

Memorandum

Date: May 17, 2005

To: Harbor Safety Committee, San Francisco Bay Region

From: Len Cardoza

Subject: Water Transit Authority Technical Advisory Committee Report

I attended the Water Transit Authority (WTA) Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting on May 17, 2005, representing the San Francisco Bay Region Harbor Safety Committee. Several other Harbor Safety Committee members and regular attendees of the HSC were also present.

The WTA is a regional agency authorized by the State of California to operate a comprehensive San Francisco Bay Area public water transit system. The WTA's goal is "To develop a reliable, convenient, flexible and cost-effective expanded Bay Area water transit system that will get drivers out of their cars and onto environmentally responsible state-of-the-art ferries".

The enabling legislation for the WTA, Chapter 1011 of the Statutes of 1999, requires the formation of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The roles of the TAC include the following:

- The TAC will serve as a conduit to interested agencies, identifying key contacts within those agencies and facilitating discussions on specific technical items.
- Provide review and comment to WTA staff and its consultants on the myriad of technical reports and studies that will be prepared in the development of the Implementation and Operations Plan.
- Review the findings and the recommendations for consistency to promote inter-agency cooperation and integration with ongoing planning efforts.

Charlene Haught-Johnson, President, WTA Board of Directors, gave a report to the TAC describing progress on the WTA transitioning from a planning agency to an operating agency.

Vladimir Shepsis, Coast & Harbor Engineering, gave a powerpoint demonstration on the status of wake wash studies, concluding that there is marginal difference between ferry wakes and ambient (wind wave) conditions. He cautioned that wake wash studies are highly site specific. The study will help in planning new routes and terminals.

John Takekawa, USGS, gave a powerpoint presentation on the status of the rafting bird study. The San Francisco Bay Area is situated on the largest estuary along the Pacific coast. The estuary is a critical component of the Pacific flyway. John's report stated that there were inconclusive findings and evidence of the definitive impact of ferry transits on rafting water birds.

John Sindzinski, WTA, gave a report on the status of environmental documentation relating to proposed ferry routes, terminals, and supporting infrastructure. The EIR has evolved from a programmatic document to a series of project / site / route specific documents. The Project team is wrapping up a series of technical studies relating to technical use. The environmental

documentation will cover potential impacts relating to operations, construction and maintenance activities.

John Sindzinski, WTA, also gave an update on siting considerations for the proposed WTA office, berthing, and maintenance facilities. Key factors include a central bay location, water depth, land, and infrastructure facilities.

TAC attendees also received presentations on the Regional Maritime Contingency Plan, new vessels, alternative fuel (fuel cell) vessel, and the SF-VMAP, analogous to presentations delivered to the Harbor Safety Committee.