

DOWNTOWN EAST VALLEY POLICY ADVISORY BOARD

Thursday, June 12, 2008

MINUTES

1. The Regular Meeting of the Downtown East Valley Policy Advisory Board (PAB) was called to order at 9:36 a.m. by Chairperson Nora Campos in the Isaac Newton Senter Auditorium, Santa Clara County Government Center, 70 West Hedding Street, San Jose, California.

ROLL CALL

Members Present

Blanca Alvarado
Nora Campos, Chairperson
Dave Cortese
Sam Liccardo, Vice Chairperson

Members Absent

Pete McHugh

A quorum was present.

2. **PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS**

There were no Public Presentations.

3. **Receive and file the Summary Minutes of September 6, 2007**

On Order of Chairperson Campos, there being no objection, the Committee received and filed the Summary Minutes of September 6, 2007.

4. **Capitol Expressway project**

Ken Ronsse, Design and Construction Manager, reported that the design phase of the Capitol Expressway Light Rail project is 95 percent complete. He noted that documents needed to finalize the project are being held pending the Revenue and Expenditure Plan update. He added that staff, while waiting for the approval of the Revenue and Expenditure Plan, is prepared to begin the right-of-way acquisition process, the utility acquisition process, and the development of documents.

Member Alvarado inquired about VTA's budget decision schedule that would determine project authorization for the current and next fiscal year. Carolyn Gonot, Chief SVRT Program Officer, responded that staff is in the process of updating the Measure A Revenue and Expenditure Plan. She noted that the updated Measure A Revenue and Expenditure Plan would be expected to be presented to the Board of Directors at the

September 5, 2008 Workshop and brought back to the Board of Directors for adoption on October 2, 2008.

Member Alvarado inquired about the schedule to submit a new sales tax measure to the voters. Ms. Gonot responded that the new sales tax measure would be discussed at the Board of Directors Committee of the Whole meeting on July 17, 2008 and a decision would be made at the August 7, 2008 Board of Directors meeting.

Member Cortese clarified that the suspension of the Capitol Expressway project anticipates the adoption of the Revenue and Expenditure Plan. Ms. Gonot stated that the adoption of the Revenue and Expenditure Plan would determine how the project would move forward. She noted that following projects that would be affected by the Revenue and Expenditure Plan: Capitol Expressway project; BART; and South County project.

Mr. Ronsse commented that the next steps that would complete the Capitol Expressway project are the following: wholesale utility relocation; wholesale acquisition of right-of-way; and Light Rail construction. He added that the project awaits budget approval for the year 2010 onwards to complete the project.

Member Cortese expressed concern that the decision to suspend work on the Capitol Expressway project was not brought to the Downtown East Valley Policy Advisory Board.

Member Cortese stressed that VTA would not receive support from councilmembers and the community regarding the new sales tax measure if they continue to dishonor the commitment of Measure A.

Member Alvarado provided a brief history on the Capitol Expressway project and stressed its importance to East Valley residents. She expressed concern on the following: 1) Lack of political will and support to implement the Capitol Expressway project; and 2) Suspension of the project without informing the Downtown East Valley Policy Advisory Board.

Member Alvarado supported the comments made by Member Cortese. She noted that VTA would have difficulty gathering support for the new ballot measure from East Valley residents unless the issue of the Capitol Expressway project is resolved.

Vice Chairperson Liccardo commented that he supports a review of all Measure A projects. He expressed concern on the lack of communication between staff and Downtown East Valley Policy Advisory Board. He stated that the decision to suspend the project should have gone before the Policy Advisory Board.

Chairperson Campos commented that the voice of the Downtown East Valley Policy Advisory Board was bypassed regarding the decision made to suspend the Capitol Expressway project. She noted that the existing possibility that the Capitol Expressway project may not be completed is not fair for the elective leaders and residents of East Valley who supported the Measure A with the notion that the project would be constructed.

Member Cortese described the process and the criteria that were created by the VTA Board of Directors to rank projects. He noted that based from that criteria, the Capitol Expressway project ranked the highest. He commented that the public has the right to know what the intension of the Board of Directors is regarding the Capitol Expressway project.

M/S/C (Cortese/Alvarado) to reaffirm the Policy Advisory Board's support to the planned extension of Light Rail to Eastridge Mall and forward that recommendation to the VTA Board of Directors for its approval at its next available meeting, July 17, 2008 Committee of the Whole meeting.

M/S/C (Cortese/Alvarado) on a vote of 3 Ayes, 1 No and 0 Abstension, to communicate the Policy Advisory Board's lack of support for the suspension of the extension of Light Rail to Eastridge Mall and forward that to the VTA Board of Directors for approval and to include the memo by Vice Mayor Cortese entitled Light Rail Extension to Eastridge Mall dated June 11, 2008. Vice Chairperson Liccardo opposed.

On Order of Chairperson Campos, there being no objection, the Committee received the status report on the Capitol Expressway project.

5. Santa Clara-Alum Rock Transit Improvement Project

Kevin Connolly, Transportation Planning Manager, reported that the Administrative Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is scheduled for release on June 27, 2008. He added that a Public hearing is scheduled on July 17, 2008 at the Mexican Heritage Plaza.

Mr. Connolly provided a brief description of the following: 1) Sidewalk at Santa Clara Street Between 1st and 2nd Streets; 2) Baseline Alternative – Alum Rock Transit Center; 3) Alternative 1 – Alexander Avenue Station; 4) BRT Station in Front of City Hall; 5) BRT Station Between 6th and 7th Streets; 6) King Road Station; 7) Jackson Avenue Station; and 8) Coyote Bridge Construction Plans.

Vice Chairperson Liccardo queried on the Coyote Creek Bridge construction plans and its effect to the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and Light Rail. Mr. Connolly responded that the bridge does not need to be replaced or modified for BRT which is projected to be operational by January 2012. He added that replacement of the bridge is required for the conversion to Light Rail which will not take place until year 2021.

On Order of Chairperson Campos, there being no objection, the Committee received a report on the status of the Santa Clara-Alum Rock Transit Improvement Project.

6. Santa Clara-Alum Rock Transit Improvement Project – Median Busway

Kevin Connolly, Transportation Planning Manager, introduced Andrew Ittigson, Senior Planner, who is working on the project.

Mr. Connolly reported that staff has been working with the City of San José regarding the median width of the busway in Alum Rock. He stated that the width of the busway would

affect street parking and the width of the sidewalk. He noted that 25-feet is the minimum width needed to provide adequate clearance between the buses, but it will not be enough for Light Rail conversion. He stated that 26-feet is the minimum width needed for conversion to Light Rail in the future. Staff is recommending 26-feet busway for the environmental document.

Mr. Connolly reported that the ultimate design for project will be developed through the continuous work of staff with Caltrans and the City of San José.

Ray Salvano, Senior Civil Engineer, City of San José Department of Transportation, reported that the City of San José has been working with VTA staff and the redevelopment agency to develop a project design that would cater to the business district and the BRT.

Member Alvarado inquired about bicycle lanes in the project. Mr. Salvano responded that the current configuration would not support bicycle lanes. He added that other routes that would support the bicycle lanes are to be determined.

Member Cortese expressed concern on the safety of bicyclists heading toward transit stations. Mr. Salvano responded that there are other bicycle lane improvements that are in the north and south direction that connects to the Jackson and Alum Rock stations.

On Order of Chairperson Campos, there being no objection, the Committee received a report on the status of the Santa Clara-Alum Rock Transit Improvement Project – Median Busway.

7. ADJOURNMENT

On order of Chairperson Campos, there being no objection, the meeting adjourned at 10:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Diaresco, Board Assistant
VTA Board of Directors