Subject: Approve update of goals for San Pablo Bus Rapid Transit implementation

RECOMMENDED ACTION: [ ] Information Only [ X] Recommended Motion

Fiscal Impact: Increase in operating expenses still to be determined. Will be funded from new Measure B proceeds.

BOARD ACTION: Approved as Recommended [x] Other [ ]
Approved with Modification(s) [ ]

Continued to March 21, 2002.

The above order was passed and adopted on March 7, 2002.
Rose Martinez, District Secretary

By ______________________________
Background/Discussion: The Board has approved goals for San Pablo Avenue service in the past. Now that the project is moving closer to implementation, staff recommends that the Board update those goals as shown below. These recommendations are based on information learned from Los Angeles’ Rapid Bus project, and coordination efforts with the Alameda County CMA on the signalization project in the corridor.

1. The major components of the San Pablo Rapid bus program should be implemented simultaneously, rather than, implement incrementally. These components should include signal priority for buses, new limited stop service, and proof-of-payment fare collection. If possible, implementation should also coincide with the arrival of new buses and passenger amenities, giving a new image to the corridor. Based on the critical path items shown in the next section, staff recommends implementation of the new service in mid-2003.

2. AC Transit should implement a headway-based schedule for the new Rapid Bus service, with transit priority at traffic signals in the Corridor also based on the headway concept. Signal priority would be used only for the Rapid buses, not the local buses.

3. AC Transit staff should continue to work with CMA staff and consultants, who are supportive of headway-based scheduling, to develop software and implement necessary signal-related improvements along the Corridor.

4. Stops for the Rapid service should be about one-half the number of the current limited stops.

5. Work should continue to convert as many near-side stops to far-side stops, as practical, along the route.

6. Buses, shelters and marketing materials should have a uniform and distinctive design.

7. Bus arrival information should be provided at every Rapid bus shelter.

8. Rapid bus service should be provided at a minimum 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Saturday, with a 12-minute peak and 15 minute off-peak schedule.

9. All portions of the AC Transit work force, including drivers, should be involved early in the implementation process, and attend on-going working committee meetings.

Below are the critical path items that have led staff to recommend that implementation of the new Rapid Bus service take place in mid-2003.

1. Traffic Signalization. Agreement has been reached at the staff level with CMA staff supporting headway-based transit priority. This recommendation will be proceeding to their TAC and Board in the near future. There will be added costs to AC Transit for designing appropriate traffic signal software and installing necessary hardware, which can be covered from existing grants. The software and hardware needed for transit priority will be available in May 2003.
2. **Bus Procurement.** Up to forty 40-foot new Van Hool buses should be available in early summer 2003. The San Pablo Rapid service, with spares, would take about 20 of those buses.

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3. **Bus Shelters, Bus Arrival Signage and Other Street Furniture.** Custom design for the San Pablo Rapid is already underway. Since AC Transit now enjoys a bus shelter contract with Lamar Advertising for the majority of Alameda and Contra Costa counties, staff is working with Lamar to design and install all necessary shelters and other street furniture. Negotiations have begun with NextBus to extend their current demonstration project in Richmond and El Cerrito to the entire San Pablo line. We are at the beginning of this process. All proposed Rapid stops have been photographed and inventoried, and staff has driven the route to identify necessary shifts in bus stop location.

4. **Budget.** As this project moves from a planning effort to an implementation effort, its budget will conform more to the reality of necessary costs. An updated capital budget for the project will be included in next month’s report. In the interim, staff is evaluating projections for Measure B operating funds, which will be lower than anticipated for next year. Funding decisions for additional service on San Pablo, and other parts of the District, will be made during the budget process.

**Recent Meetings:**

At the suggestion of the General Manager, a staff retreat was held January 18, 2002, at Division 2 Emergency Operations Center. Twenty staff members attended, and a significant number of items were discussed. Consensus was reached that implementation should be keyed to delivery of Van Hool buses, rather than putting another type of bus out for a few months, then switching later. Also, that all facets of the program should be implemented together. If new elements are rolled out incrementally, the public will not be fully aware of the service. It was suggested that drivers be brought into the process early, rather than later. Beginning in March, monthly working sessions will be convened with staff representing all affected AC departments.

On February 8, 2002, Rex Gephart, Rapid Bus Project Manager for Los Angeles MTA, made a detailed two-hour presentation to about 30-40 AC transit staff in the Board Room, answering many questions about their experience with Rapid Bus over the past year and one-half. Later that day, he made another presentation to the Alameda County CMA Board and staff, at their offices. The LA service is quite distinctive, with red buses, unique design, transit priority at traffic signals, and separate locations for Rapid stops.

The Rapid has been a spectacular success in Los Angeles, with a 25 percent reduction in running time and a 40 percent increase in ridership on the two current lines. Wilshire Boulevard is a 26-mile corridor with 90,000 bus riders a day, 45,000 on the Rapid and
45,000 on local service. Buses run every 1 ¾ minutes. The Ventura Boulevard line is much more like AC’s trunk lines, a 14-mile route with 15,000 daily passengers and headways of 10-12 minutes. Two-thirds of the Ventura ridership is on the Rapid Service. Finally, MTA plans to expand Rapid service to additional 23 lines over the next six years.

A meeting of the newly-created joint Planning/Marketing task force for the San Pablo Rapid convened on February 20, 2002, with Marketing’s design consultant, who has recently met with the MTA project team. This session allowed for input from all attending personnel, which will go into design proposals which will distinguish the AC San Pablo Rapid service. This joint task force meets regularly as a separate entity, to review customer marketing, publicity, design, and various facets of scheduling and other planning issues.

Additional meetings have recently been held with Information Technology and Operations staff, to finalize transit priority proposals and questions, and with Operations staff regarding installation of the emitters necessary to activate the Opticom system at traffic signals. A variety of other meetings are ongoing, as part of the implementation effort.

Attachment A is a draft project schedule, and Attachment B identifies key issues for implementing street furniture.

Prior Relevant Board Actions/Policies:

- Board Resolution No. 1119: San Pablo Avenue Corridor Management MOU
- Board Approved (Jan. 2000): Goals for San Pablo Avenue Corridor Service
- Approval of Proof of Payment Concept for San Pablo: November 2000
- Approval of Service Deployment proposals as basis for community input (March 2001)
- Periodic updates to Board

Attachments: Attachment A : Draft Project Schedule
Attachment B: Key Issues for San Pablo Furniture Implementation

Approved by: Rick Fernandez, General Manager
Kathleen Kelly, Deputy General Manager for Service Development

Prepared by: Jon Twichell, Transportation Planning Manager
Date Prepared: February 12, 2002
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Task Name</th>
<th>Duration</th>
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<th>Finish</th>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Will Van Hools be available within 18 months?</td>
<td>6 mos</td>
<td>Wed 1/2/02</td>
<td>Tue 8/18/02</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>What are alternatives?</td>
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<td>4</td>
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</table>
Attachment B

Key Issues for San Pablo Street Furniture Implementation:

Stop locations
- Where possible, moving near-side stops to far-side stops in order to take advantage of traffic signal priority
- Coordination with AC Pole crew and Traffic Engineer
- Moving bus stop flags to provide enough room for street furniture and buses
- Create FINAL San Pablo stop location list
- Present proposed locations to merchant associations/interest groups/cities

Contra Costa County
- Finalize Bus Shelter JPA Amendment to include Contra Costa County
- Seek City Council approval
- Cities must adapt Transit Shelter Agreement (Amend Agreement)
- El Cerrito must amend its no-advertising policy
- Hold Harmless Agreement with Lamar to remove old street furniture
- Interlocal Agreements between Lamar and Cities

Lamar/Alameda County
- Amend current Transit Shelter Agreement to include design/build of San Pablo except in Oakland and Emeryville
- Determine how much additional funding needed for additional street furniture and maintenance
- Determine timeline for implementation within AC Transit’s 18 month deadline
- Determine what Lamar cannot include in program
- Get Lamar design proposal approved by CMA

Oakland/Adshel
- Determine how much additional funding needed for additional street furniture and maintenance
- Get the Adshel design proposal approved by CMA and City of Oakland
- Determine what Adshel cannot include in program

Other Issues
- Coordinating design to meet Lamar, Adshel, CMA, AC Transit, and Cities’ standards/parameters
- Funding for street furniture that cannot be provided by Lamar or Adshel
- Budget for street furniture, including Next Bus Signage
- CMA approval of AC Transit’s proposed implementation plan
- Maintenance of street furniture outside of Lamar/Adshel program
- Broadway stops/street furniture
- Emeryville street furniture as part of San Pablo Corridor Project
- AC Transit graphic design and branding
- AC Transit information and signage