

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: Final Draft BART to Livermore DEIR Comments  
FROM: Christy Wegener, Director of Planning and Operations  
DATE: October 2, 2017

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**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.

Staff brought updated comments to the September 25, 2017 Projects and Services Committee meeting. The Committee provided additional feedback.

**Discussion**

During the September 11<sup>th</sup> 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?

During the September 25, 2017 Projects and Services Committee meeting, the Committee provided the following additional comments:

- The infrastructure (track, etc.) cost from the Isabel Station to the new yard/shop should not be fully allocated to the BART to Livermore project as BART has identified a need for a new shop independent from the Livermore extension.
- The size of the yard identified for the 5.2 mile extension to Isabel is identical to the size of the yard for the Silicon Valley BART extension.
- The BART to Livermore team should explore other locations for the storage tracks in the median of I-580; the goal is to extend BART to ACE at Greenville and building two miles of storage tracks through the Livermore hills for a 5 mile extension doesn't make sense. Those storage tracks should be built in the median of I-580, bringing the tracks two miles closer to Greenville.

At the time this staff report was due (September 27<sup>th</sup>), draft comments have been received from the City of Dublin as well as from staff to the Alameda-San Joaquin Regional Rail Working Group. Highlights of comments received include:

- The City of Dublin: 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.

- Staff to the Alameda-San Joaquin Regional Rail Working Group: The level of parking supply at the future Isabel station isn't sufficient. The size of the yard for both full BART and DMU/EMU appears to be out of scale with capacity requirements, and the cost allocation is flawed. There is a difference in the number of cards needed for full BART (36) versus DMU/EMU (24), without explanation. The proposed project schedule calls for the project to be complete in 5 years; however, the DEIR indicates a 10-year horizon for the project. Significant concerns were cited regarding how the costs of the yard and shop were allocated. The geographic scope of the project was noted as being outdated and therefore the project is unable to address the interregional need in the 580 corridor (project scope is limited to Isabel, versus Greenville).

### **Next Steps**

Once comments are received from the City of Livermore and the City of Pleasanton, staff will finalize the letter.

### **Recommendation**

None – Information only.

### **Attachment**

1 – Draft BART to Livermore DEIR Comment Letter

*Submitted:* \_\_\_\_\_

October 2, 2017

Bay Area Rapid Transit District  
Attention: BART to Livermore Extension Project  
300 Lakeside, 21<sup>st</sup> 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) Yard and Shop Comments: According to the DEIR, the extension to Isabel would require both a yard to store trains and a shop to maintain train cars for both the full BART and the DMU/EMU alternative. For the full BART alternative, the yard would be constructed to hold 172 train cars taking 68 acres, although only 36 train cards are needed to operate the Isabel extension. The shop would be constructed to include 10 service bays, although only 2 are needed to support the Isabel extension. The location selected for the yard and shop in the DEIR takes 1.9 miles of track and infrastructure to get to, requiring two bridges and one tunnel. All of this is deemed necessary for a 5 mile extension of BART to Isabel. 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, as well as to replace the storage track space lost at Dublin/Pleasanton.

BART has assigned 25% of the cost of the new shop to the 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 project even though only 20.9% of the capacity is needed to store trains for the Isabel extension service. The full cost (100%) of the 1.9 miles of track is allocated to the project.

The yard and the shop will not just benefit the Livermore riders; it is a core upgrade necessary for the 2040 projected service levels and train lengths, and the cost should be spread across the system accordingly. The size of the yard for this project rivals the size of the yard needed for the Silicon Valley extension. The full cost of the yard and connecting track should not be carried by this project; no more than 20.9% of the yard cost should be allocated to the project.

The location selected for the yard/shop, which includes 1.9 miles of connecting track and associated infrastructure, significantly balloons the cost of the project. Given the growth of the Tri-Valley, the project growth of the San Joaquin Valley, and the influx of commute trips on I-580, there is a regional need to connect BART to ACE. The 1.9 miles

of connecting track should be located in the 580 median, which would get the project ¼ of the way to Greenville. There are significant economies of scale that can be achieved with a longer extension.

The shop cost should be removed from the project, or reallocated at 20%, instead of the 25% in the DEIR. The shop is a core upgrade for BART that is necessary outside of the extension to Livermore.

- 2) 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 future Isabel station would be located adjacent to residential communities; there is concern that if BART riders are unable to find parking at the stations, people will begin to park in the residential neighborhoods near the station.

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.

- 3) 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.
- 4) 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.
- 5) The cost of the DMU/EMU option from Dublin/Pleasanton to Isabel (\$1.6B+) seems excessively high. There may be other engineering schematics that could make the DMU/EMU a more affordable option, including dual-gauge tracks at the tail track of

Dublin/Pleasanton. Additionally, the size and location of the storage track and shop make the DMU/EMU alternative significantly more expensive than it needs to be. To reiterate the comments made in #1, laying the storage facility to the east of the Isabel station will get the region closer to making the important BART to ACE connection.

- 6) Despite the DEIR document calling for more effective transit options in the project area as well as focusing action on the substantial impacts that regional growth trends such as population, housing and employment create, there is no responsive build alternatives included in the DEIR assessment that address the regional need to connect BART and ACE.
- 7) ACE ridership is projected to decrease as a result of the full BART alternative, as well as the DMU/EMU option in the DEIR. However, it wasn't clear if the modeling took into account the ACE Forward plans for the 99-corridor, especially with the \$400m identified to extend to Merced, and the increased ridership expected as a result.
- 8) 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?
- 9) 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 for all alternatives that include buses.
- 10) 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.

Respectfully,

Michael Tree  
Executive Director

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