



BUILDING BETTER TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Executive Summary April 4, 2005

PRESENT: Chair Nora Campos, Vice Chair David Cortese, Councilmember Linda J. LeZotte, Councilmember Forrest Williams

STAFF: Jim Webb, Ed Shikada, Bill Hughes, Sharon Landers, Jim Ortbal

The meeting was convened at 1:34 p.m.

Chair Campos began by stating that the Committee will not be hearing items A1 and A4 because those items were being deferred to the May 2, 2005 meeting, and that item A3 has been dropped.

a. Expansion and Improvement of Transit and Transportation Systems

1. Receive Report from Caltrans on Regional Transportation Issues (Transportation/Caltrans District 4) – **Deferred to May 2, 2005**
2. Recommendations on Santa Clara/Alum Rock Transit Mode Choice (Transportation)

Upon a motion by Councilmember Williams, and seconded by Councilmember LeZotte, the Committee accepted the report with direction to staff to come back with any schedule feedback to the May 2, 2005.

3. Route 880/Coleman Interchange Aesthetic Design (Airport/OCA/Public Works/Transportation)
DROPPED
4. Report on San Jose Transportation Needs and Funding Alternatives (Transportation) – **Deferred to May 2, 2005**

b. Traffic Relief/Safe Streets

1. Receive Follow up Report on Red Curbs Standards at Crosswalks in Vicinity of schools (Transportation) – **continued from March 7, 2005**

Upon a motion by Vice Chair Cortese, and seconded by Councilmember LeZotte, the Committee accepted the report with direction to staff to return in June 2005 with response/analysis to the information requested (as described in the attached Meeting Report).

c. Supporting Smart Growth

1. No items

d. Regional Relationships/Funding/Policy

1. No items

e. Oral Petitions

There were none.

f. Adjournment

The Committee was adjourned at 2:27 p.m.



Councilmember Nora Campos, Chair
Building Better Transportation Committee



BUILDING BETTER TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Meeting Report April 4, 2005

PRESENT: Chair Nora Campos, Vice Chair David Cortese, Councilmember Linda J. LeZotte, Councilmember Forrest Williams

STAFF: Jim Webb, Ed Shikada, Bill Hughes, Sharon Landers, Jim Ortbal

The meeting was convened at 1:34 p.m.

Chair Campos began by stating that the Committee will not be hearing item A1 & A4, they have been deferred to the May 2, 2005 meeting and item A3 has been dropped.

a. Expansion and Improvement of Transit and Transportation Systems

1. Receive Report from Caltrans on Regional Transportation Issues (Transportation/Caltrans District 4) – **Deferred to May 2, 2005**
2. Recommendations on Santa Clara/Alum Rock Transit Mode Choice (Transportation)

Jim Ortbal, Assistant Director, Department of Transportation, stated that as part of the Downtown/East Valley Transit Improvement Program, the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) is developing a project to construct transit improvements along the Santa Clara/Alum Rock corridor. The Santa Clara/Alum Rock project is considering two transit mode alternatives to serve the corridor: 1) Enhanced Bus and 2) Single Car Light Rail Transit.

Jim Ortbal noted that the City is waiting on VTA staff recommendation to determine what City staff would recommend to the Committee, and the Council adopt and forward on to the VTA. VTA is still in process of developing the recommendation, finalizing. Jim added that there is a Policy Advisory Board (PAB) meeting April 7, 2005, and staff anticipates that VTA will have a recommendation by then to share with the PAB. Upon formal receipt of a VTA recommendation, this item will return to the Committee for discussion and to provide a formal recommendation on the alignment or the type of mode choice in terms of travel in the corridor.

On July 2, 2004, the VTA submitted the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Report (EIS/R) to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for review and approval for public release. As of February 9, 2005, additional comments were submitted by FTA requiring VTA to provide further information related to air quality during construction and historic properties.

Councilmember Linda LeZotte noted that considering the funding scenario for the measure, and the fact that VTA said that the only thing it could put into the funding scenario was the enhanced bus, she posed the following question, *why are we even considering that they will come forward with anything else beside the enhanced bus?* Jim Ortbal stated that staff was not sure what it was going to do at this time and that the direction that was heard from the PAB was to consider both of the recommendations side by side. He added that VTA must make a formal recommendation and City staff did not feel it was appropriate for the City staff to assume what the VTA may be recommending or to try and determine what it should be without its recommendation.

Chair Campos noted that since additional information had to be submitted to the FTA with regard to air quality, she posed the following questions, *will that impact the timeline of when we go out to the community?* Jim Ortbal stated that VTA staff received additional comments from the FTA and noted that staff is analyzing them at this time and he does not believe there will be delays in getting a re-circulated EIS/R. He added that the original timeline for VTA to release a formal recommendation was by August and that date may change depending on the outcome of the PAB meeting.

Hans Larsen, Deputy Director, Department of Transportation, added that at this time it is estimated that circulation of the Draft EIS/R and the public hearings will occur in late Spring/Early Summer 2005. The process for policy action on the selection of a preferred alternative includes:

- Public release of Draft EIS/R,
- Community outreach and a public hearing
- VTA's recommendation of a preferred alternative
- BBT Committee review and recommendation
- City Council review and recommendation, and
- VTA Policy Advisory Board action

The earliest expected schedule for BBT Committee review of the preferred alternative is now August 2005. Staff will continue to monitor the status of the project and recommend a new schedule for the Summer/Fall BBT Committee workplan.

Chair Campos stated that we should wait to see what the outcome of the Thursday PAB meeting are and then the City can determine how to proceed. She asked for this item to be scheduled for the May meeting and that it could be deferred if necessary.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Williams, and seconded by Councilmember LeZotte, the Committee accepted the report with direction to staff to come back with any schedule feedback to the May 2, 2005.

3. Route 880/Coleman Interchange Aesthetic Design (Airport/OCA/Public Works/Transportation) – **DROP**
4. Report on San Jose Transportation Needs and Funding Alternatives (Transportation) – **Deferred to May 2, 2005**

b. Traffic Relief/Safe Streets

1. Receive Follow up Report on Red Curbs Standards at Crosswalks in Vicinity of schools (Transportation) – **continued from March 7, 2005**

Jim Ortbal stated that at the March 7, 2005 Building Better Transportation (BBT) Committee meeting there was discussion about the necessity of adopting an ordinance establishing the length of red curb required adjacent to school crosswalks. As a result of the discussions, the BBT Committee requested that the Department of Transportation (DOT) incorporate the need for red curb adjacent to school crosswalks into the department's existing guidelines for the installation of marked crosswalks and come back and share with the Committee what improvements or additions that were made to the guidelines for the installation of crosswalks and the addition of red curb next to crosswalks. He then reviewed the guidelines for the installation and removal of marked crosswalks. Jim stated that it would be staff's plan, ultimately, to have red curb at all locations unless it is not appropriate.

After review of the updated Guidelines for Installation and Removal of Marked Crosswalks, Councilmember Williams stated that there have been complaints about too much red curbs in communities, and was thankful that staff put some thought into and have the guidelines in order to distinguish the proper amounts of red curbs.

Jim Webb, Mayor's Office, stated that at the Mayor's State of the City address, the Mayor announced the pedestrian safety initiative, and posed the following questions, *If these new guidelines will be used like the new flashing lights at crosswalks throughout the City? What will determine what the location will be?* Jim Ortbal stated that this is one element of that effort but that these are guidelines on how the installation should be done and what considerations will be taken. He added that staff would also be looking at many factors, such as: vehicle volumes, speeds, and crash history, as these guidelines do take those types of factors into consideration.

Vice Chair Cortese asked where specifically the new language is contained in the guidelines. Jim Ortbal stated that at the bottom of page 2, under Parking Restrictions Adjacent to Crosswalks, after the list of bulleted points, the paragraph "Each warranted school..." that whole paragraph is the new language that was added. Vice Chair Cortese stated that the each warranted school crosswalk language seemed to imply as a crosswalk is warranted then this guideline will be applied to the installation, when really this is more of a installation guideline and not a maintenance guideline, he thinks the request from one of the PTA's was a little more of a retrofit, which was acknowledge to some degree in the staff presentation, stating that there is a desire to get to 95% and as these things need refreshing, staff would go back and reapply these guidelines on the red curb at the same time. Jim Ortbal stated that was correct.

Vice Chair Cortese then asked how often that happens? Jim Ortbal stated that markings typically last about 2-3 years depending on the type of marking, and as they start to come up for scheduled maintenance, staff would start the installation over time. This would probably take about 3 years to complete, and as mentioned, we do not have the resources to go and do a complete and comprehensive review today. We are trying to keep up with the volume of other types of requests coming in. We will have our engineers work with our striping/marketing crews to get them as they are going through on a scheduled preventive maintenance and this could take about 3 years. Vice Chair Cortese stated that that was reasonable and asked that as part of our traffic calming program, if upon request, staff could go out and do at least an evaluation. Jim Ortbal stated that staff is prepared if a request comes in a particular location, they could go study/evaluate and if needed, put the request in for early possible completion.

Vice Chair Cortese is asking for two things to be included in the new guideline language: evaluated upon installation or during a traffic calming evaluation, and the last sentence of the new language "if parking restrictions are not necessary" the reason of that determination would be documented as part of the engineering investigation and how we can expand the report out a little bit, maybe if the determination was already included in the Council office traffic calming logs that are provided about every other month, if they were part of the traffic calming study they would automatically show up on those logs, but that may not be enough, he is trying to accomplish that the school itself and the Council office are notified once the evaluation is done. If there is a justified reason for not doing (a rejection) the red curbing, if it could be reported out to the school district and the Council office, then there are several resources for people to get the reason it was rejected. Jim Ortbal stated that since there are not too many rejections, staff could accommodate Vice Chair Cortese's request to report out the rejections to the school affected as well as the Council district office where the school is located in. So for the record it will be documented as part of the engineering investigation and forwarded to the Council office as part of the monthly traffic calming report Council already receives and the affected school via written report or email.

Chair Campos opened the floor to any public speakers; Mr. Glen Wetzel from the Matsumoto PTA came forward to speak on the item. He stated in regards to the guidelines, the PTA was told by DOT that the guidelines could be changed at a whim without Committee review, that is why the PTA put forward a proposal for standards for crosswalks that staff put in some form for public review and be endorsed by elected officials i.e. the municipal code. Other cities have their standard municipal code, it is a question as to why this is being pushed in a place where people can't see it or hold the Department of Transportation accountable. We have had experiences where children have almost been run over in crosswalks multiple times and this is based upon the engineering standards. He believes the proposed changes to the guidelines today are the same old thing, staff will examine on a case by case basis, but there is nothing to make staff hold standards and there are opportunities for deviations.

Chair Campos stated that what the Committee is supporting today will go to Council and if there were any changes it would come back to the Committee. Jim Ortbal stated that this goes to Council from the Committee report out of minutes and replied yes any changes would come back to the Committee. In terms of the installation guidelines, they are at the direction of the City

Traffic Engineer so they could be changed at DOT's direction, we recognize the sensitivity of changing this issue and that the Committee would want to be engaged and involved in the discussion on any future changes. Staff does not change guidelines lightly and in many instances staff works with the community and affected Committee's, so these are department guidelines as the municipal code states and are delegated to the Director of Transportation to establish and modify as necessary. All changes are to protect the best interest of public safety.

Chair Campos added that there should be something in the guidelines that triggers a change that was established by the Committee would come back through the Committee for that change. Jim Ortbal stated that staff would not contemplate changing without the Committee's involvement.

Vice Chair Cortese added that maybe we should be directing any modifications to the Council and/or the Committee.

Bill Hughes, Senior City Attorney, City Attorney's Office stated that Vice Chair Cortese's motion was taken as a suggestion and that this particular issue falls under the Director of Transportation, and he feels that there are reasons why they should remain guidelines.

Vice Chair Cortese asked Bill Hughes if we took the words in the proposed guidelines, "take the parking restrictions adjacent to crosswalk" and take that section and asked that it be cross referenced in the City's traffic calming policy, which is Council jurisdiction. That way if the school crosswalk installation piece was ever modified again, the City Engineer could propose changes, but it would have to come before Council for approval. Bill Hughes stated that in the traffic calming policy, that part would not even be referred to in the guideline, with regards to parking restrictions adjacent to crosswalks. Vice Chair Cortese reiterated that by the action today the Committee would ask that the guidelines would be part of the traffic calming policy as well. Jim Ortbal stated that he believed they already were, and there are references to other department guidelines. Bill Hughes added that it might be better to look at the traffic calming policy to see if these guidelines are already incorporated and come back at another time if language needs to be changed.

Chair Campos stated that what she is hearing is that we want to move the staff memo as is and pull out the parking restrictions component of it and cross reference that to traffic calming policy. Vice Chair Cortese moved acceptance of the red curb standards for school crosswalks report, with modifications discussed on reporting out to Council offices and schools as appropriate and with the modifications in regards to frequency of evaluation being allowed during traffic calming studies, and bring back language that would cross reference just the red curb standards for school crosswalks into the traffic calming policy as a separate item for the next Committee meeting. Jim Ortbal stated that there was a traffic calming item on the June agenda, Chair Campos agreed that would be appropriate to hear in June.

Upon a motion by Vice Chair Cortese, and seconded by Councilmember LeZotte, the Committee accepted the report with direction to staff to adhere to Vice Chair Cortese's motion above.

c. Supporting Smart Growth

1. No items

d. Regional Relationships/Funding/Policy

1. No items

e. Oral Petitions

There were none.

f. Adjournment

The Committee was adjourned at 2:27 p.m.



Councilmember Nora Campos, Chair
Building Better Transportation Committee

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