



# Memorandum

**TO:** TRANSPORTATION AND  
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

**FROM:** James R. Helmer

**SUBJECT:** VALLEY TRANSPORTATION  
AUTHORITY (VTA)  
ACTIVITIES REPORT

**DATE:** 08-27-08

Approved

*Christine F. Shupley*

Date

*8-28-08*

## RECOMMENDATION

Receive a presentation on the status of various Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) projects and programs of interest to the City of San Jose.

## BACKGROUND

The Transportation and Environment Committee work plan includes the presentation of quarterly reports on current activities related to projects and programs of significance involving the VTA. The report will include an overview presentation by City and VTA staff on key topic areas and then staff will be available for discussion of key items of interest to the Committee.

For the September 8th meeting, topics expected to be addressed in the VTA report include the following:

- BART Extension to San Jose/Silicon Valley – On August 5, 2008, the VTA Board approved placing a measure on the November 4<sup>th</sup> General Election ballot to support financing the BART project. The measure would authorize the VTA to enact a 1/8-cent sales tax in Santa Clara County, limited to 30 years, and to be collected only if sufficient state/federal funds are secured to match local construction funds.
- Santa Clara/Alum Rock Transit Corridor Project – The VTA has released a draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the project to implement a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system in the Santa Clara/Alum Rock corridor between Downtown San Jose and the Eastridge Transit Center. The project is intended to also accommodate the potential for a future Light Rail Transit (LRT) system. City staff from Planning, Redevelopment, and Transportation are working with the VTA to improve the project scope to better align with concurrent efforts to revitalize the Alum Rock Neighborhood Business District. Key issues include the avoidance of a proposed loss of 77 on street parking spaces (45% of current on street parking supply) and improvement of urban design and landscaping features.

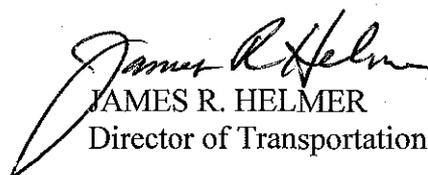
- Freeway Litter Control Study - Caltrans and the VTA have completed a Litter Control Pilot Program in order to estimate the costs of removing litter and maintaining an acceptable appearance (referred to as “slightly littered”) on freeways in Santa Clara County. The pilot project focused on a 10-mile test section of Route 101 between Route 880 and Blossom Hill Road. The annually cost to maintain the pilot section in a “slightly littered” or better condition was \$450,000. For the entire 248 mile freeway network in Santa Clara County, the annual litter removal cost is estimated to be in the range of \$11 million to \$19 million depending on the availability and utilization of probationers. The current annual Caltrans budget for litter removal in Santa Clara County is \$0.9 million (less than 10% of the funding need). The Litter Study is being reviewed in September by the VTA’s committees and the Silicon Valley Litter Control and Removal Committee. Key follow up issues include an evaluation of 1) Caltrans resource allocation practices, 2) Caltrans service delivery model, 3) public education and enforcement programs, and 4) new funding sources.
- Route 880/Coleman Landscaping Project – Based on prior City Council direction, City staff has worked with the VTA to develop a gateway landscape and public art design at the 880/Coleman interchange. In this capacity, the City’s Departments of Transportation and Public Works, in association with the Office of Cultural Affairs, have completed a 95% design for the interchange landscape that is consistent with the “agricultural” design theme adopted as part of the landscape master plan for the Airport. The major features of the design includes the placement of 15 large illuminated metal pipes that provide a modern expression of harvested hay bales and native, drought tolerant grasses. The design is within the project’s original \$3M construction budget. The project is currently on hold due to two issues. First, VTA has informed the City of a funding shortfall for the project due to unanticipated extra costs associated with the 880/Coleman construction. Secondly, Caltrans is requiring that the City assume maintenance responsibility for the interchange area due to the special art features of the design. The estimated annual maintenance cost ranges from approximately \$30,000 to \$100,000 depending on the frequency and quality of maintenance. City and VTA staff are currently exploring options to address the project funding issues. Similarly, City staff is considering options related to funding the maintenance of the interchange landscaping including volunteer efforts.
- Airport Area Automated Transit Network Demonstration Project – City staff is currently soliciting interest from the transit industry to consider San Jose as a demonstration project location for developing new transit technology referred to as an Automated Transit Network (ATN). The ATN system is an “automated people mover” system that provides on-call, point to point travel over a transit guideway network. This type of system has potential to provide transit service in the Airport area that connects: Airport destinations; BART, Caltrain and LRT stations; hotels; and major office buildings. Staff is soliciting industry interest through a Request for Interest (RFI) that has been developed consistent with the Demonstration Partnership Policy approved by the City Council on June 3, 2008.

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- Current Regional Highway Projects – Various highway projects are being developed by VTA, Caltrans, and/or San Jose for construction within the next 5 years. They include: Route 101/Tully Interchange Upgrade, Route 880 Widening (237 to 880), Blossom Hill/Monterey Area Pedestrian Overcrossing, Route 85/Cottle Interchange Upgrade, Route 87 Corridor Landscaping, Route 880/Coleman Landscaping, and Route 87 Corridor Ramp Metering. In addition, project development work is ongoing for improvement projects at 280/880/Stevens Creek/Winchester, 101/Trimble, 101/Zanker, 101/Oakland, 101/Mabury, 101/Blossom Hill, 880/Charcot, 87/Capitol/Narvaez, and Montague Expressway, as well as the development of a High Occupancy Toll (HOT) Lane system along Route 85 and Route 101.

  
JAMES R. HELMER  
Director of Transportation

For questions please contact Hans Larsen, Deputy Director, at 535-3835.