

CONGESTION MANAGEMENT PROGRAM & PLANNING COMMITTEE

Thursday, January 19, 2006

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Meeting of the Congestion Management Program & Planning Committee (CMPP) was called to order at 10:35 a.m. by Chairperson Kniss in Room 157, County Government Center, 70 West Hedding Street, San Jose, California.

ROLL CALL

Members Present

Nora Campos, Vice Chairperson
Cindy Chavez
Dennis Kennedy
Liz Kniss, Chairperson

Members Absent

None

Alternates Present

None

Alternates Absent

Pete McHugh
Al Pinheiro
Ken Yeager

* Alternates do not serve unless participating as a Member.

A quorum was present.

Chairperson Kniss welcomed new member Dennis Kennedy, representing the City of Morgan Hill.

2. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

There were no Public Presentations.

3. **ORDERS OF THE DAY**

There were no Orders of the Day.

CONSENT AGENDA

4. **Minutes of December 15, 2005**

M/S/C (Chavez/Kennedy) to approve the Minutes of December 15, 2005.

5. **Programmed Projects Quarterly Monitoring Report for October to December 2005**

John Ristow, Programming & Project Development Deputy Director, noted that this report aims to assist in monitoring progress of projects programmed by VTA.

Upon inquiry of Member Kennedy, Mr. Ristow explained that obligation of funds mean that the project has passed through the federal authorization to proceed with the project. Once approved, call for bids will follow.

Michael T. Burns, General Manager, advised the Committee that Carolyn Gonot, Chief Development Officer, will give an overview of the Programmed Projects Quarterly Monitoring Report at a future meeting.

Member Chavez noted that it may be helpful to include information on local funding source of projects with local funding component. With this information, the VTA Board of Directors will be aware of local cities or county contribution. She added that information about other funding sources such as Measure B should also be included. She noted that this will assist in educating the public that money is spent on projects that are important to them.

Mr. Ristow stated that through VTA and city coordination, there is a 100 percent project delivery.

On order of Chairperson Kniss, the Committee reviewed the Programmed Projects Quarterly Monitoring Report for October to December 2005.

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

6. **Monthly Legislative Report for December 2005**

Chairperson Kniss expressed concern on the non-submittal of State monthly reports from Smitt, Watts & Company for the last two months.

On order of Chairperson Kniss, the Committee reviewed the Monthly Legislative Report for December 2005.

REGULAR AGENDA

7. **Election of Vice Chairperson for 2006**

M/S/C (Chavez/Kennedy) to close nomination and elect Nora Campos as the Congestion Management Program & Planning Committee Vice Chairperson for 2006.

8. **Freeway Litter Control and Landscape Maintenance Program – Final Report**

Mr. Ristow provided a brief background highlighting that the approved Valley Transportation Plan (VTP) 2030 included a category that allowed staff to investigate and find solutions regarding landscaping, graffiti, and liter removal. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) discussed the issue and staff conducted the study to examine the problem and determine strategies to provide remedies.

John Sighamony, Transportation Planner, presented a PowerPoint Presentation on Freeway Litter Control and Landscape Maintenance Study. Mr. Sighamony noted that the study was instigated by VTP 2030, aims to quantify the problem, and attempts to develop standards and long-term implementation strategies for Santa Clara County.

Mr. Sighamony clarified that the study is focused on freeways. He discussed the initial findings and noted the following: the volume of litter is dictated by public behavior and could be reduced through public education process, landscape maintenance is affected by the types of landscaping installed and the length of maintenance agreements, State has reduced maintenance budget allocations for the past few years, and Caltrans District 4 (nine Bay Area Counties) ranked last in the State Roadside conditions. Mr. Sighamony added that Santa Clara County ranked next to last within District 4.

In the course of the study, standards were developed for litter control and landscape maintenance. Visual Standard pertains to how freeways would look and Level of Effort Standard pertains on the frequency of clean up.

Mr. Sighamony discussed the Visual Standards and showed photos to depict the four types of litter scale. No Litter means virtually no litter on the freeway, Slightly littered means obvious small amounts of litter, Littered means litter could be readily seen along the freeway or ramps, and Extremely Littered means litter is the first seen on freeways.

Mr. Sighamony discussed the Visual Standards - Landscape Vegetation Scale and provided visuals for each scale. The three landscape vegetation scales are: 1) Attractive – well maintained landscape with healthy plants, trimmed bushes or trees, and no weeds; 2) Decent – landscape with generally healthy plants with appropriately trimmed bushes or trees and some weeds, and; 3) Neglected – dead/dying trees and or evident irrigation problems.

Dawn Cameron, Planning Consultant, provided the locations for the photos shown.

Mr. Sighamony noted that staff recommendation on Visual Standards are slightly littered and decent landscape/vegetation as the minimum standard on freeway network and a “no litter appearance” after litter pick-up. Another litter pick-up will be conducted when freeways degrade to slightly littered.

Mr. Sighamony noted the current and proposed Levels of Effort including: full advantage of Adopt-A-Highway (AAH) program, increase frequency of pick-up on freeways from 12 times to 24 times a year, promote vegetation control adoptions with minimum of 12 times a year, and adoption requirement is to maintain the whole appearance of ramp/gateway including litter removal, landscape maintenance, vegetation control, tree/shrub planting replacement, and etc.

Mr. Sighamony presented a map of the AAH segments in Santa Clara County and noted that out of the 212 segments, 166 are adopted. Some areas are not adoptable due to safety concerns.

For implementation, staff recommends that Caltrans Litter and Landscaping Program be improved or expanded, reduce litter volume and maintenance requirements, and come up with alternative institutional agreements such as providing local funds.

Upon inquiry of Member Chavez, Mr. Sighamony responded that Santa Clara County is not doing as much of the litter clean up by inmates compared to Southern California due to budget issues.

Mr. Sighamony discussed the recommended strategies stating that there should be advocacy for more state maintenance resources; request set asides for litter control and landscape maintenance when there are new funding initiatives; adopt policies to incorporate long-term maintenance in funding capital budgets; formation of a collaborative between VTA, Caltrans, Local Agencies, and other partners, and; recommend a six-month pilot program to implement strategies.

Mr. Sighamony noted that good candidates for the pilot program are US 101 from SR 85 in San Jose to SR 237 in Mountain View and SR 17/I-880 from SR 85 in Los Gatos to SR 237 in Milpitas. For the pilot program, staff envisions that Caltrans will work with the AAH participants to increase frequency of pick ups to 24 times a year, Caltrans and cities will solicit sponsors or volunteers for vegetation control adoptions for key

gateways/ramps within the pilot program sections, Caltrans in coordination with cities and partners will conduct a baseline effort in the pilot program sections, and special efforts will be made to maintain conditions to minimum visual standards during the six-month pilot program.

Chairperson Kniss commented that the two sections for candidate pilot programs were very good selections.

Member Kennedy recommended that strategies for implementation should include increased enforcement on litter violators and perform media blitz.

Upon inquiry of Member Campos, Ms. Cameron clarified that the study does not recommend the two locations mentioned but instead recommends that a collaborative taskforce be formed to select and make formal recommendation the pilot program location. The freeway sections mentioned in the study were only chosen due to their state of litter, its location in the county, and it represents 25 percent of the total freeway mileage. Ms. Cameron explained that the study aims to determine what it takes to clean up the freeways. Ms. Cameron that there are many issues involved in increasing the AAH frequency to 24 times a year.

Mr. Sighamony noted that there are local litter groups like Keep San Jose Beautiful and Keep America Beautiful. The intent is to bring these groups to the table to provide knowledge and expertise in this issue. Upon inquiry of Member Campos, Mr. Sighamony noted that there will be an educational component in the discussion.

Mr. Ristow noted that VTA's involvement in this issue will be that of a facilitator to ensure that Caltrans stays on track of the issue.

Member Campos expressed appreciation for the effort, as there are many people who complain about litter. She commented that the recommendation to create a taskforce is a good idea to ensure that people "buy-in" to the program.

Member Chavez expressed concern that there is no real strategy to make Caltrans do the clean up and get where the community wants to be in terms of litter clean up. She noted that the recommendations are good but feels "soft." She commented that this issue is in an emergency level. She suggested that policy and political strategies be included and request to Caltrans regarding litter control should be very clear and distinct.

Member Kennedy stated that Oakland applied political pressure to Caltrans and they were successful. He noted the importance of coming together and creating an assertive plan to make Caltrans address the County's litter control.

Chairperson Kniss commented that Santa Clara County should get a fair share of litter control effort from Caltrans. She expressed concern that so many of the County's highways are very unclean.

Ms. Cameron noted that there are issues on the Caltrans "fair share" argument. She explained that when cost of litter clean up per mile is used as basis, the amount spent for Santa Clara County is comparable to other places. She added that the problem lies in the number of miles and population. She noted that it would take more effort and resources to make Santa Clara County's freeways to look as good as other parts of California.

Member Chavez noted that Caltrans should be aware that litter control is a priority. She noted the importance of examining the request to make sure that it is reasonable, compared to other places. She added that since Santa Clara County's freeways are more congested, population should be taken into consideration.

Member Campos expressed concern that the plan of action should be more assertive and noted the need to revisit the issues and strategies involving litter control.

Mr. Ristow noted that the pilot project's goal is to obtain a quantitative data that will determine how much effort and resources are needed to maintain the freeways at the level that the community wants. He noted that it may be more difficult to do it on a broadbased countywide effort.

Member Chavez suggested that VTA connect with the City of San Jose staff as the city's staff has had discussions with Caltrans regarding costs.

Member Kennedy commented that the information from the pilot study will be helpful. He referred to Ms. Cameron's comments on the "fair share" argument and commented that using population or any measure of intensity of use as a basis is more appropriate.

Ms. Cameron noted that Districts 11 and 12 have put a lot more resources for litter control. She noted utilization of AAH Program and Probationary Program make their litter control successful.

Member Chavez reiterated the importance of enforcement and noted that it is key in making litter control efforts effective. She suggested examining landscape designs as part of the litter control program.

Chairperson Kniss noted that worse intersections should be identified as well, with US 101 coming off to First Street in San Jose as an example. Chairperson Kniss noted that litter control is a major issue and expressed concern that there is no sense of ownership in cleaning up freeways. She stressed the importance of working with Caltrans.

Mr. Burns noted that the TAC had considerable discussion regarding the program. He suggested that since the program is not aggressive as it should be, the comments at today's meeting be referred back to TAC. After TAC, the program will come back to CMPP prior to taking it to the full Board.

Chairperson Kniss referred to the safety issues associated with litter on freeways and recommended exploring options on how to get law enforcement involved in litter control.

Chairperson Kniss noted the importance of following up with the County with the utilization of the Probationary Program as they do in Southern California. She noted that this item will be referred to TAC then back to CMPP on February/March 2006.

Mr. Sighamony thanked the Committee for their comments.

On order of Chairperson Kniss, the Committee deferred the Freeway Litter Control and Landscape Maintenance Program to February/March 2006.

9. Recommended VTA Quarter Cent Sales Tax Scenario

Mr. Burns provided a brief background noting that today's presentation on the modified VTA Scenario was based on the new projections. The same presentation was given to all Advisory Committees the prior week. Staff is preparing a summary of their comments and will be available prior to the Board workshop on Friday, January 27, 2006.

Jim Lawson, Government Affairs Manager, reviewed the 2000 Measure A, major projects, and negative effects of economic downturn to VTA. He discussed the creation of the Ad-Hoc Financial Stability Committee, which examined methods on how to continue VTA operations and how to deliver of Measure A projects.

Mr. Lawson provided an overview of the history of the expenditure plan and noted that it was developed based on the many workshops and regular meetings of the Board of Directors. He noted the three significant meetings about the expenditure plan: September 16, 2005, November 3, 2005, and December 1, 2005.

Mr. Lawson noted that VTA received new annual sales tax projections, which affected the VTA Scenario. He pointed out that VTA's new projections were only slightly changed. He also presented projections by other cities for comparison and noted that cities are more dependent on property taxes than sales taxes.

Jack Collins, Chief Construction Officer, compared the previous and modified VTA Scenario. He noted that the major difference between the two is that the completion plan would not have any projects as all projects could be completed. The modified VTA Scenario has a positive ending balance of \$537 million, maintains reserves at 15 percent, advances BART from 2018 to 2016 completion date, advances light rail to Eastridge from 2018 to 2012, advances light rail to Nieman by 2017, advances light rail to Los Gatos by 2012, and Santa Clara/Alum Rock by 2021 if single car light rail mode is selected. Mr. Collins noted that on Santa Clara/Alum Rock, although a mode has not been decided, staff put in the most expensive mode in the VTA Scenario.

Mr. Collins further reviewed the projects with the new projections noting that the VTA Scenario restores the previous 10 percent funding cut for Caltrain, completes Caltrain Electrification by 2018, provides for Caltrain service improvements, provides for 8.4 miles of Caltrain double tracking in South County by 2010, completes Dumbarton Rail by 2011, provides Altamont Commuter Express (ACE) upgrades, completes Airport People Mover by 2018, initiates new Bus Rapid Transits projects on Monterey Road and Stevens Creek by 2011, provides \$718 million for local streets and roads, county roads and bicycle and pedestrian path improvement program, provides \$130 million Bus Rapid Transit Project in Sunnyvale/Cupertino, gradually increases VTA service to 24 percent, provides for new senior/disabled programs, and provides \$2.7 billion in BART Operating subsidy to 2038.

Mr. Collins stated that the Santa Clara County (SCC) Board of Supervisors, VTA Advisory and Standing Committees reviewed the VTA Scenario. Other parties such as the cities of Milpitas, Cupertino, Gilroy, and Morgan Hill have requested presentation from VTA Staff. Mr. Collins stated that the SCC Board of Supervisors have deferred decision on the VTA Scenario next week while the City Council of Milpitas had an affirmative vote. Upcoming actions include the VTA Board Action on February 2006. Once approved, there will be future discussions on the ballot initiative.

Upon request of Member Campos, Mr. Ristow read the ballot language relating to the Santa Clara/Alum Rock project from Measure A.

Member Campos expressed concern on the timeline of the Santa Clara/Alum Rock (Downtown East Valley Light Rail) project.

Stephen Levy, Center for Continuing Study of the California Economy (CCSCE), noted that VTA's decision on the economic forecast represents a public statement on VTA's faith on Silicon Valley economy. Mr. Levy stated that the changes CCSCE between last year and this year caused the modification of VTA's projections.

Mr. Levy pointed out that evidence shows that Silicon Valley's economy has bottomed out and turned up a tiny bit. Mr. Levy noted that it has been VTA's practice to use the average of the moderate and conservative projections. He explained that the modification of VTA's projection was brought about by the increase of CCSCE's conservative projection from 3 percent last year to 4.7 percent this year. He further explained that the dominant factor for this change in conservative projection is due to the rate of wage increase and data from 2004 and 2005 showed a significant wage growth in Silicon Valley, despite of a flat job growth. Therefore, the CCSCE raised its conservative growth in average wages per year projection for 2004-2015 to 5.1 percent. This figure is lower than what has occurred in any period since 1990.

Mr. Levy also attributed the positive change to cities' efforts in building more housing in the County. He explained that due to more housing, the shared jobs by commuters is dropping, which translates to more residents spending their money in the County.

Mr. Levy referred to Slide #12 – County Lags State in Retail Sales as Share of Income, and noted that since the late 1990's County residents have spent less percentage of their income to taxable sales compared to California. Mr. Levy noted that this could be attributed to the decline of automobile sales in the County.

On Slide #13 there was a decline in the Projected Share of Income Spent on Taxable Retail Sales. Mr. Levy noted that people may have been scared of the uncertainty and started cutting back on expenses. He noted however, based on circumstances this year, people will begin to modestly spend like they do in other counties.

Mr. Levy noted that Santa Clara County does considerable amount of business-to-business sales. The current moderate projection shows that business-to-business spending will go back to its 2000 level by 2015 while the conservative projection shows that it will never go back to the 2000 level.

Mr. Levy clarified that his duty is only to provide figures and not to make any recommendations on which projections VTA should use. Mr. Levy noted that the CCSCE provides projections every year and the report becomes a living document. He commented that the annual review process is an important tool as there are no certainties in projections.

Member Chavez thanked Mr. Levy for the presentation and inquired about the source of the business-to-business spending growth. Mr. Levy responded that it could be attributed to the price increases. Mr. Levy noted, however, that the projection does not suggest volume increase because Silicon Valley has now become more service-oriented.

Member Chavez whether the annual evaluation is appropriate and further inquired if it would make more sense to look at projections in a bi-annual process. Member Chavez commented that VTA should consider strategies that allow the Board of Directors to look at details in a deeper level bi-annually versus annually.

Chairperson Kniss noted that this measure should incorporate expressway projects, pavement management, and increased service to disabled and seniors.

On order of Chairperson Kniss, the Committee reviewed the Recommended VTA Scenario to the VTA Board of Directors.

OTHER ITEMS

10. Committee Work Plan

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

11. **Committee Staff Report**

There was no Committee Staff Report.

12. **Chairperson's Report**

There was no Chairperson's Report.

13. **Determine Consent Agenda for February 2, 2006 Board of Directors Meeting**

CONSENT: None

REGULAR: None

14. **Announcements**

There were no Announcements.

15. **ADJOURNMENT**

On order of Chairperson Kniss, there being no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 12:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine F. Baltao, Board Assistant
VTA Board of Directors