



INYO COUNTY LOCAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION



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Michael Errante, Executive Director

MINUTES

INYO COUNTY LOCAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION Inyo County Board Chambers, 224 N. Edwards St., Independence 8:00 a.m.

All members of the public are encouraged to participate in the discussion of any items on the Agenda. Questions and comments will be accepted via e-mail to: jkokx@inyocounty.us. Any member of the public may also make comments during the scheduled "Public Comment" period on this agenda concerning any subject related to the Inyo County Local Transportation Commission. PUBLIC NOTICE: In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Transportation Commission Secretary at (760) 878-0201. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the Inyo County Local Transportation Commission to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting (28CFR 35. 102-35. ADA Title II).

October 16, 2024

8:03 a.m. Open Meeting

1. Roll Call

Commissioners Present

Vice Chair: Jeffery Ray
Commissioner: Jennifer Roeser
Commissioner: Stephen Muchovej
Commissioner: Scott Marcellin

Others Present

Justine Kokx: LTC Transportation Planner
Tina Chinzi: LTC Secretary
Catherine Carr: Caltrans
Rick Franz: Caltrans
Mark Heckman: Caltrans
William Powell "Chip": Caltrans
Nora Gamino: City of Bishop
Phil Moores: ESTA
Elaine Kabala: ESCOG
Trina Orrill: County of Inyo
Tawni Thompson
Aaron Schat
Erick Schat

Chair Celeste Berg, Vice-Chair Jeffery Ray, Commissioners: Jennifer Roeser, Stephen Muchovej, Jose Garcia, Scott Marcellin

Karen Kong: City of Bishop
Marianne's iPhone
S160587
Al Amiri

2. Public Comment during the Truck Bypass discussion, Item No. 4

Aaron Schat – Expressed concerns about a truck bypass potentially diverting traffic away from the commercial center of Bishop. Believes that a bypass would fundamentally change Bishop.

Erick Schat – Getting trucks off Main Street would be a good thing but would not support anything other than getting the trucks off, which could hurt Bishop.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Consent Agenda

- a. Request approval of the minutes of the meeting of August 21, 2024
- b. Ratify Letter of Support for Reconnecting Communities Federal Grant Program
- c. ESTA State of Good Repair

*Motion made by Commissioner Roeser and seconded by Commissioner Muchovej; all in favor.

2. Request Commission consider combining the November and December LTC meetings to November 20th; approve via minute order.

*Motion made by Commissioner Muchovej to combine the November and December meetings to a date to be determined. Seconded by Commissioner Roeser, all in favor. Justine will poll the Commissioners for a preferred date.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

3. Elaine Kabala of ESCOG – Reconnecting Communities Grant Program

Elaine Kabala, Executive Director of ESCOG, summarized the grant submission for the federal Reconnecting Communities Grant Program. She described the current conditions along US 395 as having little visual cues for motorists as they enter communities at high speeds. The goal of this grant would be to expand community engagement in developing a vision for the Eastern Sierra corridor to complement the funded PID beyond core Caltrans infrastructure improvements and get community plans shovel-ready for implementation. There is a need for community vision plans in several communities, including Independence and Big Pine. The project would also look at circulation in the Bishop area to look for solutions to the increase in truck traffic.

4. Bishop Truck Bypass discussion ([link to BAACS](#))

Commissioner Muchovej highlighted some of the traffic/circulation problems on Main Street in the city of Bishop; namely that there are on average 15000 cars each day, and an average of 1 big rig every minute. He provided an overview of the BAACS from 2007 and emphasized that public outreach for downtown plans results in feedback that walking on Main Street does not feel safe and that a main culprit of that was truck traffic. Whenever the topic of circulation in the downtown corridor arises the topic of truck traffic and a bypass inevitably comes up. The current truck traffic volume in downtown Bishop already exceeds the projected 2040 truck volume that was projected by a Caltrans traffic study completed 5 years ago. He believes the project needs to be framed as a Highway 6 bypass since most of the truck traffic through Bishop is headed to Highway 6. There is a process for achieving large projects, which takes time and long-term planning with robust community engagement. He believes that the discussion needs to happen now and continue moving forward in a holistic manner.

Commissioner Roeser prefers to spend LTC resources on priority projects identified in the Regional Transportation Plan. There are shovel ready projects countywide that could be addressed sooner, and that the focus should be on those projects now, and that using LTC resources on a bypass planning grant at this time would be putting the cart before the horse, given the potential for the ESCOG grant. She has concerns about the eastern alternatives identified in the BAACS and is not willing to lose an acre of agricultural land.

Both Commissioners agreed that the Reconnecting Communities grant – if successful – could be a suitable venue for future discussions of a truck bypass, since the grant would involve a holistic, community wide approach towards addressing circulation needs and concerns.

Commissioners expressed similar concerns about truck traffic and volume through all the communities, including Lone Pine, Big Pine and Independence.

Commissioners Ray and Marcellin expressed frustration with the fact that Inyo County has a lot of needs, but the perception is that projects have stalled.

5. Request Commission provide input into potential grant opportunities – RAISE, Rural & Tribal Assistance Pilot Program & Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant

Justine provided an overview of the types of grant projects that could be addressed by the abovementioned grants. Climate resiliency projects to identify persistent flood or disaster-prone areas, evacuation and alternative routes for egress and ingress; and community specific mobility plans to bolster community input and support for the two existing Active Transportation grant projects. Two consultants, LSC and the Ferguson Group, are available to assist with one application. Commissioners weighed in on the ideas and provided thoughts about how to move forward. Commissioner Roeser brought up the CWPP as a good resource with a lot of detail about the climate resilience topic. She also would like to see Visioning plans for all the communities along US 395. She also mentioned the southeast county draft community plans that still need funding for CEQA. Commissioners were open to all suggestions and staff will report back in November with final decisions and the grant selected as the best fit for the project.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

6. City of Bishop Report

Nora expressed her appreciation for the CTC town hall. Their visit was valuable to help staff build relationships. Their visit gave them some perspective on some of our unique rural challenges.

She provided a summary of the recent City projects:

- East Line Bridge, close to 30% design. Still seeking funding for construction, she was able to potentially find a lead on some funding sources when the CTC was here.
- South Warren, working to finalize the PS&E package and R/W
- Primarily been working on water and sewer projects, including preparation of the PER to apply for a USDA RD loan for the water line replacement under Line Street to accomplish the work before Caltrans completes the Bishop Pavements job. Also working on the PER for USDA disaster funds to make the City's sewer collection system more resilient to major storm events and infiltration. Working on an additional PER for compliance with the lead and copper rule, which will mandate the City to provide an inventory and report out all the materials for all water service laterals, including the customer side, which the City does not own or control

7. ESTA Executive Director's Report

Phil is actively working on a hydrogen plan for the region. He visited the Port in Hayward California to gather information about the use of hydrogen as a fuel source. He shared a clip of a video he made of cutting-edge technology developed by AC Transit. AC Transit is building a hydrogen training school. They have developed a tool that employs virtual reality to provide real-time technical assistance for hydrogen vehicle repair, from anywhere with a Wi-Fi connection.

8. Caltrans Report

Catherine Carr provided the Caltrans report. She provided details about the Olancho-Cartago traffic switch, Olancho Cartago shoulder closures, Dunmovin' thin blanket project. She also provided updates on the upcoming Bishop Pavement, Meadow Farms ADA, and Fish Springs projects. Caltrans HQ has selected D9's Climate Change Planning Unit to apply for a PROTECT planning grant for Hwy 190 to conduct hydraulic modeling, assess corridor vulnerabilities and 30% design + cost estimates. D9 will be asking for letters of support.

Mark Heckman addressed a question from Commissioner Muchovej about the Wye Road intersection Street Story survey. He mentioned that it was confusing because there were no visuals of the proposed roundabout options, such as where it would be placed, exactly. Mark replied that this is because it is early in the PID/planning stage, and nothing has been decided yet. They are gathering information and feedback at this point and don't want to cause controversy or concern.

Commissioners Marcellin and Roeser have been receiving calls from concerned residents about the idea of a roundabout. Mark stated that so far, comments have been generally on the positive side. There were additional questions and comments made by Commissioners about the Wye Road intersection, how trucks navigate roundabouts, and all-around support for the PROTECT grant

project for Hwy 190. Can Hwy 136 be included for the benefit of Keeler and Darwin communities? Caltrans will take that back for consideration.

9. Tribal Report

10. DVNP Report

11. USFS Report

12. Executive Director's Report - Justine reported in Mike's absence

- Whitney Portal – Two box culverts' design was approved, now awaiting construction and delivery. Once installed, paving can begin. Contractors are considering paving portions of the road in the meantime. Timeline for completion is by the end of the year.
- Q4 RPA invoice - \$46K claimed; primarily focused on grants development in Q4.

13. Reports from all members of the Inyo County LTC

Commissioner Roeser would like LTC staff to provide a workshop for the Board of Supervisors to talk about the various types of funding and process for getting a project shovel ready.

CORRESPONDENCE

None

ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned at 10:39 until 8:00 a.m. to a date TBD at the Bishop City Chambers

UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS

LTC Funding Workshop