

Special Meeting of the East Bay Bus Rapid Transit Policy Steering Committee

MINUTES

Thursday, October 5, 2017

2:00 p.m.

2nd Floor Board Room

1600 Franklin Street

Oakland, California 94612

PSC Members:

AC Transit:

President Elsa Ortiz, Chair

Director Greg Harper

Director H. E. Christian Peeples

Alameda County (Ex Officio):

Supervisor Nate Miley

Metropolitan Transportation Commission/Caltrans:

District Director Bijan Sartipi

City of Oakland:

Council Member Rebecca Kaplan

Council Member Noel Gallo

City of San Leandro:

Mayor Pauline Cutter

Council Member Corina Lopez

The East Bay Bus Rapid Transit Policy Steering Committee held a special meeting on Thursday, October 5, 2017. The meeting was called to order at 2:05 p.m. with Chair Ortiz presiding.

1. Roll Call

Committee Members Present:

President Elsa Ortiz, Chair

Director Mark Williams (alternate for Director Peeples)

Director Greg Harper

Councilmember Rebecca Kaplan

Councilmember Noel Gallo

Councilmember Corina Lopez

Committee Members Absent:

Director H. E. Christian Peeples

Mayor Pauline Cutter

Supervisor Nate Miley

Caltrans District Director Bijan Sartipi

AC Transit Staff Present:

General Manager Michael Hursh

General Counsel Denise Standridge

District Secretary Linda Nemeroff

Executive Director of Planning and Engineering Ramakrishna Pochiraju

2. **Public Comment** *(For items not on the agenda. Two minutes are allowed for each speaker.)*

There was no public comment offered.

3. **Consider Approving the BRT Policy Steering Committee Minutes of June 29, 2017.**

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

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

ABSTAIN:1: Williams

ABSENT:3: Miley, Sartipi, Cutter

4. **Chair's Report on Pertinent Actions of the AC Transit Board of Directors.**

Chair Ortiz reported on the following:

- Significant advancement of construction in Segment A of the Project, including signal pole and street light upgrades in Zones 8, 10, and 12;
- First station platform shell under construction at 72nd Avenue in Oakland;
- Waterline relocation in Zone 14 in San Leandro completed in August with most outside area improvements and signal pole and street light upgrades completed;
- Two curbside station platform shells at Civic Center (Northbound) and in Downtown San Leandro nearing completion;
- Traffic control plans in the final stages of approval;
- The BRT Community Outreach Program's effectiveness in addressing construction impacts in collaboration with the City of Oakland's Technical Assistance teams to optimize the overall support to the community; and
- Efforts to improve hiring levels in order to meet required goals.

5. **BRT Project Updates:**

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

a. **Construction Progress Update.**

Director of BRT David Wilkins presented an overview of construction progress in San Leandro and Oakland. He also gave an update on the "30 in 31 Campaign" which proposed to complete work in 30 areas during the month of August, advising that 75% of the work had been completed with the remainder being finished in September.

In addition, Mr. Wilkins reported that 17% of the project had been completed to date, anticipating that permits would be approved for all remaining zones before the end of the year. He further advised that professional services agreements set to expire in April 2018 would be brought to the AC Transit Board for extension through the end of the Project. An overview of the timeline for schedule mitigations was given and assistance

was sought from the City of Oakland to expedite and streamline operations by allowing work on evenings and weekends as well as allowing work in adjacent zones. He further highlighted the enhanced community benefits of the project, including new storm drains, sidewalks, signals, etc.

Councilmember Kaplan asked about the issue of getting permission from the City of Oakland to extend the construction schedule, noting a willingness to facilitate city council action if necessary. Mr. Wilkins advised that staff was working with Public Works staff that, in turn, would work through the City Administrator to bring the matter to the council. General Manager Michael Hursh advised that the larger request was the ability to work in adjacent zones, noting that businesses along the corridor would like construction to move faster and AC Transit staff was working cooperatively with City staff to bring this issue to the council in the coming weeks. He added that he would need assurance from the contractor to ensure they could work at the pace necessary.

Councilmember Lopez offered that businesses were providing a mix of feedback. She urged the District to help free-up parking during periods when construction work was not taking place, and requested that parking be freed up if construction was not taking place for more than 48 hours. She added that a formal letter would be forthcoming to AC Transit about this issue.

President Ortiz asked for clarity on the start of revenue service and was advised that it was December 2019. She also pointed out that the extension of contracts would contribute to further project deficits. Mr. Hursh advised that the project had to conclude in December 2019, and it was in everyone's best interest to accelerate the progress.

Councilmember Gallo commented on the concerns raised over the timeline, seeking assurance that the project had remained unchanged.

Councilmember Kaplan agreed that it was essential not to block parking and not to start work and then leave it unfinished for weeks at a time.

b. Community Outreach Update.

External Affairs Representative Claudia Burgos gave an update on community outreach activities along the corridor, including complaint resolution and troubleshooting temporary construction impacts. She also went on to share the stories of two individuals, one of which had completed a training program and went on to become a staff member for Rising Sun Energy Center and another that had found employment with Van Guard Construction.

Director Harper and Councilmember Kaplan felt it would be better if staff focused on being an ombudsman for the businesses in helping to resolve issues encountered along the corridor. Director Harper requested that the next report concentrate on answering concerns raised by businesses in the area.

Councilmember Kaplan felt the immediate issue was to resolve the concerns being raised by businesses. Outreach about the launch of the service should occur down the road and include Ecopass, maps and other information about the service. She requested that the General Manager work with the team on work assignments at different phases of the project.

President Ortiz commented that while she agreed with outreach to businesses, the District was also under pressure from community groups to make sure hiring goals were fulfilled, especial with respect to local, minority, and disadvantaged workers.

Mr. Hursh pointed out that a lot of transit users were being inconvenienced by the project and it was important to promote its benefits as a transit improvement to riders. In addition, he advised that there were two staff members assigned to address the specific concerns raised by Director Harper.

Councilmember Lopez felt the immediate priority during construction was the concerns of the business owners who were just trying to survive. One business has indicated to the City of San Leandro that it has filed a claim with EBMUD.

Ms. Burgos responded that staff was in field daily talking with businesses and responding to concerns, adding that requests from businesses were brought to the contractor and the rest of the team to determine what accommodations could be made.

Director Williams echoed the concerns raised by President Ortiz with respect to providing employment opportunities to local, minority, and disadvantaged workers.

Councilmember Gallo asked if Ms. Burgos was working in direct coordination with other organizations providing outreach to businesses. Ms. Burgos advised that her team collaborated with the technical assistance teams, New America, and Mason-Tillman Associates, but did not manage them. Representatives from the various organizations also attend weekly construction progress meetings.

Councilmember Gallo further asked when action would need to be taken by the City of Oakland to help advance the construction schedule, adding that the project, once built, was needed in Oakland and would have a lasting impact. Mr. Hursh advised that if City of Oakland staff determines council approval is required to work concurrently in adjacent zones it would be brought to the City in the next quarter. He added there was financial pressure to finish the project on time, and to that end, AC Transit would hire a financial consultant and was prepared to assume up to \$20 million of debt. Anything that could be done by the cities to speed up the project would be helpful.

c. Project Labor Agreement, Construction Careers Policy and Hiring Update.

Contracts Compliance Administrator Phillip McCants presented an overview of progress achieved toward meeting workforce goals as well as the offsite local hire credit program

for contractors, hiring initiatives and planned activities for the fourth quarter. He also noted that the Project's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise goals were being exceeded.

Councilmember Kaplan expressed appreciation for staff's efforts in this area.

Director Harper requested that staff's next report detail what the unemployment rate was when the goals were set versus what they are now.

Councilmember Lopez was thankful for the progress made in San Leandro thus far and was encouraged to see more progress in the future.

Councilmember Kaplan advised that the African American unemployment rate was 2.5 times higher than the white unemployment rate. It was further suggested that perhaps AC Transit work with Cypress Mandela on a hiring program specific to bus operators or truck drivers.

6. Schedule Date and Time of Next Meeting.

The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for January 11, 2017, at 2:00 p.m. The District Secretary is to poll the members on the date and any alternative dates recommended by staff.

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

Councilmember Lopez requested information on the process related to business impact fees, seeking clarification of the process at the local level as to where merchants should go for assistance.

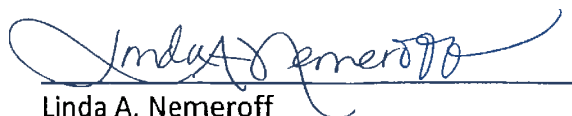
Councilmember Lopez invited staff to give an overall project update to the San Leandro City Council.

Councilmember Kaplan made an informal request for information on the dollar amount per year of sponsorship necessary to provide free rides on BRT.

8. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 3:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Linda A. Nemeroff
District Secretary