

Memorandum

**TO: BUILDING BETTER
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**

FROM: James R. Helmer

**SUBJECT: VTA's EXPENDITURE PLAN AND
PROPOSED TAX MEASURE**

DATE: 02-23-06

Approved

Date

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to update the Building Better Transportation Committee on the current status of the following significant regional transportation policy issues:

1. Development of a 30-year regional transit investment plan by the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) referred to as the VTA Expenditure Plan, and
2. VTA's consideration of a new transportation sales tax in Santa Clara County to help support implementation of the VTA Expenditure Plan.

At the Committee meeting, staff will provide a verbal report on this subject to reflect policy actions anticipated to be taken on February 28, 2006 by the County Board of Supervisors and on March 2, 2006 by the VTA Board.

ANALYSIS

VTA Expenditure Plan

On December 23, 2005, VTA staff released a proposed Expenditure Plan for future regional transportation investments. This plan favorably reflects recommendations approved by the City Council on November 29, 2005 and includes the following:

- BART completion by 2016.
- Full funding of Airport People Mover connection to BART/Caltrain and completion by 2018.
- Full funding allocation for highest cost option (light rail) for Santa Clara/Alum Rock transit corridor and completion by 2021.
- Completion of Capitol Expressway Light Rail to Eastridge by 2012 and to Neiman by 2017.
- Funding for Caltrain upgrades, Bus Rapid Transit projects, and bus service increases.

- Funding of VTA share of Caltrain Electrification through all of Santa Clara County (Palo Alto to Gilroy) by 2018.
- Provides annual funding for local street pavement maintenance, County expressway improvements, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- Assumes voter approval of a new 30-year, quarter-cent sales tax for transportation.

The VTA Expenditure Plan was discussed at a VTA Board Workshop held on January 27th, and is scheduled for consideration of approval at the VTA Board meeting on March 2, 2006.

New Transportation Tax Measure

In September 2005, the VTA Board of Directors proposed the consideration of a new 30-year, quarter-cent sales tax measure to enhance VTA transit service levels and assist with the delivery of priority transportation improvements. The Silicon Valley Leadership Group has assisted with the development of a possible ballot measure for June 2006 or November 2006.

Recently, consideration has been given to a tax measure with the County Board of Supervisors that would address transportation needs and general County services as part of a new half-cent sales tax measure. This proposal is being considered by the County Board of Supervisors at a special Board Session to be held on February 28, 2006, at 6:30 p.m.

JAMES R. HELMER
Director of Transportation