

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Thursday, October 12, 2006

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was called to order at 1:39 p.m. by Vice Chairperson Dey in Conference Room B-104, Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), 3331 North First Street, San Jose, California.

ROLL CALL

Members Present

Rajeev Batra
Dan Collen
Nancy Coss-Fitzwater, Ex-Officio
John Curtis
Don Dey, Vice Chairperson
Glenn Goepfert

Members Present

Joan Jenkins
Jim Porter
Jaime Rodriguez
Jim Rowe
Lee Taubeneck, Ex-Officio
Ben Tripousis

Members Absent

John Cherbone
Robert Kass
Gayle Likens

Members Absent

Henry Louie
Gordon Siebert
Jack Witthaus

A quorum was present.

2. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

There were no Public Presentations.

3. Committee Staff Report

Jim Lawson, Government Affairs Manager, provided a report on VTA's ridership, highlighting: 1) system wide ridership increased 12 percent over the previous year; 2) bus ridership increased 2.1 percent; and 3) light rail ridership increased 53.6 percent.

Mr. Lawson reported that Board of Directors Vice Chairperson Dean Chu testified before the Senate Transportation and Housing Committee on September 27, 2006, regarding Proposition 1B and supported VTA's position on the Proposition.

Mr. Lawson reported that the additional auxiliary lane on Northbound Highway 17 between Camden and Hamilton is nearing completion. Early last week, the contractor had a series of equipment failures that delayed the opening beyond the 5:00 a.m. schedule. He indicated that this caused significant traffic delay and congestion, and VTA regrets any inconvenience that the delay may have caused.

Mr. Lawson reported that the second phase of the Route 152 Bridge Widening Project in the City of Gilroy is two months ahead of schedule, with an expected completion date in early January 2007.

Mr. Lawson reported that VTA has operated the Sharks Shuttle for the hockey games for the past several years. The General Manager, Michael T. Burns, has stated that VTA has agreed to pay its half share of the operating costs of the Sharks Shuttle, but the San Jose Sharks Management has made a business decision not to renew its agreement to pay its half share of the operating costs for the Sharks Shuttle. Mr. Lawson noted that VTA provides the following excellent service to the Sharks games at the HP Pavilion in downtown San Jose: Vasona Light Rail and Bus Routes 522 and 22. He noted that VTA will continue to maintain its offer to pay its share of the operating costs for the Sharks Shuttle.

Mr. Lawson reported that the Cities of San Clara and San Jose hosted the Rock-and-Roll Half Marathon on Sunday, October 8, 2006. Although there were significant impacts to VTA service due to the marathon, VTA succeeded in mitigating the service disruptions.

Mr. Lawson reported that VTA hosted the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Annual Conference that was held on October 7 to October 11, 2006. Mr. Lawson noted that there were over 2,200 participants from transit agencies across the country. Board Member Dolly Sandoval represented VTA on the Host Committee along with City of San Jose Mayor Ron Gonzales. Mr. Lawson indicated that VTA presented a session on the activities of the organization and showed a brief video highlighting the VTA. Several of the VTA Staff, Board and Advisory Committee Members were in attendance. He noted that the feedback received was extremely positive.

Alternate Member Tripousis took his seat at 1:46 p.m.

Mr. Lawson introduced the new VTA Senior Assistant Counsel, Evelynn Tran. Ms. Tran noted the new requirement for TAC Members to receive two hours of Ethics Training under the new Government Code Section 53235. She indicated that TAC received an e-mail and letter from the VTA Board Secretary noting the required Ethics Training and training sessions to be held on October 25, 2006 at 1:30 p.m. and October 26, 2006 at 5:30 p.m. Ms. Tran distributed a sign-up sheet to register TAC Members for the Ethics Training on either October 25 or 26. The training sessions will be held at the County Government Center, Council Chambers, 70 W. Hedding Street, San Jose.

Alternate Member Batra indicated that he is scheduled to receive Ethics Training from the City of Santa Clara the week of October 16, 2006, and queried if it was the same training. Ms. Tran indicated that the training has to meet the requirements of Government Code 53235 or Assembly Bill 1234.

Member Curtis queried about the process to inform VTA that Members have already taken the required training with their respective cities/towns. Ms. Tran indicated that the Members should receive a certificate of completion and a copy should be forwarded to either her or the Board Secretary.

Murali Ramanujam, Sr. Transportation Planner, provided a report on the High Occupancy Toll (HOT) Lanes Demonstration Project. He indicated that in fall 2003, the Board of Directors directed staff to conduct a study of possible HOT Lane Projects in Santa Clara County (County). Since then, staff has undertaken a feasibility study of looking at placing HOT Lanes on some of the High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lane segments within the County. The feasibility study was completed in December 2005, and U.S. 101 and State Route (SR) 85 were identified as potential HOT Lane Demonstration Project Corridors.

Mr. Ramanujam reported that the Board of Directors authorized staff to proceed with the preliminary engineering phase of the study. Staff has issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the preliminary engineering phase and recommends awarding the contract to URS Corporation. The key scope that URS Corporation would cover as part of the study would be to define the project limits. As part of the contract, there will also be an evaluation of the design of electronic toll collection systems. There is also the objective to obtain an environmental clearance and to advance preliminary engineering study to approximately a 30 percent design level.

Upon query of Ex-Officio Member Taubeneck, Mr. Ramanujam indicated that revenue forecasts would be completed as part of the study, and the preliminary engineering phase of the study would begin in January 2007, and is targeted for completion in fall of 2008.

Member Likens expressed concern regarding the significant increases in the use of commuter lanes on SR 85 and U.S. 101 and commented that the increase is contributed to hybrid vehicles being allowed to use the commuter lanes. She queried if any recent counts were conducted to see if there was any extra capacity in the commuter lanes. She commented that there would be a huge disincentive for persons who carpool to use the commuter lanes if hybrids and persons who pay a toll fee are using the lanes.

Mr. Ramanujam indicated that data collection would again be part of the feasibility study to make sure that the most up-to-date comments are included, and it would go hand-in-hand with the initial analysis that was already done as part of the feasibility study. Part of the analysis would also involve answering the key question, "Is there sufficient capacity to allow for HOT Lanes to accommodate other users, such as hybrids and persons who pay a toll fee?"

Vice Chairperson Dey queried if HOT Lanes are being considered as three-plus lanes. Mr. Ramanujam indicated that the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) is conducting a HOT Lane study for the Bay Area. As part of that study, MTC is looking at locations where carpool lanes are already congested and is trying to address the three-plus lanes as part of their study.

Alternate Member Rodriguez expressed concern regarding the difficulty of entering carpool lanes in Southern California. He referred to the HOT Lanes Demonstration Project and recommended that consideration be given to the possibility of posting "vehicle reduce speed" signs about 1,000 feet before the entry points, so that cars that are already in the carpool lane are encouraged to reduce their speed to allow vehicles to enter the lane safely.

On order of Vice Chairperson Dey, there being no objection, the Committee Staff Report was received.

4. Chairperson's Report

Vice Chairperson Dey reported that Chairperson Yoshino met with the Hay Group, consultants conducting the Organizational and Financial Assessment, on Friday, October 6, 2006, and provided them with TAC's comments to date on how to improve the effectiveness of the Committee.

BUSINESS REFERRED TO COMMITTEE BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS/GENERAL MANAGER

CONSENT AGENDA

5. Minutes of September 14, 2006

M/S/C (Tripousis/Curtis) to approve the Minutes of September 14, 2006.

6. Programmed Projects Quarterly Monitoring Report for July to September 2006

M/S/C (Tripousis/Curtis) to review the Programmed Projects Quarterly Monitoring Report for July to September 2006.

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

REGULAR AGENDA

7. Exemption from Annual Monitoring of Intersections

Adam Burger, Transportation Planner II, reported that the item pertains to the annual Level of Service (LOS) monitoring that VTA requires all Member Agencies to complete. He noted that the City of Sunnyvale indicated that the following intersections will be undergoing a signal upgrade, which may cause the intersections to not operate at their usual efficiency: 1) Sunnyvale-Saratoga Road/Remington Avenue; and 2) Sunnyvale-Saratoga Road/Fremont Avenue. The City of Sunnyvale has requested that these intersections be excluded from LOS monitoring for 2006.

M/S/C (Curtis/Rodriguez) to review and recommend that the VTA Board of Directors approve the exemption of Congestion Management Program intersections undergoing construction from Level of Service (LOS) monitoring during the 2006 monitoring period. These intersections include: A) Sunnyvale-Saratoga Road/Remington Avenue (Sunnyvale); and B) Sunnyvale-Saratoga Road/Fremont Avenue (Sunnyvale).

OTHER

8. Update from the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Subcommittee

Vice Chairperson Dey reported that the TAC Subcommittee reviewed the Committee's recommendations received at the Study Session held on September 14, 2006 on how TAC could improve its effectiveness and relationship to the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) and Board of Directors. He directed attention to the document entitled, "Draft – Areas to Enhance Committee Effectiveness Recommended by TAC Members", and noted that the recommendations provided by the Committee were compiled and are contained in the document. Vice Chairperson Dey recommended that the Committee's recommendations be agendized for approval at the November 9, 2006 TAC meeting and forwarded to the Board of Directors for approval at their December 14, 2006 meeting.

Stephen Flynn, Sr. Management Analyst, directed attention to the document entitled, "Draft – Areas to Enhance Committee Effectiveness Recommended by TAC Members," and provided a report on the recommendations received from TAC as follows:

- **Alignment of organizational mission, goals, objectives, work programs, etc.**
 - Align TAC's mission and responsibilities more closely with those of the VTA Board of Directors.
 - TAC serves as a forum for smaller cities to provide input and perspective on countywide and regional issues.
 - TAC should continue to review and provide meaningful input of Congestion Management Agency (CMA) items.

- Orientation on VTA's and TAC's mission and responsibilities should be provided to new TAC members.

Member Curtis referred to the following statement: "Align TAC's mission and responsibilities more closely with those of the VTA Board of Directors." He queried if there is a statement of TAC's mission, how does it compare to the Board of Directors' mission, and what is the anticipated method to get the mission statements aligned.

Mr. Flynn indicated that historically any record of a mission statement for TAC has not been found. TAC would have to develop their mission statement.

Mr. Lawson indicated that in regards to the mission of TAC, there has been discussion among Board members and Senior Staff members that the mission of the organization needs to be reviewed. He referred to VTA's Organizational and Financial Assessment and indicated that VTA is going through an exhaustive look to see how it works and how it should move forward in order to be successful. He indicated that some of it is going to be a work in progress and it will be driven by the results of the Organizational and Financial Assessment, and the desire on the part of TAC to see how closely TAC wants to be aligned with those areas.

Mr. Lawson referred to Member Jenkins' concern regarding the difference between the items agendaized at the October 12, 2006 PAC meeting and TAC meeting. He noted that part of the reason the items are different on TAC's agenda is because it is historical. TAC has concentrated on CMA areas as opposed to transit and financial areas.

Alternate Member Tripousis referred to the compilation of TAC recommendations and expressed concern regarding bringing the recommendations back to TAC for approval at its November 9, 2006 meeting. He requested clarification on the mechanism for how the TAC would achieve the goals.

Mr. Lawson indicated that Chairperson Yoshino was looking for consensus from TAC that the Subcommittee had factored in all of TAC's thoughts, and if in fact there is agreement on the part of TAC, a mechanism can be created in trying to achieve the goals.

Alternate Member Rodriguez queried if the consultants conducting the Organizational and Financial Assessment would provide a recommendation on what TAC's mission should be. Ann Carey, Executive Assistant to the General Manager and Project Manager for the Organizational and Financial Assessment, indicated that the consultants recently completed an exhaustive interview with staff, Advisory Committee Chairpersons and Board Members, and are at the point where they are looking to formulate the recommendations for areas to explore further. She indicated that she thinks what would come out of the Organizational and Financial Assessment would be some recommendations on how VTA can improve its operations internally as well as its communications externally.

Alternate Member Batra suggested that when developing a mission statement for TAC that it be aligned with the mission of the Board of Directors.

Vice Chairperson Dey noted that the development of the list of recommendations was in response to Board of Directors Chairperson Cindy Chavez' request for TAC to develop ideas on how TAC could become a more effective body. He noted the need for TAC to forward its recommendations to the Board of Directors, so that TAC can become a more effective body. He commented that TAC should be in a more "proactive stage."

Mr. Flynn continued his report on the recommendations received from TAC as follows:

- **Provision of meaningful advice to Board of Directors**

- Need to review and provide input to staff on items and issues in early development, not final completion stage.
- TAC needs to be provided longer lead time on items prior to meetings, especially those that may require city council input or approval.
- TAC needs to review items before PAC considers that item so the TAC member can communicate information/recommendations to their respective PAC member.
- TAC recommendation should be included on Board (and if possible, Policy Advisory Committee) memo.
- Potentially add informational updates from regional entities (Caltrans-District 4, Caltrain, MTC, etc.).
- Increase leadership and advocacy role on regional issues.

- **Emphasis on high priority issues**

- Study sessions to analyze important or controversial items in more depth.
- Place less important items on Consent Agenda to conserve meeting time for analysis of significant, controversial or urgent issues.
- TAC should continue with its role of providing opportunity for all Member Agencies to provide input on funding and grant evaluation criteria matters.

- **Development of annual work program of important and/or urgent items to ensure alignment with VTA mission, goals, plans, etc.**

- Devote one meeting per year (probably January) to identifying important/urgent items for upcoming year to include on TAC Work Plan.
- Revisit every six months and update TAC Work Plan as necessary.
- Utilize TAC Work Plan to identify, prioritize, schedule and track issues.
- Add chairperson reports from the two TAC working groups, Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and Systems Operations & Management (SOM), as standing items on TAC agenda.

- **Consensus building among Member Agencies and interaction with respective councilpersons/city councils.**

- Committee provides the opportunity and forum to develop regional, not parochial, view.
- Provides a forum for countywide or regional items to be fully vetted.
- TAC needs to be provided longer lead time on items prior to meetings, especially those that may require city council input or approval.

Alternate Member Rodriguez recommended that the TAC Work Plan be shown in a calendar format.

Alternate Member Batra commented that this is a great opportunity for TAC to show its presence. He referred to the TAC CIP and SOM Working Groups and noted that TAC should continue to use this structure, rather than TAC becoming directly involved in everything.

Vice Chairperson Dey referred to the following recommendation listed under the first bulleted item of recommendations: “Align TAC’s mission and responsibilities more closely with those of the VTA Board of Directors.” He recommended that the word “Align” be changed to “Develop.”

Mr. Lawson queried if it was appropriate to continue with the TAC Subcommittee to try to flush out some of the mechanisms by which to achieve these goals. Vice Chairperson Dey indicated “yes.”

Vice Chairperson Dey queried if the TAC Members had any concerns regarding bringing the TAC recommendations back to TAC for approval in November 2006. Alternate Member Tripousis noted that as long as TAC brings it back as a direction and agrees to work on implementation, it would be fine to bring the recommendations back to TAC for approval in November 2006.

Mr. Lawson noted that the TAC Subcommittee would continue to meet to further develop methods of implementation. On behalf of VTA staff, he thanked the members of the TAC Subcommittee and TAC.

On order of Vice Chairperson Dey, there being no objection, the Committee received an update from the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Subcommittee.

9. Committee Work Plan

Mr. Lawson noted that reports from the TAC CIP and SOM Working Groups would be agendized on a monthly basis.

John Ristow, Programming and Project Development Deputy Director, noted the request of Caltrans-District 4 to provide a report on regional impact fees for State highway projects at the November 9, 2006 TAC meeting.

Ex-Officio Member Taubeneck reported that a discussion was held at the September 2006 California Transportation Commission (CTC) meeting regarding the Caltrans-District 4 process for review of local development proposals. He noted that Caltrans-District 4 has a process and written guidelines for local development projects. He indicated that currently there are no regional impact fees for State highway projects.

Alternate Member Rodriguez noted that the Work Plan did not contain the Community Design & Transportation (CDT) Capital Grants Program Scoring Committee Recommendations. Mr. Lawson indicated that the item would be placed on the Work Plan.

Member Jenkins expressed concern that the items listed on the Work Plan are not very descriptive.

Alternate Member Tripousis expressed concern about the poor conditions of the freeways, expressways, and pavements in the San Jose metro area, noting that the City ranks last in the upkeep of the freeways, expressways, and pavement maintenance; and for San Jose, it speaks to the ongoing and significant under investment and commitment of Caltrans-District 4 resources in the South Bay. He referred to TAC's role and the importance of having discussions with Caltrans-District 4 on how they are allocating resources and how they see allocation of future resources.

Vice Chairperson Dey echoed Alternate Member Tripousis' comments and noted that it is a Countywide issue that affects all agencies. He indicated that TAC would be the forum to discuss the issue.

Ex-Officio Member Taubeneck noted that the report on regional impact fees for State highway reports would be brought to the December 14, 2006 TAC meeting instead of the November 9, 2006 meeting.

On order of Vice Chairperson Dey, there being no objection, the Committee Work Plan was reviewed.

10. Announcements

Mr. Ristow requested that TAC Members contact either himself, Marcella Rensi, Transportation Planning Manager; or Amin Surani, Sr. Transportation Engineer, if they have any issues relating to programming of projects, etc.

11. **ADJOURNMENT**

On order of Vice Chairperson Dey, there being no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 2:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tracene Y. Crenshaw, Board Assistant
VTA Board of Directors