

Downtown East Valley Policy Advisory Board

Thursday, December 4, 2008
3:00 PM

East Wing, Lower Level Conference Room
70 West Hedding Street
San Jose, CA

AGENDA

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

2. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS:

This portion of the meeting is reserved for persons desiring to address the Board of Directors on any item within the Board's jurisdiction. Speakers are limited to 2 minutes. The law does not permit Board action or extended discussion of any item not on the agenda except under special circumstances. If Board action is requested, the matter can be placed on a subsequent agenda. All statements that require a response will be referred to staff for reply in writing.

3. INFORMATION ITEM - Receive staff recognition of outgoing DTEV PAB Members.

4. Approve Minutes of June 12, 2008.

5. Receive and file Minutes of September 4, 2008.

6. INFORMATION ITEM - Receive the Status Report for Capitol Expressway Light Rail Project.

7. INFORMATION ITEM - Receive a status report of activities on the Santa Clara-Alum Rock Transit Improvement Project for the period beginning September 2008 and ending November 2008.

8. INFORMATION ITEM - Receive a status report for the Santa Clara - Alum Rock Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) EIR.

9. ADJOURN

In compliance with the Americans with Disability Act (ADA), those requiring accommodations for this meeting should notify the Board Secretary's Office 48 hours prior to the meeting at (408) 321-5680



Date: November 25, 2008
Current Meeting: December 4, 2008
Board Meeting: December 11, 2008

BOARD MEMORANDUM

TO: Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority
Downtown East Valley Policy Advisory Board

THROUGH: General Manager, Michael T. Burns

FROM: Chief CMA Officer, John Ristow

SUBJECT: Staff Recognition of Outgoing DTEV PAB Members

FOR INFORMATION ONLY

VTA staff would like to recognize the commitment and service of the three outgoing members of the Downtown East Valley Policy Advisory Board. Supervisors Blanca Alvarado and Pete McHugh and Vice Mayor David Cortese have provided valuable insight and guidance on projects in the study area over their many years of service. We thank them for their service on this advisory board and their support for transit, and we wish the best in their future endeavors.

Prepared By: Andrew Ittigson, Senior Planner

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-foot 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



Downtown East Valley Policy Advisory Board

Thursday, September 4, 2008

MINUTES

1. The Regular Meeting of the Downtown East Valley Policy Advisory Board (PAB) was called to order at 4:31 p.m. by Vice Chairperson Liccardo in the Conference Room 157, Santa Clara County Government Center, 70 West Hedding Street, San Jose, California.

ROLL CALL

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Sam Liccardo	Vice Chairperson	Present	
Pete McHugh		Present	
Blanca Alvarado		Absent	
Nora Campos	Chairperson	Absent	
David Cortese		Absent	

A quorum was not present and a Committee of a Whole was declared.

2. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

There were no Public Presentations.

3. Approve Minutes of June 12, 2008.

On Order of Vice Chairperson Liccardo, there being no objection, the Committee of the Whole deferred the Minutes of June 12, 2008.

4. East San Jose Community Based Transportation Plan

Jody Littlehales, Transportation Planner, provided a brief background regarding the East San Jose Community Based Transportation Plan (CBTP). She reported that the plan would identify transportation needs, solutions to address them, and explore funding opportunities. Highlights of the report are as follows: 1) Established a Project Working Group; 2) Creation of a "Project Fact Sheet" to get the community involved; and 3) Community Outreach by organizing three focus group meetings.

Ms. Littlehales noted that staff will distribute the fact sheet/survey through the end of September and the findings would be presented to the Neighborhood Advisory Committees. She added that the survey report would be included in the final CBTP.

Member McHugh inquired on the timeline for the East San Jose CBTP and the Milpitas CBTP. Ms. Littlehales responded that the East San Jose CBTP would be completed by December 2008 and the Milpitas CBTP would start early 2009.

Vice Chairperson Liccardo inquired if the final CBTP would be incorporated to the Valley Transportation Plan (VTP) 2035. John Ristow, Chief CMA Officer, responded that the CBTP would not be incorporated in the VTP 2035, but it would be eligible under the Lifeline Program that would receive funding from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission.

Kevin Connolly, Transportation Planning Manager, commented that the CBTP is a comprehensive way to examine the bicycle and pedestrian issues on East San Jose.

On Order of Vice Chairperson Liccardo, there being no objection, the Committee of the Whole received an update on the East San Jose Community Based Transportation Plan.

5. Status of the Santa Clara-Alum Rock Project

Kevin Connolly, Transportation Planning Manager, reported on the updated project timeline. He noted that the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) would be presented to the San Jose City Council on November 2008 and presented to the VTA Board for certification on December 2008.

Mr. Connolly reported on the Draft EIR public hearing that was held on July 17, 2008 at the Mexican Heritage Plaza. He provided the Policy Advisory Board with the following public comments on the impacts of the project: 1) Concern regarding diesel buses; 2) Desire for clean burning technologies; 3) Parking concerns; and 4) Improve safety and security.

Mr. Connolly reported that staff conducted Community Outreach focusing on business owners. He noted that the presentations included the updated project information, project impacts, and station renderings and design schematics.

Mr. Connolly reported that Caltrans supports the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project. He noted that the project is progressing as scheduled. He added that VTA and City staffs are in both in alignment regarding the project with some issues that are expected to be resolved in the near future.

Member McHugh expressed concern on the low turn out of the business owners that attended the Community Outreach meeting. Mr. Connolly explained that despite the low turn out, staff was able to provide information regarding the project and address the community's concerns by conducting a walk-thru of the businesses along the corridor.

Vice Chairperson Liccardo inquired about the community's reaction regarding the loss of on-street parking due to the project. Mr. Connolly responded that the parking issue was a major concern of the residents. He noted that staff expects to receive more input and concerns from the community as the project progresses.

John Ristow, Chief CMA Officer, stated that staff will be working with the City of San Jose to locate alternative parking spaces.

Vice Chairperson Liccardo inquired if Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) or other technologies are being considered for the BRT. Mr. Ristow responded that hybrid diesel technology is being considered for the BRT.

Mr. Connolly commented that a study for the BRT strategic plan is being conducted and it would address vehicle procurement in the future. It would explore the different alternative technologies for the BRT.

On Order of Vice Chairperson Liccardo, there being no objection, the Committee of the Whole received a report on the status of the Santa Clara-Alum Rock Project.

6. Status Report for Capitol Expressway Light Rail Project

Mark Robinson, Acting Chief Engineering and Construction Officer, reported that the following are completed activities for the project: 1) Supplemental Environmental Document has been certified; 2) Final design drawings have been prepared to a 95% level; 3) Initial right-of-way documents have been prepared; and 4) Substantial completion of utility relocation design.

Mr. Robinson reported on the following current work items for the project: 1) Review of right-of-way mapping; 2) Schedule of appraisal; 3) Continuous work with utility companies to receive final utility relocation plans; and 4) Coordinate with City of San Jose staff to meet design requirements.

On Order of Vice Chairperson Liccardo, there being no objection, the Committee of the Whole received a status report for the Capitol Expressway Light Rail Project.

7. ADJOURN

On order of Vice Chairperson Liccardo, there being no objection, the Committee of the Whole adjourned the meeting at 4:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Diaresco, Board Assistant
VTA Board of Directors



Date: November 25, 2008
Current Meeting: December 4, 2008
Board Meeting: December 4, 2008

BOARD MEMORANDUM

TO: Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority
Downtown East Valley Policy Advisory Board

THROUGH: General Manager, Michael T. Burns

FROM: Acting Chief Engineering & Construction Officer, Mark S. Robinson

SUBJECT: Status Report for Capitol Expressway Light Rail Project

FOR INFORMATION ONLY

The project status for the Eastridge Extension of the Capitol Expressway Light Rail Project can be summarized as follows:

- Right-of-way documents are in process of updating. This is scheduled to be complete by March 2009
- Utility design is complete. Next step will be to execute an agreement for utility relocation and purchase of materials. Utility relocations can begin as early as 2010 once property is acquired.
- Light Rail Design is complete. Bid documents can be ready by late 2009 and construction can begin as soon as late 2010 once utilities are relocated.

Also, for information, the Board Workshop for the 2000 Measure A Transit Improvement Program scheduled for December 11, 2008 will include a presentation for the Capitol Expressway LRT Project. The presentation highlights will include the project background, status, key issues and next steps.

Prepared By: Ken Ronsse



Date: November 25, 2008
 Current Meeting: December 4, 2008
 Board Meeting: December 11, 2008

BOARD MEMORANDUM

TO: Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority
 Downtown East Valley Policy Advisory Board

THROUGH: General Manager, Michael T. Burns

FROM: Chief CMA Officer, John Ristow

SUBJECT: Status of the Santa Clara-Alum Rock Project

FOR INFORMATION ONLY

This memorandum presents a status report of activities on the Santa Clara-Alum Rock Transit Improvement Project for the period beginning September 2008 and ending November 2008.

DISCUSSION:

Project Schedule

The VTA Board of Directors is scheduled to certify the Final EIR for the Santa Clara - Alum Rock Transit Improvement Project on December 11, 2008. Following that approval, staff will begin a RFP process for an on-call consultant list for upcoming BRT projects. At the conclusion of the RFP process, the project will move forward into Preliminary Engineering for Phase I - BRT in Spring 2009. The construction phase of the project is expected to begin in Spring 2011 and conclude in Summer/Fall 2012 with revenue service starting in Fall 2012.

Activity	Start Date	End Date
Present EIR to VTA Board for Certification	-	Dec. 11, 2008
RFP for On-Call BRT Consultants	Winter 2009	Spring 2009
Preliminary Engineering	Spring 2009	Spring 2010
Final Design	Spring 2010	Winter 2010
Construction	Spring 2011	Summer/Fall 2012
First Day of Service	-	Fall 2012

Bus Rapid Transit Strategic Plan and BRT Brand Identity

VTA is developing an integrated Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) network linking activity centers throughout the county. As an initial step to developing this network, staff is working with a consultant team and city stakeholders to develop a BRT Strategic Plan. The goals of the BRT Strategic Plan are to 1) establish a brand identity for VTA's future network of BRT services; 2)

evaluate the feasibility and effectiveness of developing BRT facilities in the candidate corridors, and; 3) develop an action plan for implementation in each corridor.

The first task in the Strategic Plan was an industry review that indicated the creation of a distinctive and effective brand identity is a common element to all successful BRT projects. A strong and recognizable brand identity expresses to customers and the general public the value and purpose of a product. This is done through colors, images and product features that all reinforce a unifying message.

VTA engaged a marketing and branding consultant team with previous experience in BRT branding to help with developing a brand identity that would convey the unique attributes of BRT but still identify it as a VTA service. The design team developed names, logos and color schemes that met the following criteria:

- Works in concert with the current VTA identity
- Seen as modern with high level amenities and facilities
- Conveys reliability and permanence
- Distinguished from other VTA services
- Conveys fast service and reflects speed

After a set of final names, logos and color schemes were developed with VTA staff, the final candidates were tested with target market segments. Testing occurred with 1) focus groups of both riders and non-riders, and 2) through an on-line survey targeting both riders and non-riders. The results of this research indicated a strong preference for specific branding elements.

The brand identity will be used in the near-term as the basis for Santa Clara/Alum Rock Preliminary Engineering and for developing the specifications for VTA's order of new hybrid articulated buses. In addition, the branding will help define design detail for stations and other public improvements as the project moves into the preliminary engineering phase.

State Route 130 Replenishment, Caltrans Coordination

Staff members from VTA, the City of San Jose and Caltrans District 4 met on October 22, 2008 to discuss the status of the project and the possible relinquishment of State Route 130 (Alum Rock Avenue) from the State to the City. While there is no firm schedule for relinquishment of the facility, all parties seemed to agree that it would eventually move to City ownership. As a result, an agreement between all the parties recognizing this shift in ownership will need to be developed before the project proceeds through the next phases of design.

Prepared By: Andrew Ittigson, Senior Planner



Date: November 25, 2008
Current Meeting: December 4, 2008
Board Meeting: December 11, 2008

BOARD MEMORANDUM

TO: Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority
Downtown East Valley Policy Advisory Board

THROUGH: General Manager, Michael T. Burns

FROM: Chief CMA Officer, John Ristow

SUBJECT: Santa Clara-Alum Rock Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) EIR

FOR INFORMATION ONLY

The Transit Planning & Operations (TP&O) Committee approved the Santa Clara - Alum Rock Transit Improvement Project at its November 20, 2008 meeting through the following actions:

1. Recommended to certify the Final Environmental Impact Report(EIR)
2. Adopted the Findings
3. Adopted the Mitigation and Monitoring and Reporting Program
4. Adopted the recommended project description, Phase I- Bus Rapid Transit.

The VTA Board of Directors will consider the certification of the Final EIR at the December 11, 2008 meeting.

A copy of the memorandum to the VTA Board of Directors recommending approval is provided in Attachment A. A copy of the Final EIR is provided in attachment B.

Prepared By: Andrew Ittigson, Senior Planner



Date: November 10, 2008
 Current Meeting: December 11, 2008
 Board Meeting: December 11, 2008

BOARD MEMORANDUM

TO: Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority
 Board of Directors

THROUGH: General Manager, Michael T. Burns

FROM: Chief CMA Officer, John Ristow

SUBJECT: Santa Clara/Alum Rock Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) EIR Certification

Policy-Related Action: No

Government Code Section 84308 Applies: No

ACTION ITEM

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the Santa Clara-Alum Rock Transit Improvement Project through the following actions:

1. Certify that the Final Environmental Impact Report:
 - a. Meets the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act.
 - b. Represents the independent judgment of VTA as the Lead Agency; and
 - c. Was presented to the VTA Board of Directors for review and consideration.
2. Adopt the Findings, including the following:
 - a. Findings; and
 - b. Facts in Support of Findings.
3. Adopt a Mitigation and Monitoring and Reporting Program.
4. Adopt the recommended project description, which calls for implementing Phase I- Bus Rapid Transit.

BACKGROUND:

VTA has prepared a Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the Santa Clara-Alum Rock (SCAR) Transit Improvement Project.

The Santa Clara-Alum Rock Corridor is one of three transportation corridors for which major transit improvements were prepared as part of the Downtown East Valley Major Investment Study (MIS) begun in early 1999. Since completion of the MIS, several planning studies have been conducted to determine the feasibility and effectiveness of developing various transit modes in the Corridor. In October 2007, the VTA Board adopted a near-term investment strategy of

immediate development of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in the Corridor with the flexibility of later conversion to Single Car Light Rail Transit (LRT) after completion of the Silicon Valley Rapid Transit (SVRT) Project in 2018.

DISCUSSION:

The Draft EIR evaluated the SCAR Transit Improvement Project as a phased alternative. Phase 1 is implementation of BRT for the corridor and Phase 2 is a transition to LRT for the corridor. Due to construction of the BART extension in downtown San Jose, it is anticipated that it would not be feasible to implement LRT until 2021. Therefore, for the purpose of the current project approval and for the purpose of approval of Findings (Attachment A) and the Mitigation and Monitoring and Reporting Plan (Attachment B), only Phase I- BRT is proposed. It is anticipated that supplemental environmental re-evaluation would be needed at the time Phase 2 is implemented.

Phase I - BRT would provide BRT service between the San Jose Diridon Station on the west to Capitol Avenue and Eastridge Transit Center on the east. BRT service would utilize articulated vehicles (approximately 60 feet in length) and would operate at 6-minute headways during peak periods. BRT service would include 13 new stations. BRT service would include the following features:

- Stations (curb side “bulb-out” or median "split platform" designs)
- Dedicated median busway on Alum Rock Avenue
- Off-board fare collection
- Specialized, hybrid vehicles
- Real-time information at stops
- Transit priority measures, such as signal priority, where appropriate.

The Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the Draft EIR was released on November 1, 2007 for a 30-day comment period to identify issues of concern regarding the SCAR Transit Improvement Project and to incorporate comments into analysis for the Draft EIR. A public scoping meeting was held on November 14, 2007 at City Hall in San Jose. The meeting included a staff presentation and display boards depicting project alternatives. Twenty comment cards, letters, or emails were submitted during the scoping process

The Draft EIR was released on July 7, 2008 for a 45-day public review period that ended August 21, 2008. A public hearing on the Draft EIR was held on July 17, 2008 at the Mexican Heritage Plaza in San Jose. The meeting included a staff presentation with VTA staff available to discuss the findings of the Draft EIR and provide agencies and the public with opportunities to provide comments on the issues addressed in the document. The original comment period was also extended at the request of public agency stakeholders. Twenty-seven letters, faxes, emails, or comment cards were submitted as comments on the Draft EIR.

The following areas of concern were raised in the comments received:

- Loss of on-street parking
- Loss of parking and traffic impacts at Diridon Station for the LRT phase
- Storage capacity for traffic at freeway on-ramps
- Width of sidewalks

- Bicycle access and safety
- Pedestrian safety, especially for students, for LRT phase
- Impacts to Coyote Creek and surrounding vegetation for LRT phase
- Air quality impacts from diesel emissions
- Construction impacts, including Five Wounds Church
- Support for BRT phase, LRT phase, and No-build alternative
- Long-term carbon imprint
- Use of electronic tickets

These comments and VTA's responses to comments are included in the Final EIR as well as changes to the Draft EIR, as required. The Final EIR will be distributed to all who commented at least 10 days prior to the Board meeting.

The actions required to complete the environmental review process and approve the SCAR Transit Improvement Project are listed below:

1. Certification of the FEIR as adequately addressing the environmental impacts;
2. Adoption of Findings. This acknowledges that there are no significant and unavoidable impacts with implementation of proposed mitigation measures;
3. Adoption of the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan to ensure that the mitigation measures in the Final EIR are implemented; and
4. Approval of Phase I - BRT of the SCAR Transit Improvement Project as described in Chapter 2 of the Final EIR.

ALTERNATIVES:

The Final EIR evaluated the proposed project which consists of BRT-Phase I and LRT-Phase 2. In addition, the Final EIR evaluated the No-Project Alternative. The No Project Alternative includes the current bus network and LRT system and assumes the construction of BART to San Jose.

The No Project Alternative would avoid many of the impacts of the proposed project. In particular, it would not include the traffic, visual quality, hazardous materials, and construction impacts of the proposed project. In addition, the No Project Alternative would avoid biological and energy impacts of the LRT-Phase 2 portion of the proposed project. However, the No Project Alternative would have impacts on the physical environment by failing to address continuing long-term congestion and traffic-related air quality and energy impacts. In addition, the No Project Alternative would not achieve the project objectives of improving mobility, increasing transit ridership, promoting livable neighborhoods, and meeting the needs of transit dependent residents.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no direct Fiscal Impact as a result of the certification of the Final EIR. The SCAR Transit Improvement Project is part of the 2000 Measure A Transit Improvement Program approved by the voters. The project capital cost (estimated current year) is \$128 million. The identified funding sources are: 1) \$38 million – Local (Measure A); and 2) \$90 million – State (Proposition 1B). There will be an increase in operating cost as a result of higher levels of

service resulting from Bus Rapid Transit features such as on-board fare collection and station maintenance.

STANDING COMMITTEE DISCUSSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

Prepared by: Roy Molseed

Attachment B

Santa Clara-Alum Transit Improvement Project EIR

(The EIR will be sent to members of the VTA Board of Directors prior to the December 11, 2008 meeting. Copies of the EIR are available upon request)