TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MINUTES
July 20, 2005

Chair Knox White called the Transportation Commission to order at 7:30 P.M.

1. ROLL CALL – Roll was called and the following recorded:
Members Present:

John Knox White	Robb Ratto
Patianne Parker	Robert McFarland
Michael Krueger	

Absent:
Jeff Knoth
Eric Schatmeier

Staff Present:
Barbara Hawkins – City Engineer, Public Works
Barry Bergman – Program Specialist II, Public Works

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Krueger had an exception to the minutes of April 27th, page 3. He requested the removal of the phrase "a grid should not be introduced where it does not currently exist." Did not say that it should never be used in an undeveloped area. He stated that while this may apply to an existing development, a grid system may be appropriate in a currently undeveloped area.

Chair Knox White noted that he was identified as JKW on page 2.

Hold off on the approval of the minutes until Commissioner Schatmeier arrives.

3. **AGENDA CHANGES** – None

4. COMMISSION COMMUNICATIONS

None of the sub-committees of the TMP have met. A meeting has been scheduled for July 27th.

5. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

6. OLD BUSINESS
6A. Broadway/Jackson Phase 2 Feasibility Study

Staff Hawkins did a presentation on the above. She showed a large drawing of the study and described the various components of each of the three alternatives being studied, and noted that she had presented an earlier version to the Transportation Commission. The first part of the study was a survey that was conducted with council members of Alameda and Oakland to determine

their familiarity with the original project study report and proposed improvements. The City of Alameda had some familiarity with the improvements but was not fully aware of all of them. They knew about the Martin Luther King exit and knew basically direct access to Alameda was not provided.

Because Oakland and Alameda could not find a solution for direct to Alameda, a portion of the funding was set aside and it was decided that at a later time a feasibility study would be conducted to look at Alameda access. This is the study currently under way. The primary stakeholders are: the City of Alameda, City of Oakland, Caltrans and ACTIA. The secondary stakeholders were: Port of Oakland, Congestion Management Agency (CMA), Chinatown, West Alameda Business Association (WABA), and developers from Alameda (Catellus and Alameda Point Community Partners) and Oakland (Signature Properties and another developer).

Staff Hawkins stated that Alameda supports going forward with a proposal so that the stakeholders would support it. Having the stakeholders support the recommended solution would be an important step in securing funding. The feasibility study is only looking at the feasibility as to which ones they can build, which ones are structural impossible and which ones impact too much on historic sites, etc.

Staff Hawkins noted that currently Oakland does not support the construction of a new Harrison Street off-ramp. One possible solution that may enable the Broadway off-ramp to meet the needs of both Alameda and Oakland is a "Texas U-Turn", which would allow drivers to exist at the Broadway ramp, make a U-turn before reaching Broadway, and accessing the Webster Tube.

Staff Hawkins noted that it will be expensive to build all these improvements. The Transportation Commission could help by providing recommendations regarding priorities or steps that could be taken to facilitate coordination with other agencies.

Commissioner Parker asked what the life of an elevated freeway would be. She asked how any other proposed projects could relate to potential phasing of the Broadway-Jackson improvements.

Staff Hawkins said that Caltrans is currently working on a seismic retrofit down by Oak Street. Otherwise, Caltrans does not see any additional safety project needs within the next 50 years.

Chair Knox White asked what options have been already eliminated from consideration.

Staff Hawkins said that she couldn't detail all 13 alternatives, but a number of them included superstructures.

Commissioner Parker asked about project timing. Would it be phased? How would the timing match up with development in the area?

Staff Hawkins said in terms of funding we have approximately $12 million is allocated to the project. But in the countywide transportation plan we could get up to $28 million, much of

which would come from the State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP). This has been identified as a priority at the county level; the next step is to compete for funds at the state level.

Alameda stakeholders have indicated that two of their high priorities are the horseshoe access ramp onto northbound I-880 and direct access onto southbound I-880.

Commissioner McFarland asked if there is a weave problem at the proposed off-ramp on northbound I-880 and the existing on-ramp getting onto I-980.

Staff Hawkins answered that the weave distance was evaluated and is not a problem.

Staff Hawkins stated that we will need to weigh congestion relief benefits against the estimated costs, and this will impact on project phasing.

Commissioner McFarland asked what environmental document is required.

Staff Hawkins answered that the next step would be the environmental analysis and the project study report, if we go forward with all the project elements. Hopefully this could be done in two years.

Commissioner Parker asked about the direct route from I-880 down toward the Broadway on-ramp, how that relates to the existing Jackson Street ramp, and whether it is possible to use the existing ramp to access the tubes.

Staff Hawkins stated that using the Jackson Street exit would require drivers to travel through the produce district to get to the tube. They tried to have direct access from the Jackson Street ramp into the tubes, but that would have precluded access to Jack London Square or Chinatown.

Commissioner Krueger asked if AC Transit is involved in any of these discussions, as the transbay buses would be impacted, as well local buses on Broadway.

Staff Hawkins said that the analysis has accounted for the required turning radii of the buses, but that AC Transit has not been actively involved in discussions of the design. The study team has talked about identifying queue jump lanes to enhance access to the Webster tube.

Staff Hawkins agreed that it is a good time to involve AC Transit in the project discussions.

Public Comment Opened

Melody Marr from the Alameda Chamber of Commerce asked who the stakeholders are for the project.

Staff Hawkins responded that the stakeholders included City of Alameda, City of Oakland, Caltrans, Port of Oakland, Chinatown, West Alameda Business Association, Signature Properties (which has a project in Oakland), Alameda County Transportation Improvement Authority

(ACTIA), Catellus, Alameda Point Community Partners, and the Peralta Colleges, Congestion Management Agency,

Ms. Marr asked that the Chamber of Commerce board members and others be given a presentation on the project in September.

Ms Stieg wanted to know who actually are the representatives that are part of this committee discussion and who represents Alameda's interests.

Staff Hawkins stated that they were listed on the email that is sent to them.

Ms. Steig mentioned that she and some of other people on the email list are not able to attend the meetings. She indicated she would like to find out more about why the 13 of the 16 project design options were eliminated. She also asked if she could obtain a list of the proposals and the pros and cons of each before the final report is completed.

Staff Hawkins said that it would be presented to the City Council and then the City Council can open it up for comments. She added that the Stakeholders meeting would be a good place to express her concerns.

Ms Steig said that she was not able to make those meetings because they are on Mondays. She asked that the Commission take no actions on this feasibility study until the Alameda business community has a chance to review and comment on it. She expressed concern that some of the options would have a negative impact on Alameda.

Commissioner Ratto stated that WABA was a designated stakeholder and understood some of the scheduling problems. He asked if they have been receiving the meeting packets.

Staff Hawkins said that emails are sent to them along with the information from the meetings.

Commissioner Ratto suggested that since WABA is unable to send a representative to the stakeholder meetings that a representative from the Chamber of Commerce be identified to represent the Alameda business community.

Ms. Stieg supported this idea, and asked that the Chamber be added as a stakeholder.

Staff Hawkins agreed.

Public Comment Closed

Commissioner Parker said that she would like to see which proposals were discarded. She added that the project's scope of work looks at freeway access from Alameda but does not address other issues Alameda is concerned with, such as connectivity from Alameda to Chinatown or Jack London Square.

Staff Hawkins said that it was a joint effort with Caltrans, Oakland and Alameda. They were not looking at local street circulation but at access to the freeways and not to preclude access to the local communities. She stated that the scope suggested by Commissioner Parker could be a second study.

Chair Knox White suggested that rather than identifying a specific alternative, it would be helpful to present the Council with the Commission's priorities and concerns. He expressed concern that there are significant political issues, but that the issues are not being discussed at a political level.

Sta*ff Hawkins* noted that there were two meetings left. One was with the technical group and the second with the general stakeholders. The general stakeholders meeting would be in September. There would be a discussion as to any elements that would need to be removed and then move forward. After that the next step would be the environmental review and the PSR report.

Commissioner Parker said that the focus should be on doing the best job and what we want to accomplish.

Staff Hawkins stated that the traffic study would include local circulation and a few blocks beyond the area bounded by 8th, Oak, and MLK.

Melody Marr from the Chamber of Commerce asked to table this until the next Transportation Commission meeting so that they could have time to review it.

Chair Knox White said that the Transportation Commission has no power to keep the Chamber in or out of this discussion. The Mayor had asked for the Transportation Commission to review it.

Staff Hawkins said that the September meeting would be the final discussion by the stakeholders group.

Commissioner Ratto moved to recommend Council that they contact whomever they need to contact to keep all the options available at this point, and that nothing be taken off the table. *Commissioner Parker* seconded the motion. Motion carried by a unanimous voice vote – 5.

6B TMP SUB-COMMITTEES APPOINTMENTS AND NEXT STEPS

Chair Knox White stated that he would hold off on committee appointments since Commissioner Knoth was not present.

Staff Bergman said that the sub-committee would be meeting on July 27th.

8. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

Chair Knox White mentioned that the bus stop by Lum School on Otis Drive was removed and not replaced by an alternative. As a result, there are no bus stops on Otis Drive between Grand

and South Shore. This was well beyond the 1000 or 1200 feet requirement. There was no notification of this.

Commissioner Krueger said that he and his wife walked the route and confirmed there was no bus stop sign posted between Grand and Whitehall.

Staff Hawkins said that the stop was removed at the request of the police department, that there was a problem with the circulation of students, crossing guards and vehicles. Since it was within the distance prescribed in the Transit Plan, City and AC Transit staff agreed to remove the stop.

Commissioner Parker asked if the Transportation Technical Team should make that decision.

Staff Hawkins said that the Transportation Technical Team does not deal with the removal of bus stops. AC Transit deals with the removal of bus stops, not the City, and the TTT has been dealing with the bus stop issues only when it involves parking spaces. She said AC Transit should provide notification to the public if a stop is removed.

Chair Knox White asked how the recommendations of the transit plan are accounted for, if AC Transit has the right to make the decision unilaterally.

Commissioner Parker said that the school should have been involved in these discussions, since this affects the ability of students to take transit to school.

Staff Hawkins noted that the school was involved in the discussions regarding the bus stop.

Commissioner Krueger suggested that we should try to have some type of public noticing when bus stops are removed, even if it is not technically required.

Commissioner Krueger said that the re-paint job of the bus shelters on Grand Avenue and Santa Clara Avenue turned out really well. The City is doing a great job on getting graffiti removed from the shelters, and praised Public Works regarding the new and existing bus shelters.

Commissioner Ratto noted that PSBA would be having the annual Art and Wine Fair on July 30-31.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 P.M.

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