

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: Final Draft BART to Livermore DEIR Comments
FROM: Christy Wegener, Director of Planning and Operations
DATE: September 25, 2017

Action Requested

Receive an update of the Agency's BART to Livermore DEIR comments.

Background

BART recently released its BART to Livermore Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) and is soliciting comments by October 16, 2017. The DEIR is evaluating four alternatives for the BART to Livermore Project: 1) A full BART extension to Isabel; 2) A diesel or electric multiple unit (DMU/EMU) extension to Isabel; 3) Express-bus service to Dublin/Pleasanton BART; and 4) Enhanced-bus service to Dublin/Pleasanton BART.

BART staff gave a presentation about the DEIR to the LAVTA Board on September 11, 2017. At that meeting, the Board provided some feedback on the DEIR, and directed staff to collect comments on the DEIR from the three Tri-Valley cities and the Tri-Valley San Joaquin Valley Regional Rail Working Group. The Board directed staff to come back to the September Projects and Services Committee with updated comments for review and discussion.

Discussion

During the September 11th BART to Livermore DEIR presentation, the Board provided the following comments/feedback:

- The cost of the DMU/EMU option from Dublin/Pleasanton to Isabel (\$1.6B+) seems excessively high. Other projections for DMU/EMU cost peg an extension from Dublin/Pleasanton to Tracy at \$1.6B. There may be other engineering schematics that could make the DMU/EMU a more affordable option. There were concerns with right-of-way needed for the DMU/EMU.
- ACE ridership is projected to decrease as a result of the full BART alternative, as well as the DMU/EMU option. However, it wasn't clear if the modeling took into account the ACE Forward plans for the 99-corridor, and the increased ridership expected as a result.
- There was concern about the need for a shop and whether the cost (25%) was appropriate for allocation to the BART to Livermore project. The Board commented about the comparison between the shop requirements for the BART to Silicon Valley project, and other BART extensions.

- There was concern about the projected growth in BART ridership from the Central Valley, and those riders not having paid into the BART system.
- There was concern that the parking identified for the BART station would not be sufficient for the ridership, and that if the parking lot is oversubscribed, there would be an impact on the adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- The local traffic conditions projected as a result of the full BART extension show an increase in the traffic on local Livermore streets, and an alleviation of traffic on I-580 west of the Isabel station. However, these local traffic conditions are currently present. Did the BART to Livermore DEIR take into account other roadway projects designed to address local gridlock, for example, the SR-84 widening?

At the time this staff report was due (September 20th), comments had only been received from the City of Dublin. Highlights of comments received from Dublin include:

- The City cited concerns about the travel demand model assumptions for 2025 and 2040 concerning the new parking garage at Dublin/Pleasanton, as well as the land-use changes with the Isabel Neighborhood Plan. The City noted some potentially incorrect assumptions about the travel demand model utilized for the projections, including the traffic network assumptions, travel time for transferring in the EMU/DMU and Express Bus alternatives, and bicycle/pedestrian access. The City sought clarification on which projects were used for the Cumulative Conditions in 2025 and 2040, and whether any land-use changes were assumed. The City also questioned the park-and-ride mode share at Dublin/Pleasanton with the no Project and full BART alternative. The City questioned the smaller VMT reduction for both the full Project and the DMU/EMU alternatives, and requested a more detailed explanation of how the VMT was calculated and what percentage of new BART riders were coming from the Central Valley. The City made note of some errors in the document (tables 3.B-32 to 3.B-35, 3.B-40, 3.B-43). Finally, the City had major concerns with the Right-Of-Way needed for all alternatives.

Next Steps

Once comments are received from the City of Livermore, the City of Pleasanton, the Working Group, as well as from the Committee and LAVTA Board, staff will finalize the letter.

Recommendation

None – Information only.

Attachment

1 – Draft BART to Livermore DEIR Comment Letter

October 2, 2017

Bay Area Rapid Transit District
Attention: BART to Livermore Extension Project
300 Lakeside, 21st Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Mr. Tang:

Thank you for providing LAVTA with the opportunity to provide comments on the BART to Livermore Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR). Our staff have reviewed the document thoroughly and offer the following comments:

- 1) According to the DEIR, the full BART extension to Isabel would require both a yard to store trains and a shop to maintain train cars. The yard would be constructed to hold 172 train cars (although only 36 train cards are needed to operate the Isabel extension), and the shop would be constructed to include 10 service bays (although only 2 are needed to support the Isabel extension). The justification for the size of both facilities is that the space would be needed eventually when the system shifts to 12-minute headways and 10-car trains by 2040. BART has assigned 25% of the cost of the new shop to the BART to Livermore project as only 2 of the 10 service bays would be used to directly support the Blue Line trains; however, 100% of the cost of the yard is allocated to the full BART to Livermore scenario even though only 20.9% of the capacity is needed to store trains for the Isabel extension service.

The yard will not just benefit the Livermore riders; it is a core upgrade for BART and the cost should be spread across the system accordingly. Therefore, the full cost of the yard should not be carried by this BART to Livermore project; LAVTA recommends assigning 20.9% of the cost of the yard to the project.

Also, the shop cost should be reallocated at 20%, instead of the 25% in the DEIR. BART staff should look at the shop requirements placed on all other BART extensions (existing and underway) to ensure equity with the BART to Livermore analysis.

- 2) Table S-4 indicates that the Enhanced Bus alternative would have a negative impact on Greenhouse Gas emissions (GHG), as the ridership would be low and the bus would produce more GHG than the riders reduced. However, by the year 2040, it should be assumed that the fleet of transit buses are fully electric. The GHG calculations should be revisited.
- 3) For the enhanced and express bus alternatives, the DEIR claims that additional Transit Signal Priority (TSP) would improve overall performance of these services. It remains

unclear as to the specific TSP items or locations that are assumed for these two alternatives. For any bus alternative to be an effective means for transporting people in the Tri-Valley, the TSP must be a significant upgrade from what exists in the LAVTA system today. LAVTA staff suggests examining bus-only lanes for any alternative that suggests keeping buses on local arterials.

- 4) Regarding the full BART alternative, the estimated ridership (boardings and exits) at the future Isabel BART Station is over 16,000 per day by the year 2040, which doesn't include the ridership that could be generated with the City of Livermore Isabel Neighborhood Plan development; however, only 3,500 parking spaces are planned. BART staff have indicated that the future Isabel BART Station ridership (~16,000) is equal to Dublin/Pleasanton today. As many in the Tri-Valley know, it is impossible to find a parking spot after 8am on Weekdays, and there is a wait-list with several thousand people trying to get a reserved parking space. Given that Dublin/Pleasanton parking is full and that spaces rarely turn over throughout the day, what would the other access mode for the riders at Isabel be once the station is oversubscribed with parking?

The 2017 Alameda County Tri-Valley Integrated Park and Ride Study recommends a high-frequency shuttle (every 15-minutes) between the Airway P&R in Livermore and Dublin/Pleasanton BART as a precursor to a full BART to Isabel extension by the year 2020. The study also recommends a shuttle route from a future Laughlin/Greenville Road P&R lot to the Dublin/Pleasanton Station (and then to the future Isabel Station) by the year 2030. A Laughlin/Greenville Road P&R and high frequency shuttle service should be included with the full BART alternative, and also with the DMU/EMU option.

- 5) The additional time needed to transfer between the DMU/EMU and BART, and the Express Bus and BART, should be included in the travel demand forecasting.
- 6) The DEIR has assumed that the BART parking garage at Dublin/Pleasanton would be expanded to include 540 net new spaces; however, the BART Board has elected not to build the expansion and instead implement a hybrid plan to increase the parking spaces by 540. This change in direction might have an impact on local traffic circulation and could change the information utilized in the DEIR analysis.

Respectfully,

Michael Tree
Executive Director