

**MINUTES**  
**MONDAY, APRIL 21, 2014**  
**SARATOGA CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING**  
**STATE ROUTE 85 EXPRESS LANES PROJECT WORKSHOP**

Mayor Lo called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m. in the Joan Pisani Community Center Multipurpose Room at 19655 Allendale Avenue.

**ROLL CALL**

PRESENT Mayor Emily Lo, Vice Mayor Howard Miller, Council Members  
Manny Cappello, Chuck Page, Jill Hunter  
ABSENT: None  
ALSO PRESENT: James Lindsay, Community Development Director  
John Cherbone, Public Works Director  
Crystal Bothelio, City Clerk

**ORAL COMMUNICATIONS ON NON-AGENDIZED ITEMS**

None

**COUNCIL DIRECTION TO STAFF**

None

1. State Route 85 Express Lanes Project Workshop

**Recommended Action:**

Conduct public workshop on the State Route 85 Express Lanes Project.

Mayor Lo provided opening remarks and invited Community Development Director James Lindsay to lead the meeting.

Community Development Director James Lindsay gave an overview of the State Route 85 Express Lanes Project, described the meeting process, and addressed questions from the audience. He explained that the meeting would be conducted in a workshop format with an emphasis on small group discussions at the tables. He also noted that the City Council would be acting as observers during the meeting, to allow the meeting to focus on the concerns and thoughts of the meeting participants. He then asked the meeting attendees to discuss concerns about the project among their table groups.

At the end of the small group discussions, a representative from each table reported concerns identified at their tables. The meeting scribe, City Clerk Crystal Bothelio, recorded these concerns on flipcharts.

Reported Concerns:

- 1) Choke points - project will increase traffic at these locations along State Route 85

- 2) Access to carpool/HOV lanes - retain current access to carpool/HOV lanes, proposed location of HOT entrances/exits will result in loss of access \*
- 3) Noise of existing roadway surface
- 4) Light rail - project may prohibit light rail, fear possibility of light rail will be lost
- 5) Adequacy of noise, environmental, traffic on surface streets (including impact of HOT entrances and choke points on traffic/surface streets) is lacking
- 6) Short-term solution
- 7) Enforcement of agreements by West Valley cities – prohibition of large trucks on 85 and all elements of the agreements \*
- 8) Lack of voice/representation
- 9) Upholding agreements and who determines if agreements are upheld
- 10) Follow through on original EIR mitigations \*
- 11) Request full EIR analysis on the project, including analysis of pollution \*
- 12) Council representation/support \*
- 13) Inequity of the HOT lanes – wealthy can use, poor may not be able to afford to use it
- 14) West Valley cities should retain legal counsel to define rights and legal position \*
- 15) Why was the second HOT lane a surprise?
- 16) Saratoga gets all the impacts, none of the benefits
- 17) Group consensus at the meeting: opposed to the project
- 18) 237 HOT lane impact on local roads
- 19) Light rail and bus need to be analyzed as an alternative for “mass transit” \*
- 20) No negotiation against ourselves \*
- 21) Impacts to homes – light, noise, and air quality
- 22) Use of Union Pacific line for light rail \*
- 23) Project will not resolve congestion
- 24) HOT lanes do not encourage carpooling
- 25) Growing population will result in an increased need for public transit
- 26) Alignment of housing and mass transit \*
- 27) General lack of awareness of the project, including 2 HOT lanes
- 28) Existing pollution impacts, including dust and oil
- 29) Carbon footprint analysis of the project should be done \*
- 30) Existing vibration
- 31) How to prevent future agreement violations, since the existing agreements/conditions are already being violated (noise, landscaping, design).  
Hard to trust new agreements/conditions will be honored. \*
- 32) Up to 10 lanes in some areas
- 33) Project will be obsolete 6 years after projected completion
- 34) Council should request an EIR
- 35) Structure of VTA Board/governance
- 36) Revenue oriented project
- 37) Residents should be surveyed

*\* Possible solutions/strategies identified during issue/concern identification*

After concerns were reported, Community Development Director James Lindsay announced a short break.

After the break, Community Development Director James Lindsay asked the meeting participants to return to their table and invited the small groups to identify possible solutions and strategies to address the concerns that had been identified.

Representatives from each table reported the solutions and strategies identified by their group. These solutions and strategies were captured by the scribe and are noted below.

Solutions/Strategies Identified:

- 1) Find out if agreements can be enforced, then enforce (if enforceable)
- 2) Act as team of West Valley cities, take regional approach
- 3) Focus on/solve the real problem – alternatives to congestion relief, such as light rail
- 4) Sue if agreements are violated
- 5) Annually review the agreements
- 6) More community involvement with VTA Board, establish Saratoga voice at VTA Board meetings
- 7) Council vote to request/require EIR
- 8) Council vote to oppose the project
- 9) Mail notice citywide on the project
- 10) No additional lanes north of State Route 17, resolve choke points first
- 11) Rubber asphalt overlay to reduce existing road noise
- 12) Landscaping to reduce existing noise
- 13) Enforce local noise regulations on State Route 85
- 14) Study/analysis of successful public transportation
- 15) No extra lane
- 16) Keep carpool/HOV access
- 17) Establish long-range plan for light rail
- 18) Engage politicians at State level
- 19) Engage environmental groups
- 20) Outreach to West San Jose
- 21) No concrete median barrier
- 22) Additional noise mitigation/noise barriers and sound absorbing material for existing noise
- 23) Light rail on 85 and connect to other transit systems/corridors, including Mountain View to State Route 87
- 24) No tolls
- 25) Meet standards of old EIS/EIR
- 26) Regional planning, more inclusion
- 27) Inform VTA: Saratoga will not endorse bond measure for project if agreements are not honored
- 28) Give informational report/update on the project at every Council meeting
- 29) Obtain legal opinion on the agreements, perhaps from a retired judge

- 30) Categorize strategies/solutions identified at meeting into options that delay the project vs. defeat the project
- 31) Ask VTA to solve the congestion issue
- 32) File lawsuit demanding full EIR and enforcement of the agreements
- 33) Increase staff accountability on VTA Board
- 34) Work with VTA Citizen Advisory Board

In addition to the concerns and strategies/solutions, staff at the meeting also noted questions and items for follow up. These items are below.

Questions/Follow Up:

- 1) Obtain/distribute schedule of VTA meetings (date and times), including a link to the VTA board meeting information
- 2) What is the source for matching funds required for the project?

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Lo adjourned the special meeting at 9:40 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted:

Crystal Bothelio, City Clerk