

## **Transportation Commission Minutes: Wednesday, January 22, 2014**

*Commissioner Jesus Vargas* called the Transportation Commission to order at 7:00 p.m.

### **1. Roll Call**

Roll was called and the following was recorded:

Members Present:

Jesus Vargas (Chair)  
Christopher Miley (Vice Chair)  
Gregory Morgado  
Michele Bellows  
Eric Schatmeier

Members Absent:

Sandy Wong  
Thomas G. Bertken

Staff Present:

Staff Payne, Transportation Coordinator  
Staff Patel, Public Works Transportation Engineer  
Staff Haun, Public Works Director

### **2. Agenda Changes**

*None.*

### **3. Announcements / Public Comments**

*Commissioner Schatmeier* mentioned that the AC Transit Board approved the fare changes and he was unable to attend the board meeting to see if they reviewed the Commission's comments. He then said fare changes would take effect in July 2014.

*Jim Strehlow*, Alameda resident, stated that he was unable to attend the November Commission meeting. He referred to the Alameda Point plan and saw too many streets that were coded to have cycle tracks on the presentation map. He urged the Commission to review the budget to make sure funds are spent wisely.

*Staff Patel* replied there was a presentation from the Planning Board and the plan has not gone to the City Council for approval.

*Commissioner Miley* said that just because the map and routes are in the plan does not prevent City staff and the Commission from looking at other options.

*Commissioner Bellows* asked for clarification on whether the plan required complete construction of the cycle tracks. If not, then we would put a hierarchy in place and figure out the best use for the money.

#### **4. Consent Calendar**

##### **4A. *Transportation Commission and Planning Board Minutes:* *Wednesday, October 23, 2013***

*Commissioner Vargas* called for a motion to approve the meeting minutes.

*Commissioner Bellows* moved to approve the meeting minutes. *Commissioner Miley* seconded the motion. The motion was approved 5-0.

##### **4B. *Transportation Commission Minutes:* *Wednesday, December 11, 2013***

*Staff Payne* stated that she would carry the approval over to the next Transportation Commission meeting.

##### **4C. *Quarterly Report on Activities Related to Transportation Policies and Plans***

*Commissioner Miley* asked if there was a completion date set for the Webster Smart Corridor Project.

*Staff Patel* replied that the construction is done and the next step is integration. The Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC) contractor installed Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) elements along the project limits.

*Commissioner Miley* referred to the I-880 North at 23<sup>rd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue Interchange project and requested that ACTC staff present any updates to the Commission for the next meeting.

*Staff Patel* said he requested ACTC to present their updates with the Transportation Commission and City Council.

*Commissioner Miley* asked staff if a date was set for construction.

*Staff Patel* replied construction is set for sometime this summer. The public can obtain information about the project on the Caltrans website. However, he said staff wants to find out how ACTC intends to manage closures, traffic mitigation, and the coordination of other Bay Area projects near the City.

*Commissioner Vargas* called for a motion to approve the Quarterly Report.

*Commissioner Miley* moved to approve the Quarterly Report. *Commissioner Bellows* seconded the motion. The motion was approved 5-0.

**4D. Transportation Priority List Update**

*Commissioner Vargas* called for a motion to approve the updated priority list.

<p><i>Commissioner Bellows</i> moved to approve the updated priority list. <i>Commissioner Miley</i> seconded the motion. The motion was approved 5-0.</p>
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**5. New Business**

**5A. Shore Line Drive/Westline Drive Bikeway Project: Revised Eastern Section and Parking Inventory**

*Staff Payne* presented the update.

*Commissioner Vargas* opened the floor to public comments.

*Bert Morgan*, resident of Shore Line Drive, stated the City overlooked the inadequate number of crosswalks for the neighborhood. He further explained that Grand Street and Westline Drive have two crosswalks and towards Alameda South Shore Center there are two crosswalks. He felt that many people cross midblock while cyclists and cars speed around them. He worried that the plan represents a hazard because the traffic on Shore Line Drive is increasing, and there will be more with the development of Alameda Point.

*Joyce Larrick*, resident of Shorepoint Court, said her cul-de-sac is across from Crown Memorial Beach and there are over 800 residential units within the area. She stated that there is only one crosswalk that goes over to the park and she is concerned with the lack of a crosswalk at Westline Drive. Ultimately, she wants the City to focus on overall safety in the neighborhood.

*Klaus Schniederger*s, resident near Shore Line Drive, felt the side streets are difficult to exit with a car or bicycle, and he wanted to make sure there is support to keep the area safe.

*Bruce Kibby*, local bicyclist, thought it would be a good idea to have a cycle track along Shore Line Drive. Additionally, he felt City staff cleverly resolved the issues pertaining to pedestrian safety, handicap parking and visibility. He approved the project.

*Phyllis Klein* commutes to school every day and travels along Shore Line Drive. She felt that there is a lot of traffic on Shore Line Drive, and was concerned about the potential lack of parking for residents in the evening.

*Jon Spangler*, Alameda resident and a League of American Cycling Instructor, said he helped to refine the Alameda Bike Plan in 1999. He explained that the current plan is much better than what was first introduced by City staff. Moreover, he mentioned that Fernside Drive has a similar treatment, but carries 2-3 times as much traffic and Shore Line Drive is not meant to be a commuter route for cars.

*Commissioner Morgado* referred to *Mr. Morgan's* comments and said if a bicyclist runs a stop sign they could be cited for a traffic violation. He asked *Sergeant Simmons* if the police could focus on writing citations in the area.

*Sergeant Simmons*, Alameda Police Traffic Section Supervisor, said that it is an issue all over the City and they are focusing on that issue citywide.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* referred to *Mr. Spangler's* comments on the plan and how it improved due to public involvement. He felt that it was a better plan due to public input and he would like to acknowledge that the process helped to produce those comments and the refinements to the plan.

*Commissioner Vargas* applauded staff's work and the inclusion of a summary of changes to the plan.

*Commissioner Vargas* requested a motion from the Commission.

<p><i>Commissioner Miley</i> moved to approve staff recommendations. <i>Commissioner Schatmeier</i> seconded the motion. The motion was approved 5-0.</p>
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#### **5B. City of Alameda Paratransit Program Annual Review**

Staff Payne presented the report.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* said he reviewed the paratransit service performance graphs and there is a huge upwards spike for taxi service in the first part of 2010-2011 fiscal years. He wanted to know the reason for the spike.

*Staff Payne* replied that at the time the City did not provide a shuttle and the City did not have restrictions on distance for the medical return taxi subsidy. The results showed users traveling from different counties for appointments. The City sought to constrain the costs while maintaining service. *Staff Payne* stated that the current subsidy only allows users to travel within Alameda County and users receive only five vouchers per month.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* explained that the cost control narrative says that shuttles are the most efficient way to provide service, but the taxi service is \$5 per trip, which is a third of the cost of the shuttle trips. He felt that it makes sense to preserve the \$5 per trip cost and to encourage more taxi trips. He thought that this would be the best option because taxi service is available seven days a week and the shuttle service is only available three days a week. Thus, if you want to provide the most service then provide the option with the greatest availability to people.

*Staff Payne* replied that the goal of the shuttle service was to have the service implemented over time with demand increasing as well and then the operating costs would reduce.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* stated that he approved of paratransit service, but he wanted the service to be meaningful and accessible. He viewed the best passenger count documented was

July 2012. When he heard the plan that asked for a budget increase, he wanted to make sure staff reviewed where access was needed and where the greatest number of people accessed the service. Ultimately, he urged the Commission to be vigilant about how the money is spent and review with a critical eye. Additionally, he was interested in erecting a route map around the shuttle stops.

Staff Payne replied that staff will purchase schedule holders for the stops. She wanted to know if *Commissioner Schatmeier* approved the schedule holders along with requesting a route map.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* replied yes.

*Commissioner Miley* said the Oakland Broadway Shuttle displays their route map clearly. Additionally, he does not have major issues with the increase to the program, but he is concerned with the financial impact. Specifically, he was concerned with implementing service and then eventually having to cut it back. He asked staff about the timeline for service increases and their plan once they have to cut back on services.

*Staff Payne* said the infusion of funds was from a one-time capital project fix such as benches and bus stop schedule holders. It is an increase to the budget this one time and taken care of the next fiscal year. She explained the increase in funds would increase the number of vouchers for the subsidized taxi programs. If the funds are used, staff would revert back to the number of vouchers they usually give. However, she felt a public forum would be needed to review the reduction of services.

*Commissioner Miley* asked *Staff Payne* if the decrease in funds would be from the amount that it is increasing for this year.

*Staff Payne* said every year there is a base budget amount of around \$150,000 for the next fiscal year. When adding together the costs of the paratransit program, they would have to dip into the program's reserve to pay for the costs. They were advised to dip into the reserve to not lose the money they initially received.

*Commissioner Miley* asked staff if the reserve was held by ACTC.

*Staff Payne* replied yes, through ACTC from Measure B funds.

*Commissioner Miley* asked if the City and East Bay Paratransit (EBP) meet to discuss issues or best practices.

*Staff Payne* replied when they survey passengers, they ask questions pertaining to the City program and EBP. She said after the survey results are reported, they pass the information along to EBP. Moreover, she said Alameda's subsidized taxi and shuttle program help to close the gap for EBP service because the EBP service requires passengers to reserve 24 hours ahead of time.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* asked staff if the survey includes all three of the services that are provided in Alameda. He also wanted to know if there are questions asking about service

preference especially since services could increase or decrease in the future.

*Staff Payne* replied that the survey asks questions about all the paratransit services yet there are no questions about service preference, which could be a question added in the future.

*Commissioner Vargas* asked staff if there is a difference with wheelchair accommodations between taxis and shuttles.

*Staff Payne* replied that the shuttle has two wheelchair spaces and not all taxis have wheelchair access. The one issue they have is that most taxis have a separate special rate for wheelchairs, while one taxi company (Welcome) installed a taxi meter onto their wheelchair van.

*Commissioner Vargas* asked staff if many of the users leave from senior care centers to doctor visits.

*Staff Payne* referred to Figure 2 and said a total of 35 trips per month are taken from medical appointments to home.

*Commissioner Miley* asked staff where the majority of passengers are traveling.

*Staff Payne* replied they tend to be from Mastick Senior Center, Trader Joe's Shopping Center and residents of group homes.

*Commissioner Vargas* requested a motion from the Commission.

*Commissioner Vargas* moved to approve staff recommendations. *Commissioner Schatmeier* seconded the motion. The motion was approved 5-0.

## **6. Staff Communications**

### **6A. Staff Communications**

*Staff Payne* replied that the next Commission meeting will take place on Wednesday, March 26, 2014 and the following items would be discussed:

- Staff from the Water Emergency Transportation Authority is expected to attend the meeting.
- Park Street Pedestrian Safety Project

*Commissioner Miley* asked staff to invite ACTC to the next meeting.

## **7. Announcements/ Public Comments**

*Jim Strehlow* commended the City's Public Works Department because they swiftly cleaned the main corridors and side streets after a fierce windstorm in December.

*Commissioner Miley* commended the City's Public Works Department and the Police Department for their work in December as well.

*Commissioner Vargas* welcomed the new Public Works Director *Bob Haun*.

*Bob Haun*, Public Works Director, said they responded to the wind storm at 7:30 pm that night and worked straight through until 4:30 am the next day. He commended all the staff for their efforts in clearing the debris.

*Commissioner Vargas* asked *Bob Haun* about the City's water conservation efforts.

*Bob Haun* replied that they are working on a report for the City Council due February 4<sup>th</sup> and they plan to make a 20% reduction of water use that might result in some brown turf areas around town.

*Jon Spangler* stated that he is a member of the BART Bicycle Task Force representing Alameda County. He said on October 21, 2013 BART implemented new bike rules that allow bicycles on all trains in all directions with the exception of the first three cars during commute hours and the first car during all hours. He explained that the policy is successful so far and all indications look good. In the meantime, BART's demonstration cars will arrive this year and there is a road show schedule available on the BART website.

## **8. Adjournment**

8:10 pm