



DATE: September 15, 2015

CATEGORY: New Business

DEPT.: City Manager's Office/Public Works

TITLE: **Regional Transportation Update**

RECOMMENDATION

Receive an update and provide direction to the Mayor and City Manager regarding Mountain View's continued activities relating to regional transportation issues.

BACKGROUND

There has been increased interest in, and discussion by and between, several Santa Clara County cities regarding regional transportation issues in response to the Valley Transportation Authority's (VTA) current efforts to update its Valley Transportation Plan 2040 (VTP 2040) and identify candidate projects for inclusion in a possible 2016 transportation sales tax measure through its Envision Silicon Valley campaign.

The purpose of this Council Report is to provide the City Council with an update regarding Mountain View's participation in these recent regional transportation discussions and receive Council direction regarding future discussions and activities.

ANALYSIS

VTP 2040 Update

As Santa Clara County's Congestion Management Agency, the VTA is responsible for preparing and adopting Countywide long-range transportation planning documents. Earlier this summer, the VTA initiated a process to update its current transportation plan, VTP 2040, to track with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC) development of a new Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), also known as Plan Bay Area. As a first step in this update process, the VTA issued a call for projects to VTA member agencies requesting them to update their existing VTP project lists and submit any new projects intended for completion within the VTP 2040 planning horizon. The deadline for agencies to update their VTP project lists was August 31, 2015.

The list of projects submitted by the City of Mountain View for the VTP 2040 update is provided in Attachment 1. It was posted on our website on September 1. The list includes updates to projects previously submitted by the City in earlier VTP processes, as well as new projects identified in studies and plans recently reviewed and/or approved by the City Council (e.g., Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan, 2013 Shoreline Transportation Study, 2014 Shoreline Corridor Study, 2014 North Bayshore Precise Plan, Draft Bicycle Transportation Plan Update, etc.). The City last updated its list of projects in 2011. While most of the items are unique to Mountain View, many were added to support regional improvements and were drafted to match submittals of Sunnyvale, Palo Alto, and Caltrain.

It is important to remember that a project's placement on the VTP or Plan Bay Area does not guarantee its funding, only its eligibility to compete with other regional projects for Federal and other funding.

Agencies were urged by the VTA to submit "unconstrained" project requests (i.e., without any prioritization or regard to the availability of funding), so staff added several new items, including some items suggested by members of the community. The VTA has committed to an extensive community input/outreach process during the upcoming Envision Silicon Valley process for the discussion and prioritization of projects before the VTP is updated and the projects to be included in a potential 2016 transportation sales tax measure through Envision Silicon Valley are finalized.

Envision Silicon Valley/Transportation Tax Measure

The VTA launched the Envision Silicon Valley campaign earlier this year as a visioning process to discuss current and future transportation needs, identify projects/solutions, and develop funding priorities for a potential 2016 transportation sales tax measure. It is staff's understanding that in order for a project to be considered for funding in the sales tax measure, it should be included in the VTP 2040 and Plan Bay Area documents.

While no decision has been made on a revenue measure and no specific components defined, the sales tax measure is currently being discussed as a 30-year, half-cent tax that could generate approximately \$6 billion (current dollars) while it is in effect. Likely programs and projects to be considered for funding through the tax measure include:

- Completing an extension of BART to downtown San Jose, and possibly Santa Clara.

- Street maintenance and pothole repairs in all 15 cities and other jurisdictions in Santa Clara County, with a possible provision that agencies could use the funding for other transportation-related purposes if certain pavement maintenance conditions are achieved/maintained.
- Relieving traffic congestion on all eight of the County's expressways, including Central Expressway.
- Bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements.
- Caltrain system and capacity improvements.
- Improvements to the Valley's freeway network.
- Improved transit services for senior, low-income, and disabled riders.

The current schedule for the Envision Silicon Valley process is provided in Attachment 2. The VTA is likely to begin work on crafting an initial proposal for the tax measure later this fall based on the VTP 2040 update call for projects, outreach to communities and stakeholders, and VTA advisory committees. City staff has offered a Mountain View venue as the site for one or more of the upcoming Envision Silicon Valley community meetings.

A final expenditure plan for the tax measure is scheduled to be approved by the VTA Board of Directors next summer. The deadline to submit measures for the November 2016 ballot is August 2016.

Coordination on Transportation Issues

Spurred by the VTA's VTP 2040 update and Envision Silicon Valley processes and concerns that our area has not received its fair share of transportation funding in the past¹, Mountain View convened the mayors and managers from North County and West Valley cities and towns to discuss and coordinate regional transportation issues. One outcome from these discussions was the joint development and signing of a letter (Attachment 4) requesting that the VTA embark as soon as possible on a comprehensive study to develop a long-term plan for future mass transit and last-mile investments for Santa Clara County, with an initial focus on the State Route 85, U.S. 101, State Route 237, and Interstate 280 corridors.

¹ Attachment 3 includes an analysis requested by Santa Clara County Supervisor Simitian of past transportation measures.

The City of Mountain View included this study request as part of the VTP 2040 update/Envision Silicon Valley process, but staff prefers that the funding for the study come from other VTA funding sources on a more immediate basis so as not to delay the start of the study.

Also included in Mountain View's VTP 2040 project request list, as well as that of a few other cities, is a placeholder funding request to begin implementation of recommendations identified in the comprehensive study discussed above.

Meeting with VTA General Manager

As part of an ongoing dialogue between the City and VTA regarding issues of mutual interest and importance to both agencies, City representatives (the Mayor, City Manager, and Public Works Department staff) met with the VTA General Manager and members of her staff on July 29, 2015, to discuss the VTP 2040 and Envision Silicon Valley processes and several other issues, including:

- The City's adoption of a new North Bayshore Precise Plan, current efforts to study residential uses in the North Bayshore, and the VTA's potential redevelopment of its North Coach Terminal on La Avenida.
- The El Camino Real Bus Rapid Transit project.
- New VTA initiatives to study and pilot alternative transit service models (e.g., subscription/demand response bus service) in its service area.
- Transit access improvements (light rail and/or other services) into the City's North Bayshore Area.
- VTA's efforts to regulate third-party (e.g., private employer and other shuttle services) use of its transit facilities.
- The Council's approval of a Fiscal Year 2015-16 capital project to begin a master planning effort for the Mountain View Transit Center, including both the identification of a preferred grade separation/street closure concept for the Castro Street/Moffett Boulevard/Central Expressway intersection and development of a new Master Plan for the transit facility.

The agencies agreed to continued dialogue and coordination as these projects and initiatives move forward.

Silicon Valley Leadership Group Meeting

The Mayor and manager, along with the mayor and manager of Cupertino, recently met with Carl Guardino, CEO of the Silicon Valley Leadership Group. The Silicon Valley Leadership Group has taken a lead role on past transportation tax measures and is expected to again. It was a candid conversation about the joint letter and the expectations of North County and West Valley cities to ensure sufficient funding is provided to achieve real long-term and future-oriented improvements in congestion in those parts of the county.

Next Steps

In addition to continuing to engage with the community and other North County and West Valley cities regarding local and regional transportation needs and challenges as the VTP 2040 update and Envision Silicon Valley processes move forward, a City Council Study Session has been scheduled for October 27, 2015 to provide the Council with an opportunity to discuss and provide direction to staff regarding the development of a work plan for the Council's new two-year goal to initiate a multi-year process in conjunction with other cities and agencies to improve last-mile connections, particularly fixed-rail options.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact directly associated with the approval of the above-listed recommendation. However, local matching funds may be required from the City for some approved projects in the future.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Direct the Mayor's and City Manager to no longer engage in regional transportation discussions.
2. Provide alternative direction to the Mayor and City Manager regarding their future activities relating to the VTP 2040 update process, the Envision Silicon Valley campaign, and/or other regional transportation issues/initiatives.
3. Provide other direction.

PUBLIC NOTICING – Agenda posting.

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- Attachments:
1. City of Mountain View VTP 2040 Project Requests
 2. Envision Silicon Valley Schedule
 3. Transportation Sales Tax Analysis
 4. August 27, 2015 Joint City Letter to VTA