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 ACTION DISCUSSION INFO

BOARD MEMORANDUM

TO: Technical 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: Draft 2006 Monitoring and Conformance Report and Conformance Findings

RECOMMENDATION:

Review and recommend that the VTA Board of Directors approve the Draft 2006 Monitoring and Conformance Report and Conformance Findings. The findings are summarized in this memorandum and the draft report is provided in Attachment A.

BACKGROUND:

State legislation requires urbanized counties to implement Congestion Management Programs (CMP). As the designated Congestion Management Agency (CMA) for Santa Clara County, VTA is responsible for implementing the CMP. One of the CMP requirements is to determine annually whether Member Agencies are conforming to the adopted CMP standards. Nonconformance places Member Agencies at risk of losing local gas tax subventions included as part of the 1990 Proposition 111 legislation.

DISCUSSION:

As part of the CMP Monitoring Program, Member Agencies must comply with the following requirements:

1. Monitor and submit level-of-service reports on CMP Roadway Network intersections;
2. Prepare and submit land-use monitoring data to the CMP on all land-use projects approved from July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2006; and

3. Prepare transportation impact analyses (TIAs) for projects that generate 100 or more peak hour trips and submit the TIA at least 15 calendar days before the project is up for approval or is “recommended for approval.”

Roadways and intersections are evaluated by level of service (LOS), a measure of driving conditions and vehicle delay. Levels range from A (best) to F (poorest). Each Member Agency must maintain the CMP traffic LOS standard—LOS E—on CMP system facilities. Roadways and intersections that operate at LOS F are considered non-conforming. However, if a roadway or intersection was operating at LOS F in 1991, the baseline year, it is exempt from the CMP standard and conformance requirements when found to be operating at LOS F in subsequent monitoring periods.

Until a Countywide Deficiency Plan is developed and adopted, a Member Agency whose jurisdiction has a non-conforming intersection, freeway segment or rural highway, should develop a local deficiency plan or require a new development’s project sponsor to implement the “Immediate Implementation Action List” in VTA’s *“Requirements for Local Deficiency Plans.”*

The Draft 2006 Monitoring and Conformance Report presents the results of the monitoring program. A brief discussion of the results is presented below.

Freeways. In 2006, approximately 70 AM and 69 PM directional miles of the County’s freeway system operated at LOS F during the peak hours. However, due to 1991 baseline exemption, only 41 AM and 45 PM directional miles are considered deficient—that is, they have deteriorated to LOS F from LOS E or better since monitoring began in 1991. Compared to 2005, the number of directional miles considered deficient for the AM peak period is unchanged at 41. Deficient miles for the PM peak period have increased significantly, growing from 35 miles in 2005 to 45 in 2006. In 1991, 36 AM and 37 PM directional miles operated at LOS F.

The percentage of directional miles of each freeway that operate at LOS F in either the AM or PM peak period - or both periods - is shown in Table 1. Reviewing the total directional miles of freeway at LOS F by facility reveals that I-880 has the highest percentage of facility at LOS F at 68%. This is an increase from 2005 when 49% of the facility operated at LOS F.

Twenty-six freeway carpool lane segments totaling about 21 miles were determined to operate at LOS F, compared to 18 freeway segments totaling about 16 miles that operated at LOS F in 2005. As reported in monitoring reports from previous years, the conclusion is that these LOS F conditions in carpool lanes are not due to lack of capacity. Rather, the LOS F carpool lane segments are at the beginning or end of a carpool lane or near a major interchange where there is heavy weaving traffic between the carpool lane and the adjacent mixed-flow lanes. Such situations could benefit from direct carpool lane connectors between freeways or a direct carpool lane to off-ramp connector.

TABLE 1.
Percentage of Freeway Facilities at LOS F During AM and/or PM Peak Period

Freeway	Directional Miles	Miles at LOS F	2006 Percentage
SR 17	28	14	52%
SR 85	48	21	44%
SR 87	18	10	54%
US 101	115	31	27%
SR 237	20	9	44%
I 280	44	24	55%
I 680	20	10	51%
I 880	21	14	68%

Rural Highways. All twelve rural highways were determined to conform to CMP LOS standards in 2005.

Land-Use Submittals. Almost all Member Agencies have complied with the CMP land-use submission requirements. Data from Milpitas and Los Gatos is expected shortly. In the 2006 monitoring period, a net total of 4,777 residential units were approved during the 2006 monitoring period. Analysis of commercial and industrial land use approvals estimate that 4,032 new jobs have been created. In 2005, residential unit approvals and estimated new jobs totaled 9,063 and 11,381, respectively.

It should be noted that the residential units approvals and job estimates for 2005 were heavily influenced by the approval of the North San Jose Development Policy, which identified several sites for intense infill development. As such, a decline in residential and commercial/industrial approvals in 2006 is not unexpected. Additionally, a trend of converting vacant commercial and industrial sites into residential sites has emerged. Since the available commercial and industrially zoned land has decreased, a loss of jobs is shown if the calculations for assigning jobs to acreage is strictly followed. In reality, no jobs are lost when unused sites are rezoned because the sites are already vacant. As such, cities such as San Jose, Sunnyvale and Santa Clara, which are utilizing these conversions, are seen as having misleadingly low job change estimates.

The land use data is used to track general development trends over time. Additionally, it is used in the countywide transportation model database and in the analysis of development trends in proximity to major transit facilities.

Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA) reports. All Member Agencies have met the TIA requirement.

ALTERNATIVES:

There are no practical alternatives to this action. As the designated CMA, VTA must adopt conformance findings.

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