

East Bay Bus Rapid Transit Policy Steering Committee



DRAFT MINUTES

Friday, March 16, 2012
4:00 pm

2nd Floor Board Room
1600 Franklin Street
Oakland, CA 94612

PSC Members:

AC Transit Board:

President Elsa Ortiz
Director Greg Harper
Director Mark Williams

City of Oakland:

Vice Mayor Ignacio De La Fuente
Councilmember Rebecca Kaplan

Alameda County:

Supervisor Nate Miley

City of San Leandro:

Vice Mayor Michael Gregory
Councilmember Pauline Cutter

Metropolitan Transportation Commission/Caltrans:

District Director Bijan Sartipi

The East Bay Bus Rapid Transit Policy Steering Committee held a meeting on Friday, March 16, 2012. The meeting was called to order at 4:02 p.m. with Chair Ortiz presiding.

Items were taken out of sequential order. However, they are reported in sequential order in the minutes for ease in reading.

1. Roll Call

Committee Members Present:

President Elsa Ortiz
Director Greg Harper (Arrived 4:06 p.m.)
Director Mark Williams
Vice Mayor Michael Gregory
Councilmember Pauline Cutter
Councilmember Rebecca Kaplan

Committee Members Absent:

Supervisor Nate Miley
Caltrans District Director Bijan Sartipi
Vice Mayor Ignacio De La Fuente

AC Transit Staff Present:

District Secretary Linda Nemeroff
Assistant General Manager Beverly Greene
Director of BRT Arul Edwin
Director of Capital Projects Dennis Butler
Director of Planning and Service Development Tina Spencer
Transportation Planner Jim Cunradi

2. Public Comment

There was no public comment offered.

3. Chair's Report on Pertinent Actions of the AC Transit Board *Presented by Elsa Ortiz*

President Elsa Ortiz introduced AC Transit's new General Manager, David Armijo, to the committee. General Manager Armijo told the committee that he saw the BRT project not

only as a great opportunity to use technology to improve transportation for residents in the corridor, but more importantly, as a way to improve the connectivity of all services in the region.

President Ortiz then reported on significant events which had occurred since the last meeting in January:

- Adoption of a resolution by the AC Transit Board of Directors approving the Alameda County Transportation Expenditure Plan;
- Public outreach meetings in Oakland and San Leandro as part of the environmental review process for the BRT Project;
- Changes in the project approval process in response to a request from the City of Oakland that AC Transit certify the Environmental Impact Report in advance of actions taken by the cities of Oakland and San Leandro; and
- Approval by the AC Transit Board of Directors to purchase buses from local manufacturer, Gillig.

4. Approval of the minutes from January 12, 2012.

MOTION: KAPLAN/WILLIAMS to approve the minutes as presented (6-0-0-3).

Ayes: Councilmember Kaplan, Director Williams, Councilmember Gregory,
Councilmember Cutter, Director Harper, Chair Ortiz – 6
Noes: None – 0
Abstain: None – 0
Absent: Supervisor Miley, Vice Mayor De La Fuente, District Director Sartipi – 3

5. Briefing/Information Items Presented by AC Transit Staff

All items were presented for information only. No actions were taken.

[A presentation outlining the following agenda items was provided at the meeting for information and discussion. The document is incorporated into the file and by reference hereto is made part of these minutes.]

Director of BRT Arul Edwin introduced Senior Transportation Planner Jim Cunradi who presented an overview of the following:

i. Project Status Review and Schedule

- a. Recent Accomplishments
 - Circulation of the Final Draft EIS for public review and comments.
 - Completion of community outreach meetings.
 - Procurement for a branding consultant.
 - BRT staffing update.
- b. FEIS Schedule/Changes to Project Approval Process
 - April 2012 - AC Transit Board of Directors to hold a public hearing on project approval and certification of the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR).
 - May 2012 – Oakland and San Leandro City Councils vote on the project.
 - August 2012 – FTA expected to issue Record of Decision for NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act).

ii. FEIS Review: Community Outreach

Assistant General Manager Beverly Greene reported that AC Transit completed seven public outreach meetings, which were extensively publicized and attended by over 250 members of the community and numerous elected officials.

A video shown at the outreach meetings featuring broad community support from constituencies represented by business, government, and faith-based organizations was shown to the Committee. Councilmember Kaplan raised questions regarding the boarding and station configuration shown in the video.

Ms. Greene explained that in the interest of streamlining and being economical, staff utilized some footage from prior videos which didn't reflect the current configuration.

Councilmember Kaplan emphasized the importance of having outreach materials that reflected what people have asked for and what has been done in response. She requested that the next round of materials take this into account.

Mr. Edwin presented an overview of the concerns raised at the community meetings and discussed how they were being addressed:

- At the southern end of the dedicated lanes in San Leandro the concerns were loss of parking, location of bus stops and loading and unloading exit routes.
- At the Havenscourt middle school, the principal requested the station be moved to the front of the school because the current station location is not convenient or safe for children.

iii. Project Next Steps

a. Engineering/Design

Mr. Edwin outlined the following:

- Completion of the final design in 2013.
- Construction to begin in the second quarter of 2014 and finish in the first quarter of 2016.

b. Pedestrian Safety

Mr. Cunradi provided an overview of the provisions for pedestrian safety:

- New traffic signals.
- Upgrades to existing signals with pedestrian call buttons and countdown signs.
- Signals to be re-timed to give pedestrians more crossing time according to new standards.
- Smooth pavement.
- Conversion of crosswalks to a high visibility design (i.e. zebra stripes).
- New lighting that identified when a pedestrian was present.
- Signals would be timed and coordinated to handle traffic flow and minimize bus delays due to signals.

In response to questions from Director Williams and Councilmember Gregory regarding safety and lighting, Mr. Cunradi responded that all stations would have cameras covering the platforms and looking down the street at the crosswalk. He said that station areas would have the full complement of lighting for street, platforms, sidewalks, crosswalks and they were trying to see if they could expand it to have pedestrian and roadway lighting throughout the corridor.

Councilmember Kaplan noted that there were two categories of pedestrian safety: safety from vehicles and personal safety from crime and violence. She said the safety items presented thus far had to do with traffic safety precautions;

however, the concerns from the public were more about personal safety from crime and violence. She said there needed to be a substantial amount of pedestrian lighting and cameras with an angle on the surrounding area and that the community wanted a commitment on the issue of security personnel. She suggested a security presence could be modeled on Oakland's safety ambassador program.

Director Harper agreed they need to show people that the project is sensitive to lighting needs and ask people along the corridor where they need it. Overall, though, he thought the best thing for safety was to put in really good, well used transit.

c. Emergency Vehicle Access Using Bus Lanes

Mr. Cunradi reported that the system would be compatible with the pre-emption system used by law enforcement and emergency vehicles. They would have full access to lanes at all times.

Director Harper introduced the idea of infrastructure provisions in anticipation of future technologies, such as emerging emergency vehicle access technology. Councilmember Kaplan asked if there would be some sort of data conduit installed. She said the Bay Area is now rolling out a hot lane network and the BRT line could be a hot lane. Councilmember Gregory added that San Leandro put in conduits 20 years ago when redoing the streets and it was recently a great advantage to have it available.

Mr. Cunradi responded that the project would have high data needs and conduits that could be designed to carry more, noting future demands to provide camera data to third parties such as local police departments.

Councilmember Gregory suggested that fiber optic could be made available to businesses and become a possible revenue generator adding to the economic viability of project.

d. Bus Procurement

Mr. Cunradi reported that the Maintenance Department was in the process of developing specifications for a hybrid bus with doors on both sides. He added that the selected manufacturer would have to meet Buy America requirements and that presently, there were three potential manufacturers.

e. Branding Update

Ms. Greene reported that the procurement was in final stages and she would provide a report at next meeting.

President Ortiz then asked the PSC members if they had any final questions or comments.

- Councilmember Kaplan said she has heard the East Lake Business District around E. 20th Street did not feel their parking mitigation needs had been resolved.
- Councilmember Kaplan requested something more definitive around personnel or technology strategies to address personal safety and crime prevention strategies.

- Councilmember Kaplan suggested there should be a third DOSL option to approve Phase I as the DOSL corridor with direction to continue conversations regarding the northern leg. Tina Spencer, Director of Service Development and Planning reminded Councilmember Kaplan that they were not planning to bring the DOSL decision to the PSC since the cities have the jurisdiction over their project definition; however, they were investigating what would happen next if DOSL goes forward, and trying to help cities understand what their action meant for future projects and phases. She said staff was working with consultants to figure out the next steps after DOSL and that would be addressed in the report going to the Board prior to certification in April.
- Councilmember Cutter asked for a definite answer regarding re-paving curb to curb in San Leandro and cutouts for ADA all way down the route.
- Councilmember Gregory suggested an alternate phase may be to go out San Leandro Blvd at a future time to BayFair. He added that in addition to BRT being a world class project, he was attracted to the project because it could connect BayFair Mall with UC Berkeley.
- Director Harper asked how a BRT corridor could operate together with a DOSL corridor operationally. He said he would like to know how that would be scheduled and operated. Tina Spencer replied that the operations and maintenance plan will address that and that there could be a terminus around 20th Street, with decreased frequency on Telegraph. Councilmember Kaplan commented that the ridership on International/E. 14th was so dramatically higher than on Telegraph it did not make sense to have those two services intertwined.

6. Schedule Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, June 15, 2012 at 3:00 p.m.

7. Future Agenda Items

- Councilmember Kaplan requested more details on public safety and crime prevention strategies including technology and security personnel.
- Councilmember Kaplan supported San Leandro's request for a definite answer on whether or not their streets would be re-paved.
- Councilmember Cutter spoke in favor of BRT connecting BART and BayFair, even if there were no dedicated lanes. The current plan to terminate at San Leandro BART means students and current ridership have to transfer and the senior center is not served.
- Director Harper requested a report on infrastructure provisions in anticipation of future technologies, such as emerging emergency vehicle access technology or high capacity data conduits.

8. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda A. Nemeroff
District Secretary