



BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, April 9, 2008

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Meeting of the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) was called to order at 6:10 p.m. by Chairperson Swent in Auditorium, Building A, VTA, 3331 North First Street, San Jose, California.

ROLL CALL

Members Present

Cheryl Bunnell
John Carpenter
Bruce Entin
Chris Fernandez
Carl Hagenmaier
William Manry
Thomas Muniz
Lane Parker
David Simons
Jim Stallman
John Sullivan
Richard Swent, Chairperson
Herman Wadler
Joe Walton, Vice Chairperson
Corrine Winter, Ex-Officio

Members Absent

Anna Brunzell
Jerri-Ann Meyer, Alt. Ex-Officio

Representative Cities

City of Milpitas
City of Mountain View
Town of Los Gatos
County of Santa Clara
City of Los Altos
City of Monte Sereno
City of Gilroy
City of San Jose
City of Sunnyvale
City of Saratoga
City of Santa Clara
City of Palo Alto
City of Campbell
City of Cupertino
Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition

Representative Cities

Town of Los Altos Hills
Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition

A quorum was present.

2. ORDERS OF THE DAY

There were no Orders of the Day.

3. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

Akos Szoboszlay, Interested Citizen, advocated for safe pedestrian access at expressways. He provided the Committee a handout entitled, "Pedestrians along expressways: County Board of Supervisors (BOS) policies and orders."

4. Committee Staff Report

General Manager's Report

Michael T. Burns, General Manager, provided a report, highlighting the following:

- Appointment of Yolanda Cruz as VTA Assistant Board Secretary; retirement of Suzanne Gifford, General Counsel and appointment of Kevin Allmand as the Acting General Counsel.
- Concerns regarding transit funding shortfalls from the Federal and State. The California Transit Association is appealing the ruling about its lawsuit to recover the \$1.259 billion raided from the Public Transportation Account in the 2007-08 state budget; VTA staff is recommending a support position for a bill which calls for creation of a California Transportation Infrastructure Funding Task Force that will develop report regarding alternatives to current funding system for transportation infrastructure.
- Expressed concern about lower sales tax revenues and higher gas prices. VTA is trying to manage the situation and does not anticipate any negative impact to its operations and maintenance for 2008.
- VTA is working to implement the Hay Group Recommendations including Board Rotation, Board term, and VTA Mission and Vision update. The Administration and Finance (A&F) will be the VTA Committee that will receive status of the implementation.
- VTA is monitoring the progress of the New Bus Service Plan implemented in January 2008 and making appropriate route changes when necessary.
- VTA February 2008 overall ridership increased approximately six percent when compared to February 2007.
- VTA is in the process of updating its Measure A Revenue and Expenditure Plan, which is scheduled for VTA Board of Directors approval by October 2008. During this process, VTA staff will create portfolio of plans that contain different scenarios. The Board needs to make key decisions on next steps for the following major projects within the year: Caltrain Double-tracking Project; Light Rail Extension to Eastridge; and BART Extension Project.

- VTA will be actively working with the Bike to Work Day this year.

Member Stallman commented that the New VTA has more consciousness about evening bus transfers. He added that it will benefit VTA if its internal communication system (peer to peer) is formalized.

Upon inquiry of Chairperson Swent, Mr. Burns responded that the major issue surrounding the New Service Plan only occurred in Palo Alto. VTA staff worked with the City of Palo Alto and key stakeholders to address the issues and the appropriate bus route changes will be implemented in July 2008.

Chris Augenstein, Planning Deputy Director and Staff Liaison, inquired if the Committee wishes to review the High Occupancy Toll (HOT) Lane study.

Member Walton took his seat at 6:35 p.m.

Michelle DeRobertis, Senior Transportation Planner, reported that the VTA Bikeways Map is being updated for the Bike to Work Day event. She encouraged the Members to provide updates. Ms. DeRobertis noted that VTA staff is looking into finding solutions to the issue of bicyclists not exiting at the front of the bus.

Chairperson Swent noted that a Citizen has raised a concern over bus thefts.

Ex-Officio Member Winters suggested providing education through Bus Operator notices to prevent bicycle thefts and to notify bicyclists to exit at the front of the bus.

Highway Program Update

There was no Highway Program Update.

Conditions of Approval Update

There was no Conditions of Approval Update.

County Report

There was no County Report.

5. Chairperson's Report

Chairperson Swent expressed support for updating Bicycle Plans at the local and regional level. He referred to the Expressway Plan and noted that work still needs to be done to complete the Plan. He added that citizens indicated that bicycle and pedestrian safety should be a priority for the Oregon Expressway Improvement Project.

CONSENT AGENDA

6. Minutes of March 12, 2008

M/S/C (Stallman/Walton) on a vote of 12 ayes, 0 noes, and 1 abstention to approve the Minutes of March 12, 2008. Member Simons abstained.

REGULAR AGENDA

7. Updated VTA Vision/Mission Statement

Greta Helm, Chief External Affairs Officer, noted that to update the Vision/Mission Statement, VTA conducted a VTA Board of Directors and Executive Management Leadership Workshop on February 1, 2008 and conducted an employee survey response based on the list of values generated at the workshop. Ms. Helm reported that staff would like to obtain input regarding the updated Vision/Mission Statements prior to forwarding the recommendation for Board approval.

On order of Chairperson Swent, there being no objection, the Updated VTA Vision/Mission Statement was discussed.

8. Measure A Revenue and Expenditure Plan Update Process and Policy Guidance

Jim Lawson, Senior Policy Advisor, reported that the Board of Directors directed a regular review of the Revenue and Expenditure Plan. The current update will set policy direction for long-term and provide framework for short-term strategic decisions. The critical elements of the update process include: 1) Development of policy guidance; 2) Revised financial model; and 3) Portfolio of plans. Mr. Lawson reviewed the schedule noting that the Advisory Committees will be involved in the discussion of policy guidelines and portfolio of funds and recommendations. Final approval of the plan is slated for September 2008.

On order of Chairperson Swent, there being no objection, the report on the Measure A Revenue and Expenditure Plan Update Process and Policy Guidance was received.

9. Countywide Bicycle Plan – Adopt Plan

Chad Brower, Interested Citizen, noted that there should be priority given to long-distance bike travel. He noted that overpasses and underpasses should be put in the long-distance corridors and not on the last mile. He advocated for funding for a bicycle freeway system, which can make biking a competitive alternative to cars.

NOTE: M/S/C MEANS MOTION SECONDED AND CARRIED AND, UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED, THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chris Augenstein, Planning Deputy Director and Staff Liaison, reported that the City of San Jose requested deferral of the Countywide Bicycle Plan (CBP) adoption to provide feedback to the cross-county corridors. He assured that if there are major changes, the BPAC will review them prior to forwarding it to the Board in June 2008 for approval.

Michelle DeRobertis, Senior Transportation Planner, provided an update to the CBP, noting that CBP aims to address cross barrier connections. The potential projects, funding, and implementation plans are contained in Chapter 4. Appendix D also shows the project, funding policies and sources. VTA is still working on obtaining the estimate for the money it can expect to receive from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC). Ms. DeRobertis advised that the CBP will not include the priorities, which means that the data in CBP is the “unconstrained” list.

Ex-Officio Member Winter inquired if the Committee can suggest projects in the Bicycle Expenditure Plan (BEP) that are not yet in the “unconstrained” list. Ms. DeRobertis explained that the expansion of the BEP will be coming from the “unconstrained” list.

Member Simons suggested a review of the prioritization guidelines to ensure that the prioritization guidelines are current.

Member Carpenter suggested looking into the concept of special infrastructure for bicycle freeways that can be used by pedestrians as well.

Member Hagenmaier noted a concern about having only one crossing (San Antonio) on El Camino from Charleston in Palo Alto and Castro in Mountain View.

Member Carpenter referred to Appendix D-1, Potential Bike Projects by Cross County Bicycle Corridor by City, and noted that there is no Middlefield/S.R. 85 Interchange in Mountain View. He also requested clarification on the Mountain View Project noted on Page 9 of 14, CCBC No. 15C (El Camino Real). He noted that the City of Mountain View is working to get a path on the East Middlefield to SR 85.

Member Simons referred to Page 3 of 14, CCBC No. 03, Sunnyvale, Mary Avenue New Roadway or roadway overcrossing and inquired if it is possible to include the mitigation of the increased traffic volume due to the bridge.

Member Muniz requested for updated CBP by May 2008, which contains all the changes.

Ms. DeRobertis noted for the record that she distributed to all cities the draft cross-county bicycle corridor alignment last July 2007.

On order of Chairperson Swent, there being no objection, the approval of the Countywide Bicycle Plan was deferred.

10. Roads and Airport Department Calendar Year 2008 Master Capital Projects Plan

Dan Collen, Santa Clara County Staff, presented the 2008 Master Capital Projects Plan, which contains different programs and the projects in the plan that are being pursued.

Upon inquiry of Chairperson Swent, Mr. Collen responded that the “Foothill Expressway at Loyola Bridge” project has circulation issues and there are structure limits. Dawn Cameron, Santa Clara County Consultant, noted that there are three separate projects for the area. The use of funds is restricted and cannot be used to widen the shoulders of the bridge. Chairperson Swent expressed concern about the bottleneck and the high speed merge in the area, which discourages bicycle use.

Upon inquiry of Ex-Officio Member Winter, Mr. Collen responded that any project with bicycle and pedestrian effects or any project with a bike element will be forwarded to the BPAC for review.

On order of Chairperson Swent, there being no objection, the Committee reviewed and commented on the Roads and Airport Department Calendar Year 2008 Master Capital Projects Plan.

11. County Pedestrian Safety Project – “Safety Fence at Capitol Expressway and Monterey Highway”

Akos Szoboszlay, Interested Citizen, expressed concern on the safety of pedestrians who illegally cross the train tracks. He noted that the solution to the current problem is an at-grade railroad crossing similar to the one in Lafayette.

Dan Collen, Santa Clara County, noted that a safety fence is recommended to prevent fatal accidents, which have happened in the past.

Member Stallman suggested that VTA strategically review the bus stop and crosswalk location so that people can use it effectively. Mr. Collen responded that the project include pedestrian guide signs that will direct pedestrians to use the existing pathway.

On order of Chairperson Swent, there being no objection, the Committee reviewed and commented on the County Pedestrian Safety Project – “Safety Fence at Capitol Expressway and Monterey Highway.”

12. BPAC Subcommittee Report on County Expressway Planning Study Update - Pedestrian Element

Akos Szoboszlay, Interested Citizen, referred to the handout he distributed, entitled “Request regarding pedestrians/transit patrons.” He expressed concern about the inability of the BPAC to vote about the issue of pedestrians on expressways. He noted that pedestrian paths along expressways should be maximized by immediately creating unpaved paths. The paving of the existing paths should be held-off until all paths are completed.

Member Simons requested that the Subcommittee policy changes be agendaized for BPAC's consideration and review at a future meeting.

On order of Chairperson Swent, there being no objection, the Committee Report on County Expressway Planning Study Update - Pedestrian Element was received.

OTHER

13. BPAC Work Plan

Michelle DeRobertis, Senior Transportation Planner, noted the addition of the following items: evaluation of prioritization criteria and CBP changes.

Member Stallman recommended deletion of the Bike Network in County: Remaining Issues and Member Muniz recommended deletion of Coyote Valley Specific Plan from the "Items for Future Consideration."

On order of Chairperson Swent, there being no objection, the BPAC Work Plan was reviewed.

14. Announcements

Ex-Officio Member Winter invited the Members to the SBVC three outreach trainings. She also reported that SBVC is working on a broad-based proposal for the Share The Road Program.

Member Wadler reported that Campbell BAC will be voting on who would represent Campbell to the VTA BPAC since he has served for the last four years.

Member Entin reported the following good news: 1) the proposal to bend bicycles on trail near Hicks and Shannon will not push through; and 2) there will be additional installation of speed limit and cautions signs to the area. He thanked Member Wadler for coming to Los Gatos and helping him out on this issue.

Member Carpenter announced that the Stevens Creek Trail opening ceremony will be held this coming Saturday, April 12, 2008. He reported that the Mountain View BPAC supports bicycle safety improvements around Mountain View High School but opposes more parking on streets. He also reported that the Sustainable Mountain View Task Force met and discussed the Green Ribbon Transportation Report, and the Palo Alto Gunn High School efforts to encourage usage of bicycles.

Member Simons announced that the Sunnyvale BPAC will meet on Thursday, April 10, 2008.

Member Bunnell announced that the next Milpitas BPAC will be held on Monday, April 14, 2008.

Member Muniz announced that the City of Gilroy and the School district was awarded a State grant which will build a safer route (trail) to schools.

Member Sullivan announced that the next Santa Clara BAC meeting will be held in June 2008. The bike plan striping at Homestead Road has been completed. He referred to the County Project on Level of Service Item #7, Intersection Improvements for Homestead Road and San Tomas Expressway, and expressed concern that this improvement project has preempted the bike lanes that were planned for the intersection.

Member Walton reported that he will report on the status of the discussion about the traffic congestion on Cupertino's tri-school area. He announced that Cupertino will provide a cake for the Bike to Work week.

Chairperson Swent expressed concern that sharrows are still not installed in Palo Alto. He noted that the Gunn High School in Palo Alto has a program called the Pedaling for prizes program, which encourages students to use bikes.

15. ADJOURNMENT

On order of Chairperson Swent, there being no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine F. Baltao, Board Assistant
VTA Board of Directors