

TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MINUTES – DRAFT
June 25, 2008

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
Michael Krueger
Robert McFarland
Robb Ratto
Eric Schatmeier

Members Absent:

Srikant Subramaniam
Neilson Tam

Staff Present:

Obaid Khan, Supervising Civil Engineer
Barry Bergman, Transportation Coordinator
Lisa Goldman, Deputy City Manager

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- a. May 28, 2008

Commissioner Krueger noted that page 2 “MTC Stationary Planning Grant” should be “Station Area Planning Grant.”

Commissioner Krueger noted that there were several comments on pages 10 and 11 that he did not remember making, and inquired whether they were made by someone else. Page 10: “*Commissioner Krueger* noted that bike and pedestrian funding generally comes out of grants...” Page 11: “*Commissioner Krueger* believed that CalTrans should provide the funds to maintain their own roads, such as the Tubes.” *Chair Knox White* believed that he had made both comments.

Commissioner Schatmeier noted that page 11 should be changed to read, “Bus rapid transit” rather than “rapid transit”.

Commissioner McFarland moved approval of the minutes for the May 28, 2008, meeting and minutes as corrected. *Commissioner Krueger* seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0. Abstain: *Commissioner Ratto*. Absent: *Commissioners Subramaniam and Tam*.

3. **AGENDA CHANGES**

There were none.

4. COMMISSION COMMUNICATIONS

a. Pedestrian Plan

Chair Knox White noted that the Pedestrian Plan Task Force had not met since the last meeting.

Staff Khan noted that staff was in the process of completing the draft plan, and will go to City Council as part of the TMP at the end of the year.

b. Bicycle Plan Update Group

Chair Knox White noted that the group met on June 16, 2008, where an overview of the Bike Master Plan update process was presented.

d. Alameda Point Advisory Task Force

Chair Knox White noted that there had been no meetings since the last TC meeting.

Chair Knox White noted that he had spoken to a citizen on the bus regarding the bike parking issue at the theater. They had suggested looking at racks for the Park Street area. He noted that the City-owned lot across the street from the theater had a lot of dead space.

Staff Khan noted that the Police Department had requested an official parking space for police vehicles or others to park there. Staff was in the process of making that change.

Commissioner Schatmeier noted that he had driven past Amelia Earhart School and Lincoln Middle Schools, and had seen the 631 bus in operation. He inquired whether the bus operated when school was out of session, and did not believe that was a good use of resources.

Staff Bergman responded that bus ran when summer school was in session, but did not know whether it was in session yet.

5. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – NON-AGENDIZED ITEMS

There were none.

6. OLD BUSINESS

6A. Oral Update on the Status of Water Emergency Transit Authority (WETA)

Lisa Goldman, Deputy City Manager, presented the staff report, and described the background of this item. She noted that SB1093 was introduced by Senator Wiggins of Vallejo. Sen. Wiggins had voted for SB976, which did not please her constituents. She then took the lead on the cleanup legislation, and ensured that Alameda was included in the discussions. SB1093 had passed the Senate and several Assembly committees, and was currently pending before the Assembly Appropriations Committee. She noted that the City of Vallejo, despite its economic problems, hired a consultant and a lobbying firm to assist with this legislation. She noted that they brought forward several interests to City Council and the Transportation Commission, particularly with respect to guarantees and protections for ferry riders, and asked that any new bill would guarantee that current service levels were maintained at a minimum for seven years. They also requested that future fare increases be consistent with historical trends for Alameda ferry services, and that the City be reimbursed for all of its investigation assets associated with the ferry service at fair market value. They estimated that there were approximately \$1.2 million of discretionary money that could have been used for other City purposes. They wished to ensure that they were reimbursed for monies that could have been used for local streets and roads, or other transportation projects in town. They requested a seat on the new five-member board, and Mayor Johnson was appointed to that board by Senator Perata. Vallejo's former mayor was also appointed to the board.

Ms. Goldman noted that they were also interested in quarterly rider satisfaction surveys, on-time performance, public meetings in Alameda if a fare increase or schedule change was anticipated. They wanted to ensure that any plans at Alameda Point would not have to suffer or change because of the work with the new ferry system. They wished to be involved in the development of the management plan for emergency response. They pushed the date for the development plan for completion out six months because they had a late start; the transition plan must be adopted by July 1, 2009. The ferries cannot be taken away or consolidated until the plan has been adopted by that date. The cities of Alameda and Vallejo, as well as the WETA Board, must affirmatively adopt resolutions stating that they will move forward. Any proposal to change the fares or schedule must be followed with a public hearing in Alameda. She noted that they must respect the City's General Plan, redevelopment plans, and any existing redevelopment agreements. They cannot compel property changes or operational changes prior to the adoption of the transition plan without the affirmative agreement of the City. They must compensate the City in a manner to be determined later. She was hopeful that no major changes would follow, and was disappointed that the permanency of the Board was not established.

Open public hearing.

There were no speakers.

Close public hearing.

Commissioner Schatmeier believed one of the worst features of the bill was the five-member board versus the 11-member board. He believed the five-member board was too small, and that reducing the number of representatives will make it more difficult for riders to directly communicate their concerns to decisionmakers. He believed this legislation and new agency was unnecessary and not very well thought-out. He also noted that he would like for ferry tickets to be good on other ferries. *Ms. Goldman* noted that would be one major benefit of the new plan. She noted that the new executive director would be John Stanley, who had close ties to Alameda as executive director of the Hornet.

Chair Knox White noted that staff requested that someone from Senator Perata's office come to hold the hearing in October, but that they stopped returning calls, which he believed was disrespectful and unfortunate.

No action was taken.

6B. Broadway/Jackson Project Update

Staff Khan presented the staff report, and reviewed previous meetings on this ongoing project, which was performed in collaboration with the City of Oakland, ACTIA and Caltrans to move the project forward. He noted that it was important to address the weave at the Jackson Street on-ramp on I-880 northbound. He noted that the intersection at 7th and Harrison was heavily used by pedestrians, so one goal of the project is to reduce traffic at that intersection. Staff would like to shift freeway-bound traffic as much as possible, off Chinatown's local streets to arterials. Staff intended to present an alternative that he mentioned previously, which would give drivers exiting the Posey Tube the option to make a left turn onto Sixth Street, which would be turned into an arterial street and would provide access to the freeway. The Broadway off-ramp would be moved, shortened and dropped at Webster Street. There would be a new on-ramp at I-880 North at Market Street, including some arterial improvements on 5th Street.

Dave Dickinson of Kimley-Horn Associates, the project consultant, displayed a presentation on additional studies that had taken place since February 2008, and discussed the background of the project, as well as recommended alternatives. Their two main objectives with the project study report were to develop a scope of an overall project that was reached through consensus of the stakeholder agencies; and the deeper analysis of the environmental studies. They developed a concept to put in a left-hand turn from Harrison to 6th Street, tapping into the 6th Street arterial. They developed elements that had an independent utility so that they could be implemented individually. He displayed the proposed arterial improvements along 6th Street, leading down to the Market Street on-ramp. The project would also include a southbound off-ramp at Martin Luther King Jr. with the 5th Street improvements. A left turn would be added from Harrison, exiting

the Posey Tube onto 6th Street. The study report would be available for agency review in mid- to late summer, and finalized by the end of the calendar year, at which time the environmental process would commence.

In response to an inquiry by *Commissioner Schatmeier*, Mr. Dickinson replied that 6th Street would not require additional right of way, and that it was an underutilized three-lane road at this point. Signal coordination and prioritization would be utilized on the roadway, which would be relatively cost-effective. There would be intersection improvements at the base of the Market Street and a 6th Street on-ramp.

Commissioner Krueger inquired whether 5th and 6th would remain one-way streets. Mr. Dickinson replied that they would. *Commissioner Krueger* further inquired whether it would be possible to square off the corner at Broadway near Jack London Square and still maintain the traffic flow. Mr. Dickinson replied that would be possible, with a slight curve to allow cars to turn.

Chair Knox White inquired how the project study report chose its alternatives, and inquired whether modeling had been done with respect to the alternatives. Art Dao, ACTIA, replied that they had done traffic forecasting and origin/destination studies, as well as traffic counts. He noted that a complex traffic forecasting model had been developed, and that they were in the process of performing the operations analysis.

A discussion about the necessity of the “pork chop” island and the double turn in the intersection at Harrison and 7th Street ensued. Mr. Dickinson stated that it possibly could be eliminated; his staff would examine the number of trips being diverted.

No action was taken.

Chair Knox White suggested that Item 7A be heard before Item 6C.

7. NEW BUSINESS

7A. Resident Appeal of Public Works Director’s Approval of the Installation of “NO PARKING” Street Sweeping Signs on the 1300 block of Regent Street.

Staff Bergman presented the staff report, and summarized the background and scope of this item. He displayed the affected area on the overhead screen, and summarized the responses received in the survey. He noted that the first basis for the appeal was that the parking restrictions would increase the hardship on parking, which would be twice a month for each side of the street, for a total of four times each month per block. City policy states that street sweeping signs were installed with the intention of balancing the environmental needs of the street’s cleanliness with the needs for parking in the neighborhood. The second basis for the appeal was that the neighbors took pride in the street, and picked up debris as it collected. The City’s concern was that the street sweeping machines can remove debris that could not be removed by hand, such as metals, hydrocarbons and small particles from brake pads on cars, etc. This also had to do

with the City's obligation under the Municipal Storm Water permit, and through the Clean Water Program to control the runoff into the Bay. Staff recommended that the no-parking street sweeping signs be installed on this block in accordance with City policy, and to comply with the requirements of the Federal EPA Clean Water Act.

Commissioner Schatmeier noted that both the appellants and the letter mentioned casual car poolers, as well as Transbay bus riders. He inquired how many of the current parkers were in that category. *Staff Bergman* replied that was anecdotal, and that hard numbers were not available at this time. Staff did have boarding and alighting data from the Trans-Bay bus at that location. The morning boardings were slightly over 100 per day, and about 200 in the evening.

Commissioner Ratto inquired whether the 1200 block of Regent Street was signed for street sweeping. *Staff Bergman* replied that it was, as was the 100 block.

In response to an inquiry by *Commissioner Krueger* regarding the duration of daytime parking, *Staff Khan* replied that the parking occupancy survey was conducted at the time the sweepers would go through. *Commissioner Krueger* suggested it would be useful to know how many cars were there for the entire four hours.

Commissioner Krueger requested further information on the amount of debris in the gutter. *Staff Khan* noted that the City was trying to determine parking impacts where street sweeping was installed, and based on that, staff recommends the restrictions, and identifies the conditions of the affected streets. Staff found that there was no scientific way to determine the condition, but qualitative analysis observed an accumulation of debris in the storm drain inlets. He noted that the mechanical broom was much stronger than by hand. He noted that removal of debris by hand also increased the suspension of particles into the air, as compared to the sweeper, which vacuums the debris into the containment chamber.

Open public comment.

Mr. Rabin, appellant, noted that the area was used by carpoolers all day. When he arrives home from his night shift at the hospital, he frequently had no place to park, and that cars parked on his corner all day long. He noted that he had to move his car to a spot two blocks away, and added that this was an ongoing problem for him. He understood that street sweeping was a necessity, but believed that manual sweeping would be better than the street sweeper. He noted that the vehicle emits hydrocarbons, stirred debris around, and left a trail behind it. Some residents have complained that their cars have been sideswiped, and others believed that it was a revenue-enhancing practice through the

issuance of tickets. He added that the street sweeping schedule was sometimes confusing and difficult to remember. He would like the casual carpool pickup spot to be moved to the parking area near the theater.

Staff Bergman noted that staff reviewed off-street parking along the block, and with the exception of six, at least one offstreet space is available.

Staff Khan believed the street sweeping would improve the situation, because carpoolers would not be able to park on the street.

Mr. Rabin, appellant, noted that the residents did not mind street sweeping, but did mind having the carpoolers parking in the area. He would like to see a parking sticker system explored and instituted.

Staff Khan noted that staff was looking into that possibility very seriously.

Close public comment.

Commissioner Krueger stated that he heard that there is hand-sweeping on Gibbons. *Staff Khan* noted that he was not aware of it, and that it was not sanctioned by the City. *Commissioner Ratto* noted that because of the massive trees on Gibbons, the residents bring in a vacuum truck to remove the leaves. He had never seen any hand-sweeping on that street in 10 years.

Commissioner Krueger noted that he lived at 1204 Regent Street, which had street sweeping, and inquired whether anyone had any objection to his participation in this issue. He added that he had an off-street parking space.

Commissioner Ratto noted that he had participated in Park Street issues for six years, and did not object to *Commissioner Krueger* participating in this issue.

Chair Knox White noted that conflict of interest was financial.

Commissioner Krueger noted that he had no financial interest in this issue, and that he agreed that parking on Regent Street was very difficult.

Commissioner Schatmeier noted that the issue of the street being used as a park-and-ride lot was critical, and believed that there may not be a problem otherwise. He believed the restriction would take care of most workdays, and did not believe that decisions based on a guess should be made.

Staff Khan agreed that a park-and-ride lot would be beneficial near the Park Street district, but that a location was difficult to find. He invited suggestions for potential locations. He noted that the City of Davis offers a permit was possible for transit users; staff was looking into that possibility very seriously.

Commissioner Ratto agreed with Mr. Rabin that the sweeping schedule was difficult and restrictive. He respectfully asked Public Works to look at the possibility of modifying the schedule so that the streets could be swept on the other days to spread out the parking restrictions. He suggested that the City hold discussions with the owners of the Bank of America building, and that they offered monthly parking passes in that lot. He suggested talking with the US Bank building, which was underutilized during the day. He noted that he would vote to deny the appeal, and added that the appellant brought up many good points. He commended the appellant for appearing before the Transportation Commission, and chided his neighbors for not showing up for the appeal. He believed the appellant would have been better supported if his neighbors had appeared as well, and added that it was easy to sign a piece of paper, but that showing up for the meeting was very important. He noted that this would be his last meeting as a Commissioner. He suggested going back to the neighbors, and encouraging them to show up next time.

Commissioner Schatmeier supported *Commissioner Ratto's* comments, and that a park and ride lot would be an asset to the City.

Commissioner Krueger believed a park and ride lot would help, but would not solve the problem. To solve the street sweeping issue, the parking utilization must be reduced to less than 30%.

Commissioner McFarland agreed that having all the neighboring streets swept on the same day was a big problem, and that some people did not have off-street parking.

Staff Khan agreed with that assessment, and had previously suggested modifying the schedule. He noted that the maintenance crews looked at making the sweeping pattern as efficient as possible without impacting neighborhoods more than necessary. He noted that if no off-street parking is available, the City takes this into account.

Chair Knox White noted that while a park and ride program was being discussed, there was also a large parking garage with many open spaces during the day. He believed this could be a way to solve the park and ride problem. He noted that the Transportation Master Plan had a recommendation for setting up permit parking plans, making them available to neighborhoods. He would like to see some semblance of control over how many people park in an area, and for the public to use public streets as necessary. He believed residents should be careful in identifying the space in front of their house as "their space." He was concerned with street sweeping itself, and believed that it should be done on every street. He noted that other streets, such as Crist Street, were highly parked. He noted that this was a difficult decision, but that the streets were swept only four days a month. He believed staff would continue to work with the residents with respect to the impacts.

Commissioner Ratto believed there should be signs on Central, Encinal, Chester and Crist.

Commissioner Krueger inquired whether a street stayed signed forever. *Staff Khan* noted

that staff did not have an occasion to remove a sign, but if they receive a request, it may be because of a substantial land use change, such as a new school. It was staff's goal that ultimately all streets would be signed.

Commissioner Ratto moved to accept staff's recommendation to deny the appeal. *Commissioner McFarland* seconded the motion. Motion passed 4-1 (*No: Schatmeier*).

6C. Review of Draft Schedule for Completing Analysis of Thresholds of Significance.

Staff Khan presented the staff report, and noted that the major issue was how to resolve conflicts. The City Attorney has stated that a Supplemental EIR would be necessary. He noted that the Transportation Commission has asked staff to determine how to resolve conflicts prior to bringing the EIR to the City Council. He noted that they would present a schedule to bring the resolution forward. The five items listed in the discussion to be implemented before reaching the goal of having the threshold of significance were:

1. The final selection of methods of evaluation or level of service criteria;
2. Development of draft implementation policies to address conflicts among different transportation modes;
3. Running the transportation model to see where the impacts were, and how to mitigate them;
4. Modify the draft policies as appropriate; and
5. Process the necessary environmental document so City Council could say they understood the conflicts and the impacts, and that they would approve the new thresholds of significance.

He noted that the City Council must also disclose the impacts to the public, which was a very important item, in accordance with proposed EIR Policy 7. As an example, he noted that the City of San Jose had selected a few intersections that were protected, and that they would not be mitigated by adding more lanes; they would create a system of other modes in the City, and that the impacts at the other intersection would pay for the improvements. He noted that in order to collect the money from a developer or from projects, it would be critical to have a nexus between the fees collected and the impacts. A statement of overriding consideration would be needed for those intersections that would trigger the requirement of a supplemental EIR. He described the contents of the schedule in Table 1. He noted that in order to meet the schedule, a joint public hearing for the Draft EIR with the Transportation Commission and the Planning Board was being considered for August. The Final EIR would be brought to the Transportation Commission before it went to City Council. He noted that resolutions to the conflicts must be determined, and that staff hoped to return to the Transportation Commission in August or September with those recommendations.

Chair Knox White noted that the Transportation Commission requested that the procedures for resolving conflicts come to this meeting, rather than a schedule. *Staff Khan* indicated that staff would continue to bring information forward as it became

available.

Chair Knox White was confused about the rationale for bringing the San Jose example forward, which the Transportation Commission has stated they did not want to follow.

Staff Khan noted that it would be helpful for the Transportation Commission to clearly state that they did not want to pursue the San Jose example. *Staff Bergman* noted that the Transportation Commission had requested that staff focus on using the functional classification system to resolve conflicts, but that the possibility was brought up of blending a few approaches together. He noted that the San Jose example was meant to be illustrative.

Commissioner Krueger noted that the minutes accurately reflected his memory, and that he had asked about the San Jose approach as a hybrid approach. He did not want to drop that subject without further discussion.

No action was taken.

8. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

Staff Bergman brought the maps that had been produced for the Safe Routes to School project. The rest of the maps would be completed by the end of the summer. He displayed a video to illustrate the impact of the redesigned drop-off zone at Paden School on traffic circulation.

Estuary Crossing/Feasibility Study

Staff Khan noted that staff was looking into some alternatives for creating a crossing across the Estuary. A Technical Advisory Committee meeting would be held on August 5, 2008, and a Policy Advisory Committee meeting would be held on August 7. Another set of public hearings would be held in September and October.

Future meeting agenda items

Staff Khan noted that he did not have any development-related traffic studies or plans at this time. He noted that another appeal on the street-sweeping issue would be held at a future meeting. An ILC meeting would be held on July 2, 2008 at City Hall.

Staff Bergman noted that the City's work on multimodal thresholds of significance was presented for discussion at ACTIA's bicycle and pedestrian working group meeting. He noted that there was considerable interest in the City's work among staff from other agencies, but no one had undertaken similar work to date.

Staff Khan noted that the Transportation Master Plan Environmental Impact Report would be released by the second week of July.

Chair Knox White asked about AC Transit-related signage near Willow and Otis, or Willow and South Shore. *Staff Bergman* replied that this related to the proposed

improvements at bus stops. The improvements will be implemented even if this portion of Line 63 is not shifted to Shoreline Drive, as the stops also serve Line W.

Chair Knox White noted that this was the final meeting for *Commissioner Ratto*.

Commissioner Ratto noted that it was ironic and gratifying that the four Commissioners that he started serving with were the four Commissioners in attendance. He noted that it had been a pleasure serving with them, and that he had learned much from them. He thanked *Staff Khan* and *Staff Bergman* for staffing this Commission, and for their efforts in informing the public regarding the limitations of the Department. He also thanked the public for their participation.

Chair Knox White thanked *Commissioner Ratto* for his service.

Commissioner Schatmeier noted that he was distressed that this was *Commissioner Ratto*'s last meeting. He noted that they had disagreed on issues, but that he always respected him as a colleague and a friend. He noted that he would be missed.

9. ADJOURNMENT: 9:35 p.m.