

South Bay Cities Council of Governments

February 8, 2016

TO: SBCCOG Steering Committee

FROM: Steve Lantz, SBCCOG Transportation Director

RE: SBCCOG Transportation Update – February, 2016

Adherence to Strategic Plan:

Goal A: Environment, Transportation and Economic Development. Facilitate, implement and/or educate members and others about environmental, transportation and economic development programs that benefit the South Bay.

FEDERAL

Feds To Invest \$4 Billion and Start Regulating Self-Driving Cars

In his January 12th State of the Union Address, President Obama announced a \$4 billion federal investment over the next 10 years to test autonomous vehicles and get them ready for the market. Two days later at the Detroit Auto Show, Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx announced that federal regulators would begin to develop national safety regulations for autonomous vehicles. DOT said it would work with the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators and state officials to complete the rules within six months.

The department is providing guidelines and sharing best practices, but actual policy on autonomous cars will be up to each state since there are no federal driver laws. However, consistent with the federal role, the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration will develop performance standards for self-driving cars. The goal of the federal initiative is to standardize the emerging patchwork of state regulations by providing model national policy guidance to address issues in both the testing and the wider operational deployment of vehicles at advanced stages of automation.

The prospect of self-driving cars raises hopes for significant decrease in accidents, better utilization of scarce roadway space for pedestrians and bike lanes, the re-use of vast parking lots which would no longer be needed, and the opportunity to implement autonomous freight deliveries at night. However, the new paradigm also raises a host of questions ranging from liability in the event of a crash to the potential for shared autonomous vehicles to encourage sprawl.

Some advocates view the technological change as a way for local jurisdictions to re-design streets and the federal/state governments to incentivize shared-use autonomous vehicles. Others fear the emergence of shared-use vehicles and the transportation-as-a-service model will significantly reduce the current volume of local automobile sales which are a core local revenue source in many cities.

The \$4 billion investment is about what Obama earmarked last June for clean energy tech investments to develop major advances in solar photovoltaics, wind power, advanced batteries, energy-efficient lighting, and fuel cells. And like the Clean Power Plan, the money is being

allocated to public, private and academic pilot programs all over the US. These pilot programs can start to test autonomous cars in new situations: winter weather, denser cities, trucking, and even for public transit (think self-driving buses).

Bikeshare Transit Act Would Provide Categorical Access To Federal Funds

Despite the fact that many bike-share projects have received federal funding for start-up expenses, the U.S. Department of Transportation does not officially recognize bike-share as transit.

Representatives Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) and Vern Buchanan (R-FL) on January 7th introduced their Bikeshare Transit Act (HR 4343) to codify bikeshare as transit in federal transportation law which would make it easier for cities and towns to access federal funding to pay for bikeshare facilities construction and equipment purchases. Bikeshare systems would be eligible to receive funding to enhance related public transportation service or transit facilities. Bikeshare projects would be included as eligible expenditures under the federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program and the Transportation Alternatives Program.

The legislation would make it clear that cities are allowed to use the money to support bikeshare programs, though they would not be required to implement them. Having Bikeshare recognized in federal law may not happen overnight. Congress worked for six years to have complete streets included in the FAST Act, the federal five-year transportation funding bill enacted last month.

STATE

Governor's Proposed 2016-17 Budget Includes \$3.6 Billion for Transportation

Governor Jerry Brown released his proposed \$170 billion 2016-17 state budget on January 7th. His proposal includes \$3.6 billion in transportation projects and several proposed revenue increases.

One-half of the funding (\$1.8 billion) would go to cities and counties for street maintenance, complete street projects, public transit and state-local partnership funding projects. Of this amount, \$1.01 billion would be allocated by formula for local streets and roads maintenance, \$523 million of which will go to cities each year based on population. An additional \$100 million would be set aside for a complete streets competitive grant program.

The revenue package required to fund the proposal relies on adjusting the variable gas tax to reflect historical averages, indexing the entire gas tax for inflation, and generating \$2 billion from a \$65 per-vehicle highway user fee. Additional funding would come from \$500 million in Cap-and-Trade revenues, \$500 million from an 11-cent increase in the diesel tax indexed for inflation, and a \$10 increase to the vehicle registration fee.

The Governor also proposes obtaining \$100 million in Caltrans efficiencies and speeding up repayment of \$879 million in transportation-related loans from special funds, including repaying \$148 million to the Traffic Congestion Relief Program.

California Transportation Commission Slashes State Highway And Transit Funding; Governor State of the State Speech Calls for New Taxes to Fund Roads

Faced with plummeting gasoline tax revenue and a reluctance by state legislators to increase transportation funding, the California Transportation Commission announced plans on January 21st to cut funding for road and transit projects by \$754 million over the next five years, a 38% decrease which is the greatest reduction in two decades. Because of the funding cut, the state for the first time in a decade asked counties to terminate some of the 200-plus projects previously offered state funding. Past cuts have resulted only in projects being delayed.

Caltrans is attempting to figure out how to make up for fuel taxes being less viable as a primary funding source as electric vehicles and more fuel-efficient vehicles become more prevalent. The state has seen the price-based portion of the gas tax fall to 12 cents per gallon last year and it's expected to fall another 2 cents this year. Caltrans said \$140 million is slashed from the annual transportation budget with every penny that the gas tax revenue falls.

Local agencies, including the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, have until February to come up with a list of projects to be deleted or delayed. The transportation commission allocates money raised through the state gasoline excise tax to counties for inter-city rail, state highway improvements and county transit projects.

Governor Jerry Brown used his January 21st State of the State address to call on the Legislature to complete its Transportation Special Session by enacting new taxes and fees for transportation projects. He noted the state has \$60 billion in deferred road, highway and bridge maintenance, with one in four local streets expected to be in a "failed" condition by 2022.

State Releases Proposed Rules to Replace LOS With VMT in Environmental Law

The State of California released its anticipated final draft set of changes to the state's environmental law, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) on January 22nd. The new rule replaces the traditional measure of roadway congestion, Level of Service (LOS) with a measurement of Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT).

Under the new CEQA rule, environmental studies will use measurements that better correspond to actual environmental costs and benefits to enable a more balanced set of mobility options including driving transit, walking and bicycling. The proposed regulations were authorized by the SB 743 in 2013. The release marks the beginning of a 45-day initial public comment period before finalizing the proposal Public comment ending on February 29th at 5 p.m. If formally adopted, the regulations would be effective statewide in 2019.

New Caltrans Design Bulletin OKs Protected Bike Lanes Throughout California

Meeting its statutory deadline, Caltrans issued its "Class IV Bikeway Guidance" on December 31st. The "design bulletin," a supplement to the state's official Highway Design Manual, defines various types of protected bikeways, provides examples, and refers to existing publications (including federal guidance) for specific standards. It was prepared in response to the Protected Bikeways Act of 2014, a law that mandated Caltrans create an official category of protected bike lanes and write guidance for planners and engineers to build them.

Caltrans engineers relied on new federal guidance as well as other publications including the Massachusetts Separated Bike Lane Planning & Design Guide and NACTO's Urban Bikeway Design Guide. The agency coordinated the federal guidance with California laws and regulations. The guidelines are permissive, rather than restrictive to encourage local and state engineers to use their own informed judgement when making decisions on local streets and state highways.

REGION

LA City And Disabled File \$1.4 Billion, 30-Year Tentative Agreement For Sidewalk Repairs

Court filings submitted on January 12th reveal details about a precedent-setting legal tentative agreement to settle a class action lawsuit over L.A.'s failure to make the public pedestrian right-of-way accessible to disabled people. The proposed settlement (Willits v. City of Los Angeles),

requires the City of Los Angeles to expend in excess of \$1.367 billion over 30 years to make its public sidewalk and crosswalk system accessible to persons with mobility disabilities. It will require the city to install, repair, and upgrade curb ramps; repair sidewalks and walkways damaged by tree roots; repair broken or uneven pavement; correct non-compliant cross-slopes in sidewalks; install tree gates and missing utility covers; and remediate other inaccessible conditions.

The proposed Settlement will also permit Class Members to submit requests for access repairs such as curb ramp installations and tree root fixes at specific locations, which the City will use its best efforts to remediate within 120 days of receiving the request. In addition, the proposed Settlement calls for the hiring of an ADA Coordinator for the Pedestrian Right of Way, and includes effective reporting, monitoring and dispute resolution mechanisms.

The city's initial commitment will be \$31 million annually for five years, gradually ramping up to \$63 million annually during the final five years.

Gerald Desmond Bridge Replacement Requires 3-Year Detour Near Long Beach

Motorists traveling from San Pedro or Terminal Island to downtown Long Beach via the Gerald Desmond Bridge were detoured beginning January 19th. A section of eastbound Ocean Boulevard has been closed between the bridge and the entrance to downtown to make way for a new bridge column. Drivers must exit Ocean onto Pico Boulevard to a set of two traffic signals before returning to Ocean Boulevard. No trucks are allowed back onto Ocean. Westbound traffic — to San Pedro — will be shifted to the eastbound lanes of Ocean Boulevard in that stretch of street.

That should be the traffic pattern until the westbound traffic moves to the new bridge some time in 2018. Westbound traffic will go over the new bridge a few months before the eastbound lanes are complete.

The new cable-stayed bridge will replace the iconic Gerald Desmond Bridge, which was completed in 1968. The new bridge will have three lanes in each direction plus 10-foot shoulders and a bike lane, and will be 205 feet above the water, allowing the new mega-ships to pass underneath to reach the inner harbor.

General Motors Invests \$500 million In Lyft

General Motors Co. and ride-hailing company Lyft Inc. announced on January 4th they are forming an unprecedented partnership to better compete in the self-driving future. In exchange for a \$500 million investment, GM gets a seat on Lyft's board and access to the three-year-old company's software, which matches riders with drivers and automates payments. GM also becomes a preferred vehicle provider for Lyft and the partnership will provide GM a car-sharing platform on which it can compete with Daimler AG and Ford Motor Co., who are developing their own ride-sharing services.

Together, the companies plan to open a network of U.S. hubs where Lyft drivers can rent GM vehicles. That could expand Lyft's business by giving people who don't own cars a way to drive and earn money through Lyft. Longer term, GM and Lyft will work together to develop a fleet of autonomous vehicles that city dwellers could summon using Lyft's mobile app. Partnering with GM could help Lyft compete with its rival, Uber Technologies Inc., which is working on its own driverless cars.

Inglewood Obtains Metro Approval for "Metro Line to Goal Line" Feasibility Study

Metro's Board of Directors approved at its January 26th meeting a new rail transit feasibility study and EIR to document how to connect Inglewood's 298-acre project site to the Crenshaw-LAX and /

or the Green Line. Although plans for the full re-development of the site aren't final, entitlements for the former Hollywood Park racetrack site that will include an NFL Stadium for the Rams and perhaps another NFL team, would allow nearly 2,500 residential units, 890,000 square feet of shops and restaurants, 780,000 square feet of office space, a 300-key hotel and 25 acres of public parks and open space.

The Metro Board also agreed to form a Metro Line to Goal Line task force to investigate ways to encourage football fans to take mass transit when the Rams begin playing in the Southland at the LA Coliseum this fall and improving transit links to the Inglewood Stadium which is expected to open for the 2019 National Football League season.

Los Angeles City Introduces Go LA – A One-Stop Integrated Mobile Trip Planning App

The City of Los Angeles premiered its new Go LA trip planning app on January 27th. Developed in partnership with Xerox, the pilot software program integrates public transportation options, like buses and bikesharing, with private transportation options such as Zipcar and Lyft. The app takes an individual's destination and desired arrival time, and calculates the different routes available, categorized by "sooner," "cheaper," and "greener."

The app aggregates and calculates the time, cost, carbon footprint, and health benefits from walking, biking, driving your own car, parking, taking public transit, as well as the emerging private transportation options – such as Lyft, Zipcar, FlitWays and Uber –allowing users to easily compare a variety of ways to reach their destination. As the app learns more about its user's individual travel preferences, it will eventually recommend and highlight personalized commuting options. Customers can also save trips they take often, like from home to work, in their "My Rides" area of the app.

Beyond the seamless travel experience for users, Go LA will help the city glean important information they can use to advance their transportation systems. The destination and preferred travel mode data is anonymously shared with the city to deliver insights on how people travel around the region. The information can inform planners and public works staff where to improve infrastructure for people who walk, roll, bike, take transit, and drive.

Future versions of the smart phone app will integrate booking and payments. In addition, a ridesharing function and destination parking information are being planned and users will also be able to create a profile where they can set and track goals related to their personal fitness, cost, and time. The Go LA app is available for iOS and Android systems in the Apple and Google Play stores at: www.golaapp.com.

France to pave 620 miles of road with solar panels

The French government intends to pave 1,000km (620 miles) of road with photovoltaic panels in the next five years. If successful, the 1,000 meter project could furnish 5 million people, or about 8% of the French population, with all of their electricity needs other than heating. The 7 millimeter thick panels will be glued to the roadway and have been tested to be skid-resistant and not damaged by heavy vehicles. Funding for the project is coming from fuel taxes. Tests on the panels will begin in the spring.