

TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MINUTES
February 28, 2007

Chair Knox White called the Transportation Commission to order at 7:35 p.m.

1. **ROLL CALL** – Roll was called and the following recorded.

Members Present:

John Knox White

Jeff Knoth

Michael Krueger

Eric Schatmeier

Srikant Subramaniam

Absent:

Robert McFarland

Robb Ratto

Staff Present:

Obaid Khan, Supervising Civil Engineer

Barry Bergman, Program Specialist II

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- a. October 25, 2006
- b. November 15, 2006
- c. January 31, 2007

Chair Knox White requested that page numbers be inserted in the minutes. *Commissioner Schatmeier* requested that in the January minutes, that they be changed to reflect that Mr. Knopf was comparing Alameda to San Francisco.

Commissioner Schatmeier moved approval of the minutes for the October, November, and January meeting minutes. *Commissioner Krueger* seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0

3. **AGENDA CHANGES**

Chair Knox White suggested that the Alameda Landing TDM item be heard before the shuttle study.

4. COMMISSION COMMUNICATIONS

- a. Multimodal Circulation Plan
- b. Pedestrian Plan
- c. TSM/TDM Plan

Chair Knox White encouraged people to sign CalPIRG's online petition opposing the budget cuts by Governor Schwarzenegger, which would cut \$1.1 billion from the Public Transit account.

5. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

There were none.

Staff Khan inquired whether the Commissioners would be available for a joint meeting with City Council on March 27, 2007. He understood that *Commissioner Schatmeier* was available, as was *Chair Knox White* and *Commissioners Krueger* and *MacFarland*. He added that *Commissioners Knoth* was not available, and that he had not heard from *Commissioner Ratto*. *Commissioner Subramaniam* indicated he may be able to attend. The meeting would be held in the evening.

6B. Alameda Landing TDM Goals and Program Development – Second Presentation *Outcome: Review and recommend finalization of performance goals, the methodology by which the goals will be evaluated, monitoring guidelines, and a process*

Staff Bergman summarized the staff report, and noted that this discussion item would return as an action item in March, and would go to the Planning Board in April.

John Atkinson, consultant to Catellus on this project, complimented City staff on its expertise. He believed the City had a unique opportunity to forge a sustainable TDM program. He noted that the program goals would be to reduce vehicle trips and congestion. Mr. Atkinson stated that the emphasis of the program would be reducing peak commute times through the tubes and into the project area. Later the program would have broader goals. He believed that the TDM measures should be judged on cost effectiveness. He stated that the intent of the project is for an Alameda Landing Transportation Management Association to be established to serve the project area and to ultimately merge into a future West End TMA. He stated that Catellus agreed wholeheartedly that the implementation of an EcoPass program through AC Transit would be beneficial for the project. He stated that the Census data for the rest of Alameda were not directly applicable to this project.

Mr. Atkinson noted that there was a concern about bike capabilities on the shuttle, and that some people had asked about using a trailer. He noted that none of the operators he contacted were not comfortable with that concept for safety reasons. He noted that bike racks could be mounted on the front and the back of the shuttle, which yielded a capacity of six per loop, or approximately 36 per day.

He believed that the TDM program would be comprehensive enough that retail trips could be reduced. He noted that the water shuttle could potentially partner with Alameda Power & Telecom. Part of the agreement was to do a comprehensive water shuttle feasibility study, and many of the issues would be raised there; the type of vehicle would be included in the comprehensive water shuttle study. The shuttle would be coordinated with existing transit, as well as with the employers' work schedules in order to make it effective. Their goal was to provide a variety of commute options, and they would continue to work with AC Transit with the residents and employees of the Landing. He noted that there would be a maximum amount of commute choices, and a minimum amount of waiting time for those choices. With respect to counts, they believed that surveys would serve as a viable reflection of the effectiveness, and would allow them to make changes based on users.

Mr. Atkinson noted that staff had suggestions for the survey particulars, by expanding the survey to maximize the return. The end goal was to get as much feedback on these programs from the tenants and residents as possible, in order to tailor and make the program as effective as possible. He noted that they wanted shuttle feedback, and that the dock location would be covered under the comprehensive water shuttle study. They have had ongoing meetings with the Port of Oakland and a variety of other agencies, and of the approval process that would be needed; they would forward that to staff. He noted that the study would examine whether the shuttle would be on demand or operate on a regular schedule.

Public Comment

There were no speakers.

Closed Public Comment

Commissioner Krueger noted that he looked at the updated version online, and saw that the EcoPass was mentioned only as an optional measure. He did not see that it would play a large role, and inquired whether it was still under development.

Mr. Atkinson noted that the EcoPass representative attended their meeting with AC Transit, and that the EcoPass would be part of the long-term solution. If it proved to be economically and operationally viable for them to make changes to existing lines and provide a greater degree of service to Alameda Landing and then other sites, the EcoPass would be a part of that comprehensive AC Transit strategy to serve the project. While EcoPass programs have typically served large employers, he suggested that it may be possible to enable smaller employers to participate by having the program administered through the TMA. He noted that the budget for TDM measures was limited. It may be that AC Transit service would be a good long-term option, but there would not be sufficient funds and ridership available for it to be implemented early in the project, so the private shuttle would provide interim service.

Mr. Krueger stated that the financial analysis seemed to treat the AC Transit option as a standalone option. He inquired whether it could be viewed as an incremental extension of the existing service. He suggested reconfiguring two existing lines to include Alameda Landing and Alameda Point, and believed it would only need to cover the incremental cost of the existing line. He added that it would not cannibalize the AC Transit ridership with the shuttle, and did not see that possibility listed.

Mr. Atkinson agreed it was that was a viable point.

Commissioner Schatmeier inquired whether the possibility of incorporating the EcoPass into a program with employers similar to a parking cashout. *Mr. Atkinson* replied that could be investigated for both businesses and residential uses.

A discussion of the EcoPass program ensued.

Chair Knox White stated that developments like Alameda Landing pay taxes and that AC Transit therefore has a responsibility to provide some level of service there. He believed that the TDM program should be augmenting this service, not paying AC Transit to serve the development.

Chair Knox White believed one of the major issues faced by the Commission was how to start a TMA that was Alameda Landing-focused, and meld it with the Citywide TDM process. He believed that would likely result in a Citywide TMA. He recommended that the document state that the TMA is originally being set up for Alameda Landing to address its TDM goals. He noted that there was an expectation that once the City's TDM program is completed, and has gone through the EIR process and Council adoption, it would be folded into a larger TMA. He also expressed a concern that the TDM program is being set up as a benefit for the Alameda Landing project, while the intent is that the program should be mitigating traffic congestion.

Staff Khan stated that staff wants to help ensure that the TMA addressed the goals that were established, and not have to wait until the rest of the entities joined in for the program to be successful. So it should establish a TMA for Alameda Landing, and should be able to move into the future for the West End TMA, and ultimately would be consistent with a citywide TDM plan and program.

Bruce Knopf, Catellus, noted that they were very interested in ensuring the program achieved the goals that were set out. He added that Catellus was very experienced in running TDM programs, and they participated with other entities in Emeryville in operating the Emery Go Round. They understood the process of working with partners to achieve goals, and always thought of this program as fitting into the larger transit picture in the West End. They were also very concerned about ensuring that the financial obligation that the tenants and residents would be paying into will bring direct benefits to the project. Over the long term, they were looking for a way to balance those two objectives.

Chair Knox White would like to further explore the role of municipalities in other TMAs, and wanted to ensure that the City had a real voice in how it moved forward, such as the Council having a voting member or be required to approve the program. He wanted to be careful that the TDM program did not become exclusively a shuttle program. He felt strongly that the City should evaluate the program by counting trips, using the ITE trip generation rates as a baseline.

Mr. Knopf noted that the City Council has some authority over the TDM program, as it must approve any reallocation of the budget involving at least \$45,000.

Chair Knox White recalled that at the last meeting, *Commissioner Schatmeier* suggested not using the word “shuttle,” and that it should be discussed in a more inclusive sense. He believed the surveys were good and worthwhile, but believed that counting cars would be the best way to judge the effectiveness in the early years. He believed the agreement between City Council and ProLogis gave a lot of cover for not meeting the goals. He believed that the efforts should go beyond what was expected, and that all participants should work aggressively to meet the goals.

Chair Knox White noted that page 3 of the TDM program read, “The first phase of TDM program will have regular supplementary ground shuttle service running at 30-minute headways.” He had assumed that AC Transit would run some type of service through the project area, and that tension would build between AC Transit and the private shuttles. He believed that language was needed that addressed AC Transit service as the preferred transit service, and that an agreement be reached between AC Transit regarding the thresholds that would trigger their ability to go into offering that service.

Chair Knox White noted that the bottom of page 3 read, “Within Alameda Landing, neither property owner or tenant, other than the affordable housing, will be a participant in the TDM program, paying annual TDM assessments.” He requested a clarification that this referred to the payment, that the affordable housing tenants would not be asked to pay into the TDM program, but that they would be able to participate in the program. *Mr. Knopf* confirmed that they would not be asked to pay into the program. He stated that they would also be able to access the EcoPass.

Chair Knox White echoed *Commissioner Krueger’s* comments about including the EcoPasses as one of the priority possibilities for the program, rather than a voluntary or optional item. He noted that Table 2 on page 10 (Projected TDM Implementation) should be titled as an example of TDM implementation. He wanted to allow the flexibility of the program to change as its effectiveness is evaluated over time. He also noted that some items called out as part of the TDM program were already parts of the City ordinances, and were required independent of the existence of the TDM program. They included bike parking and bus shelters. He would like those prerequisites to be pointed out as such.

Chair Knox White noted that a car share programs should not cost the project any money to implement. *Mr. Knopf* noted that the \$2000 for guaranteed ride home was mostly for the marketing efforts and implementation; he noted it would not be effective if nobody knew about it.

Chair Knox White noted staff's concern that the guaranteed ride home may only be offered to large companies. He had spoken with the CMA about a project in which they were willing to allow residents to take part in this program as long as there was a program coordinator. He was pleased that the applicant was being proactive with these items.

Mr. Knopf noted that they would return in a month to follow up.

6A. REVIEW AND PROVIDE RECOMMENDATIONS ON FINAL REPORT ON WEST END SHUTTLE STUDY *Outcome: Review and recommend finalization of draft report on West End Shuttle Study. Discussion/Action.*

Staff Bergman presented the staff report, and described its background based on Council's interest in using electric vehicles as a way to improve linkages from the West End to BART.

John Atkinson, the City's consultant on the project, noted that he had spoken with AC Transit representatives, who were interested in their roles. He hoped to have more substantive discussions in looking at more concrete discussions. He thanked *Staff Bergman* for his patience and hard work as this project changed throughout the process. He presented three conceptual maps, and described the features and the routes. He noted that by improving the 63, it would not impact any of the existing service, and the cross-Island service would still be at 30-minute intervals; it might be improved to 15- to 20-minute intervals connecting BART to the West End. He noted that service on other parts of the Island would not be diminished to benefit the West End.

Commissioner Schatmeier noted that if the loop in the Phase 3 map is only 1 direction, that some people would face a very long trip to connect to BART, but if the loop were bi-directional, the headways would be doubled.

Chair Knox White noted that the written description of "hybrid electric" stated that emissions were "slightly reduced" from diesel, but the grid showed that hybrid electrics have "low emissions" and diesels have "high emissions." *Mr. Atkinson* replied that it depended on the type of fuel used in the hybrid.

Chair Knox White inquired whether the mechanics' rates of \$50 per hour were based on the City's rates, and wished to ensure that whatever was listed matched what was actually paid.

Commissioner Krueger inquired whether the cost comparison with AC Transit was truly fair. While their cost per mile is higher, they may be able to service the area by incrementally expanding an existing route, rather than establishing a new one, so the cost comparison should reflect this. He also asked that the analysis account for the benefits of providing a service through AC Transit, which would integrate into the larger system. He noted that a potential disadvantage of a City- or privately-provided shuttle would be the possibility of taking riders from AC Transit, which could have a negative impact on AC Transit's existing service. In

addition, it may be difficult to coordinate such a service with AC Transit in terms of providing riders with information such as maps.

Chair Knox White noted that this study originated from the Council's interest in developing a service that would utilize electric vehicles, and added that some cities continued to use electric vehicles. He suggested that since the analysis does not recommend electric vehicles, that a more detailed explanation should be provided.

Mr. Atkinson noted that given the route under consideration – connecting Alameda to Oakland through the tube – that the grade in the Tube would be a challenge for these vehicles.

Chair Knox White would like to know more about the advantages and disadvantages. He noted that Santa Barbara still ran electric buses, and would like more information. He believed Alameda would be a good place to run electric vehicles because it was generally flat, so it would help to include a description of circumstances under which such vehicles would be a viable option.

Mr. Atkinson noted that the Phase 3 route as shown on the map would be an ideal application for electric buses because it was short and flat, operates only within Alameda, and had the opportunity for charging between runs.

Chair Knox White asked that the report include a summary grid of the cost information. He believed the conclusion should be more robust, and that the recommendations should include some options. For example, if the City chooses to run electric shuttles, the pluses and minuses should be included, including higher capital and maintenance costs.

Mr. Atkinson noted that *Staff Bergman* had made similar recommendations that separated the monetary concerns from the other recommendations in a more sequential manner. He noted that he wanted to include pricing on bio-diesel, and added that fueling stations were often donated. He suggested that a bio-diesel fueling station could be constructed in the West End, and added that the technology was continually advancing. He added that resistance to bio-fuels was beginning to relax on the vehicle manufacturers' part.

Commissioner Schatmeier inquired about the source of the higher maintenance for electric vehicles. *Mr. Atkinson* noted that it was because of the use of prototype vehicles for which replacement parts are not standardized and readily available.

Commissioner Schatmeier requested that more detail be provided about electric buses, since that was a major reason the study was undertaken.

Commissioner Krueger inquired whether the European track record had been examined.

Mr. Atkinson noted that the manufacturer for the Santa Barbara vehicles was in Goleta, and that they had a vested interest in ensuring they worked well. He noted that the electric load on rainy days was often a challenge, when the heater and windshield wipers were needed while the vehicle was running.

Chair Knox White noted that since this item will be sent to the City Council, he would like to see it again. He believed the Commission's comments were extensive, and he would rather not send the recommendations to City Council without reviewing the revisions.

Commissioner Schatmeier asked why fuel cells were not discussed in the report.

Chair Knox White believed that AC Transit made a policy commitment to this technology, and that they decided not to implement CNG in favor of hydrogen.

A discussion of the proliferation of shuttles ensued, including revenue impacts and ridership confusion.

Commissioner Schatmeier recommended changing the name of the study, which seemed to indicate that the City was about to implement a West End shuttle.

Staff Khan noted that a unit cost could be identified for the 15-minute interval, and therefore could be applicable in other parts of the City

Commissioner Schatmeier asked to see more analysis of why the routes were chosen, and what route choices were available. He suggested renaming the document "Shuttle Operational Analysis" so members of the public did not think a shuttle was imminent.

No action was taken.

8. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

Staff Bergman noted that the first meeting of the Line 51 Task Force was held earlier in the day, and that it was a staff-only meeting that presented data identifying some of the issues and problems.

Chair Knox White requested an oral report or minutes from that meeting.

Commissioner Krueger requested a status report on the red curbing. *Staff Khan* noted that the first batch was ready to go to the TTT on March 14, 2007.

Commissioner Schatmeier asked what the status was regarding the proposed bus stops on Otis Drive.

Chair Knox White noted that he and *Commissioner Krueger* understood that the TC's recommendation was for two stops in front of Pond Isle and Willow, but Willow was not specifically referenced in the motion. He noted that the staff report recommended that stops be installed along Otis Drive at Sandcreek Way and Willow.

Staff Khan noted that what was going to the Council was actually an appeal of the Commission's recommendation to install the stop at Pond Isle.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 PM.