

DOWNTOWN EAST VALLEY POLICY ADVISORY BOARD

Thursday, June 4, 2007

MINUTES

1. The Regular Meeting of the Downtown East Valley Policy Advisory Board (PAB) was called to order at 9:03 a.m. by Chairperson Campos, San José City Hall Tower Room 1446, 200 East Santa Clara Street, San José, California.

ROLL CALL

Members Present

Nora Campos, Chairperson
Dave Cortese
Sam Liccardo, Vice Chairperson

Members Absent

Blanca Alvarado
Pete McHugh

A quorum was present.

2. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

There were no Public Presentations.

The Agenda was taken out of order.

5. Update on Santa Clara/Alum Rock Outreach

Kevin Connolly, Transportation Planning Manager and Staff Liaison, provided an update on the Santa Clara/Alum Rock Outreach highlighting: 1) Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) alternative; 2) Station Design; 3) Outreach efforts to community groups and organizations; 3) Response from residents regarding parking considerations; and the 4) Reduction of stations.

Chairperson Campos asked which segments of the corridor residents have parking concerns. Mr. Connolly answered concerns were raised about “on street parking” in the Alum Rock Avenue business area.

Member Liccardo asked if feedback from the community favors BRT versus Light Rail (LR). Mr. Connolly commented that community feedback indicates a preference toward BRT.

Chairperson Campos inquired about the availability of a Spanish-speaking translator during outreach meetings. Mr. Connolly commented that a translator would be available on an “as needed basis.”

On order of Chairperson Campos, there being no objection, the update on Santa Clara/Alum Rock was received.

6. Bus Rapid Transit

Kevin Connolly, Transportation Planning Manager and Staff Liaison, provided a report entitled, "Bus Rapid Transit-Clean Vehicles," highlighting BRT "clean vehicles" from various public transit agencies.

Mr. Connolly discussed the design of the vehicles and the various types of propulsion technology used to power those vehicles. BRT "clean vehicles" are now utilized and in service in Las Vegas, NV; Cleveland, OH; Boston, MA; Los Angeles, CA; Eugene, OR; and Oakland, CA. Mr. Connolly stated that the community expressed a great deal of interest in the utilization of clean technology vehicles.

Mr. Connolly commented that he would provide a video presentation at a future DTEV PAB meeting depicting either the Los Angeles' Metro BRT or Lane Transit District (LTD) BRT from Eugene, Oregon.

On order of Chairperson Campos, there being no objection, the report on Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) was received.

3. Minutes of April 5, 2007

M/S/C (Liccardo/Cortese) to approve the Minutes of April 5, 2007.

4. Summary of Analysis of Preserving High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lanes on Capitol Expressway

Ken Ronsee, Design and Construction Manager, provided a report entitled, "Capitol Expressway LRT Project-High Occupancy Lane Analysis," highlighting: 1) Project Background; 2) High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lane Background; 3) Current Project Description; 4) Assumptions for HOV Lane Analysis; 5) Options Studied; 5) Northbound HOV Lane; 6) Traffic Impacts to Remove HOV Lanes; 7) Capitol Avenue to Story Road; 8) South of Story Road; 9) North of Ocala Avenue; and 10) Conclusions.

Mr. Ronsee commented that the Evergreen Specific Plan and the Downtown East Valley Major Investment Study established a vision for an Urban Boulevard in the corridor along Capitol Expressway. Mr. Ronsee provided HOV lane background information that included: 1) The Evergreen Specific Plan and DTEV Major Investment Study; and 2) Capitol Expressway Light Rail Project landscaping and pedestrian enhancements. Mr. Ronsee further commented that existing HOV lanes were added as a temporary mitigation measure as a component of the Evergreen Specific Plan with the intention of removing the HOV lanes when light rail was constructed.

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

Mr. Ronsee provided project background highlighting: 1) The Certification of Environmental Impact Report (EIR) in May 2005 that included removal of HOV lanes; 2) Circulation of the Supplemental EIR including removal of HOV lanes in early 2007; 3) Completion schedule of final design slated for mid 2008; and 4) Property acquisition anticipated for fall 2007.

Mr. Ronsee commented that the Light Rail Alignment will consist of a median running along Capitol Avenue to Tully Road with grade separation at Capitol Avenue, Story and Tully Roads and with station locations at Story Road, Ocala Avenue and Eastridge. Mr. Ronsee noted that the Urban Boulevard design would consist of 3 mixed flow traffic lanes in each direction in compliance with the minimum City of San Jose lane width standards and with a no HOV lane scenario. He stated that the continuous multi-use path on the east side of the expressway would contain a 10-foot sidewalk with a six-foot landscape buffer and would be integrated with the Silver Creek trail system. He stated the west side of the expressway would consist of a six-foot standard sidewalk with six feet of landscaping. Mr. Ronsee noted that median treatment and extensive tree planting is planned.

Mr. Ronsee noted that the assumptions for HOV lane analysis include: 1) Maintain the current light rail alignment design; and 2) Maintain current roadway geometry design.

Mr. Ronsee commented that options evaluated in the study indicated that a reversible HOV lane was not feasible and the option of a southbound HOV lane would result in substantial physical impacts. He stated that a northbound HOV lane would allow a choice between the Urban Boulevard and HOV lane concepts. He further stated the traffic impacts to remove HOV lanes highlighting: 1) Level of Service (LOS) 2010; and 2) Travel time in 2010 comparing HOV lanes and Light Rail transportation.

Mr. Ronsee responded that staff has heard strong support from the community endorsing a light rail project with Urban Boulevard amenities. He noted the proposed wide sidewalks, landscaping and bike lanes are consistent with the Board adopted Community Design and Transportation Manual including the Pedestrian Technical Guidelines. Mr. Ronsee commented that to add a northbound HOV lane with Urban Boulevard results in significant environmental impacts that include: 1) Exchange traffic impacts on the expressway for traffic impact along the adjacent neighborhoods; and 2) Inclusion of a HOV lane without landscape could result in a 12 month schedule delay and a \$20 million cost increase. He stated that a northbound HOV lane could be included south of Tully Road with modest impact while maintaining the Urban Boulevard north of Tully Road.

Member Cortese requested clarification from VTA staff regarding the inclusion of planned growth in the Evergreen area in the traffic model. Christina Jaworski, Senior Environmental Planner, commented that the growth in the Evergreen area was considered to the extent possible in the traffic modeling for the Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

She stated that traffic impacts were calculated in 2002 and were based on land-use projections from the City of San José's General Plan. Ms. Jaworski further stated that the traffic model did not include the current development plans for the Evergreen area, which were recently approved by the City of San José.

On order of Chairperson Campos, there being no objection, the Summary of Analysis of Preserving High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lanes on Capitol Expressway was received with the recommendation of forwarding to the Board of Directors at the August 2, 2007 meeting

9. ADJOURNMENT

On order of Chairperson Campos, there being no objection, the meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacqueline F. Golzio, Board Assistant
VTA Board of Directors