

**TO: HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL**

**ATTN: POLICY AND SERVICE COMMITTEE**

**FROM: CITY MANAGER** **DEPARTMENT: PLANNING AND COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT**

**DATE: JUNE 3, 2008** **CMR: 267:08**

**SUBJECT: REVIEW OF REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO CITY COUNCIL**

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Policy and Services Committee review and comment on the regional transportation issues discussed in this report and recommend to Council to:

1. Refer the Palo Alto Intermodal Transit Center project, the Caltrain/ California High Speed Rail and the Comprehensive County Expressway Study to the Planning and Transportation Commission for review and recommendations to the City Council.
2. Continue support for the existing Council position on ramp metering as detailed in the May 29, 1996 letter from Mayor Wheeler to Caltrans and direct staff to convey the Council position to VTA and Caltrans and report back to the City Council.
3. Direct staff to prepare a recommendation to the City Council on anticipated Valley Transportation Agency (VTA) Governance structure prior to scheduled action by the VTA Board of Directors this summer.

**BACKGROUND**

On May 19, 2008, the City Council voted to refer the matter of regional transportation initiatives, projects and studies as they relate to and could have impacts for Palo Alto to the Policy and Services Committee for discussion and review. Since Council members also sit on policy advisory boards and committees for some of these transportation studies, the Policy & Services Committee was the appropriate body to develop updates, review past Council positions, determine next steps, and recommend potential policy position to the full City Council.

**DISCUSSION**

This report provides background on eleven regional transportation initiatives of interest to both the Council and the community. These projects, independently and cumulatively will have implications for Palo Alto and the mid-peninsula. Specific issues discussed in this report are following:

1. 2020 Peninsula Gateway Corridor Study

2. Highway 101 Auxiliary Lanes/101 High Occupancy Toll (HOT) Lanes Project
3. Highway 101 Ramp Metering Project
4. Dumbarton Rail & HOV Buses
5. Santa Clara County Comprehensive Expressway Study Update
6. VTA Valley Transportation Plan (VTP) 2035
7. California High Speed Rail (HSR)
8. Caltrain Electrification
9. Grand Boulevard Initiative and El Camino/Stanford Avenue project
10. Palo Alto Intermodal Transit Center
11. VTA Governance

There are City Council adopted policies in the Comprehensive Plan or developed directly by Council for several of the above issues, while others are new issues that have not been discussed by the City Council and/or had policy established. These projects can be classified into three general categories: (1) projects requiring City Council policy direction; (2) projects to be referred to the Planning and Transportation Commission for further review prior to Council action; and (3) projects to be monitored by staff and brought forward for policy direction at a later time when the projects progress to a stage that sufficient information is available for a policy decision.

The attached materials present an overview and status of each of these projects. Staff will continue to monitor all of these projects, prepare more detailed reports for policy direction on individual items where appropriate, and forward issues to the Planning and Transportation Commission and Council for review and recommendations.

### **RESOURCE IMPACT**

There is no City resource impact associated with these recommendations.

### **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The recommendations in this report are consistent with existing stated Council policies and Comprehensive Plan Transportation Element policies, including:

Policy T-7: Support plans for a quiet, fast rail system that encircles the Bay, and for intra-count and transbay transit systems that link Palo Alto to the rest of Santa Clara County and adjoining counties.

Program T-14: Pursue development of the University Avenue Multi-modal Transit Station conceptual plan based on the 1993-94 design study

Program T-17: Support Caltrain electrification and its extension to Downtown San Francisco.

Policy T-25: When constructing or modifying roadways, plan for usage of the roadway space by all users, including motor vehicles, transit vehicles, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

Policy T-49: Lead and participate in initiatives to manage regional traffic.

Policy T-52: Where appropriate, support the conversion of existing traffic lanes to exclusive bus and high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes on freeways and expressways, including the Dumbarton Bridge.

Policy T-53: Participate in seeking a regional solution to improved roadway connections between Highway 101 and the Dumbarton Bridge without construction of a southern connection across environmentally sensitive baylands.

Policy T-54: Support efforts by Caltrans and the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority Congestion Management Program to reduce congestion and improve traffic flow on area freeways.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

Receiving an update on these regional transportation issues does not constitute a project under the California Environmental Quality Act.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

- A. Project Matrix
- B. 2020 Peninsula Gateway Corridor Study
- C. Highway 101 Auxiliary Lanes/101 High Occupancy Toll (HOT) Lanes Project
- D. Highway 101 Ramp Metering Project
- E. Dumbarton Rail & HOV Buses
- F. Santa Clara County Comprehensive Expressway Study Update
- G. VTA Valley Transportation Plan (VTP) 2035
- H. California High Speed Rail (HSR)
- I. Caltrain Electrification
- J. Grand Boulevard Initiative and El Camino/Stanford Avenue project
- K. Palo Alto Intermodal Transit Center
- L. VTA Governance

### **COURTESY COPIES**

Planning and Transportation Commission  
Chamber of Commerce

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