



Date: April 23, 2007
 Committee Meeting Date: May 10, 2007
 Board Meeting Date: N/A
 ACTION X DISCUSSION INFO

BOARD MEMORANDUM

TO: Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee
 Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority
 Board of Directors

THROUGH: Michael T. Burns *Michael T. Burns*
 General Manager

FROM: Carolyn M. Gonot *Carolyn M. Gonot*
 Chief Development Officer

SUBJECT: Expressway Pedestrian Access Study Funding Opportunities

RECOMMENDATION

Recommend that VTA staff and County Roads staff meet and discuss ways to expedite the delivery of pedestrian improvements on the expressways.

BACKGROUND:

See memo from County Roads and Airports in Attachment 1.

Prepared by: Michelle DeRobertis Senior Transportation Planner

County of Santa Clara

Roads & Airports Department

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Date: February 21, 2007
BAC Meeting Date: March 14, 2007
ACTION X **DISCUSSION** ___ **INFO** ___

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMORANDUM

To: VTA BPAC

Prepared By: Paul Pascoal, BPAC liaison
Santa Clara County Roads & Airports Department

From: Dan Collen, Deputy Director, Roads and Airports Department
Infrastructure Development Division

Subject: Expressway Pedestrian Access Study Update

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the BPAC request by action of the committee that VTA staff and County staff meet to discuss ways and means of expediting delivery of pedestrian improvements on the expressways, and that staff report back with findings and recommendations.

Background:

In the interest of pedestrian safety, several cities have pedestrian prohibitions along portions of the expressway system. The Expressway Planning Study (2003) committed the County to working with cities to identify where prohibitions could be lifted. A 2004 effort essentially reaffirmed the existing prohibitions, but did recommend lifting of prohibitions at a few locations, some of which were not possible due to preference of the local city to retain prohibitions. County is again studying pedestrian access to the expressways and a report is planned for later this year. Though the report is still under development, it is apparent that cities and the County are not comfortable with pedestrian use of expressways in some situations where the most likely walking path is on the traffic side of the curb.

Construction of sidewalks (either asphalt or concrete) is the certain path to removal of prohibitions, as achieved on Capitol and Lawrence at many locations.

Pedestrian needs were inventoried by the 2003 Study, which identified \$5.16 million in stand-alone sidewalk work. Due to resource limitations, the department's capital projects program depends on grant funds. One pedestrian grant source is available to the County, the Transportation Development

Act (TDA) guarantee funds; VTA's Community Design and Transportation (CDT) is effectively not available to the County. County's share of TDA varies from year to year but is about \$70,000 per year. If all of the County's TDA share was applied toward expressway sidewalk and nothing was spent on the other 600 miles of the County road system, it would take approximately 74 years to finish this work.

The lack of TDA resources available for expressway sidewalk improvements is a function of the formula for distribution of TDA. Although the expressways are an urban, city resource, the County's TDA share is based on a population formula that only counts the unincorporated area residents.

Discussion:

Some options for further discussion could include:

Recalculation of TDA Guarantee Share – One approach could be to re-divide the TDA guarantee pie, but as it is a fixed amount, local cities would perceive the change as a loss for their programs.

Re-division of TDA Guarantee/ Discretionary Split with Creation of New Expressway Program – Another approach could be to reconsider the dedication of all of the TDA discretionary funds to the VTA bike program. Since these funds have traditionally been for discretionary use, there should be less objection to dedicating a share to expressway sidewalks. TDA discretionary was used in the past to construct several sidewalk segments on Capitol Expressway.

Set-Aside of CDT Share for New Expressway Program – A third approach would be to set-aside a portion of the VTA CDT program. These funds are discretionary, and the most recent cycle of grant allocations did not use the full amount available. However, cities seem sensitive to this fund source at the moment and would likely object to a county set-aside.

There may be other options staff has not yet considered.