

Date: June 5, 2007  
Committee Meeting Date: NA  
Board Meeting Date: June 21, 2007  
ACTION X DISCUSSION        INFO       

**BOARD MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority  
Board of Directors

**THROUGH:** Michael T. Burns  
General Manager

*Michael T. Burns*

**FROM:** Kurt Evans  
Government Affairs Manager

**SUBJECT:** Legislative Positions

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

**Policy-Related Action: Yes      Government Code Section 84308 Applies: No**

Adopt a support position for AB 534 (Smyth).

**BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION:**

AB 534 (Smyth) increases the amount of money transferred from the Highway Users Tax Account to the Bicycle Transportation Account from \$416,667 a month to \$1 million a month. Under the provisions of this legislation, the increase in the monthly transfer would remain in effect until January 1, 2012, or until all Proposition 1B transportation infrastructure bond revenues have been expended, whichever occurs first. At that point, the transfer would return to \$416,667 per month.

Under current law, Caltrans is authorized to allocate funds from the Bicycle Transportation Account to "improve the safety and convenience of bicycle commuters." Funding can be used for the following types of projects:

- ✓ New bikeways.
- ✓ Bicycle-carrying facilities.
- ✓ Installation of traffic control devices to improve bicycle travel.
- ✓ Elimination of hazardous conditions on existing bikeways.
- ✓ Planning, improvement and maintenance of bikeways.

In addition, any city or county may prepare a bicycle transportation plan, which includes a description of existing and proposed bikeways, as well as bicycle facilities and services. A city or county may then submit the approved plan “to Caltrans in connection with an application for funds for bikeways and related facilities which will implement the plan.” Caltrans may grant funds from the Bicycle Transportation Account to local jurisdictions on a matching basis, provided that the applicant covers 10 percent of the total construction cost of the proposed project. In addition, funds from the Bicycle Transportation Account may be used by an applicant to apply for and match federal grants or loans.

From 2001 to 2007, approximately \$45 million was allocated to 176 bicycle projects throughout the state from the Bicycle Transportation Account. During the same time period, however, a total of 684 project applications were submitted, requesting more than \$259 million in funding. These figures underscore the need to provide more assistance to local jurisdictions so that they are able to meet the strong demand for bicycle improvements in their communities.

On May 9, 2007, VTA’s Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) reviewed AB 534 and encouraged the Board of Directors support this measure.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

The Board of Directors could decide to adopt an oppose position for AB 534, or could opt to take no position on this bill at this time.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no immediate fiscal impact associated with this recommendation.