

Special Meeting: East Bay Bus Rapid Transit Policy Steering Committee



MINUTES

Thursday, November 12, 2015

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

Alameda County (Ex Officio):

Supervisor Nate Miley

Metropolitan Transportation Commission/Caltrans:

Caltrans District Director Bijan Sartipi

City of Oakland:

Vice Mayor Rebecca Kaplan

Councilmember Noel Gallo

City of San Leandro:

Mayor Pauline Cutter

Councilmember Corina Lopez

The East Bay Bus Rapid Transit Policy Steering Committee held a special meeting on Thursday, November 12, 2015. The meeting was called to order at 2:05 p.m. with Chair Ortiz presiding.

1. Roll Call

Committee Members Present:

Vice President Elsa Ortiz, Chair

Director Greg Harper (arrived at 2:10 p.m.)

President H. E. Christian Peeples (Alternate) (arrived at 2:09 p.m.)

Mayor Pauline Cutter

Councilmember Corina Lopez

Councilmember Noel Gallo

Vice Mayor Rebecca Kaplan

Committee Members Absent:

Supervisor Nate Miley

Caltrans District Director Bijan Sartipi

Director Joel Young

AC Transit Staff Present:

General Manager Michael Hursh

General Counsel Denise Standridge

District Secretary Linda Nemeroff

Director of BRT David Wilkins

2. **Public Comment**

There was no public comment offered.

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

Chair Ortiz reported on the following actions/activities which occurred since the last Policy Steering Committee meeting:

- Completion of Final Design plans for Bid Package 3 (major roadway construction) which is expected to be advertised on November 13, 2015;
- Bid Packages 1 (utility relocation) and 2 (parking lots and street improvements) are near completion;
- Two parking lots have been paved and will be turned over to the City of Oakland for operation in early 2016;
- Contract award for the purchase of buses for the BRT system, which calls for the delivery two pilot buses in late 2016; and
- An overview of items to be discussed on today's agenda.

4. **Consider approving Policy Steering Committee minutes of July 9, 2015 and September 3, 2015.**

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

AYES:6: Kaplan, Peoples, Harper, Cutter, Lopez, Gallo

ABSTAIN:1: Cutter (on the September 3, 2015 minutes only)

ABSENT:2: Miley, Sartipi

5. **BRT Project Update:**

[The PowerPoint presentation is incorporated into the file by reference.]

Director of BRT David Wilkins gave an introduction to the staff presentations.

a. **Construction Impact Mitigation Plan for Bid Package 3**

Senior Project Manager Mitra Moheb gave an overview of the Construction Impact Mitigation Plan for Bid Package 3 as well as the subsidiary AC Transit Business Technical Assistance Plan which will provide non-financial mitigation of direct permanent impacts which may arise as a result of construction.

With regard to the budget, Director Harper asked to what extent the District had discretion over when a business says it needs technical assistance and when it doesn't. Ms. Moheb advised that requests will be evaluated by the District on a case by case basis.

b. Oakland Business Sustainability Program (BSP)

Al Letto, City of Oakland Department of Housing and Community Development, thanked AC Transit for the \$2 million grant for the Business Sustainability Program Technical Assistance Services. The program is part of a long-term strategy to enable businesses along the route and vicinity to survive the construction phase of the project and thrive. He added that the City Council would consider options for the eligibility criteria in January and that the Oakland Business Development Corporation (OBDC) would bring additional resources to the effort.

Paula Groves, OBDC Small Business Finance, gave an overview of the funding for the programs; BSP technical assistance program goals; components of the program and outreach managers; subject matter expertise; consultant services, how businesses could utilize the services available as well as ways businesses could improve their finances and administration. She also gave figures on outreach efforts, interest in the program, and a needs assessment.

Chair Ortiz asked what the relationship was between AC Transit and the OBDC in regard to the program and what type of reporting AC Transit would receive. Ms. Groves advised that AC Transit will contract with the City of Oakland and the City will contract with OBDC Small Business Finance. She added that there are quarterly reporting requirements with regard to the number of businesses served, the jobs created, the revenues increased, the number of businesses retained and/or closed or moved. Reports will be provided to AC Transit and will explain the reasons why technical assistance is being provided.

Chair Ortiz felt that the business technical outreach figures for the Fruitvale area were askew given the amount of outreach that had been done previously about the project. It was pointed out that the figures were the result of a telephone survey which may not reflect actual outreach done on the project (i.e. the business owner may be aware of the project more so than the employee who responded to the survey).

Vice Mayor Kaplan felt that outreach about the BRT system should be incorporated into the outreach efforts on the Business Technical Assistance Program. She felt that while we are trying to build relationships with businesses, we should also be educating businesses about the BRT and its benefits.

Referring to construction in downtown Oakland, Director Harper wanted to know which businesses OBDC was working with in Latham Square. Ms. Groves advised that there is a concessionary (low interest rate) loan product offered to the businesses in that area, noting that three have applied. Director Harper expressed a concern that \$2 million in funds is being given to OBDC without knowing what it is being spent on. He wanted to ensure that we track what the money is being used for so that when similar projects are launched in the future

there is sufficient data to estimate costs, appropriateness of use, etc. He asked if AC Transit would receive some sort of accounting to assuage concerns. Ms. Groves advised that there was a separate accounting and invoicing process for the BRT Project and that data was being collected.

Councilmember Gallo requested that Ms. Groves share information on outreach to businesses along the corridor, specifically banks and automotive businesses. Ms. Groves advised that of the approximate 1,400 businesses along the corridor that have been identified; her firm has called or done site verifications for 668 and performed needs assessments on 70 businesses. In addition, her firm is in negotiations with major banks in the area to secure additional lending capital for businesses along the corridor.

Councilmember Lopez left the meeting at 2:27 p.m.

c. **Oakland Parking Mitigation Plan (Parking Improvement Program)**

Rob Reese with Fehr & Peers gave an update on the development of the Oakland Parking Impact Mitigation Plan (Parking Improvement Program), including parking occupancy information and a summary of parking impacts in four areas in Oakland.

Councilmember Gallo commented on the influx of new housing projects in the area of International Boulevard and 35th and asked if the plan would address or make adjustments for the loss of about 500 parking spaces in the area as a result of these major housing developments. Mr. Reese advised that a restructuring of the parking along International Boulevard would prioritize parking for patrons to local businesses. He added there will be a change in the way people make use of the area because of the additional housing which will put a strain on the streets until there is another high efficiency transit system like the BRT (in addition to BART). He further envisioned changes to on-street parking to meet the needs, such as a two-hour parking limits extending to the BART station. Councilmember Gallo stressed the need for governmental bodies to communicate and plan ahead for changes in the area.

Director Harper hoped that the parking information would be provided to the OBDC to share with businesses.

Vice Mayor Kaplan requested that the area of International Boulevard and Derby to 42nd Avenue be reviewed because of development slated for the area. She added that she would like to have an agreement to re-examine parking impacts once the BRT is up and running. Members of the AC Transit Board on the Committee strongly objected on the basis of limited funding and because the impacts of the other projects designated for the area had nothing to do with BRT. It was also pointed out that the goal of BRT was to get people out of their cars.

Councilmember Gallo argued against taking a narrow view of the parking issue, noting that it impacted both AC Transit and the City. He added that he was not asking for more money, but instead, an approach whereby other issues such as parking can continue to be reviewed during the course of other studies/activities as it would be good to know what impacts these things may have down the road.

Vice Mayor Kaplan also requested to see the plan for actually getting people to ride the BRT at a future meeting as well as EasyPass marketing efforts to businesses on the corridor and utilizing these businesses as Clipper card vendors. She also requested the locations of the 25 parking spaces that are being removed for pedestrian curb extensions.

Mayor Cutter commented that she was concerned about a couple of areas in San Leandro where parking was being removed, but hoped the issues could be resolved. She also requested the most updated maps reflecting stations that had been moved.

d. Branding Update

Director of Marketing and Communications Michele Joseph gave an update on the branding of the BRT, noting that the AC Transit Board had approved the name Tempo. She further asked for the Committee's input on potential logos.

Vice Mayor Kaplan inquired about the report she was expecting on sponsorships, noting that it seemed counterproductive to spend time picking out a name and logo when a sponsor may want something different. She added that she thought staff would be bringing a report on sponsorship options, revenue potential, estimates, etc.

Ms. Joseph explained that the District's consultant, John Gobis, had advised that the system needed to be branded before seeking sponsorships. She added that staff was not looking to put a sponsor's name on the system, but for sponsorship revenue that would associate their name, brand, or product with support of the BRT line. She added that she would forward to the Committee Mr. Gobis's September letter to the AC Transit Board and prior report to the PSC.

President Peeples noted that the letter the AC Transit Board received from Mr. Gobis in September explained that you don't sell an abstract concept and that a name, logo, etc. were essential to gaining sponsorships. Vice Mayor Kaplan felt it worked differently based on her knowledge of how naming rights were sold at the Coliseum and for the BRT in Cleveland. Chair Ortiz added that the AC Transit Board was pressured to make a decision on a name for the service because of the ground breaking for construction.

Discussion ensued regarding next steps. General Manager Michael Hursh advised that, in his experience, selling naming rights was difficult. He added that he would, however, take a fresh look at the issue and would talk to other transit

properties about their experiences. He added that the Valley Transportation Authority thought there might be an opportunity with Levi's stadium and the Super Bowl, but efforts to secure a sponsorship had not made much progress. Phoenix and Houston also tried to sell their light rail systems, but did not get far.

Further discussion of the item was postponed. Staff was directed to conduct research on the experience of other transit systems and to call some of the local businesses to see what the level of interest is in a potential sponsorship. It was requested that the Mr. Hursh meet with Mr. Gobis prior to the next meeting.

e. **Sponsorship Program Update**

See the discussion on the branding update.

The item was presented for information only.

6. **Schedule date and time of next meeting.**

The next meeting is scheduled for January 14, 2016 at 2:00 p.m.

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

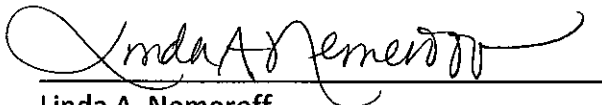
Vice Mayor Kaplan requested the following:

- Corridor outreach in furtherance of increasing ridership and use of EasyPass;
- Pictures of the BRT vehicles; and
- Clipper card availability on the corridor before launch.

8. **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 3:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Linda A. Nemeroff
District Secretary