

Jim Frazier
Chair
Oakley
City Council

Salvatore Evola
Vice-Chair
Pittsburg
City Council

Brian Kalinowski
Antioch
City Council

Robert Taylor
Brentwood
City Council

Mary N. Piepho
Contra Costa County
Board of Supervisors

Gil Azevedo
Antioch
Planning Commission

Joseph Weber
Brentwood
Planning Commission

Vacant
Representing the
Contra Costa County
Board of Supervisors

Duane Steele
Contra Costa
Planning Commission

Kevin Romick
Oakley
Planning Commission

Bruce Ohlson
Pittsburg
Planning Commission

TRANSPLAN Committee Meeting

Thursday, February 9, 2012 – 6:30 PM

Tri Delta Transit Board Room, 801 Wilbur Avenue, Antioch

We will provide reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities to participate in TRANSPLAN meetings if they contact staff at least 48 hours before the meeting. Please contact John Cunningham at (925) 335-1243 or john.cunningham@dcd.cccounty.us

AGENDA

Items may be taken out of order based on the business of the day and preferences of the Committee.

1. Open the meeting.

2. Accept public comment on items not listed on agenda.

Consent Items (see attachments where noted [♦])

3. Adopt Minutes from January 12, 2012 TRANSPLAN Meeting. ♦ PAGE 2

4. Accept Correspondence. ♦ PAGE 9

5. Accept News Articles ♦ PAGE 14

End of Consent Items

Closed Session

6. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL -- EXISTING LITIGATION

(Govt. Code Sect. 54956.9(a))

Case Name: TRANSPLAN & ECCRFFA v. City of Pittsburg; Contra Costa County Superior Court Case No. MSN11-0395

7: Adjourn to next meeting on Thursday, March 8, 2012 at 6:30 p.m. or other day/time as deemed appropriate by the Committee.

Staff Contact:

John Cunningham
TRANSPLAN
651 Pine Street
N. Wing—4th Floor
Martinez CA 94553

Phone
(925) 335-1243
Facsimile
(925) 335-1300
www.transplan.us
john.cunningham@
dcd.cccounty.us

ITEM 3
ADOPT MINUTES FROM Jan 2012 MEETING

TRANSPLAN COMMITTEE
Antioch - Brentwood - Pittsburg - Oakley and Contra Costa County

MINUTES

January 12, 2012

The meeting of the TRANSPLAN Committee was called to order in the Tri Delta Transit Board Room, 801 Wilbur Avenue, Antioch, California by Chair Brian Kalinowski at 6:47 P.M.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Gil Azevedo (Antioch), Salvatore Evola (Pittsburg), Jim Frazier (Oakley), Bruce Ohlson (Pittsburg), Mary N. Piepho (Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors), Kevin Romick (Oakley), Robert Taylor (Brentwood), Joe Weber (Brentwood), and Chair Brian Kalinowski (Antioch)

ABSENT: Duane Steele (Contra Costa County Planning Commission)

STAFF: John Cunningham, TRANSPLAN Staff
David Schmidt, Legal Counsel

PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

There were no comments from the public for items not on the agenda.

CONSENT ITEMS

On motion by Jim Frazier, seconded by Joe Weber, TRANSPLAN Committee members unanimously adopted the Consent Calendar, as follows:

3. Adopted Minutes from November 10, 2011 TRANSPLAN meeting.
4. Accepted Correspondence.
5. Accepted News Articles.
6. Accepted Status Report on Major Projects.
7. Adopted TRANSPLAN 2012 Calendar of Meetings.
8. Appointed TRANSPLAN Representatives to the Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee.

CLOSED SESSION

CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – EXISTING LITIGATION (Government Code Section 54956.9(a))

Case Name: TRANSPLAN & ECCRFFA vs. City of Pittsburg; Contra Costa County Superior Court Case No. MSN11-0395

The closed session was moved to the end of the agenda.

ELECT CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR FOR 2012

On motion by Brian Kalinowski to nominate Jim Frazier as Chair and Sal Evola as Vice Chair of the TRANSPLAN Committee. The nomination was seconded by Mary Piepho. There were no other nominations. The nominations were closed. **Jim Frazier** was unanimously elected to serve as Chair and **Sal Evola** as Vice Chair of the TRANSPLAN Committee for 2012.

APPOINT TRANSPLAN REPRESENTATIVE TO THE CONTRA COSTA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (CCTA) BOARD

Mr. Cunningham advised that the current even-year appointment to the CCTA Board would expire on January 30, 2012. The seat and alternate position were currently held by Robert Taylor of Brentwood and Brian Kalinowski of Antioch. A continuation of those appointments was recommended.

Brian Kalinowski nominated Bob Taylor to serve as the TRANSPLAN representative for the even-year term on the CCTA Board and Brian Kalinowski to serve as the alternate. Mary Piepho seconded the nomination. There were no other nominations. The nominations were closed. **Bob Taylor** was unanimously elected to serve as the TRANSPLAN representative and **Brian Kalinowski** as the alternate for the even-year term on the CCTA Board of Directors from February 1, 2012 to January 30, 2014.

Mr. Cunningham advised of the two presentations on the meeting agenda and due to what he called an overlapping of the plan reported that Martin Engelmann and Karen Engel had discussed the presentations and had determined that Martin Engelmann should make the first presentation.

PRESENTATION BY MARTIN ENGELMANN OF THE CONTRA COSTA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY ON THE STATUS OF SB 375 IMPLEMENTATION

Martin Engelmann, Deputy Executive Director of Planning for the CCTA, reported on the implementation of SB 375, the "Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act" of 2008, which mandates changes to planning practices to integrate land use, housing, and transportation planning and which is intended to help implement AB 32, the "Global Warming Solutions Act" of 2006.

Mr. Engelmann explained that AB 32 establishes the first comprehensive program of regulatory and market mechanisms in the nation to achieve greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reductions and sets GHG emission limits for 2020 at the 1990 level acknowledging that 2020 was not the endpoint but points the way towards an 80 percent reduction in 2050. He explained that the State Air Resources Board had adopted a Scoping Plan to achieve AB 32's GHG emissions reduction target in a three-pronged approach to reduce transportation GHGs through cleaner vehicles, cleaner fuels, and more sustainable communities.

Essentially SB 375 directs the Air Resources Board to develop passenger vehicle GHG reduction targets for 2020 and 2035. In addition, the Sustainable Communities Strategy would be added as a new element to the Regional Transportation Plans (RTPs), there would be a separate alternative planning strategy if GHG targets are not met, California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) streamlining incentives would be allowed for projects consistent with the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS), and the Association of Bay Area Government's (ABAG's) Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) would be coordinated with the regional transportation planning process.

Mr. Engelmann described the status of the SCS process and identified the scenarios analyzed with the Initial Vision Scenario as defined in April 2011, and the Core Concentration Scenario which concentrates housing and job growth more in Priority Development Areas (PDAs) throughout the region near major transit corridors as part of the Initial Vision. Alternative Scenarios included Focused Growth which focuses growth in PDAs throughout the region near major transit corridors; Constrained Core Concentration which concentrates housing and job growth more in PDAs in San Francisco, Oakland, and San Jose; and Outward Growth which puts higher levels of growth in inland areas of the Bay Area closer to past trends. He identified priority areas in East County and described the two Transport Networks; the T-2035 Network and the Core Transit Network that were part of the plan. He also summarized the households and jobs land use forecasts for 2040.

Mr. Engelmann explained that the Air Resources Board had established per capita reduction targets for passenger vehicle and light-duty truck emissions relative to a 2005 baseline and had established the Bay Area's target for 2020 as a 7 percent reduction and for 2035 as a 15 reduction in emissions. He highlighted the per capita GHG reductions per scenario, identified best and worst performance per target compared with the goal for 2040, and spoke to the policy initiatives intended to achieve reductions.

What had been determined was that performance would vary only slightly across the scenarios because the Bay Area is essentially a built environment and changes due to land use and transportation were on the margin.

In addition, transportation policy was critical to building complete communities although the transportation scenarios had little direct impact on GHG reduction regionwide, and MTC/ABAG would likely need to assess further land use, transportation-related, and other policy measures to meet the GHG and other targets.

Mr. Engelmann identified the next steps in the process over the next year and responded to questions. When asked about the risk to communities of not achieving the targets, he stated that there was nothing at risk. He added that if a local jurisdiction had a high allocation of housing in the SCS that would affect the RHNA numbers. When asked about his recent presentation to and response from the Antioch Chamber of Commerce, he explained that the presentation had gone well and there had been a lot of interest.

PRESENTATION BY KAREN ENGEL OF THE EAST BAY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE ON THEIR “BUILDING ON OUR ASSETS: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND JOB CREATION IN THE EAST BAY”

Karen Engel, the new Executive Director of the East Bay Economic Development Alliance (EBEDA), noted that Mary Piepho was the Vice Chair of the EBEDA, a two-county, 26-city public/private partnership around for 20 years working on the region’s economic health and vitality on issues ranging from education to transportation and the point for regional marketing and investment attraction.

Ms. Engel stated that the report was quite lengthy and the purpose of the report was to identify the region’s assets and come to grips with the worst recession of all time. Among the core assets was a highly-educated work force, a world class infrastructure, centers of innovation, and excellent quality of life. In considering both the impacts of the recession and moving forward, she stated that all those assets were under threat and on top of that having to adapt to climate change. In addition to the impact of recession, one in every 10 jobs had been lost in the last four years.

In terms of jobs base, Ms. Engel noted that there was a near doubling of jobs over the past 20 years almost all from companies starting and growing in the region. She identified the composition of East County employment in 2010 by position and noted that the report identifies the fact that innovation drives the region. Other strengths noted that construction had increased. She identified East Bay job trends and added that manufacturing still mattered noting a high level of concentration in the most advanced of manufacturing sectors. She added that venture funding revealed strength; she showed projected growth rates for 2011-18, and as to what else was creating jobs stated that half of the employment was in regional serving occupations.

In terms of the region, Ms. Engel reported that the largest employment trading partner was Santa Clara. For the built environment, the consultants had identified the employment concentration as across the I-880 and I-680 corridors. The study had also looked at the issue of transit and the share of East Bay jobs near transit, which had actually declined. In the East Bay, 50 percent of jobs near transit were in downtown Oakland. She identified the historical development in the built environment and explained that before 1980 it was manufacturing and warehousing although since then warehouse and research and development (R&D) had dominated in that new companies wanted more R&D/flex space, with more in southern Alameda County.

The study had also looked at labor markets. Ms. Engel characterized the region as highly educated, with pockets of disparity. The report also found that the incoming workforce was not as qualified as the Baby Boomers which was the most highly educated generation in history, and that 60 percent of Hispanics in the East Bay had a high school education or less, noting that Hispanics were the highest growing demographic.

Ms. Engel explained that the process would help identify the actions to be taken focusing on telling the East Bay story and strengthening incubation and clustering, education and workforce development, increasing business connections with education/workforce efforts, increasing the connection of small businesses to resources, and allow regulatory improvements, among others, through a broad coalition of other groups such as the Contra Costa Council and the East Bay Broadband Consortium.

Chair Frazier noted with respect to coalitions that a coalition should be developed with the League of California Cities to reinstate redevelopment. With a State takeover of redevelopment, he suggested there would be a huge devaluation of commercial properties which would produce unwanted and unneeded consequences.

Kevin Romick agreed that with the elimination of redevelopment it would be very difficult for cities to address infrastructure needs. He too urged a coordination of efforts with the League of California Cities to emphasize the importance of redevelopment.

Ms. Engel noted that she would work with the League of California Cities and other members to see what would happen next with the need to seek other solutions to target dollars for investment in the region. When asked, she noted that the EBEDA would meet next Tuesday and would discuss the ruling related to redevelopment and initiate a conversation to strategize for proposals.

Chair Frazier asked Ms. Engel to advise TRANSPLAN Committee staff of EBEDA meetings.

Mary Piepho commented that there was still a lot of growth that was occurring. She referred to an example in Brentwood of an employment/business incubator that was valuable to help promote and stimulate job growth, much in the home; essentially a solve-your-own-problem job growth. She stated that the Brentwood model worked and the business incubator model for small businesses would create jobs and get people to work. She added that the report would also be presented to the Mayors' Conference in February.

Chair Frazier adjourned into closed session at 7:52 P.M.

Sal Evola and Bruce Ohlson recused themselves from the closed session and left the Board Room.

CLOSED SESSION

CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – EXISTING LITIGATION (Government Code Section 54956.9(a))

Case Name: TRANSPLAN & ECCRFFA vs. City of Pittsburg; Contra Costa County Superior Court Case No. MSN11-0395

Chair Frazier reconvened from closed session at 9:11 P.M. and advised that there was nothing to report from closed session.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Bob Taylor, seconded by Mary Piepho to adjourn the TRANSPLAN Committee meeting at 9:12 P.M., to February 9, 2012 at 6:30 P.M. or other day/time deemed appropriate by the Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Anita L. Tucci-Smith
Minutes Clerk

Meeting Handouts:

- Bay Area Plan, Scenario Results, Contra Costa Transportation Authority, January 12, 2012
- Building On Our Assets, Economic Development & Job Creation in the East Bay, A regional economic assessment prepared for the East Bay Economic Development Alliance, October 2011

ITEM 4

ACCEPT CORRESPONDENCE

WCCTAC

West Contra Costa Transportation Advisory Committee

El Cerrito

January 27, 2012

Mr. Randell Iwasaki, Executive Director
Contra Costa Transportation Authority
2999 Oak Road, Suite 100
Walnut Creek CA 94597

Hercules

RE: WCCTAC Meeting Summary

Pinole

Dear Randy:

The WCCTAC Board at its meeting today took the following actions that may be of interest to CCTA:

Richmond

1) Elected Janet Abelson (El Cerrito) as the even-year CCTA representative for the term beginning February 1, 2012; and received Dr. Jeff Ritterman's (Richmond) resignation as the CCTA alternate effective February 24, 2012.

San Pablo

2) Deferred making an appointment to the Countywide Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory Committee until next month's meeting.

3) Discussed at length and in detail, and unanimously approved support for, Hercules' upcoming request to CCTA to allocate \$5,541,000 in Measure J funds for the Intermodal Transit Center.
4) Approved the use of \$187,000 in Measure J Subregional Transportation Needs (Program 28b) funds for payment of west County's share of the operations & maintenance (O&M) costs of the traffic monitoring elements of San Pablo Avenue Smart Corridors for FYs 2009-2012.

Contra Costa County

5) Received a presentation from staff providing a) an update on the status of the O&M Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the I-80 Integrated Corridor Mobility (ICM) and b) discussion of staff's preliminary recommendation of approval. The Board directed staff to seek additional refinements to the MOU, including: a specific provision that Contra Costa County's representative on the Policy Advisory Committee be an elected official from WCCTAC, and that construction contracts resulting from the project provide preference for hiring residents from the corridor jurisdictions, if possible. The Board also authorized staff to work with the project partners to host a public workshop on the project prior to the MOU being considered for approval by the governing bodies along the corridor, and directed staff to put the workshop on a 'fast-track' in deference to concerns raised about the timely use of State bond funds dedicated to the project.

AC Transit

BART

6) Adjourned the meeting in memory of Marvin Dyson, west County resident and advocate for transportation services for blind and other disabled persons, and George Livingston, former Mayor of Richmond.

WestCAT

Sincerely,



Christina M. Atienza
Executive Director

cc: Danice Rosenbohm, CCTA; Barbara Neustadter, TRANSPAC; John Cunningham, TRANSPLAN; Andy Dillard, SWAT



COMMISSIONERS

David Durant,
Chair

Don Tatzin,
Vice Chair

Janet Abelson

Genoveva Calloway

Jim Frazier

Federal Glover

Dave Hudson

Karen Mitchoff

Julie Pierce

Karen Stepper

Robert Taylor

Randell H. Iwasaki,
Executive Director

2999 Oak Road
Suite 100
Walnut Creek
CA 94597
PHONE: 925.256.4700
FAX: 925.256.4701
www.ccta.net

MEMORANDUM

To: Barbara Neustadter, TRANSPAC
Andy Dillard, SWAT, TVTC
John Cunningham, TRANSPLAN
Christina Atienza, WCCTAC
Richard Yee, LPMC

From:  Randell H. Iwasaki, Executive Director

Date: January 19, 2012

Re: Items approved by the Authority on January 18, 2012, for circulation to the Regional Transportation Planning Committees (RTPCs), and items of interest

At its January 18, 2012 meeting, the Authority discussed the following items, which may be of interest to the Regional Transportation Planning Committees:

1. **Final 2011 Measure C Strategic Plan.** The draft 2011 *Measure J Strategic Plan* was presented at the December Authority meeting for review and comment. Staff recommends approval of the 2011 Measure C Strategic Plan. *The Authority approved Resolution 12-02-P, adopting the 2011 Measure C Strategic Plan.*

2. **Approval to Distribute the Final Measure J Calendar Year (CY) 2010 & 2011 Growth Management Program (GMP) Compliance Checklist for Allocation of Fiscal Year (FY) 2011-12 and 2012-13 Local Street Maintenance and Improvement Funds.** Staff has prepared the final Measure J CY 2010 & 2011 GMP Checklist for release to local jurisdictions in January 2012. Jurisdictions will have until June 30, 2013 to submit the checklist, which covers payment of Measure J Local Street Maintenance and Improvement (LSM) Funds for FY 2011-12 after July 1, 2012, and subsequent-year payment on the anniversary of the first payment. *The Authority approved distribution of the CY 2010 & 2011 GMP Checklist to local jurisdictions.*

3. **Release Call for Projects for the Cycle 3 Lifeline Transportation Program (LTP).** The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) has released guidelines

for the Cycle 3 LTP. The purpose of the LTP is to fund projects that result in improved mobility for low-income residents of Contra Costa. A total of approximately \$5.5 million is expected to be available to Contra Costa through MTC from a variety of federal and State funding sources over a three year funding cycle from FY 2010-11 through FY 2012-13. The program is proposed to be conducted in a method similar to the second cycle. *The Authority authorized the release of the Contra Costa LTP Call for Projects on January 19th, approved the new proposed project ranking criteria and weighting of each criterion, and directed staff to work with the transit operators to develop a target range of funding by geographic sub-area for STA funding distribution.*

4. **Request from Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) for Program Manager Transportation Fund for Clean Air (TFCA) Support of Drayage Truck Program.** Authority Staff have reviewed a request from BAAQMD staff for CMA funding support from county 40 percent TFCA funds to offset the cost of drayage truck replacement in order to bring drayage trucks into compliance with California Air Resources Board (CARB) regulations. *The Authority directed staff to work with the Regional Transportation Planning Committees to consider funding for the drayage truck program with TFCA funds either on a sub-regional or countywide basis, and identify and consider other appropriate funding sources that could be used for the drayage truck program.*
5. **Measure J Status Update.** It is anticipated that the 86% of Measure J revenues set aside for capital projects will be encumbered under contract by 2015, well before the expiration of Measure J in 2034. Furthermore, most of Measure J marquee projects will be completed by then. Staff provided the Authority with a status update on the Measure J *Program of Projects* and initiated the discussion on potential renewal of Measure J. *As follow-up to this discussion, staff will move forward with preliminary polling, in conjunction with the private sector, aimed at determining the potential for support for a sales tax extension.*
6. **Approval of Letter to MTC Recommending Inclusion of Projects in the 2013 RTP.** MTC recently completed an analysis of major roadway and transit projects submitted by the CMAs for inclusion in the 2013 Regional Transportation Plan. The analysis indicated that certain projects which the Authority submitted to MTC in December 2011, had a high benefit/cost ratio, and were effective in reducing Greenhouse Gas emissions. When evaluated using other evaluation targets, however, such as housing, health, and open space preservation, those projects received a low score. MTC staff has requested that the CMAs make a “compelling argument” for inclusion of the low-scoring project in the 2013 RTP. *The Authority approved a letter to MTC*

making a compelling argument for inclusion of the SR 239 and Pacheco Boulevard widening projects in the 2013 RTP.

- 7. SB375/SCS Implementation Update.** *Authority staff is looking closely at three of five alternative Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) scenarios evaluated by MTC/ABAG, and believe that the constrained Options 3, 4, and 5 have a reasonable forecast for the Bay Area as a whole and for Contra Costa. Staff is looking at the distribution of land-use among these three alternatives, and the Authority's website now features tools which allow for use in comparing each of the three alternatives against a base case of current regional plans. A series of presentations to the Regional Transportation Planning Committees has also been planned. To access the SCS land use information go to: <http://www.ccta.net/EN/main/planning/370/landuse.html>*

ITEM 5

ACCEPT RECENT NEWS ARTICLES

Planners want to direct Bay Area residents to live in existing communities to cut back on greenhouse gas emissions

By Lisa Vorderbrueggen
Contra Costa Times

Posted: 01/26/2012 06:28:49 PM PST

Updated: 01/26/2012 09:22:12 PM PST

CONCORD -- A Bay Area plan for where to build new houses, shops and offices in a way that helps cut greenhouse gases relies on increased population concentrations some communities may reject, a state homebuilding industry representative told Contra Costa business and political leaders Thursday.

"My concern is that we are way down the road in this process, but not a lot has been explained to the public," California Building Industry Association attorney Paul Campos said. "There is a near-poetic discussion of the scenarios but a studious avoidance of the word 'density.' "

One Bay Area calls for directing a majority of the 1.5 million new people expected to live in the region by 2040 into existing communities, where they can live closer to jobs, shopping and transit.

Planners say the shift will cut automobile trips, one of the chief sources of dangerous climate change emissions.

About a year from completion, the plan is required under legislation passed after California in 2006 adopted AB32, which mandates the state cut greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 to 1990 levels.

The regional agencies leading One Bay Area -- the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and the Association of Bay Area Governments -- rely on what Campos characterized as "aggressive" hikes in population concentrations, or densities, that average 20 percent but double in some cities.

"If anyone thinks Palo Alto will accept a 100 percent increase in density

then do I have a deal for you," Campos said, speaking to several hundred political, business and community leaders at the Contra Costa Council's annual Contra Costa USA conference.

Metropolitan Transportation Commissioner and Orinda Councilwoman Amy Worth cautioned against overreaction, comparing the regional effort with Contra Costa's exercise of about a decade ago called "Shaping Our Future."

It was an often-contentious planning effort in which the county and its 19 cities settled on broad concepts about where to accommodate new houses, shops and offices in a way that preserved open spaces and encouraged the use of public transit.

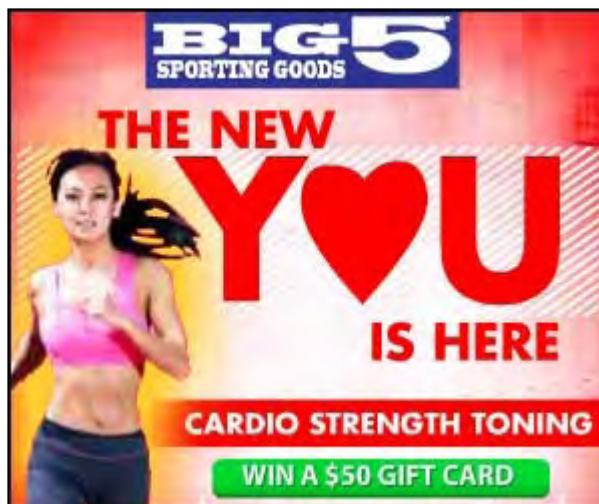
"One Bay Area is a merger of each of the nine Bay Area counties' versions of Shaping Our Future, and they reflect the consensus reached in each community," Worth said. "No community will be forced to build anything its residents don't want."

Compliance with One Bay Area is voluntary.

But the purpose of these "sustainable community strategies" is to direct billions of dollars in transportation investments into communities that meet regional goals.

A city may reject the regional vision, but roads and transit money could go elsewhere. In the meantime, a city must still show how it will meet mandatory greenhouse gas emission cutbacks.

Contact Lisa Vorderbrueggen at 925-945-4773,

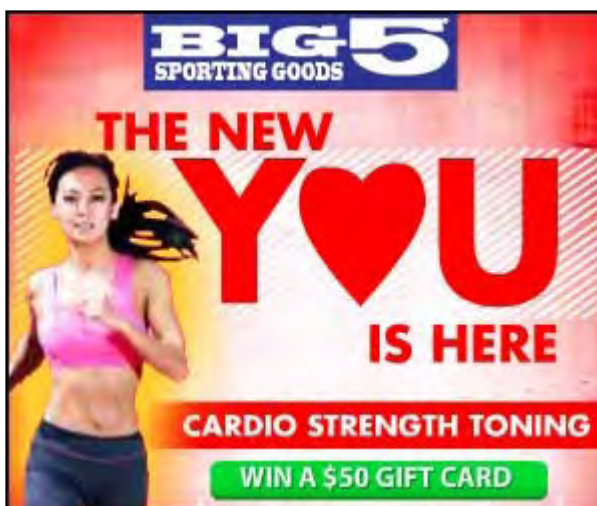


Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

lvorderbrueggen@bayareanewsgroup.com, www.
ibabuzz.com/politics or at Twitter.
com/lvorderbrueggen.

ONLINE

Read about One Bay Area at www.onebayarea.org.



Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

Commuters are leaving mass transit for their cars, and they have their reasons

By Mike Rosenbergs
Bay Area News Group

Posted: 01/09/2010 10:21:38 PM PST

Updated: 01/10/2010 12:41:41 PM PST

The great debate for middle-class commuters — to drive or take transit — is now a no-brainer for many who are finding it cheaper and faster to take their cars.

The recession has changed the way commuters think. Gas prices are down and transit fares are up; freeway traffic is looser, while transit service is less frequent.

For three years, Veronique Selgado took BART from the East Bay to her job working for an airline at San Francisco International Airport. But she recently switched to driving because BART raised fares and upped its SFO round-trip surcharge from \$3 to \$8, boosting her daily trip cost to nearly \$20.

"It's outrageous," Selgado said. "At what point do they stop raising the prices,

when it's \$50 a day to go round-trip to work? At what point does BART stand back and say, 'People can't pay that much to commute?'"

The math also stopped adding up for Castro Valley computer data analyst David Ross, 53. After BART and AC Transit raised fares, and BART started charging \$1 to park at the Castro Valley station, he and his girlfriend began paying \$14.25 each day on transportation. With gas at around \$3 per gallon — the price in California has risen lately but is still down from the peak of \$4.61 in 2008 — since October they have been paying \$14.50 to drive and park in Oakland instead.

"The time savings is worth more than any costs," said Ross, who now leaves for work with his

girlfriend each morning at

6:30 instead of 5:55.

Although transit riders often say they enjoy their commute more, ridership is dwindling by the day.

"I hate driving, I'll be honest," said 26-year-old Vicky Liaw. But after giving public transit a try, she drives anyway, from the Berryessa neighborhood of San Jose to her job in the purchasing department at Virgin America in Burlingame. She forks over \$180 to \$220 per month in gas because it simply takes her too long, about an hour and a half, to take transit to work.

The recession is not only changing the way people get around but also where they are going. Some commuters said they now try to work from home once or twice a week, or have begun looking for jobs closer to home.

Hercules resident Craig Watson, laid off from his electrical foreman position in San Francisco a year ago, decided to find a job closer to home largely to cut down on his public transportation bill. He now drives to his new job in nearby Richmond, and no longer has to spend \$400 a month on BART tickets.

"Giving up public transportation has meant a significant boost to my income. I can literally make my car payment with the savings," said Watson, a single parent who is also using the extra money to feed his

family.



Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™



hours and 15 minutes it takes him to walk from his Milpitas home to a transit station, catch a train, transfer to another train and then walk to his job as a software engineer in Sunnyvale.

So he drives instead. It takes him 10 to 15 minutes.

"I'm all for taking longer on public transit," said Mann, 40. "But that was too much — eight, nine times longer than what it would take driving. It really doesn't make any sense for me to take public transit to get to work."

Contact Mike Rosenberg at 650-348-4324.

The shift in transportation cost and convenience is also putting some commuters in tricky ethical dilemmas: Should they continue to take transit for its societal benefits, or save personal time and money by driving? Some said they felt a sense of remorse for leaving transit, but the alternative was just too enticing to pass up.

Watson, a lifelong Bay Area resident, said he took pride in taking transit to reduce pollution and congestion. "But I must say, I'm actually feeling relieved financially and emotionally to abandon public transportation," he said.

Trip time also plays a major role in commuters' decision-making process.

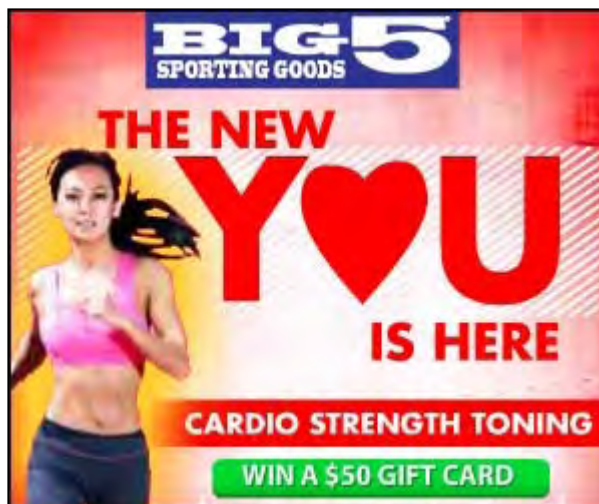
Millbrae resident Robert Smith, 63, had taken BART and Golden Gate Transit to his job in Sausalito because his employer provided transit vouchers, but eventually he threw up his hands, bought a Honda Civic and started driving.

It took him 2 1/2 hours each way by train and bus, turning his nine-hour workday into a 14-hour endeavor. Now he drives, and it takes him 45 minutes each way, which he said is well worth the extra gas and toll bridge costs.

"It just got to the point where it was too much of a hassle time-wise," Smith said. "It's just not worth it."

Many commuters agree that, if convenience and cost were equal between transit and driving, they would ditch their cars in an instant. But all too often that's not the case, now more than ever.

Rick Mann loves public transit but hates the two



Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™