

Meeting of the East Bay Bus Rapid Transit Policy Steering Committee

MINUTES

Thursday, May 12, 2016

2:00 p.m.

2nd Floor Board Room

1600 Franklin Street

Oakland, CA 94612

PSC Members:

AC Transit:

Vice President Elsa Ortiz, Chair

Director Greg Harper

Director Joel Young

City of Oakland:

Councilmember Rebecca Kaplan

Councilmember Noel Gallo

Alameda County (Ex Officio):

Supervisor Nate Miley

City of San Leandro:

Mayor Pauline Cutter

Councilmember Corina Lopez

Metropolitan Transportation Commission/Caltrans:

District Director Bijan Sartipi

The East Bay Bus Rapid Transit Policy Steering Committee held a regular meeting on Thursday, May 12, 2016. The meeting was called to order at 2:09 p.m. with Chair Ortiz presiding.

1. Roll Call

Committee Members Present:

Vice President Elsa Ortiz, Chair

Director Greg Harper

President H. E. Christian Peoples (Alternate for Director Joel Young)

Councilmember Corina Lopez

Councilmember Rebecca Kaplan

Councilmember Noel Gallo (arrived at 2:16 p.m.)

Committee Members Absent:

Supervisor Nate Miley

Caltrans District Director Bijan Sartipi

Mayor Pauline Cutter

AC Transit Staff Present:

General Manager Michael Hursh

General Counsel Denise Standridge

District Secretary Linda Nemeroff

Director of Capital Projects Ramakrishna Pochiraju

2. Public Comment For Items Not on the Agenda

There was no public comment offered.

3. Consider approving BRT Policy Steering Committee minutes of March 10, 2016.

MOTION: PEEPLES/LOPEZ to approve the minutes as presented. The motion carried by the following vote:

AYES:5: Peeples, Lopez, Kaplan, Harper, Ortiz

ABSENT:4: Miley, Sartipi, Cutter, Gallo

4. Chair's Report on pertinent actions of the AC Transit Board of Directors.

Chair Ortiz reported on the following:

- Issuance of a limited-purpose Notice to Proceed to O. C. Jones and Sons and preparation of the construction schedule and required pre-construction submittals;
- City of Oakland Public Works Committee approval of the final design;
- Construction groundbreaking expected late this summer; and
- New emphasis on communications, including updates to the BRT website and hotline as well as the designation of AC Transit External Affairs staff as a direct point of contact on the corridor.

Following her comments, Chair Ortiz turned the meeting over to Director of Capital Projects Ramakrishna Pochiraju for the staff presentation.

5. BRT Project Update:

[The PowerPoint presentation on the BRT project update is incorporated into the file by reference.]

A. Bid Package 3 update, projected construction schedule, and revenue service date.

Director of Capital Projects Ramakrishna Pochiraju reported on construction milestones, project schedule, and the sequencing and staging plan.

B. Information update on East Bay MUD utility relocations. [Requested by Councilmember Lopez - 3/10/16]

Mr. Pochiraju gave an update on East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) utility relocations and pavement depth issues. He advised that three-fourths of the project corridor would be mill and overlay and that a shallow pavement section depth (12" to 14") was proposed to Caltrans to provide as much construction clearance over existing waterlines as possible. Members of the Committee inquired about the impact of changing the pavement depth, age of the pipes and replacement, and current negotiations with EBMUD. Concerns were also raised about the lifespan and quality of mill and overlay pavement.

Mr. Pochiraju advised that the proposed pavement improvements were cost effective and, while some sections may be shallower than previously planned, they were just as strong and had a 20-year design life per Caltrans' rehabilitation requirements. General Manager Michael Hursh underscored the 20-year design life and the use of a construction method that would minimize the disruption to the community with all new striping and traffic control systems.

Councilmember Lopez asked about the possibility of repaving beyond Bellevue in San Leandro. Mr. Pochiraju advised that most of the alignment had pavement improvements, but in San Leandro those improvements only extended to Bellevue per the Memorandum of Understanding with the City.

Public Comment:

Carlton Chan, Design Manager for the EBMUD Pipeline Division, commented that the BRT Project posed a high likelihood of conflict with water utilities during construction. He added that the project bid documents showed a pavement depth requirement that would disturb the existing cast iron and asbestos cement water mains, not the 12" to 14" depths currently being discussed. He added that EBMUD is working with AC Transit to lessen the pavement depth requirement to ensure greater protection over the existing water infrastructure.

President Peebles asked Mr. Carlton to comment on the age of the pipes and how close they were to end of life regardless of any repaving efforts. Mr. Carlton explained that there were roughly 10 miles of pipeline in the corridor ranging from 6" to 30" at various ages. He added that some of the older pipes were pre-1930s and that EBMUD would like to replace them eventually. Negotiations with AC Transit were ongoing.

Mr. Pochiraju advised that the pipelines would eventually require replacement regardless of BRT construction, which was something the project timeline could not accommodate. Mr. Hursh advised that the AC Transit Project Team was working with EBMUD and the City of Oakland to make sure everyone is in agreement on the pavement depth.

Councilmember Kaplan requested that the issue of the EBMUD negotiations be placed on the next agenda.

Director Harper asked staff to define 'mill and overlay'. Mr. Pochiraju reported that the top 4" to 5" of asphalt would be removed and replaced with new asphalt.

Director Harper asked who was responsible for identifying the issues with EBMUD earlier in the project. Mr. Pochiraju advised that AC Transit had submitted a full set of plans to EBMUD and all the other utilities over the last two years, but discussions never evolved into the pavement sections and what it would do to water mains. Mr. Chan advised that the plans that EBMUD had worked off of were based on a 65% utility design set as per the utility agreement and that areas outside the platforms and bulb outs were not areas of focus. Director Harper commented on the importance of inter-agency communication and cooperation.

Councilmember Gallo raised concerns with the "mill and fill" paving technique, noting that it posed a temporary fix that would not last due to vehicle weight. He added that he didn't want to cut corners after promising a quality, long-lasting roadway. Mr. Pochiraju advised that milling would be done from curb to curb and would provide the 20-year life. Mr. Hursh advised that AC Transit was committed to curb to curb repaving at a significant depth with a 20-year life. He added that a quality product was in the interest of AC Transit as potholes pose an expense that AC Transit cannot afford.

President Peebles inquired about the database maintained by EBMUD for street openings, noting his understanding that the project was not added to the database because AC Transit didn't know it existed. Mr. Chan confirmed the existence of the database, but noted that it was an imperfect system and he believed AC Transit did its best to notify EBMUD as early as possible.

Councilmember Kaplan asked who would be responsible for paying to repave the road if EBMUD had to replace pipes in the future. Mr. Pochiraju advised that any number of utilities may need to open the pavement to do utility work and the permitting agency would control the type of pavement that should go in and how long it should last. He further advised that the current construction schedule could not accommodate pipe replacement and still meet the revenue service date. Mr. Hursh added that AC Transit had already made an investment and completed a lot of utility replacement work and

could not pay to replace water pipes. Mr. Chan advised that while it would have been ideal to replace the pipes during BRT construction, it would not be possible to relocate 10 miles of pipeline within the current construction schedule. The focus, instead, had to be on mitigating impacts to the existing pipeline and working with the BRT Team to identify “candidate pipelines” marked for replacement. Mr. Hursh advised that the project was subject to a fully funded grant agreement with the FTA and AC Transit did not have control over the construction schedule. He cautioned that to add the complexity of pipeline replacement at this point of the project would likely jeopardize the entire project.

Councilmember Kaplan requested that issues such as pipeline replacement be fully considered in future projects.

C. Information report on real time message systems. [Requested by Vice Mayor Kaplan – 3/10/16]

Mr. Pochiraju gave an update on real-time message systems. With regard to NextBus, General Manager Michael Hursh advised that the CAD/AVL Project would replace NextBus and provide a more accurate predictive system.

Director Harper asked if the sign technology would be the same or improved to provide emergency notifications. Mr. Pochiraju advised that he would check and report back.

Councilmember Lopez asked if a municipality could display local emergency messages tailored to a specific area. General Manager Michael Hursh advised that the city’s 911 call center would need to contact AC Transit’s Operations Control Center (OCC) and provide the information. The ability to change messages would be handled through the OCC on a call by call basis. AC Transit, however, would retain full control of the signage.

Councilmember Kaplan noted that while the new system would provide audio and visual announcements of bus arrival times, the noise from audio announcements could become a problem. Mr. Hursh advised that the system would have dynamic audio adjustment that could be turned off after a certain time. He added that there was no additional cost to activate the audio feature and whether or not it is activated would be subject to testing and review.

D. Vehicle procurement – New Flyer BRT 5-door bus. [Requested by Vice Mayor Kaplan – 9/3/15, 11/12/15]

Mr. Pochiraju provided an update on the purchase of the New Flyer Excelsior buses for the BRT service and displayed left and right side views of the bus as well as an example of curbside docking.

Noting advances in self-parking cars, Director Harper remarked how bus technology always seemed to lag behind the technology used in cars. He suggested that staff see if similar technology was available for docking buses at the station platforms. General Manager Michael Hursh advised that docking was not an issue at other transit properties and was one area where millions of dollars could be spent to solve a problem that has not become an operational problem.

E. Information update on legislative and/or policy initiatives regarding enforcement of the bus only lane. [Requested by Vice Mayor Kaplan – 1/14/16]

Director of Legislative Affairs and Community Relations Beverly Greene gave an overview SB 998 (Wieckowski) and SB 1051 (Hancock).

6. Schedule date and time of next meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 15, 2016 at 2:00 p.m. The Committee will meet sooner if necessary.

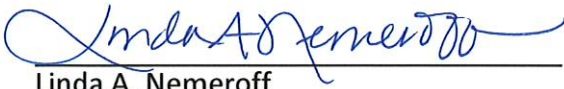
7. Future Agenda Items/Review List of Pending Items.

- Report back on discussions with EBMUD.
- Councilmember Kaplan noted her previously requested items were an update on Clipper card implementation, specifically how to attract more vendors along the corridor; and an update on the resolution of issues associated with the City of Oakland Business Assistance Program.

8. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 3:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Linda A. Nemeroff
District Secretary