



METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION

Agenda Item 3c
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Memorandum

TO: Legislation Committee

DATE: December 31, 2015

FR: Deputy Executive Director, Policy

W. I. 1131

RE: Sacramento & Washington D.C. Legislative Visits

Each year at this time we recommend a plan for meetings and outreach to the members of the Bay Area's legislative delegations in Sacramento and Washington, D.C. This memo summarizes our proposed approach for 2016.

Sacramento Advocacy

The goal of our Sacramento meetings is to provide commissioners a chance to meet face-to-face with the Bay Area delegation to brief them on our advocacy priorities and update them on key activities for the year, including the Plan Bay Area update, Bay Area Express Lanes, the Transit Core Capacity Study and other focus efforts.

Given the challenge of securing a single date and time on the calendar of a large number of legislators and commissioners and the difficulty in attendance from members, we recommend setting up specifically tailored meetings with Commissioners and legislators either in Sacramento or at the district office and grouping multiple meetings on the same day to the greatest extent possible. We believe a first round of those meetings should take place in February — after the budget is released, but before the Legislature begins its policy committee hearings in March. A second round of meetings will be set for the April-May timeframe — a critical time to weigh in on legislation. Most of the meetings will be held in Sacramento as this provides much more flexibility with legislators' schedules and allows for meetings with the delegation's key legislative and committee staff, who play an integral role in drafting legislation.

Staff will be in touch with your scheduler in the next few weeks to select dates that work for you in the February and spring timeframes.


Washington, D.C., Advocacy

2016 will be a unique year in Washington, D.C, with Congress having just completed enactment of a five-year surface transportation authorization bill — the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act — which authorizes funding through fiscal year 2019-2020. As such, this year's meetings will focus on two areas of interest. The first priority will be to thank the Bay Area delegation, committee leaders and their staff for their support of the legislation, which delivers stable transit and highway funding, growing at modest levels each year and establishes two new freight funding programs, one formula based, the other a discretionary program of \$800 million in FY 2016. The second priority will be to advocate for the region's New Starts priorities and any Bay Area projects identified as regional priorities that are seeking funding from the freight or TIGER discretionary grant programs.

Our Southern California partners are supportive of co-hosting a California transportation agency reception once again as this provides an excellent opportunity for board members and staff to meet with members of Congress and federal officials to congratulate them on the enactment of the FAST Act. We've received a positive response from the Southern California Association of Governments, the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LA Metro) as well as the county transportation commissions for Imperial, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura counties. We will continue to reach out to other transportation agencies, business associations and others to line up additional co-sponsors.

As for logistics, staff proposes scheduling our visit to Washington D.C. the week of March 14, arriving on Sunday, March 13th, returning on Wednesday March 16, with the reception to be held the evening of Tuesday, March 15 in its traditional location - the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee Room, 2167 Rayburn House Office Building. This is the week the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) is holding its annual legislative conference, and unlike last year, both chambers of Congress are scheduled to be in session that week. Scheduling our visit so that it overlaps with the APTA conference makes it easier for Bay Area transit agency partner board members and staff to participate in meetings and attend the California Transportation Reception.

We look forward to discussing this general approach with you and soliciting any additional ideas you may have to ensure a productive state and federal legislative session in 2016.


Alix A. Bockelman

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