

**TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MINUTES – DRAFT**  
**October 24, 2007**

*Chair Knox White* called the Transportation Commission to order at 7:40 p.m.

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

Members Present:

John Knox White  
Michael Krueger  
Eric Schatmeier  
Srikant Subramaniam  
Nielsen Tam

Members Absent:

Robert McFarland  
Robb Ratto

Staff Present:

Obaid Khan, Supervising Civil Engineer  
Barry Bergman, Transportation Coordinator

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

a. September 26, 2007

*Chair Knox White* noted that the following language be changed on page 4: “He recommended that the *state street* transit fare box average of 27-28% be used.”

*Chair Knox White* noted that on page 6, the language reflected a double negative, and should be changed as follows: “*Chair Knox White* did not believe that angled parking was ~~not~~ appropriate everywhere...”

<p><i>Commissioner Krueger</i> moved approval of the minutes for the September 26, 2007, meeting. <i>Commissioner Schatmeier</i> seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0. <i>Commissioners McFarland and Ratto</i> were absent.</p>
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3. **AGENDA CHANGES**

None.

4. **COMMISSION COMMUNICATIONS**

None.

5. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

### **Open public hearing.**

*Deborah James* wished to express concern about the behavior of students on the Line 63, and noted that she had written an email to the Alameda Transit Advocates website, with a draft letter to the principals of the schools on Line 63. She noted that the students have become very foul-mouthed, to the point where the driver was required to stop the bus until they quieted down, or were asked to leave the bus. One young man threatened the bus driver, who stated that she would call the police. She noted that the kids had quieted down since they were informed that she drafted a letter online.

### **Close public hearing.**

## **6. OLD BUSINESS**

### **6A. Options for Rerouting AC Transit Line 63 and Locations of New Bus Stops. *Outcome: Commission to Provide Comments.***

*Staff Bergman* summarized the staff report, and displayed a graphical presentation of the route. He noted that this was a direct follow-up from the March 6, 2007, City Council meeting, in which an appeal of the Commission's recommendation to install bus stops at the intersection of Otis Drive and Pond Isle was reviewed. The Commission recommended the stop due to the gap between the existing bus stops on the intersection of Otis Drive and Grand Street, and the intersections of Whitehall Road and Willow Street. The distance was approximately 3,000 feet, where the City's goal was to have stops approximately 1,000 feet apart. In addition to the concern about spacing, Line 63 has had significant operational problems; there is currently insufficient run time in the schedule to enable the bus to remain on-time throughout the day. The Council directed the Transportation Commission to review additional bus stop alternatives, to evaluate the ridership potential of rerouting Line 63 from Otis Drive to Shoreline Drive between Grand and Willow, and to examine other routing alternatives. The Commission established a subcommittee consisting of Commissioners Ratto, Schatmeier and Krueger to examine Line 63 in more detail, working closely with staff and AC Transit. At this meeting, staff will present the Commission's and staff's recommendations regarding the line. He provided an overview of where the route runs, as well as its frequency and schedule.

*Staff Bergman* noted that a key issue at the Council meeting was the density along the Shoreline corridor, compared to Otis Drive, and whether that would attract additional ridership. He provided overview of the density in that area, which was displayed on the overhead screen. He noted that there were over 1,000 housing units in the vicinity of Shoreline Drive, and approximately 330 in the vicinity of Otis Drive. At previous meetings, public input had primarily been received from residents of Otis Drive, where the proposed stops had been. A survey was distributed to collect input from riders of the bus in this area, and 128 responses were received. Most of the respondents overall indicated that the proposed stop locations, comparing Otis Drive to Shoreline Drive, would not impact their riding habits, although the proposed Shoreline stops were identified by significantly more riders than the Otis Drive stops.

*Staff Bergman* noted that additional input was solicited from more Shoreline Drive residents, and received a total of 38 calls and emails; 29 of those supported rerouting the bus onto Shoreline Drive, and 9 were against.

Summarizing all of the input received to date, *Staff Bergman* noted that the following comments had been received:

1. 65 people opposed stops at Otis Drive and Willow Street;
2. 40 people supported the Shoreline Drive the route;
3. 10 people were opposed to the Shoreline route;
4. 11 people were opposed to the proposed stops at Otis and Sandcreek;
5. 8 people were opposed to the stops at Pond Isle;
6. 1 person supported the proposed stops at Otis and Sandcreek;
7. 1 person opposed all stops in the Otis corridor;
8. 4 people indicated they wanted one stop somewhere along the Otis corridor;
9. 2 people supported the Otis and Pond Isle stops;
10. 1 person indicated they wanted to maintain the stops within Alameda Towne Centre;
11. 2 people wanted to maintain stops at the Ferry Terminal; and
12. 1 person opposed the removal of stops at Alameda Point on Monarch Street.

*Staff Bergman* noted that scheduling was a key issue, identified by approximately 24 respondents in the survey; on-time performance was a major problem on the line. The key segment of the route that was problematic has been between the Atlantic/Webster intersection and the end of the line near 12<sup>th</sup> Street BART, which had to do with Tube congestion and congestion in downtown Oakland. For Line 62 to achieve acceptable on-time performance, approximately four minutes must be eliminated from the run time.

*Staff Bergman* added that funding was also discussed; four buses remain in service at any given time on the 63 in order to maintain the 30-minute headways. The annual cost of adding a fifth bus, depending on the number of hours per day it would run, would be \$300-500,000. Depending on rerouting recommendations, it could require significant expenses on the City's part; the City would be responsible for making capital expenditures at bus stops. With respect to future transit demand, particularly in the West End, Alameda Landing was expected to be online fairly soon, with early tenants coming in mid-2009.

*Staff Bergman* noted that the subcommittee examined a number of options for modifying Line 63, which he also displayed on the screen:

1. Potential reroute at Alameda Point, which would save approximately two minutes off the run times. *Staff Bergman* noted that of the two sets of stops eliminated on Monarch Street, AC Transit's data indicated there were six riders per day using all the stops.
2. Rerouting the line near Encinal High School, estimated to save 1.7 minutes in one direction, and just under a minute in the other direction. The schools have indicated that they would not object to the modification, as long as the students' needs would be served during the peak times.

3. The current route goes up Park Street, down Encinal, up High over to Fernside, and out to Fruitvale BART. The idea was discussed of a more direct line to Fruitvale BART, going up Broadway (saving considerable time); that would be implemented in conjunction with other modifications. AC Transit is in the process of evaluating Line 51.
4. It was suggested that the 63 be shifted to Shoreline Drive between Grand Street and Willow Street, as there is more housing density and greater ridership potential.
5. The route by Encinal High School went to Pacific, Marshall, Lincoln, down Webster Street. A more direct route would be to continue straight down Central. While a fairly dense corridor, and therefore it was not recommended.
6. With respect to operations near the Ferry Terminal, the route currently ran along Main Street, went into the Terminal, stops, and exits to Alameda Point. The option was to establish stops along Main Street, away from the Ferry Terminal, which would require a 600-foot walk to the terminal from its present location. That option would save approximately one minute in each direction.
7. They discussed maintaining the existing route along Otis Drive and relocating the stops to Otis Drive, removing them from Alameda Towne Centre. That was estimated to save approximately two minutes in one direction, one-and-a-half minutes in the other, and eliminates the bus having to slow down for traffic and pedestrians through the route. The major disadvantage would require shoppers to take their groceries out to Otis Drive.

*Staff Bergman* noted that subcommittee's recommendations were as follows:

1. To eliminate the portion of the Alameda Point route along Monarch Street, saving approximately two minutes;
2. To implement the reroute away from Encinal High School during the non-peak hours associated with the school.

He noted that AC Transit indicated that if it was not possible to make sufficient cuts to reduce run time that they may be obligated to add an extra bus because of their obligations to their drivers. The subcommittee did not reach a consensus regarding how to proceed given this scenario. Two options were discussed by the subcommittee: 1) The additional bus could operate on Line 63 on an interim basis, while the Transportation Commission would have a specified amount of time to develop a plan to use that bus most effectively. If no plan is developed, the additional bus should be removed, and more drastic cuts be implemented. 2) The additional bus should not be run on an interim basis, but only if a plan is already in place for utilizing the additional bus.

In both scenarios, the subcommittee agreed that if a satisfactory plan could not be developed to make use of the additional bus, that the following additional service cuts be made to Line 63, in the following order, only as necessary to provide additional run time:

1. The stops be relocated away from the Ferry Terminal to Main Street;
2. Implementing the changes at Encinal High School throughout the entire day; and
3. To relocate the stops from the interior to the perimeter of Alameda Towne Centre.

The subcommittee stressed that they felt these were undesirable changes, but was necessary. He noted that the initial reluctance by AC Transit to add an additional bus on the route had to do with the impact it might have on farebox recovery, and whether this poor performance might impact the future viability of the route. The subcommittee also recommended that Line 63 should be rerouted from Otis Drive to Shoreline Drive, between Grand and Willow, once the run time is available, and once the capital improvements have been made at the bus stops, particularly on the south side of Shoreline Drive. This potential service change should be part of any discussions regarding how an extra bus might be used.

*Staff Bergman* noted that another recommendation was: Since the schedule could not currently accommodate the additional runtime required to serve Shoreline, bus stops should be installed at the intersections of Otis and Sandcreek, as well as Otis and Willow to support the City's bus stop spacing guidelines. This was a change from the TC's previous recommendation to install stops at Pond Isle. The change was in response to the shift in position by the Alameda Police Department, which determined that the Otis and Sandcreek location was the preferred bus stop location.

*Staff Bergman* noted that the final recommendation from the subcommittee was that the westbound bus stop at the intersection of Whitehall and Willow should be made the highest priority for improvements at bus stops in the City. There is not currently a sufficient landing area for people to stand while boarding the bus.

*Staff Bergman* noted that staff analysis addressed the farebox recovery issue that was a concern to the Commission, that an additional bus would reduce farebox recovery, and that the might impact the future of the line. AC Transit's data indicated that the 63 currently exceeded the minimum standards for buses along its route; it is ranked in the middle with respect to passengers per service hour and farebox recovery. While the additional bus would affect the performance, it is not clear what the impact would be at this time.

Staff supports the following recommendations outlined by the subcommittee: The elimination of the portion of the Alameda Point route; the modified service to serve Encinal High School at peak school hours only. If AC Transit determines that an extra bus would be available, staff recommended that this should be done on an interim basis, enabling the Transportation Commission to develop a plan to best utilize that bus over time. That would enable the route to stay on schedule and serve the existing route, as well as to enable the Transportation Commission to develop a longer term strategy to serve the West End's upcoming development in the next few years. Also, the line would be more effective and less convoluted.

Staff had significant concerns about some of the more severe cuts that the subcommittee recommended be implemented if needed:

1. The relocation of the stops away from the Ferry Terminal was not supported by City policies, which encourage intermodal connections. It would also undermine the potential for people to use those connections.
2. The elimination of the direct service to Encinal High School was also problematic. The partial reroute away from the school during the day would enable about half the riders to be served with the school times; people in the neighborhood would lose transit access as a result of that. The school prefers to have the students board in front of the school, so the staff can monitor them while they wait.
3. Relocating the buses to the perimeter of Alameda Towne Centre would affect some very heavily used stops. There were over 400 boardings and alightings per weekday at those three stops. Staff recommended that they not be relocated at this time.

Staff recommended that if the new bus is available, that it be run on a pilot basis for up to 12 months. If the pilot service is implemented, the Transportation Commission should continue to work with City staff, AC Transit and community stakeholders to develop a recommended reconfiguration of the route. Alternative configurations should include, at a minimum, rerouting the Line 63 onto Shoreline Drive between Grand Street and Willow Street; servicing Alameda Landing, and splitting the route into two separate pieces to more effectively serve the destination points along the line.

*Commissioner Krueger* wished to stress that with respect to staff not wanting to endorse the options for the Ferry Terminal, the direct service to Encinal High, and the relocation of the stops at Alameda Towne Centre, from the subcommittee's perspective, these were last-resort options that they did not mention lightly. They considered these to be options in the event that nothing else worked, and nothing else could be done.

*Chair Knox White* noted that under "Funding" in the staff report, it was suggested that a move to Shoreline would require the establishment of new bus stops on Shoreline. He noted that they currently had bus stops used by the W. *Staff Bergman* noted that was a more general reference regarding any route changes.

*Chair Knox White* inquired whether the surveys and fliers were actually posted at the bus stops on Willow and Grand. *Staff Bergman* replied that he did not believe they were, and that they focused more on the origin and destination points, such as Alameda Towne Center and the hospital.

*Chair Knox White* inquired whether the survey gathered address information from the respondents, *Staff Bergman* replied that they received at least intersection information.

*Chair Knox White* inquired what the daytime off-peak ridership on the Encinal High School line, *Staff Bergman* replied that it was about half the total.

In response to an inquiry by *Chair Knox White* whether interlining was considered at the bus stops, *Sean Diest Lorgion, AC Transit*, replied that they had discussed it at MLK and 12<sup>th</sup> Street in Oakland, where line 12 runs. They did not do much interlining at Fruitvale BART because there were so many bridge lines and the congestion on the bridge. They would be able to examine that possibility. He noted that interlining did play a significant role in how the service is run, as it enables AC Transit to more effectively use its drivers.

### **Open public comment.**

*Liz Cleves*, speaking on behalf of *Diane Voss*, read her statement into the record:

“At the Transportation Commission meeting on May 24, 2006, the Alameda Police Department raised concerns about the safety of the mid-block bus stop in front of the crosswalk at Lum School and Otis Drive at Sand Creek Way. Crossing guards, residents and parents have repeatedly expressed their concerns regarding the safety of the crosswalk. In spite of all the efforts the City has made to make that crosswalk safe, it still poses safety concerns. Since the May 2006 meeting, the Police Department has changed their view, and according to the staff’s current report, the Alameda Police Department is comfortable with the location of the bus stop at the Otis and Sand Creek intersection.

Comfortable. Are they comfortable with the vehicles exiting the drop-off area, and stopping on top of the crosswalk, and sometimes in the crosswalk? Are they comfortable with the number of vehicles that do not stop behind the Yield to Pedestrian arrows? Are they comfortable with the fact that when the bus is stopped in front of the crosswalk, oncoming vehicles cannot see the pedestrians, and therefore will not stop behind the arrows? Are they comfortable with the fact that the crossing guards will not be there all day, every day? Who will give further protection to children on weekends, holidays, school closure days, and during summer vacation?

Please keep in mind that the crossing guards are there only during the weekdays for two hours in the morning, and three hours in the afternoon. A great deal of time has been spent talking, designing surveys, posting signs, soliciting opinions, writing reports, etc. How much time has been spent watching the crosswalk as children arrive, and when they leave school? How much time has been spent watching the crosswalk when no crossing guards are present? The added drive-through drop-off area has added new safety concerns. The flashing lights in the pavements cannot be seen on bright, sunny days, and a bus blocking the driver’s view of pedestrians will add an even greater safety hazard. Many children are not going to wait for the bus to leave the area before they dart out in front of the bus to cross the street. There is probably nothing that can make this crosswalk 100% safe, but there are things that can make it less safe. A bus stop in front of the school crosswalk is one of those things.

If you check with the Alameda Police Department, you will find that they’ve been citing many drivers lately for failure to yield to pedestrians at the crosswalk. They are mostly present during the morning and afternoon times. They can be there issuing tickets all day long. City Councilmember Doug DeHaan, even after the installation of all the safety devices, remarked that he finds this crosswalk dangerous and is reluctant to use it with his family. A bus stop first installed on Otis and Sand

Creek in June 2004 was removed shortly after doing safety concerns. Why are we running around and around, only to end up back where we started? Over and over again, we have read and you've heard the fears, the complaints of Alameda Landing residents, Lum School parents, crossing guards.

At the City Council meeting on March 2, 2007, Councilmember DeHaan was before the City Council, and he asked to answer the problems of a bus stop on Otis and Sandcreek. He said to put the Line 63 back on Shoreline."

*Liz Cleves* noted that the staff report stated that the density at the Shoreline area far exceeded that in the Otis Drive area, and that the Shoreline area has 1,077 housing units, and the Otis Drive area has 330 housing units. The Shoreline corridor has three times the number of housing units than the Otis area. She believed that the ridership generated in the Shoreline area would be greater. She noted that of the 128 responses staff received from the survey; 23 of those responses (18%) stated that the Shoreline alternative would increase their ridership, compared to 8 respondents (6%) in the Otis area. Sixteen respondents favor a new stop at Otis and Willow. She noted that with respect to rerouting Line 63 and the locations for the new bus stop, Attachment 3 read, "By shortening one of the Alameda Point route, this would reduce the run time by 1.8 minutes westbound, and 2 minutes eastbound. This change would eliminate low-usage stops. The change at one would require riders to walk an additional 1,350 feet." She noted that AC Transit Board Policy 508 read, "Bus stops or locations where bus passengers access the AC Transit system: Bus stops must therefore be convenient to the places where passengers wish to go. Convenience and speed will be balanced in determining appropriate bus stop placement, as too many bus stops can slow down travel times. Outside the downtown areas, AC Transit generally seek to have bus stops 1,000 feet apart. Passenger usage of bus stops is an important factor when considering bus stop placements or removals." She believed the proposed increased in walking distance was too far.

*Jonathan Martin* wished to address the reroute of Line 63 from Otis to Shoreline between Grand and Willow. He liked the quietness of Willow Street, and objected to the rerouting of the 63, which would put noisy buses in front of his house at all hours. He requested that Line 63's current route be kept.

*Lucy Farber* noted that she lived in Berkeley but was the office manager at St. George Spirits at 2601 Monarch Street, which was halfway between the two stops that were proposed for elimination. She noted that people come from all over the world to visit their tasting room, and encouraged people from San Francisco to take the ferry and then use Line 63. They attach a coupon at the bottom of the ferry ticket to take the 63. She noted that the temp crew they hire to bottle the vodka frequently take the bus, and she objected to the proposed elimination of their bus stop. She was concerned about the cold and windy weather, which would make it inhospitable to require people to walk to their business. She noted that they encouraged people to take the bus after drinking at the tasting room, and that the removal of the bus stop would make it more difficult for them to use the bus.

*Deborah James* expressed concern about the possible stoppage of the bus to the ferry terminal, as well as to Alameda Towne Centre. She suggested eliminating service to the ferry terminal during the times when the ferry did not operate. She did not believe that all of the drivers were aware



that they should come into the ferry terminal, which has happened a number of times.

*Jim McDonald* spoke on behalf of his elderly mother, who lives on the corner of Willow and Shoreline. She was very concerned about bus and passenger noise, as well as pollution, generated by the current route. She believed that rerouting the 63 line would aggravate that condition, as would the litter from the passengers.

*Claudia Davison* distributed her letter to the Commissioners, and spoke in opposition to the proposed bus stop on the northwest side of Otis and Willow. She noted that the location was adjacent to high-density condominium residential units, and added that there was already insufficient parking at that location. She added that youths already passed through the complex en route to school, and she was concerned that this would add to their security, vandalism and parking problems. She had previously requested removal of the red curb zone on the north side of Otis, across from Willow Street. She did not believe that was a suitable location for a bus stop, which would add to the underutilization of that curb space. She believed that bus drivers should idle their buses and take their breaks in commercial, rather than residential, areas. She proposed that this stop be relocated to the east side of Willow between Otis and the fire hydrant to the south, which was adjacent to commercial medical facilities with off-street parking. She believed that fewer people would be adversely affected on a daily basis seven days a week, and for fewer hours, since it no one would be there after business hours. She believed it was important that Alameda be connected to the two BART stations.

*Tamara Rouse* noted that she and her children had problems crossing the street on the way to Lum School, and believed that adding a bus stop at that location would be a safety hazard. She noted that she was a property manager at 1901 Shoreline, and that while the residents liked having the morning and evening bus stop at that location, the off-peak buses created a lot of noise, traffic and unpleasant smells. She was also concerned about vandalism and strangers loitering around their property during that time.

*Susan White*, 1901 Shoreline Drive, echoed Ms. Rouse's comments, and objected to the diesel fumes in the middle of the day. She added that she suffered from asthma, which was aggravated by the fumes. She noted that she moved to this area to live in fresh air.

*Doug Biggs*, Alameda Point Collaborative, noted that less than half of the residents on Alameda Point have cars. He believed that Line 63 was broken. He noted that their growing youth project discovered that the lack of convenient access to affordable, healthful food stores was a major issue leading to food insecurity in the West End. He noted that the bus line at Alameda Point was heavily used and relied upon by the community, including many students who attend Island High School and Bay School. He noted that the bus was a lifeline for those traveling to the food bank, and that the schedule should not erode at Alameda Point. He has heard stories of buses skipping the Alameda Point loop altogether to regain the on-time schedule. He did not believe that moving the line from Towne Centre should not be considered, even as the Towne Centre is being redesigned as a more upscale shopping center. They would welcome any further efficiency on Line 63, but did not want to see any reduction in service.

*Christine Toll* noted that she lived at Willow and Shoreline, and expressed concern about the bus noise outside her window.

*Jack Bogar* thanked the Transportation Commission for the special meeting regarding the ferry, and for their efforts to improve the bus service for the riders. He noted that it was very difficult to walk across the street safely to Lum School. He noted that cars trying to pass the stopped buses at the crosswalks created a very unsafe situation, and had witnessed the Alameda Police Dept. pull many violators over. He believed that a bus stop adjacent to the crosswalk was very dangerous, and should not be allowed to stand.

*C.J. Kingsley* noted that she lived near Lincoln and Webster. She believed that it would be nice if the Towne Centre-bound bus would arrive at :20 and :50, rather than :18 and :48. Riders who disembark from the normal hourly ferry would be more likely to make the connection. Because of the erratic bus schedule, she suggested that the inbound W, except at Atlantic and Webster, be allowed to pick up Line 63 passengers with a transfer.

*Ursula Apel*, Kitty Hawk Road, noted that she lived eight blocks away from Safeway, and added that it was difficult to carry groceries that distance. She noted that it was difficult to cross Willow/Whitehall, and that there was no legal crosswalk at that location to reach the bus stop. She noted that many families signed a petition to have a bus stop on Otis that would be safer and closer to Lum School.

*George Wales* recalled the City Council meeting in March 2007 was meant to address improvements in the bus system from the riders' perspective. He believed that the reduction of run times would be beneficial to the riders.

*Susan Decker*, Alameda Transit Advocates, believed it was very important that as many people as possible have access to public transit, and looked forward to seeing the gap in Line 63 filled. She noted that solutions to reliability problems were critical, and that having direct access to the ferry as well as bus stops that are close enough. She believed it would be advantageous to move another bus to Shoreline, but because of its cost, she would be happy to solve the problems on Line 63 some other way in the short term.

*Kevin Gong* supported the rerouting Line 63 to Shoreline, because the Transportation Commission's data stated that the density along Shoreline was three times that of Otis. Also 50% of the survey respondents replied that it would increase their ridership if the 63 were to run on Shoreline. He believed that AC Transit and the City had a responsibility to ensure that the public transportation system was successful and accessible. He believed that a stop at in front of the school on Sandcreek would be irresponsible, and that the City fought hard to make that area safe for the children.

### **Close public hearing.**

In response to an inquiry by *Chair Knox White* regarding the Monarch stops, *Staff Bergman* replied that there were a total of six riders per day.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* complimented staff on an outstanding staff report, particularly the items for which consensus was reached, and not reached. The Transportation Commission did not want to cut transit service, which they viewed as an asset to the community. He emphasized that some options were a last resort, and found the arguments with respect to the Monarch stop to be particularly compelling. He wished that more businesses advertised their proximity to transit, and encouraged their customers to use transit. He believed that show of support should be rewarded, not penalized. They reached the consensus that Line 63 was very unreliable, which was echoed by the speakers. The subcommittee reached the conclusion that four minutes needed to be cut from it. He hoped that interlining could be used to achieve economies throughout the system, and he did not believe AC Transit should add a bus on an interim basis to an existing route. He shared the experience expressed by a speaker regarding the bus not going into the ferry terminal, and noted that it happened too often. He agreed with the woman who suggested carrying local passengers on the W line; he noted that was already done on the O and OX. He believed that would be a good supplement for transferring passengers, and for local passengers from Webster Street to Shoreline.

*Chair Knox White* inquired whether AC Transit has considered offering a free transfer within a specific geographic area.

*Mr. Diest Lorgion* replied that AC Transit has not been consistent about which Transbay lines offer local service. He noted that they examine local service on the W, and added that they were generally allowed where local service is not available.

*Chair Knox White* noted that he would rather see consistency in favor of allowing local transfers on all the lines.

*Mr. Diest Lorgion* noted that adding local passengers while a Transbay bus is trying to get to San Francisco was a concern for the Transbay passengers.

In response to an inquiry by *Chair Knox White* regarding adding another bus, *Mr. Diest Lorgion* noted that they had to balance between offering reliable transportation versus being able to cut only so much.

*Chair Knox White* noted that last year, the Transportation Commission made a bus stop spacing recommendation to City Council that would adopt the spacing that AC Transit used, with more flexibility up to 1,300 feet between bus stops. He inquired about the status of that recommendation.

*Staff Khan* recalled that was an interim recommendation until the Transit Plan was developed or implemented. *Staff Bergman* noted that the Transit Plan mentioned 1,000 feet as an approximation, and that it did not establish a minimum.

*Chair Knox White* noted that in terms of Line 63, the subcommittee seems to have recommended that the current line did not work. He agreed that ridership should be the primary goal on this line, and that unreliability would destroy ridership on this line. He agreed that either a new bus should be added, or that certain stops should be cut. He noted that City Council did not rule on the appeal when they heard it in March, and asked for more information. He noted that the Transportation Commission would recommend that this issue return to City Council for a final decision. He hoped that any decision would support ridership and reliability on Line 63.

*Chair Knox White* noted that a primary concern was the safety issue in front of Lum School, and was not personally convinced that a bus stopping in front of the school is a major safety issue. He noted that there was clearly a problem with respect to the use of the roads in front of Lum School. He did not believe there was a need for four lanes of traffic along Otis. He suggested that any motion sent to City Council should ask them to prioritize looking at Otis between Westline and Park, and to redesign the road, possibly to three lanes to shrink the crossing distance. He supported moving the bus line to Shoreline, and added that it may need to happen as part of a longer term plan for rerouting. He supported asking AC Transit to examine the ability to interline that route. He would like to know whether run time could be found within the route.

*Chair Knox White* noted that eliminating the East End Loop along High Street, Encinal and Fernside was rejected because of the ridership of 50-60 riders per day. He found the subcommittee recommendation rerouting near Encinal to be problematic. He was willing to support the Monarch Loop cut, and noted that segment jeopardized ridership along the entire route of the rest of the line. He described Line 63 as an ugly transit route, making frequent turns. He suggested bifurcating the line, which may allow for better, more usable transit. He would be willing to support a conditional motion stating that the Transportation Commission supported moving the line to Shoreline if interlining will allow for an incremental increase in the cost of the line. He emphasized that the 63 must run on time and reliably once the changes have been made.

*Commissioner Krueger* endorsed the cut to Monarch, and recalled mentioning St. George, and found that to be a difficult decision. He noted that he had attended several events at St. George and used Line 63. He was curious about the ridership stemming from the temp work staff, and noted that there was no way to fix the line without finding time and thereby cutting pieces of the route off.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* noted that he had been emphatic at the subcommittee level about not adding another bus. He noted that timing was a critical component, and stated that if they could identify changes to the route that would make the expenditure of the additional bus worthwhile, rather than just adding a bus to preserve the schedule, he would like to see a chance to make the case of adding another bus to serve places that are currently unserved, and gain additional riders. He did not support the strategy of adding another bus to this route on an interim basis. He disagreed with staff's findings in that regard, and strongly advised against adding another bus on

an interim basis. He would like to try the four minutes of cuts they were originally asked to make on an interim basis; during the evaluation period, the contingency of adding another bus by serving additional areas should be examined. If the four minutes did not solve the problem, then additional cuts or an additional bus must be added.

In response to an inquiry by *Chair Knox White* whether four minutes was not enough, *Mr. Diest Lorgion* replied that when they originally looked at the route, the current scheduled running time is 50 minutes one way. He added that during peak periods of the day, the running time was 57-58 minutes. AC Transit anticipated a reduction to about 54 minutes may work, while allowing the drivers' contractually required six minutes of layover. He noted that while the contract stated a six-minute layover, it has become an issue with the operators, and that additional time might be necessary.

*Chair Knox White* requested that AC Transit speak with drivers about the layover issue, and added that the City did not want to constantly change the schedule, which would lead to confusion and a drop in ridership.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* believed the trial cuts would enable the City to develop a way to use a fifth bus, or to further adjust the schedule. He was not comfortable with a trial period of adding another bus on the same route.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* moved to support the elimination of the Monarch Street stops and to implement the school-peak service only on Central Ave., on an interim basis, to remove four minutes of run time. The TC would then examine and prioritize the additional two to four minutes, and to develop a plan for best using an extra bus should it become available. *Commissioner McFarland* seconded

*Commissioner Krueger* inquired what would happen if the cuts were made, and did not work before another plan was ready. He wanted to be ready to put another bus out there, in the worst case scenario. He agreed that the plan should be ready as soon as possible.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* noted that he did not define the interim period in the motion, and suggested that it be the time between signups.

*Mr. Diest Lorgion* replied that the earliest that any change could happen would be March, or possibly June 2008. He said that route changes and signups occurred every three months. He noted that major changes were made every six months.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* suggested that the interim period be six months. He did not believe that every single cut had been explored.

*Commissioner Krueger* inquired whether the driver's union could wait that long, or whether an extra bus must be added sooner. *Mr. Diest Lorgion* replied that the Commission's recommendations would still go to City Council, so if the TC provided alternative recommendations, this would help any changes to be implemented more quickly.

*Chair Knox White* wished to make several friendly amendments. He noted that a key item from the City Council meeting was the move to Shoreline, and would like the motion to include that item. He suggested adding language to the motion that if an additional bus was needed, the bus routes would be re-examined.

*Commissioner Krueger* believed that if the required time at Shoreline were to be added, further cuts must be made somewhere else.

*Chair Knox White* agreed with *Commissioner Krueger's* assessment. *Commissioner McFarland* noted that as the seconder of the motion, that was agreeable to him.

*Chair Knox White* believed that any cuts were to be made, he believed the Transportation Commission should wait until they could discuss all the lines and the best way to run transit in Alameda.

*Staff Khan* noted that if they discussed adding a bus, it would not be restricted to Line 63. He noted that the time issue must be discussed before implementing any cuts.

*Commissioner Krueger* noted that he would rather add the bus on an interim basis than make deeper cuts.

*Chair Knox White* noted that the motion did not include a number of subcommittee conclusions, such as:

- The bus schedule cannot currently accommodate additional runtime. To serve Shoreline, a bus stop should be installed at the intersections of Sandcreek and Willow and Otis to support it;
- Eliminate W. Midway/Monarch/W. Redline (at Alameda Point) portion of route
- Reroute from Central/3<sup>rd</sup> to Pacific, away from Encinal HS, except at peak times for school trips near the beginning and end of the school day
- The prioritized list of additional cuts: 1) removing the bus from the Ferry Terminal; 2) if that did not work, removing all direct service to Encinal High School; 3) if that did not work, relocate the buses from the interior to the perimeter of Alameda Town Centre. He personally did not believe the Towne Centre stops should be removed, as they were one of the highest use stops in the City;
- Line 63 should be rerouted to Shoreline once runtime is available and capital improvements have been made at the bus stops. Since there is no available runtime, bus stops should be installed at Otis and Sandcreek, and Otis and Willow to support the City's guidelines.
- The westbound bus stop at Whitehall and Willow should be made the highest priority of improvements at the bus stops in the City.
- Line 63 should be rerouted from Otis Drive to Shoreline Drive between Grand Street and Willow Street once run time is available and capital improvements have been made at bus

stops. This potential service change should be included as part of any discussions regarding how to best use an extra bus if that becomes available.

- Since the bus schedule cannot currently accommodate the additional run time required to serve Shoreline Drive, bus stops should be installed at the intersections of Otis/Sandcreek and Otis/Willow to support the City's bus stop spacing guidelines. This change in the TC's previous recommendation is in response to the Alameda Police Dept. indicating that they are comfortable with the location of the bus stop at the Otis/Sandcreek intersection.
- The cuts will be on an interim basis, and if they do not work, additional cuts or rerouting should be identified

*Commissioner Krueger* suggested an additional amendment discussed in the subcommittee that was not included in the report: The ferry terminal cut should not be made without the capital improvements at the terminal.

*Chair Knox White* noted that there were 18 unfunded bus shelters in the City already.

*Staff Khan* wished to clarify that the area on Main Street was a wetland area, and constructing a stop there may have some serious environmental implications. He noted that an environmental document may need to be prepared.

With respect to the need for more run time, *Chair Knox White* inquired whether the Transportation Commission preferred going straight to the ferry terminal and Encinal High School all day, or whether those locations would be examined after an interim period. *Commissioner Schatmeier* preferred the latter choice.

*Commissioner Krueger* inquired whether the capital improvements could be made a priority, if not a contingency, for shifting the line.

*Chair Knox White* noted that the installation of a new stop must meet all ADA requirements, which would prevent it from becoming a muddy swamp.

Following a discussion of which items would be retained in the motion, *Chair Knox White* summarized the Commission's consensus that Items #3 and #4 should be removed from the discussion.

In response to an inquiry by *Chair Knox White* regarding the date this item would go to the City Council, *Staff Khan* replied that at the latest, it would be in December.

*Chair Knox White* noted that it would be difficult for him to support a motion that discussed additional buses on an interim basis before other cuts are made.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* noted that it was not correct that he would never support another bus; he would not support another bus on the existing route to make up six minutes that were missing.

*Mr. Diest Lorgion* replied that the line must be reviewed internally by AC Transit staff, and they would determine whether they need to come up with other cuts on their own, with feedback from the Transportation Commission, or add another bus.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* noted that would work for him.

*Chair Knox White* suggested that the Commission not prioritize the items, and that #4 (Ferry Terminal) would be removed from the discussion until it was necessary. *Commissioner Schatmeier* agreed with that suggestion.

*Chair Knox White* believed that it would be important to look at the road design for Otis. He added that Items 3 and 4 would be removed from the discussion, and the motion amended to examine the Otis design. In addition, if AC Transit says that four minutes would not be enough, they will come back to the TC for additional recommendations.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* amended the motion to include the following:

1. Implement the proposed route change at Alameda Point, removing stops on Monarch Street and rerouting the bus onto Lexington Street
2. Implement service near Encinal HS to serve the school at peak school hours; at other times the bus would be rerouted off Central Avenue and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, and would run on Main Street and Pacific Avenue
3. The two proposed cuts described above should be made on an interim basis to evaluate whether they are sufficient to keep the bus on schedule
4. Line 63 should be rerouted onto Shoreline Drive between Grand and Willow once run time is available and capital improvements have been made at bus stops to meet ADA requirements
5. Since the Line 63 schedule cannot currently accommodate the additional run time needed to operate on Shoreline Drive, bus stops should be implemented at the intersections of Otis Drive at Sandcreek Way and Otis Drive at Willow Street
6. The westbound bus stop at the intersection of Whitehall Road and Willow Street should be the City's top priority for bus stop improvements
7. Evaluate Otis Drive west of Park Street to see if the street can be redesigned from four travel lanes to three travel lanes with bike lanes
8. If AC Transit indicates that the time removed from the first two recommendations above is not sufficient, and/or they decide to put an extra bus on the line, they will come back to the TC for recommendations regarding how to proceed

*Commissioner McFarland* seconded. Motion passed 5-1 (Krueger). *Commissioner Ratto* was absent.

## **7. NEW BUSINESS**

### **7A. Proposed alignment of Mitchell Avenue Extension from Alameda Landing to Main Street. Outcome: Commission to provide comments.**



*Commissioner Schatmeier* moved to extend the meeting. *Commissioner Krueger* seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0. *Commissioner Ratto* was absent.

*Staff Khan* presented the staff report. He noted that the alignment of the new street is preliminary. Mitchell Avenue would be needed to support the development in the area, and to provide access to the Posey and Webster Tubes. Staff examined how to place it to provide access to the adjacent properties by minimizing impact to existing and historical buildings. Staff took into the consideration that the alignment be routed where the current sanitary sewer line as well. He displayed slides to illustrate the proposed rerouting. He noted that instead of a left-turn lane, staff suggested additional turn lanes into the driveway to access the property.

In response to an inquiry by *Commissioner Krueger* regarding the travel lane, *Staff Khan* explained that it was meant to establish a right-of-way. He added that this was not a final design, but was a planning-level design. *Commissioner Krueger* was concerned about the width of the street.

### **Open public hearing.**

*John Beery* believed the biggest problem with the project was that it crossed private property, and that the property must be purchased at some point. He added that in many instances, the City wants to do things that are not supported by funding. He did not believe the design should begin until the purpose of the design has been determined clearly. He noted that the properties would be impacted, and suggested a use such as Rossmoor on the site. He noted that this project wouldn't be completed for 22 years, and added that there must be practical considerations. He did not believe the City should be negotiating with South Shore, but that they should listen to the City's needs. If the City cannot get what is needed, then it should state that something is needed from South Shore. He emphasized that this was a business, not a charity, and added that the City was not a charity as well. He believed that time was being wasted, and noted that as a property owner on the site, he would like to see alternatives for the road.

*Doug Biggs*, Alameda Point Collaborative, noted that they had serious concerns about the alignment as shown and agreed with Mr. Beery's comment that it was too early to bring this item forward. He was concerned that when a concept is put on paper, it becomes hard to change. The Collaborative's specific concern was the section of the road that crosses Main Street into Alameda Point, which cut off the corner of one of the housing units, and abuts the road up against it. It would also dump the traffic onto Orion Street, a residential street where a lot of children live. They had been told that alignment would not go there, but would go further up Main Street. He was concerned that this has been reversed. They were also concerned about the larger discussion about the redevelopment of Alameda Point, which would cause a significant change in the layout of the land. He believed this conceptual alignment was premature, and hoped that it would be withdrawn at this point. He would like it to be brought forward at a more appropriate time, when the entitlements at Alameda Point have been completed.

### **Close public comment.**

*Commissioner Krueger* requested that staff address where this alignment fits with Alameda Point

and the larger picture. He inquired whether other alternatives have been examined.

*Staff Khan* noted that Mitchell Avenue is being designated as a truck route and a bicycle route, providing access to Alameda Landing and Alameda Point. He noted that it would be an additional route besides Stargell, as well as Ralph Appezzato Memorial Parkway, and that it addressed the needs of the West End as identified in the General Plan.

*Chair Knox White* noted that the speakers made a good point that it was too early to bring this item out of the conceptual phase, which tended to take a life of their own. He understood Mr. Beery's concern, given that the realignment went through his property. He suggested that if a right of way were to be preserved, he would like to see more discussions with the property owners. He believed this may invite another problem intersection in the City. He noted that they did not know all of the traffic scenarios, and would like to see those identified more clearly before proceeding.

*Commissioner McFarland* noted that developing a truck route into an intersection on a curve was fundamentally bad design, and added that there was a sharp curve coming into the intersection. He believed that neither condition was desirable.

No action was taken.

#### **7B. Designate representative to Alameda Point Advisory Task Force.**

*Chair Knox White* described the purpose and schedule of the Task Force and invited any interested Commissioners to volunteer as an alternate. He noted that he intended to attend all the meetings.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* volunteered to serve as an alternate on the Task Force.

#### **8. Staff Communications**

*Staff Khan* noted that the most recent information from the design team stated that one of the alternatives coming from the Posey Tube would create a hook ramp along Fifth Avenue to Jackson Street; that alternative may not be feasible any longer. He added that there was an Oakland-Chinatown meeting the previous week, during which that item was discussed. The concerns they had heard related to pedestrian access at the intersection. They were also concerned because of the elevation change and the distance between the exit from Posey and the intersection of 7<sup>th</sup> and Harrison. He noted that was a difficult grade change and may not be possible to implement.

*Staff Khan* noted that they would examine an alternative to develop a 6<sup>th</sup> Street arterial corridor. The design team hoped to provide better access along the Oakland side using 6<sup>th</sup> Street, and to develop some better signal coordination and improved access further to the north to 880 and 980. City staff would like to address the weave that occurs on the freeway at the Jackson on-ramp, leading to the 24 exit, and to reduce congestion at that area.

## **Future meeting agenda items**

*Staff Khan* would like to discuss the thresholds of significance for the environmental review of the Transportation Element at an upcoming meeting. They were also looking at pedestrian, transit and bicycle level of service threshold of significance. Staff has been working with the consultants, Dowling Associates, to refine those items, and will bring the information back in November or December.

*Staff Khan* noted that the Park and Webster Street parking studies may be brought back later. It is currently delayed,. He believed it may be brought back in January.

*Staff Khan* noted that a public meeting would be held November 1, 2007, regarding the Fernside Boulevard bike path improvements, for which the City received grant funding. The meeting would be held at Lincoln Middle School at 7:30 p.m. in the Multi-purpose room.

*Staff Khan* wished to address few questions that *Chair Knox White* posed to him regarding a HUD grant received by the City, as part of the Community Block Grant Program. He noted that as part of the 2005 audit, two concerns were raised:

1. With the money received, the City made improvements to bus stop locations, and the selection criteria had been questioned. The auditors recommended that a process be developed with respect to bus stop improvement selections, particular with respect to different demographics of population regarding income and disabilities; and
2. Some ADA features at the improved bus stops were slightly off. They recommended that the City be very careful in the future when making such improvements. It may be necessary to remove some of the sidewalk to comply with the requirements to maintain an appropriate cross-slope.

*Staff Khan* noted that he had received an email from the City Attorney's office, stating that they were negotiating with HUD. They were looking into the voluntary compliance agreement in order to address the concerns raised by HUD; the agreement has not yet been signed. Once it has been signed, the City may have 60 days to bring forth procedures to address the two issues.

**9. Adjournment: 10:35 p.m.**