

**Summary Minutes
TRANSPAC Meeting May 14, 2009**

ATTENDANCE:

Elected Officials: Mark Ross, City of Martinez, TRANSPAC Chair; Cindy Silva, Walnut Creek, TRANSPAC Vice Chair; Julie Pierce, Clayton, CCTA Representative; Guy Bjerke, Concord; Karen Mitchoff, Pleasant Hill. Absent: (excused) Susan Bonilla, Contra Costa County; David Durant, Pleasant Hill.

Planning Commissioners: Bob Armstrong, Clayton; Diana Vavrek; Pleasant Hill; Michael Murray, Contra Costa County; Bob Hoag, Concord. Absent: (excused) Jon Malkovich, Walnut Creek. Vacant Seat: Martinez

Staff: John Greitzer, Contra Costa County; Ray Kuzbari, Concord; Eric Hu, Pleasant Hill; Deidre Heitman, BART; Hisham Noeimi, CCTA; Susan Miller, CCTA; John Hall, Walnut Creek; Tim Tucker, Martinez; Mario Moreno, Pleasant Hill; Lynn Overcashier, 511 Contra Costa; Barbara Neustadter, Connie Peterson, TRANSPAC staff.

Chair Ross convened the meeting at 9:05 a.m. with a quorum.

- 1. Convene meeting: Pledge of Allegiance/Self-Introductions – completed**
- 2. Public Comment – none**
- 3. CONSENT AGENDA: Silva/Pierce/unanimous**
Approved the April 16, 2009 meeting minutes.
END CONSENT AGENDA
- 4. Presentation on the “sooner, cheaper” version of improvement to the I-680/SR-4 Interchange Lane**

For a number of years, TRANSPAC has sought to improve the operation and capacity of the I-680/SR-4 Interchange. In 2008, TRANSPAC asked the Contra Costa Transportation Authority to examine any additional possibilities for a “sooner, cheaper” alternative to improve operation and capacity on the SR-4 side of the Interchange with specific emphasis on the original Phase 3 of the project, the completion of the “missing” 3rd lane in each direction on SR-4 from Morello Avenue west of the Interchange as far east as possible to match the lanes to/from East County in the vicinity of Port Chicago Highway.

Susan Miller, Director of Projects for the Transportation Authority, along with consultants Scott Kelsey and Ramesh Sathiamurthy of URS, have been working on this project idea. She noted the challenges they faced in coming up with a useable segment that added benefits and that could be done at a “fundable” price given the size and cost of this five-phase interchange project. In February 2009 Caltrans signed off on the I-680/SR4 Project Report and Environmental Document. This proposed project is covered under the approved document, but because it is out of sequence, a discussion with Caltrans would have to take place to explain the benefits of the standalone usable segment.

Messrs. Kelsey and Sathiamurthy presented the options for construction of the third eastbound lane. Mr. Kelsey began by summarizing the overall project phases, estimated

costs and benefits, noting that one major benefit would be improved safety by eliminating weaves and adding lanes.

Phase III improvements include adding two lanes in the SR4 median, widening six bridges and constructing soundwalls. This improvement would be relatively easy to build as the median is extra wide and no right of way acquisition is involved, and it would increase the capacity of SR4 by 50%. When assessing the interim project, the consultants had to determine which direction of Route 4 would most benefit from the improvement. SR 4 is very heavily travelled and exceeds the state average for traffic and accident rates (especially rear-end accidents). The number of eastbound accidents exceeded those in the westbound direction, and this direction also has short weaves and a non-standard lane drop.

For the Phase III approach, the goal was to successfully conform to the approved project with no or minimal "throwaway." Flexible design was incorporated to accommodate funding availability. Four options were developed, beginning with the entire eastbound direction and then scaling back. The greatest cost occurs when a bridge is reached, and of the six bridges, three require full widening. For the three bridges that require seismic retrofit, that cost has been worked into the estimate. Also included were provisions for possible cost reductions and savings by going with approved but non-standard features. Caltrans would need to approve any non-standard features. Mr. Sathiamurthy noted that Caltrans has a new policy in which approval of exceptions would expire in three years. If the project were delayed, the exceptions would need to be reevaluated.

The benefits of this option were summarized as follows: increase SR4 eastbound capacity; eliminate lane drop; create safer weaving and merging movements; decrease congestion, and ultimately increase safety. This option will also improve traffic handling for later phases when widening the outside lanes.

Following the presentation, TRANSPAC members posed a number of questions. Tim Tucker asked if there had been any consideration of closing the Pacheco on-ramp, and Mr. Kelsey stated that it was not part of the project. Ms. Miller added that weaving would be eliminated in the following phase and replaced with a slip ramp. Bob Armstrong asked completing a segment this way lowers the cost or just speeds it up, and if this was considered a "shovel-ready" project. Mr. Kelsey replied that it speeds it up by building a piece of it. It still needs design, but clearing the environmental design was a huge hurdle towards being shovel ready. Mr. Sathiamurthy added that it is possible that the design phase could be accelerated.

Member Bjerke questioned the need to discuss this project as there is no money to fund it as a 680/4 element. Neustadter noted that this request was made prior to the economic downturn and serves as information at this point, although it could be added to the Measure J list. Member Pierce added that this alternative is significantly cheaper, would greatly improve safety and has no or minimal "throwaway" components.

Ray Kuzbari asked if the PSR looked at whether this could potentially worsen traffic downstream as it will be getting there quicker. Mr. Kelsey said that the traffic study goes beyond the project limits, and he didn't recall significant issues being raised. Member Pierce added that it widens and balances lanes throughout entire corridor. Member

Armstrong asked if Pittsburg or Antioch had expressed any comments or input, and Member Pierce replied that based on a number of informal conversations, the cities seem to be in favor of it.

Michael Murphy asked if they could expect additional reduction in costs due to the current market. Both Mr. Kelsey and Ms. Miller noted that there have been reductions in bid costs in some cases. He also asked whether there has been any consideration in using a time incentive (such as with CC Myers for the emergency work on I-580). Mr. Kelsey said that Caltrans would require that in the analysis in the design process.

ACTION: Thanked Susan Miller and Hisham Noeimi, Transportation Authority staff as well as Scott Kelsey and Ramesh Sathiamurthy of URS Corporation.

5. Proposed Central County 2009 Strategic Plan Programming Update

This update is required to revise currently planned Measure J expenditures to reflect lower than previously anticipated sales tax and bond revenues and higher financing costs. The Authority had requested that each subregion revise its programming to meet new targets by delaying expenditures to beyond 2015.

Ms. Neustadter reported that the TAC has developed a proposal to revise Central County project programming, noting that it has been done in the Authority's Strategic Plan format in 2004\$. The revised programming adds to a 2004\$ programmed amount of \$100.254M leaving an unprogrammed balance of \$3.267M (2004\$) as a partial hedge against the possibility of a lowered programming target given the current economic situation.

The proposed funding order assumes that Category 1 arterial projects are the highest priority projects for which funding should be maintained, followed by Category 2 BART and Capitol Corridor projects because these projects are the hardest to fund from other sources. Category 3 includes project development funding for State Highway projects that are considered viable candidates for STIP funding. Category 4 projects are proposed to be available for fund reprogramming and to be capped as necessary to meet Authority financial requirements.

Hisham Noeimi discussed the process for updating the Strategic Plan, including review of revenue projections, debt service and bonding capacity, and the projects themselves. Revenues are down about 25% from projections; debt service is expected to be higher on the proposed bonds; and with the absence of bond insurance, some of the bond proceeds will have to go into a reserve with no access until the end of the Measure in 2034.

The recession has reduced the estimated revenues to \$1.5 billion over the life of the Measure. Programs get a percentage of annual revenues, and project funding must be capped. The cost of financing the bonds needs to come from the projects. Each project will see an approximate 65% cap. Because of commitments to Caldecott and Highway 4, the cap can't go beyond certain limits. To maintain subregional equity, other project categories will have to be capped even lower than 65%. The TAC recommended protecting funding for the following categories:

1. Major Streets: Traffic Flow, Safety and Capacity Improvements (aka arterials)
2. BART and Capitol Corridor categories
3. SR 242 Clayton Road SB Off Ramp and NB On Ramp, Willow Pass Road Ramp Reconstruction

Category 4 projects are proposed to be available for fund reprogramming and to be capped as necessary to meet Authority financial requirements:

4. I-680 SB Carpool lane gap closure, I-680/SR 4 interchange, Marina Vista Interchange

CCTA staff will recommend to the Authority in June that the adoption of the Strategic Plan be delayed six months for three reasons: 1) some factors indicate that the recession might be ending, and more data will be indicate whether assumptions of revenue projections are reasonable; 2) in September the first bond will be issued, and at that time the actual financing cost will available; and 3) it will be known later in the year if the Caldecott or Highway 4 Loveridge-Somersville widening bids show any savings, in which case these projects might be capped further, lessening the impact on others. TRANSPAC is being asked to look at the TAC's recommendation on which projects to delay in the six-year window and the projects to be capped.

Some questions arose about adding other projects in the first bond to take advantage of the opportunity. Member Pierce cautioned against being too optimistic, pointing out that the majority of the first bond issues goes to the Caldecott and Highway 4 with little left for anything else. It was noted that the Authority plans to hold two workshops to discuss the bond issue on June 3 and August 26.

Member Bjerke thought it was a good idea to delay the Strategic Plan to look at the effects of the economy on both the revenue and expenditure sides. He agreed with staff's priorities, but also believed that to the extent that we have projects that are ready to go in a deflationary period we should capitalize on that.

Bob Armstrong asked what happens if the project comes in under budget. Mr. Noeimi said that for a city project, the savings would come from local money put into the project, or if it was a state highway project, the savings would go to Measure J and made available to other projects. Member Silva asked about the assumptions on the Caldecott project going out to bid, and it was explained that it would go to bid in August and the escalated dollar figure is TRANSPAC's portion. It is possible that the bids could come in considerably lower.

Ms. Miller said the Authority wanted to be sure that project sponsor priorities are reflected so that CCTA can allocate the dollars and do an amendment before the adoption of the Strategic Plan. Mr. Noeimi said the Authority will try not to delay any projects that are ready to move forward.

Bob Hoag asked if any consideration has been given not just to reductions in funding sources, but also the need to inflate the cost of these projects. Chair Ross agreed that Member Hoag had made a good point. This is another unknown, just as the state could add to the sales tax which could affect Measure J.

ACTION: Approved the TAC's recommendation for proposed Measure J Strategic Plan adjustments and the proposed priority funding order. The adjustments will be reviewed when more information is available. Pierce/Bjerke/unanimous

6. Review of Draft 2009-10 TRANSPAC Budget

Ms. Neustadter discussed the FY 2009-10 TRANSPAC budget. The TRANSPAC TAC reviewed the draft budget at its April 23, 2009 meeting and recommended approval to TRANSPAC. She discussed the line items, noting changes from the previous year and pointing out various opportunities to reduce costs in some areas.

Action: Adopted the TRANSPAC FY2009-10 Budget and authorization for the Chair and TRANSPAC Manager to consult, and if possible, decrease local jurisdiction formula. Pierce/Bjerke/unanimous

7. TRANSPAC and CCTA Representatives' reports. The minutes of the March 18, 2009 CCTA meeting were included in the packet.

a. CCTA meeting

Member Pierce reported that the April 23rd meeting to go over CCTA Torrico's bill regarding HOT lanes. There was a significant improvement in the language although it lacked some of the specificity that was requested. Staff changed some of the language to clarify meanings. The studies we requested, although lacking specificity, are now required. It is hoped that Caltrans will align with us and require the specificity that we want.

b. Planning Committee meeting

In member Durant's absence, Neustadter reported that the Planning Committee discussed the Draft Countywide Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan that was released. Brad Beck will present it to TRANSPAC in July. Responses to the Draft 2009 Countywide Transportation Plan (CTP) were reviewed, and TRANSPAC comments were included in the Plan. The CTP is out for one more pass at public review and TAC will look at that in two weeks. The San Ramon Valley school bus program received its first allocation and is going forward. Also discussed was the TRANSPAC and WCCTAC request for a Measure J Expenditure Plan amendment for program line items 19 and 20 to be used for existing rather than supplemental or enhanced services. The Committee approved the amendment and it will go forward to the Board

8. Reports from Staff and Committees – information accepted

Lynn Overcashier, Program Manager, reported on 511 Contra Costa activities, noting that today was Bike to Work Day. 511 Contra Costa was hosting 36 Energizer Stations this year, which is only second in number to Alameda County. At the Energizer Stations, staff will distribute a flyer provided by Brad Beck of CCTA. This flyer announces upcoming public workshops at which the Draft Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan will be presented and comments received.

A Memo of Understanding with Walnut Creek has been completed to install electronic bike lockers and electric charging stations in Walnut Creek. Ten jurisdictions have

expressed an interest in the installation of electric charging stations, and staff has put together a project for a Regional TFCA fund request. The BAAQMD has amended its expenditure plan for regional TFCA funds to allow this as an eligible category. However, the issue is that only 30% of an electric charging project can be expended using TFCA funds and requires a 70% match. The project is still moving forward, but funding sources may be piecemeal.

Member Murphy asked about the availability of usage statistics on existing electric charging stations. Ms. Overcashier noted that much of that is old technology, and the focus currently is on getting usage statistics for the new technology being used elsewhere. Member Bjerke asked about plans to track usage for the new charging stations, to which Overcashier replied that the plan involves the use of wireless technology. Discussion followed about how PUC restrictions on reselling power require fees per usage session (like parking meters), and that with revenue generated a portion would go back to jurisdiction and could eventually pay for the unit itself.

9. Correspondence/Copies/Newsclips/Information - Received

10. For the Good of the Order

Neustadter stated that Amin Abuamara, Hisham Noeimi and Jack Hall have conveyed their thanks to TRANSPAC for its recognition of their work on the stimulus package. She also noted that the investment recommendation from the RM2 Policy Advisory Committee will be presented for action at the June TRANSPAC meeting.

11. The meeting was adjourned at 10:55 a.m. The next TRANSPAC meeting is scheduled for June 11, 2009 at 9 a.m. in the Community Room, City Hall, City of Pleasant Hill.