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May 17, 2012

Martin Engelmann, Deputy Executive Director – Planning
Contra Costa Transportation Authority
2999 Oak Road, Suite 100
Walnut Creek, CA 94597

RE: Comments on State Route 4 (SR-4) Integrated Corridor Analysis Public Review Draft.

Dear Mr. Engelmann:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the above document. After review, the Transportation Planning Section would like to provide the following comments:

1. Under the section "Corridor Description – Bicycle and Pedestrian Network" on page 4, the text should include the Delta De Anza Trail and Great California Trail as ways for bicyclists and pedestrians to travel parallel to SR-4 over the Willow Pass grade and the remaining segments of SR-4.
2. In Figure 4, the "3+HOV" and "4+HOV" symbols appear to be superimposed and are difficult to interpret. (See "Short-Term" projects 15, 16, 17 and 18 on the map figure.)
3. Page 15, Table 2 of the draft report indicates quantitative measures on mobility improvements include composite values for all vehicles on SR-4, in both mainline and high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes. Given the fact that travel times and speed generally vary between mixed flow and HOV lanes during peak travel periods, a more accurate reflection of the impacts to travels speeds may be obtained if the analysis isolated travel speeds for mixed flow and HOV lanes.
4. The "Qualitative Measures" on page 17 should be defined and explained in the analysis or an appendix so the reader knows what they mean when they are applied in the project evaluation tables. In other words, some additional explanation of the qualitative measures would provide some background for how a project was viewed as having a "more favorable," "favorable," or "less favorable" impact. (More on this in following comments.)
5. The analysis should indicate if whether HOV bypass lanes at metered ramps were considered in any of the metering alternatives, or if any other additional modifications to existing ramps or adjacent arterials were considered in order to maximize the effectiveness of the ramp meters.
6. The analysis should indicate if whether higher frequency BART and eBART service were considered in any of the alternatives for the Central and East County segments of SR-4. This may be related to the qualitative measure "transit service enhancements/improvements," and if so then the analysis should indicate such.
7. In the "Project Performance Measures" tables, qualitative evaluation measures for certain projects, such as increased capital corridor service, show as "less favorable" for reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT), carbon dioxide (CO₂) and particulate emissions. Conversely, certain projects such as freeway widening are shown as being "more favorable" for reducing VMT, CO₂ and particulate emissions.

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Brief examples of these inconsistencies seem to occur in the following tables:

- Table 3 determines Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) improvements and ferry service will have a "less favorable" impact on reducing CO₂ emissions and VMT. As previously mentioned Capital Corridor service shows this as well.
- Table 4 indicates a "less favorable" impact to CO₂ and VMT for wBART service, yet the Willow Avenue ramp replacement project will have the opposite effect, according to the table.
- Table 5 shows a "more favorable" impact for transit service and improving transit speed with the SR-4 widening project (I-680 to Willow Pass Road). This project has also been deemed "more favorable" for reducing CO₂ emissions and VMT. Yet Martinez ferry service is considered "less favorable" for reducing CO₂ emissions and VMT.
- Table 7 determines ITS improvements would have a "favorable" impact on reducing CO₂ emissions and VMT, which is contrary to Table 3 for West County. There may be a justifiable reason for the disparity in evaluation based on the locations of these segments of SR-4, and if that is the case then further explanation may be warranted. Also, as with previous ferry projects, Antioch ferry service is shown as having a "less favorable" impact for reducing CO₂ emissions and VMT.
- In Table 8, East County parallel arterial improvements are shown to have a "less favorable" impact on enhancing transit service and improving transit speed. A majority of bus routes utilize these parallel arterials, so it would be reasonable to assume that improvements to these arterials would at least have some "favorable" impact on transit operations.

If the evaluation tables and weighting are not being misinterpreted, this seems counter intuitive to the preliminary analysis prepared by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) for the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), where transit enhancement projects would theoretically take vehicles off the freeway thereby reducing CO₂ and VMT. This would further justify providing additional text in the analysis to explain the measures used to evaluate these projects, and some clarity on how the "more/favorable/less" ratings should be interpreted.

The County appreciates the opportunity to comment on the draft document. If you have any questions regarding any of the preceding, please contact Jamar Stamps at (925) 674-7832, or email at jamar.stamps@dcd.cccounty.us.

Sincerely,



, for

Steven L. Goetz, Deputy Director
Redevelopment, Transportation and Conservation Planning Programs

cc: John Cunningham, TRANSPAN
Barbara Neustadter, TRANSPAC
Christina Atienza, WCCTAC