types of projects that were funded in West County with transportation sales tax dollars. After that, it gets a little murky.

I believe that because of the commitment of the WCCTAC Board, and the staff's ability to take that commitment and vision and implement it, the definition of transportation has taken on new meaning. The "dictionary" definition of transportation is "to convey from one place to another." Makes sense. Additionally, the infrastructure to provide that conveyance must be available and maintained. Most of the infrastructure is built in West County. In this region, "to convey from one place to another" includes children getting from home to school or from school to after-school programs, jobs, or sports; transport by alternative modes such as carpooling, bicycling and/or walking; safe conveyance (either personal safety such as safety after dark or providing a Guaranteed Ride Home, or infrastructure safety such as bicycle facilities and sidewalks for walking); ensuring that senior citizens are not home-bound by providing transportation to services and/or medical care; providing enough bus service to get folks to work, school, or local needs (shopping, health care, socializing); and longer distance bus service (to San Francisco, for example, for work, shopping, or the arts); providing transportation information in languages other than English; and the list goes on. This definition of "conveying from one place to another" fits very well with my background, education, history, and ideology.

As the eminent professor of Transportation Planning at UC Berkeley, Prof. Robert Cervero, says in his book, "Developing Around Transit," and in his lectures, "transportation is an induced demand." We travel because we're going someplace. Building up these "places" – residential neighborhoods, commercial and service enterprises, and open space – as well as the means to travel among them – is what we do at WCCTAC.

On the infrastructure/construction/"build it" side, there are exciting projects in West County as well, many of them designed to assist with traffic congestion relief on Interstate 80 (the most congested freeway in the Bay Area for years) including: the new waterfront intermodal project in Hercules (including a Capital Corridor rail station, ferry, and connecting bus service); construction of the station building at the Richmond Intermodal station and future improvements such as a multi-story parking structure and housing on the east side of the station; interchange improvements at San Pablo Dam Road and at Central Avenue; and a host of others that are receiving funds from the successor to Measure C (Measure J, which starts in the spring 2009) and from the developer fee program (which is currently being updated).

Food for thought... How do **YOU** spell "t r a n s p o r t a t i o n"?... I welcome your ideas and feedback... Lisa Hammon

DATES TO REMEMBER

WCCTAC Board Meetings
May 26, 2006
June 30, 2006

Technical Advisory Committee Meetings
June 8, 2006
July 13, 2006

Meetings are held at the City of San Pablo City Hall at 13831 San Pablo Ave, San Pablo. For information call 510.215.3035



511 Contra Costa helps employers with their Transit Incentive Programs and Services

Do your employees need help combating the ever-raising gas prices? Get help with trip planning, parking alternatives, **FREE** transit incentives and the Countywide Guaranteed Ride Home Program. For information call Linda Young at (510) 215-3008

Reach our staff by phone: Lisa Hammon, Managing Director/510.215.3044 - John Rudolph, Management Asst/510.215.3042
Linda Young, Project Specialist/510.215.3008- Nancy Cuneo, Admin Analyst/510.215.3035- Jeremy Hughes, Admin Clerk/510.215.3217

THE WCCTAC INFORMER

West Contra Costa Transportation Advisory Committee Newsletter
13831 San Pablo Avenue
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