

**WCCTAC**  
**West Contra Costa Transportation Advisory Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes, 27 February 2009**

**Members Present:** Maria Viramontes, Chair (Richmond); Janet Abelson (El Cerrito); Ed Balico (Hercules); Tom Butt (Richmond); Genoveva Calloway (San Pablo); Jeff Ritterman (Richmond); Aleida Chavez (WestCAT)\*. *Absent:* Roy Swearingen, Vice-Chair (Pinole); John Gioia (Contra Costa County); Joel Keller (BART); Joe Wallace (AC Transit).

\* Arrived after roll-call.

**Staff Present:** Christina Atienza, Nancy Cuneo, Valerie Lipscomb, Joanna Pallock, John Rudolph, Linda Young. Martin Englemann, Hisham Noeimi, CCTA. Michael Rodriquez, Meyers Nave.

**Place:** San Pablo City Council Chambers, 13831 San Pablo Avenue, San Pablo, California, 94806

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1. **Convene Meeting and Self-Introductions.** *Chair Viramontes convened the meeting at 8:05 a.m.* Everyone in attendance introduced themselves.
2. **Public Comment.** *Mr. Jerrold Parsons, Social Security Administration Local AFGE and John Swett Unified School District Board member,* stated that he had provided an update of the Social Security Administration parking situation in downtown Richmond to AFG Local 1122, and he hoped the City of Richmond and WCCTAC would participate in formulating strategies for improvements.

In response, *Mr. Alan Wolken, Richmond Redevelopment Agency,* stated that WCCTAC and they have met with SSA, and are working with a traffic consultant to formulate a detailed traffic and parking analysis in downtown Richmond which will include an examination of transit alternatives.

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

**ACTION:** *Director Abelson* moved to adopt the Consent Calendar with Items #3, #7, #12, and #15 withdrawn for discussion, seconded by *Director Ritterman,* and carried unanimously. Items #4 through #6, #8 through #11, and Items #13 and #14 were approved:

4. **Received Meeting Summary of the February 12, 2009 Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting;**
5. **Received Staff Reports;**
6. **Received Updates on State Budget and Federal Stimulus Package;**
8. **Approved Comment Letter on SB 375 Draft Implementation Policies;**
9. **Authorized the Ad Hoc Committee to authorize the Executive Director to enter into an agreement with a human services consultant for a fee not to exceed \$11,500 to conduct the 2009 Compensation Survey;**

10. **Authorized staff to forward information to CCTA for legal determination on West County operators' proposed use of Measure J Bus and Paratransit Enhancement Funds for Existing Services;**
11. **Approved staff's proposed Action Plan modifications;**
13. **Authorized Chair to sign letter of support for Alameda County Congestion Management Agency's Caltrans Planning Grant application for the Central I-80 Rail Corridor Study;**
14. **Authorized staff to proceed in preparation of Caltrans Planning Grant application for West County Transit Investment Strategic Plan, and gave Executive Director signature authority for the application.**

**ITEMS REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT CALENDAR**

3. **Meeting Minutes and Summary of the January 30, 2008 Board Meeting.** *Chair Viramontes* stated that *Ms. Atienza* had requested that the minutes be withdrawn from the Consent Calendar and put forward after revisions had been made.
7. **Resolution 09-01, Allocation of Measure J Program 19b Additional Bus Service Enhancements.**

**ACTION:** *Director Abelson* moved to adopt Resolution 09-01, Allocation of Measure J Program 19b Additional Bus Service Enhancements, seconded by *Director Butt*, and carried unanimously.

**DISCUSSION:** *Director Balico* asked if the proposed split between AC Transit and WestCAT is for the duration of Measure J. *Christina Atienza, Executive Director*, responded that the proposed split is for a three-year period only, to allow for a periodic reevaluation of the allocation formula. *Director Balico* requested additional justification for the split in future allocations. *Ms. Atienza* responded that staff would be happy to provide additional information in the future, but cautioned the Board that available transit data is not necessarily accurate nor collected in a consistent fashion, making it difficult to develop a more rigorous allocation formula.

**12. Lifeline Student Bus Pass Program – Amendment No. 1 to MOU with AC Transit.**

**ACTION:** *Director Balico* moved to adopt Amendment No. 1 to the MOU with AC Transit, seconded by *Director Ritterman*, and carried unanimously.

**DISCUSSION:** *Ms. Atienza* noted that the purpose of Amendment No. 1 to the MOU with AC Transit is to enable AC Transit to reimburse WCCTAC for the cost of WestCAT tickets that were purchased and provided to eligible students under the Student Bus Pass Program via the Lifeline grant.

## **15. Mid-Year Budget and Work Plan Amendments.**

**ACTION:** *Chair Viramontes* moved to adopt the Mid-Year Budget and Work Plan Amendments, seconded by *Director Balico*, and carried unanimously.

**DISCUSSION:** *Chair Viramontes* asked what are next steps in developing a model taxi ordinance, which must be adopted by West County jurisdictions prior to allocation of WCCTAC's funds for taxi safety and accessibility. *Ms. Atienza* stated that WCCTAC staff would confer with Richmond staff to confirm that it was the responsibility of Richmond staff to develop the model taxi ordinance. *Chair Viramontes* stated that she would work with the Richmond City Council to develop a draft model taxi ordinance, bring the draft before the WCCTAC Board, and then determine a committee to be involved in the review of the ordinance.

*Director Abelson* recommended involving other cities and noted that taxi safety is an issue of ongoing concern in El Cerrito. *Ms. Atienza* clarified that the intent has always been for the City of Richmond to develop the model and then circulate it to other West County jurisdictions.

### **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

## **16. Comment Letter on Draft Regional Transportation Plan – Concerns Regarding Proposed Regional High Occupancy Toll (HOT) Lanes Network, including HOT Lanes on I-80.**

**DISCUSSION:** *Ms. Atienza* stated that at the January meeting of the WCCTAC Board, the Board authorized staff to prepare a comment letter on the draft RTP that specifically states concerns about the construction of HOT lanes along I-80. *Ms. Atienza* outlined some of the concerns regarding regional HOT lanes networks that have been expressed by CCTA and WCCTAC Boards, and highlighted portions of the draft comment letter.

*Chair Viramontes* noted that WCCTAC's letter accurately summarizes the issues that need to be resolved, and suggested that copies should be sent to local representatives of the state legislature. *Chair Viramontes* expressed skepticism of the methodology that MTC had used to determine that the installation of HOT lanes will reduce carbon emissions, and suggested that a more appropriate time-frame for considering HOT lanes in West County would be after the I-80 Integrated Corridor Mobility (ICM) project has been implemented.

*Director Abelson* commented that: 1) copies of the letter should be sent to federal elected officials as well; 2) the HOT lane system in southern California is a disaster; 3) the interests of Marin and Solano counties in desiring HOT lanes are not aligned with Contra Costa's experience; and 4) analysis of potential HOT applications should be corridor-wide, not roadway-specific. She recommended including language in the letter that: 1) proposes extending the hours during which HOV lanes cannot be accessed by single-occupant vehicles; 2) addresses gaps in the HOV network; and 3) addresses the adverse impacts HOT lanes may have on transit operations.

*Director Chavez* stated that: 1) the current HOT proposal is unclear about whether or not the cost of using the lanes will be linked to demand; 2) local mass transit should be given priority in funding; and 3) corridor level improvements should be given priority over an expansive network of HOT lanes.

*Director Butt* expressed concern that the study should address the sprawl-inducing impacts of the proposed HOT network, and that sprawl, induced through such efforts as increasing automobile capacity along I-80, has long been his primary concern. He said that land-use impacts should be a part of the study.

*Director Balico* stated that he would like inclusion of language in the letter that requests an examination of the cumulative impacts of a combination of ICM and HOT lane technology, and that local officials should be granted the authority to make decisions relative to the segments of the HOT lane network that have a direct impact on their jurisdictions.

## **17. Draft 2009 Countywide Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) and Draft EIR.**

**ACTIONS:** *Director Balico* moved to retain the services of a consultant to review and prepare comments on the DEIR, seconded by *Director Abelson*, and carried unanimously. The Board also formed an ad-hoc sub-committee, consisting of *Directors Abelson, Chavez, Balico, and Butt* to discuss how best to encourage other parts of the county to be more progressive.

**DISCUSSION:** *Ms. Atienza* introduced *Martin Engelmann, CCTA*. *Mr. Engelmann* provided an overview of the CTP. *Mr. Engelmann* noted that the EIR includes a climate change protection alternative: this is a new component of the EIR, and *Mr. Englemann* encouraged the Board to review it.

*Director Butt* commented that: 1) policies in the CTP seek to increase traffic capacity and that such policies are sprawl-inducing; 2) the relationship between transportation and land-use issues needs to be resolved through the formulation of firm policies; 3) the CTP does not address the need to reconcile transportation and land-use issues; and 4) WCCTAC should retain an expert consultant to comment on the DEIR.

*Director Abelson* commented that West County has only one vote at some CCTA policy committee meetings, and West County's interests vary somewhat from the other CCTA members who vote on adoption of the plan. *Director Abelson* recommended formation of an ad-hoc committee, and suggested that West County leaders could promulgate connectivity between land use and transportation in their communications with local entities.

*Chair Viramontes* recommended that after the comment letter has been finalized and the ad hoc sub-committee has met, that Board members take the results to their own City Councils and Boards to inform them about the plan.

## **18. Subregional Transportation Mitigation Fee Program:**

- a. Next Steps for Program Development.** The Board deferred discussion of this item for the upcoming Board retreat.
- b. BART Request for Matching Funds to Lifeline Grant for Richmond Intermodal Station – Resolution 09-02.**

**ACTION:** *Director Abelson* moved to approve Resolution 09-02 granting BART’s request for \$186,200 in matching funds out of the STMP, as amended to reflect that the funds would come out of the BART project rather than the Richmond Intermodal Station project; seconded by *Director Balico*, and carried unanimously.

**DISCUSSION:** *Chair Viramontes* noted that this resolution will create a local match in funds so that BART can secure a \$744,800 Lifeline grant. *Mr. Alan Wolken* stated that Richmond has been working with BART on the Lifeline grant, and stated that the City of Richmond supports Resolution 09-02.

*Ms. Atienza* stated that there were two projects in STMP under which this project could qualify: 1) the Richmond Intermodal Station, and 2) BART. The resolution in front of the Board currently, would take funds from the Richmond Intermodal Station project. *Ms. Diedre Heitman, BART*, explained the financial situation at BART, which prompted this request; and clarified that the funds are being requested out of the allocation to the BART project, rather than the Richmond Intermodal Station project.

*Director Abelson* expressed concerns that there currently exists no policy with respect to making allocations from fees collected in the STMP program, and that funding for particular projects is being allocated without a strategic plan for the STMP, which may lead to a scenario where some projects do not have funding in the future because the funding has been distributed so far on a first-come first-served basis. *Ms. Atienza* agreed with *Director Abelson’s* concerns, but noted that if the local match is not obtained, BART will lose \$744,800 for transit improvement projects in West County.

## **19. Measure J Low-Income Student Bus Pass Program:**

- a. Initial Program Development.** The Board nominated an ad hoc committee to inform the development of the Measure J program. The Committee consists of *Directors Abelson, Calloway, Chavez, Gioia, and Ritterman*.
- b. City of Richmond Request for Potential Use of Measure J Program 21b Funds to Offset Forgiveness of West Contra Costa Unified School District’s (WCCUSD’s) \$3.7 Million Voluntary Integration Program (VIP) Debt – Resolution 09-03.**

**ACTION:** *Director Abelson* moved to approve Resolution 09-03 on the condition that it will not affect the low-income student bus pass program, seconded by *Director Ritterman*, with one abstention from *Director Butt*, and carried unanimously.

**DISCUSSION:** *Chair Viramontes* noted that West County school districts are experiencing significant problems, and the cities have committed to helping the school district reduce their debt. She noted that the resolution will allow WCCUSD to seek enabling legislation asking for VIP debt forgiveness by taking credit for the Measure J funds spent on within their jurisdiction under the low-income student bus pass program.

**20. 2009 Board Retreat.** *Chair Viramontes, Director Abelson, and Director Balico* volunteered for the Board retreat ad hoc committee.

**STANDING AGENDA ITEMS**

**21. Correspondence/Other Information:**

**a. Incoming:**

- Letter from CCTA dated February 19 re Items Approved by the Authority on February 18, 2009

**22. Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 a.m. until the next regularly scheduled meeting on March 27, 2009, at 8:00 a.m.