

Draft Minutes
Transportation Commission Meeting
Wednesday, January 26, 2022

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Location: Pursuant to Assembly Bill 361 codified at Government Code Section 54953, Transportation Commissioners can attend the meeting via teleconference. The City allows public participation via Zoom.

Legistar Link:

https://alamedaca.gov.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_RdDnLxBeQjuXZhWV-0EQNA

1. Roll Call

Present: Chair Soules, Vice Chair Yuen and Commissioners Kohlstrand, Weitze, Rentschler and Nachtigall.

Absent: Commissioner Michael Hans.

2. Agenda Changes

None.

3. Staff Communications are as shown in the web link here:

<https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5385385&GUID=0524F134-2FC5-47DB-8D47-125D50782A68&FullText=1>.

4. Announcements / Public Comments

Jim Strehlow questioned why July 27, 2022, had been recommended for cancelation. He also had issues with recent City Council decisions about slow streets and beg buttons. He noted there was no public opportunity to question why the City Council had not followed the staff's recommendation. He felt that the public had been left out of the process. He also discussed a recent trip to Orlando Florida where he felt they had very bad bike/pedestrian facilities.

Robert Vance, Public Work Senior Engineer, introduced Tawfic Halaby who had recently joined Public Works as a Supervising Civil Engineer. He would be working on the Capital Improvement Program.

Chair Samantha Soules congratulated Commissioner Randy Rentschler who had recently retired from MTC (Metropolitan Transportation Commission).

5. Consent Calendar

5A. Approve Special Meeting Minutes – October 27, 2021 (Action Item)

<https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5385386&GUID=7761655A-3E7F-4669-9501-35A0E865E689&FullText=1>.

5B. Approve Meeting Minutes – November 17, 2021 (Action Item)

<https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5385387&GUID=9067248C-DC24-40D2-9BED-5F5A482C4702&FullText=1>.

Commissioner Rebecca Kohlstrand made a motion to approve the minutes from October 27th and November 17th, Commissioner Natchtigall seconded the motion. A vote was taken by a raise of hands and the motion passed 5-0, Commissioner Rentschler abstained since he had been absent at the meetings.

5C. Approve Meeting Calendar for 2022 (Action Item)

<https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5385388&GUID=3A8E20A9-B5DF-4B06-B387-8CC10BC3F5BA>.

Gail Payne, a Senior Transportation Coordinator, explained the changes in the calendar for July.

Chair Soules opened public comment.

Jim Strehlow thought that the changes complicated things but he understood and would make sure people knew about the schedule changes.

Chair Soules closed public comment.

Commissioner Rentschler moved approval of the 2022 Meeting Calendar and Vice-Chair Tina Yuen seconded the motion. A vote was taken by raise of hands and the motion passed 6-0.

6. Regular Agenda Items

6A. Discuss and Endorse the Annual Report on Transportation and the Annual Report on the Climate Action and Resiliency Plan for the 2022 Work Plan (Multiple City staff) (Action Item)

Staff Member Payne introduced Danielle Mieler, Sustainability & Resilience Manager, who gave the presentation on the Annual Report on Climate Action & Resiliency 2022 Work Plan. The staff report and attachments can be found at:

<https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5385389&GUID=CD117554-40EC-4D67-9B54-5D65F51F339B&FullText=1>.

Commissioner Clarifying Questions for #6A CARP

There were no questions.\

Public Comments for #6A CARP

Jim Strehlow discussed how many recent council actions (roundabouts) were already slowing down traffic, he felt that these actions would increase carbon emissions as cars wait longer for non-existent pedestrians. He also discussed how the city was not preparing for electrical brownouts, and that too much demand was being put on electricity, especially with plans to get rid of PG&E gas lines to homes. He felt that these plans were leading Alameda's citizens and businesses to chaos.

Commissioner Comments and Discussions for #6A CARP

Commissioner Scott Weitze questioned the goal for commuters and if it was on track.

Staff Member Meiler discussed current traffic demands and telecommuting. She acknowledged that people were returning to work but that emphasis was on public transit.

Commissioner Rentschler discussed that FHWA (Federal Highway Administration) had recognized that roundabouts reduced greenhouse gases and decreased travel times. He then discussed how the pandemic had affected the data but it looked like people were going back to driving. He did believe though that the city's goals were on target even if they feel aspirational.

Commissioner Kohlstrand believed Alameda had done a good job developing the policy framework for CARP. She noted this was a critical time to take action against climate change. She noted the importance of funding to take concrete actions.

Chair Soules also discussed the stretch goals and goals that were not on track due to lack of funding. She wholeheartedly would recommend to Council to have revenue priorities.

Commissioner Weitze asked about the Easy Pass Programs and free bus tickets. He was concerned they were not targeting the right “carbon-intense” groups. He liked the program but wanted to make sure they were targeting people who would otherwise drive.

Andrew Thomas, Director of Planning Buildings and Transportation, discussed Alameda’s role with AC Transit and how they were looking at the E-Z Pass Program.

Commissioner Kohlstrand noted that the E-Z Pass Program was not on target and wanted to know metrics that were being discussed to get in back on target.

Vice-Chair Yuen wanted to see a dashboard with performance metrics to see where they were on track. She also wanted to see Greenhouse Gas measurements.

Staff Member Meiler answered that a dashboard was in the works and explained other metrics that were in the works. She also discussed potential regional greenhouse gas emission measurements that locals could use.

Commissioner Yuen then asked about existing housing for electrification.

Director Thomas discussed existing incentive programs and potential requirements to encourage electrification. He added that this is something that would take time.

Commissioner Alysha Nachtigall asked about data availability for car, electric vs. non-electric ownership.

Staff Member Meiler answered that 2020 was all that was available at the moment.

Vice-Chair Yuen asked about Congestion Pricing.

Director Thomas said it was still in the plans and that it needed State Legislation to make it successful. They would have to work with the regional partners.

Commissioner Kohlstrand made a motion to support the endorsement of the Climate Action Plan to the City Council. Also to urge the City Council to not only prioritize Climate Actions for funding in the city but also to strongly consider new local funding sources to facilitate concrete action towards meeting these goals. Commissioner Rentschler seconded the motion. A vote was taken by a raise of hands and the motion passed 6-0.

Staff Member Payne then introduced Lisa Foster, a Senior Transportation Coordinator, who gave a presentation on the Annual Report on Transportation. Robert Vance and Areli Vazquez of Public Works and Rochelle Wheeler of Transportation and Director Thomas also presented. The staff report and attachments can be found at

<https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5385389&GUID=CD117554-40EC-4D67-9B54-5D65F51F339B&FullText=1>.

Public Comments for #6A Transportation Annual Report

Denyse Trepanier expressed her appreciation to the staff for their work and commented on the Clement St bike path. She also discussed improvement ideas for Willow to make cycling safer.

Jim Strehlow believed that the Traffic Fatality goals were faulty, he believed that traffic fatalities were usually committed by drunks and bad drivers. He thought the goals penalized good citizens with infrastructure changes. He discussed how roundabouts would not decrease greenhouse gases. He also gave suggestions on how Agendas for meetings should be worded.

Commissioner Clarifying Questions and Comments #6A Transportation Annual Report

Commissioner Rentschler discussed roadway striping on Alameda Ave and the paid parking at Seaplane Lagoon. He discussed that fares should really benefit the rider and he urged everyone to think twice about charging for parking right now. He also discussed the bike/ped Oakland Bridge and the likeness of it happening.

Chair Soules discussed the best way to get updates with PowerPoint and what data needed to be seen by the public and the Commissioners.

Commissioner Kohlstrand agreed with Chair Soules about the mid-year updates through PowerPoint. She also discussed parts of the Cross Alameda Trail that said they were completed but were still fenced off. She also wanted the Sub-Committee to get information on the Street Classifications before it came back to the Commission. She also discussed and agreed with some of the points made by Commissioner Rentschler about the bike/ped Oakland Bridge.

Director Thomas discussed the timeline for the Street Classification and agreed it should go to the Sub-Committee first.

Chair Soules discussed that a subcommittee could help with the prioritization of goals.

Staff Member Wheeler said the fencing should be down from the Cross Alameda Trail on the following Monday.

Commissioner Nachtigall asked about the Grand resurfacing project. She discussed other sections that should be included. She also discussed priorities and that completing the Cross Alameda Trail should be high on the list.

Staff Member Vance explained that sections for resurfacing were chosen based on paving needs.

Commissioner Weitze discussed the Cross Alameda Trail and how to safely get people to the Alameda Landing Waterfront. He also wanted an update on the Alameda Point Adaptive Reuse Project and about the EV (electric vehicle) plan for the parking lot at Seaplane Lagoon.

Staff Member Wheeler answered that Fifth Street was the best option. She also pointed out other places to find information on the connected network.

Staff Member Vance gave an update on the Adaptive Reuse Project.

Staff Member Foster answered that EV chargers should be put in by spring, it was currently only a small percentage.

Chair Soules expressed the need for equity with having EV charging spots, especially with reducing overall parking. She then discussed goals in the Vision Zero Plan and that you have to look at more than one plan to get the full picture.

Vice-Chair Yuen gave her thoughts on the West End Bike Bridge and the feasibility of it happening. She believed that regardless of whether the bridge happened or not it was imperative that the city looked at alternative ways to get on and off the island.

Chair Soules agreed and discussed other potential ideas.

Commissioner Kohlstrand made a motion to endorse the Transportation Annual Report, Commissioner Nachtigall seconded the motion. A vote was taken by a raise of hands, all were in favor except for Commissioner Rentschler.

Commissioner Rentschler discussed his issues with the ambitious bike/ped bridge. He believed the cost was too high, was not feasible and he could not support it.

Commissioner Kohlstrand made a motion to endorse the Transportation Annual Report. Commissioner Nachtigall seconded the motion. Chair Soules made an amendment to consider the priority and the low feasibility of the Bike/Ped Oakland Bridge (West End Bike Bridge) with the comments made by Commissioner Rentschler. Commissioner Rentschler seconded the amendment. A vote was taken by a raise of hands and the motion passed

6B. A Public Workshop to Review and Comment on the Draft Housing Element Update to accommodate the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) for the Period 2023-2031 in Compliance with State Law

Director Thomas introduced the item and gave a presentation. The staff report and attachments can be found at

<https://alameda.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5385300&GUID=E42261C5-E282-4236-BC4A-145AB6AEF4CD&FullText=1>.

Commissioner Clarifying Questions and Comments for #6B

Chair Soules asked for clarification on State requirements.

Director Thomas discussed and explained what State Law required and that part of these workshops was showing citizens what the city had to do. This was a State requirement and the city had to do this.

Commissioner Rentschler discussed the difficulties around this challenge, such as SB-10.

Commissioner Kohlstrand wanted clarification on where SROs (single room occupancy) were allowed. She wanted to ensure there was a mix of housing types. She also discussed the Gold Coast and High Street and where multi-family housing could work.

Director Thomas went into the details around SROs and what other changes were coming to Park and Webster.

Commissioner Weitze believed that SROs were good and worked. He discussed why they were beneficial. He also discussed Linear Park and why it should be rezoned. He thought it would be great for more housing.

Chair Soules went into detail about the importance of equity.

Commissioner Nachtigall discussed the different barriers they had to remove to be successful.

Chair Soules discussed the possibility of another joint meeting with the Planning Board.

Public Comments for #6B

Jim Strehlow spoke against multi-family housing. He also expressed his concerns about safe evacuations off the island.

7. Announcements / Public Comments

Jim Strehlow pointed out that in-person meetings were better because you could see who was attending them. He also wanted to hear more about the plans for water taxis.

Alex Spehr asked about the bike barge idea instead of a bridge. She also suggested bollards for protected bike lanes.

Chair Soules discussed items that should come back such as Estuary Crossing options.

8. Adjournment

Chair Soules adjourned the meeting at 9:45 p.m.