Memorandum

TAB 21
REVISED

To: CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS

CTC Meeting: October 24, 2012

Reference No.: 2.2a. (1)
Action

From: BIMLA G. RHINEHART
Executive Director

Subject: **NOTICE OF PREPARATION – ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE BART TO LIVERMORE EXTENSION PROJECT**

ISSUE:

Should the Commission, as a Responsible Agency, provide comments in response to the Notice of Preparation (NOP) that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be prepared for the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) to Livermore Extension Project (Project)?

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Commission make no comments regarding the environmental issues to be addressed in the EIR. However, staff recommends that a letter be sent to the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (District) that states:

- The Commission has no comments with respect to the project's purpose and need, the alternatives to be studied, the impacts to be evaluated, and the evaluation methods used.
- The Commission recommends that the District and its partners identify and secure the necessary funding to complete the project.
- If, in the future, funds or other actions under the purview of the Commission are anticipated, notification should be provided to the Commission as a Responsible Agency.

BACKGROUND:

BART is the designated lead agency overseeing the environmental review for this project. On June 10, 2010 BART certified a Final Program Environmental Impact Report (FPEIR) for the BART to Livermore Extension (SCH No. 2008062026), analyzing 10 different alternatives. The purpose of this NOP is to gain input into the scope and environmental information that will be evaluated in the second tier, project-specific EIR for the proposed BART to Livermore Extension Project. The proposed project consists of a 4.8 mile BART extension along Interstate-580 (I-580) to a station in the vicinity of the Isabel Avenue/I-580 interchange. The project will incorporate an efficient bus-to-BART transfer, express bus services, and proposed off-site parking facilities.

In addition to the proposed project, the alternatives for consideration in the EIR include 1.) a No-Build Alternative, 2.) a Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU) Alternative, and 3.) an Express Bus Alternative. The initial study indicated that the EIR will consider impacts to land use compatibility, transportation, wetlands/biological impacts, safety considerations, air quality impacts, noise and vibration impacts, and visual impacts.

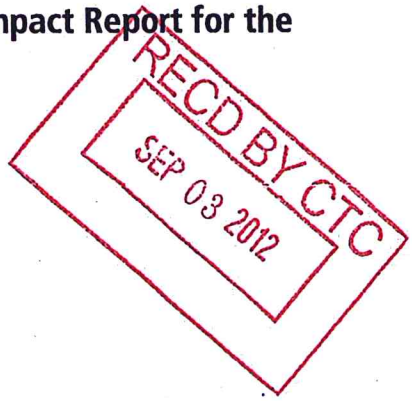
The environmental phase of the project is funded with a combination of Measure B sales tax and Highway Bridge Toll funding. Additional funding for the project is included in the Transportation Expenditure Plan for Measure B in Alameda County which is on the ballot for reauthorization and augmentation in November.

Attachment:
Notice of Preparation

BART to Livermore Extension Project
EIR Notice of Preparation

To: Interested Agencies, Organizations, and Individuals

Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the BART to Livermore Extension Project



Lead Agency: San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District
300 Lakeside Drive, 16th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

Contact Person: Marianne Payne, EIR Project Manager
San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District
Phone: 510.464.6140
Fax: 510.464.7673
Email: mpayne@bart.gov

Project Title: BART to Livermore Extension Project EIR

Project Location: Alameda County, California

SUMMARY:

The San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART), as Lead Agency, is issuing this Notice of Preparation (NOP) to advise other agencies and the public that it will be preparing a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the proposed BART to Livermore Extension Project (Proposed Project). The Proposed Project, which is being developed in partnership with the City of Livermore, consists of a 4.8-mile BART extension along I-580 to a station in the vicinity of the Isabel Avenue/I-580 Interchange incorporating an efficient bus-to-BART transfer; and also includes express bus services linking inter-regional rail service, Priority Development Areas (PDAs) in Livermore, CA, and proposed offsite parking facilities. The DEIR will be prepared in accordance with the guidelines implementing the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The purpose of this NOP is to alert agencies and interested parties regarding the plan to prepare the DEIR, to provide information on the Proposed Project and alternatives, to invite participation in the EIR process, including comments on the scope of the DEIR, and to announce that a public scoping meeting will be conducted.

DATES:

Comments Due Date: Written comments on the scope of the DEIR, including significant environmental issues, reasonable alternatives, and mitigation measures to be considered, should be sent to Marianne Payne, EIR Project Manager, at the address below by Monday, October 1, 2012.

SCOPING MEETING:

A scoping meeting to receive verbal and written comments will be held on Wednesday, September 19, 2012 at the Robert Livermore Community Center, which is located at 4444 East Avenue, Livermore CA, 94550. An informal open house will be held at 6 p.m. followed by the meeting and comments at 7 p.m. If you need language assistance services, please call 510-464-6752. Please call at least 72 hours prior to the date of the meeting.

ADDRESSES:

Written comments on this NOP should be sent to Marianne Payne, EIR Project Manager, BART, 300 Lakeside Drive, 16th Floor, Oakland, CA 94612 or faxed to 510-464-7673 Attention: Marianne Payne. Comments also may be emailed to mpayne@bart.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

For further information contact Marianne Payne (contact information above) or visit the project website at www.bart.gov/livermore.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Proposed Project

In June, 2010, BART certified a Final Program Environmental Impact Report (FPEIR) for the BART to Livermore Extension (SCH No. 2008062026), analyzing ten alternatives that provided different combinations of alignment, station and maintenance facility locations. The DEIR for the proposed BART to Livermore Extension Project will be a second tier, project-level EIR following the FPEIR. The Proposed Project is a 4.8-mile extension of the BART line from the existing Dublin/Pleasanton Station within the I-580 Corridor freeway median to a new station in the vicinity of the I-580/Isabel Avenue Interchange incorporating an efficient bus-to-BART transfer. A network of express bus services linking inter-regional rail service, Priority Development Areas in Livermore, and proposed offsite parking facilities are also part of the Proposed Project. Express bus routes are tentative and a variety of routes may be evaluated during the scoping and EIR process.

Goals and Objectives

The primary goal of the BART to Livermore Extension Project is to provide an affordable and effective inter-regional and inter-modal link of the existing BART system to inter-regional rail service and Livermore Priority Development Areas. This connection was identified as an important inter-regional link in the San Francisco Bay Area Regional Rail Plan (2007), and regional and inter-regional congestion in this corridor continues to grow. In addition, the Proposed Project is intended to support regional goals of integrating transit and land use policies to create opportunities for transit-oriented development around the proposed I-580/Isabel Avenue BART station, as well as around the inter-regional rail station and the express bus satellite transit nodes in Priority Development Areas in Livermore. The Proposed Project also is intended to alleviate traffic congestion on I-580, improve air quality, and reduce greenhouse gases and other emissions associated with automobile use.

Proposed Project and Alternatives

The Proposed Project and preliminary draft alternatives that may be evaluated in this EIR are listed below. More precise definitions of alternatives, or additional alternatives, may be identified through the EIR scoping process and during preparation of the Draft EIR. In addition to the Proposed Project, the project alternatives currently under consideration include a No Build alternative, a Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU) alternative, and an Express Bus alternative. The Proposed Project, as well as the DMU and Express Bus alternatives, will include tail tracks and maintenance facilities as needed for effective operations.

- **Proposed Project** – A 4.8-mile BART extension along I-580 to a station at the Isabel Avenue/I-580 Interchange incorporating an efficient bus-to-BART transfer, with a network of express bus services linking inter-regional rail, Priority Development Areas in Livermore, and proposed offsite parking facilities. Limited parking also would be provided at the I-580/Isabel Avenue BART station.

- **No Build Alternative** – The No Build Alternative assumes that the proposed project is not constructed. Limited low cost improvements currently planned and funded for the existing intermodal connections may be included.

- **Express Bus Alternative** - This alternative would not include the extension of BART from the existing Dublin/Pleasanton BART Station, but would include Express Bus service to the Dublin/Pleasanton Station with improvements that would provide for more seamless intermodal transfers to the BART system, such as potential improvements to bus access and operations. Transit access could occur using reserved lanes, express bus service, and direct ramps at the Dublin/Pleasanton Station to link with inter-regional rail and Priority Development Areas in Livermore.

- **DMU Alternative** – Using a DMU technology, this alternative would extend from the existing Dublin/Pleasanton BART Station along the Interstate 580 corridor to a Bus-to-DMU transfer station in the vicinity of the Interstate 580/Isabel Avenue Interchange. Limited parking would be provided at this station. A network of express bus service linking inter-regional rail and Priority Development Areas in Livermore would also be included.

Scope of Environmental Analysis

The DEIR for the BART to Livermore Extension Project will be prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as amended. In general, the purpose of the DEIR is to:

- Analyze the potential environmental effects of the Proposed Project.
- Inform decision-makers, responsible and trustee agencies, and members of the public as to the environmental impacts of the Proposed Project;
- Recommend a set of mitigation measures to avoid or reduce any significant adverse impacts; and
- Analyze a range of reasonable alternatives to the Proposed Project.

Potential environmental effects identified for analysis in the DEIR include:

- Transportation
- Air Quality
- Land Use, Housing, and Physical Displacement
- Public Services
- Energy
- Greenhouse Gases and Climate Change
- Noise
- Geology and Seismicity
- Hazardous Materials
- Water Resources
- Biological Resources
- Visual Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Public Utilities
- Growth-Inducing Impacts

More specifically, some of the areas of the EIR will consider:

- Land Use Compatibility – What conflicts might be expected with respect to existing land uses in the station areas? What potential displacements might occur?
- Transportation – What effects would there be on local circulation, access, transit system ridership, operations, connectivity and parking?
- Wetlands/Biological Impacts – Would there be direct and indirect disturbance to sensitive areas such as wetlands, creeks, and undisturbed grassland, or to sensitive species in such habitats?
- Safety Considerations – Would changes to the Livermore Airport safety zones have implications for the project?
- Air Quality Impacts – What are the effects of air emissions from transit system construction and operation? What air quality benefits could accrue on the local, regional and global (climate change) levels from providing a transit alternative to the automobile?
- Noise and Vibration Impacts – What are the local effects on sensitive receptors along the alignment and near station areas?
- Visual Impacts – Would the transit improvements affect adjacent visual resources, including the City of Livermore's scenic corridor? Are there height and/or scale compatibility concerns between the improvements and adjoining development patterns?

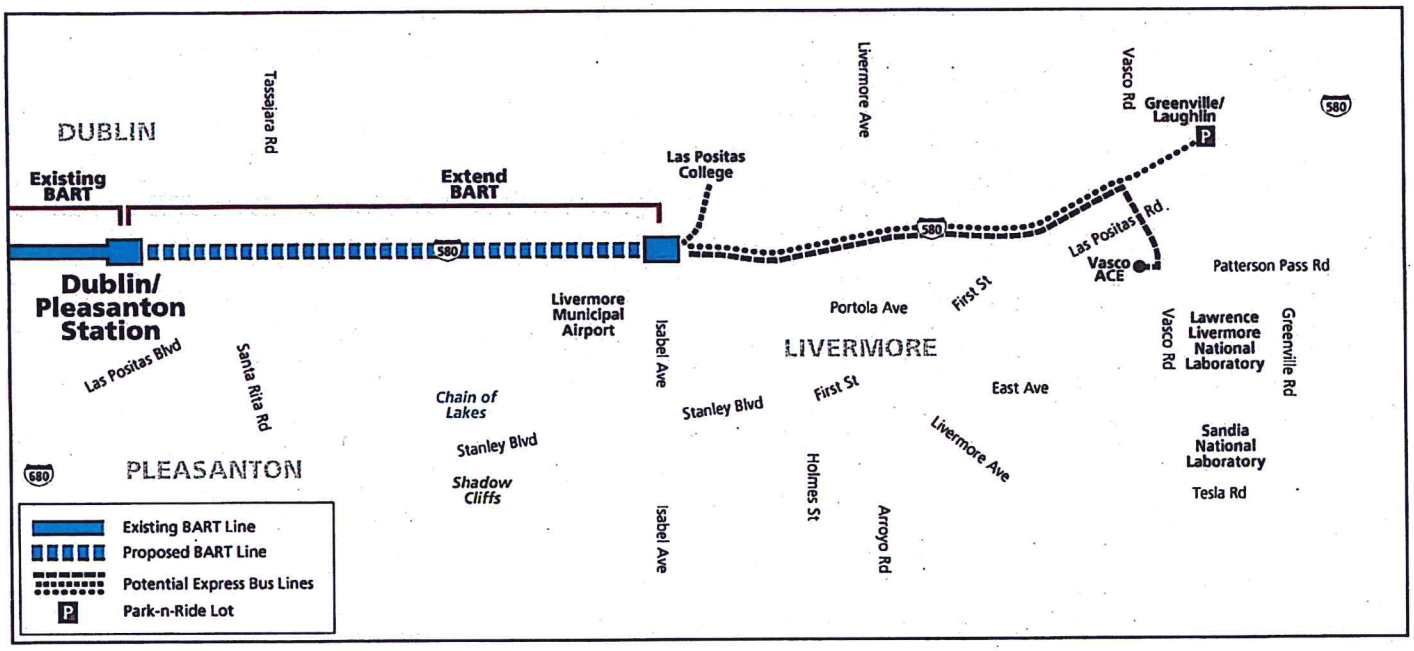
Public Involvement Program

A comprehensive public involvement program will be an integral component of the DEIR preparation process. This program will include a public scoping process, including a public scoping meeting and outreach to local and regional officials and community and civic groups. A public review/comment period and a public hearing will be held on the DEIR following its publication. All comments will be given serious consideration. BART will post project updates on the project web site (www.bart.gov/livermore).

Marianne Payne — 8/23/12

Marianne Payne
EIR Project Manager

Date


DUBLIN
Tassajara Rd
Existing BART
Extend BART
Las Positas College
Livermore Ave
Vasco Rd
Greenville/ Laughlin
580
Dublin/ Pleasanton Station
Las Positas Blvd
Santa Rita Rd
Livermore Municipal Airport
Isabel Ave
Portola Ave
First St
LIVERMORE
Las Positas Rd
Vasco ACE
Patterson Pass Rd
Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory
Greenville Rd
Chain of Lakes
Stanley Blvd
East Ave
Sandia National Laboratory
Tesla Rd
Holmes St
Arroyo Rd
680
PLEASANTON
Shadow Cliffs
Existing BART Line
Proposed BART Line
Potential Express Bus Lines
Park-n-Ride Lot