



June 23, 2005  
(For Board: July 8, 2005)

**REPORT OF THE BUILDING AND OPERATING COMMITTEE/  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

Honorable Board of Directors  
Golden Gate Bridge, Highway  
and Transportation District

Honorable Members:

A meeting of the Building and Operating Committee/Committee of the Whole was held in the Board Room, Administration Building, Toll Plaza, San Francisco, California, on Thursday, June 23, 2005, at 10:10 a.m., Chair Eddie presiding.

**Committee Members Present (7):** Chair Eddie; Vice Chair Reilly; Directors Hernández, Martini, Moylan and Stroeh; President Middlebrook (Ex Officio)

**Committee Members Absent (2):** Directors Ammiano and Boro

**Other Directors Present (4):** Directors Cochran, Murray, Pahre and Shahum

**Committee of the Whole Members Present (11):** Directors Cochran, Eddie, Hernández, Martini, Moylan, Murray, Pahre, Reilly, Shahum and Stroeh; President Middlebrook

**Committee of the Whole Members Absent (7):** Directors Ammiano, Brown, Dufty, Kerns, McGoldrick and Sandoval; Second Vice President Boro

**[On this date, there was one vacancy on the Board of Directors.]**

**Staff Present:** General Manager Celia G. Kupersmith; District Engineer Denis J. Mulligan; Auditor-Controller Joseph M. Wire; Secretary of the District Janet S. Tarantino; Attorney David J. Miller; Deputy General Manager/Bridge Division Kary H. Witt; Deputy General Manager/Bus Division Susan C. Chiaroni; Deputy General Manager/Ferry Division James P. Swindler; Planning Director Alan R. Zahradnik; Public Affairs Director Mary C. Currie; Human Resources Director Larry Daniel; Risk Management and Safety Director Bill Stafford; Executive Assistant to the General Manager Amorette Ko; Assistant Clerk of the Board Patsy Whala

**Visitors Present:** None

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**1. Approve the Design and Location of Toll Plaza Transfer Point Bus Stop and Crosswalk Improvements**

In a memorandum to Committee, Planning Director Alan Zahradnik, District Engineer Denis Mulligan and General Manager Celia Kupersmith reported on staff's recommendation that one Golden Gate Transit (GGT) bus stop be relocated with the associated deletion of two pedestrian crosswalks; that two San Francisco Municipal Railway (MUNI) bus stops be relocated; that two pedestrian crosswalks be relocated and that one GGT bus stop and one MUNI bus stop be improved in their current locations, with respect to public safety and public convenience.

The report stated that staff has evaluated the locations of the bus stops and pedestrian crosswalks within the District's right-of-way toll plaza and developed detailed plans and specifications that reflect the proposed improvements. The conclusion of the staff's evaluation and recommendation includes the associated tradeoffs that bear on public safety consideration, which are summarized as follows:

- Relocation of southbound GGT bus stop with the associated deletion of two pedestrian crosswalks. The existing southbound GGT bus stop is located on a traffic island immediately south of the Administration Building's parking lot. The current location of the bus stop requires that transit patrons transferring between GGT and MUNI buses cross the Merchant Road off-ramp, which provides inadequate stopping sight distance to the crosswalks for exiting motorists. The bus stop also affects the line of sight for vehicles merging onto Doyle Drive from Merchant Road.

Staff recommends that the bus stop be relocated at a site on the eastern edge of the Administration Building's parking lot. Such a location would include such tradeoffs as follows: (1) the relocated bus stop could cause occasional traffic back-ups when three or more buses are present; and, (2) the relocated bus stop may make it more difficult for buses to merge into traffic since they may encounter drivers merging from Lane 1 to take the Merchant Road off-ramp. On balance, public safety and public convenience impacts associated with the additional traffic queuing in Lane 1 are more than offset by the improvements to pedestrian safety arising from the relocated bus stop. Signage will be installed to limit use of this off-ramp to traffic in Lane 1. Moreover, the relocation of this bus stop will improve the line of sight for vehicles merging onto Doyle Drive from Merchant Road.

- Relocation of eastbound Merchant Road MUNI bus stop and relocation of the pedestrian crosswalk between the employee parking lot and the south side of Merchant Road. The existing eastbound MUNI bus stop is located beneath the Administration Building by the entrance to the tunnel. This location is not Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible and cannot be made ADA accessible because of the steepness of the sidewalk that leads to the bus stop. Also, the location does not have adequate sidewalk length or adequate setback from the crosswalk for bus loading and unloading.

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Staff recommends that the bus stop and adjacent crosswalk be relocated to the south side of Merchant Road, across from the District's employee parking lot. This location will be ADA accessible and will have the appropriate space for loading and unloading passengers. The existing crosswalk from the employee parking lot to the south side of Merchant Road will be relocated to a point immediately adjacent to the new bus stop. It is acknowledged that, in general, mid-block crosswalks are not desirable; however, in this specific instance, it provides for enhanced safety for both transit patrons and pedestrians by increasing the stopping sight distance to the crosswalk for motorists exiting onto westbound Merchant Road, as well as for traffic on eastbound Merchant Road. The relocated bus stop will require pedestrians transferring from GGT to MUNI to walk along a striped walkway along Merchant Road. This walkway will eventually become a concrete sidewalk pursuant to a planned construction project on Merchant Road to be performed by the Presidio Trust. On balance, the enhanced safety associated with this increase in sight distance and the increased accessibility of this location more than offsets concerns associated with a crosswalk at a mid-block location and the temporary lack of a raised concrete sidewalk.

- Relocation of westbound Merchant Road MUNI bus stop and relocation of the pedestrian crosswalk in the east parking lot. The existing westbound MUNI bus stop is located on Merchant Road in the east public parking lot adjacent to the Bridge Café. The current location requires that the buses block pedestrians from using the crosswalk while loading and unloading passengers. In addition, the width of the sidewalk at this location makes it difficult for two buses to load and unload passengers that use wheelchairs. Furthermore, the curve of the road at this location prevents buses from aligning both the front and rear doors with the curb.

Staff recommends that the bus stop be relocated to a point immediately east of the existing location and that the crosswalk be relocated to a point immediately west of its existing location. These two improvements will enable pedestrians to have better access to the crosswalk while allowing better visibility to on-coming traffic. Additionally, the existing sidewalk will be widened to a uniform width of 8 feet, thereby allowing two buses to more safely and efficiently pick up and drop off passengers in wheelchairs simultaneously. While changing the curve of the road is not feasible, staff concludes that, on balance, the pedestrian safety improvements outweigh any conceivable drawbacks.

- Improve the northbound GGT bus stop and the MUNI eastbound bus stop in the east parking lot at their existing locations. District staff evaluated the northbound GGT bus stop and the eastbound MUNI bus stop in the east parking lot and determined that the locations were appropriate. The District is improving both bus stops at their existing locations.

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- Signing and Marking. Various signing and marking improvements will be made at each of the locations to improve pedestrian safety, including in-pavement lighting in the crosswalks adjacent to the Bridge Café and the employee parking lot, and removal of steps and installation of fencing at certain locations to discourage pedestrians from crossing in non-crosswalk areas.

The report also stated that staff has determined that the toll plaza transfer point bus stop and crosswalk improvements are intended to vastly enhance safety and accessibility for GGT and MUNI passengers and other users of District facilities. Any imperfections are either relatively insignificant from a public safety standpoint or are temporary in nature and are more than offset by the range of improvements. Approval of the design and location of bus stop and crosswalk improvements would have no direct fiscal impact to the District. Funds are available for the eventual award of a contract to perform the various improvements in the Fiscal Year 2005-2006 Bridge Division Capital Budget. A copy of the staff report with attachment is available in the Office of the District Secretary.

At the meeting, Denis Mulligan provided a Power Point presentation and briefly summarized the staff report, describing the proposed improvements. He stated that the purpose is to formally approve the design and location of the bus stops and crosswalks. He further commended District staff in the Engineering and Planning Departments in bringing this item to fruition.

Discussion ensued, including the following:

- Director Pahre made the following comments and inquires:
  - She inquired as to whether or not the existing west bound MUNI bus stop located at the stop sign on Merchant Road would remain in use and inquired regarding the safety issues regarding pedestrians utilizing the crosswalk from the Administration Building parking lot to the MUNI bus stop. In response, Mr. Mulligan stated that the MUNI bus stop will remain in use at its current location, and that the planned improvements will improve pedestrian safety at that location.
  - She inquired regarding the difference in distance to the relocated MUNI bus stop on the south side of Merchant Road. In response, Mr. Mulligan stated that the difference is small, and more importantly, the existing eastbound MUNI bus stop is not ADA accessible while the new location will be ADA accessible.
- Mr. Miller stated that the staff recommendation represents an enhancement to public safety for District customers and pedestrians and that a formal resolution on this matter will be prepared that will allow the Board to make the appropriate findings, weighing the tradeoffs of the status quo versus the proposed improvements. He further stated that from a legal standpoint, the proposed improvements represent a significant enhancement over the status quo.

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- Chair Eddie commended staff for their planning and development of the project and commented that the project brings safety issues to light because motorists travel at a high rate of speed when exiting onto Merchant Road that causes safety issues for those crossing Merchant Road from the stop sign.

Staff recommended and the Committee concurred by motion made and seconded by **Directors STROEH/MARTINI** to forward the following recommendation to the Board of Directors for its consideration:

**RECOMMENDATION**

The Building and Operating Committee recommends that the Board of Directors approve the design and location of five bus stops, changes to multiple crosswalks, and related pedestrian safety improvements, all located in the vicinity of the Golden Gate Bridge Toll Plaza.

**Action by the Board – Resolution  
NON-CONSENT CALENDAR**

- AYES (11):** Directors Cochran, Eddie, Hernández, Martini, Moylan, Murray, Pahre, Reilly, Shahum and Stroeh; President Middlebrook
- NOES (0):** None
- ABSENT (7):** Directors Ammiano, Brown, Dufty, Kerns, McGoldrick and Sandoval; Second Vice President Boro

**[Note: The above recommendation was forwarded to the Board of Directors meeting of June 24, 2005, for action.]**

**2. Status Report from District Appointees on Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) Board**

The Committee was provided with copies of the Agenda for the June 15, 2005, and the Minutes of the May 18, 2005, meetings of the Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit District (SMART). Copies of these items are available in the Office of the District Secretary.

Discussion ensued, including the following:

- Celia Kupersmith stated that the SMART held a special meeting in Santa Rosa regarding the Railroad Square Development on June 21, 2005. She stated that the discussion relative to the transfer of the portion of the Northwestern Railroad Right-of-Way property from Novato Creek South to Corte Madera will be presented during closed session to the Board of Directors at its meeting of June 24, 2005, for discussion and possible action.
- Director Pahre stated that one of the most important items discussed at the last, SMART meeting was the fact that SMART's Environmental Impact Report (EIR) has been postponed for at least two months.

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- Director Eddie stated that an item appeared in the Santa Rosa newspapers regarding the proposed Railroad Square Development and that the surrounding community is very excited about being included in the planning process for SMART's eventual building and designing of that five-acre parcel.
- Celia Kupersmith stated that it was her understanding that over 200 people attended the SMART public hearing on June 21, 2005, dealing specifically with the development of the Santa Rosa site. She stated that Director Boro shared with her the positive outcome of the meeting and that they received public comments from 55 people, presenting many different perspectives on the proposed project.
- Director Martini stated that, due to a conflicting schedule, he was able to attend only a portion of SMART's public hearing. He stated that, according to the project schedule, SMART is planning to create a subcommittee to set up the criteria for project plans and specifications with an anticipated advertisement date of September 2005, selection of developer in October/November 2005 and a start date of August 2006. He also stated that, although the schedule may be ambitious, the fact that the community participated in the public hearing indicates people view this project as an asset to the area.

**Action by the Board – None Required**

**3. Status Report on Engineering Projects**

In a memorandum to Committee, Deputy District Engineer Ewa Z. Bauer, District Engineer Denis Mulligan and General Manager Celia Kupersmith reported on current engineering projects. This report will be presented to the Board of Directors at its meeting of June 24, 2005. A copy of the report is available in the Office of the District Secretary.

**Action by the Board – None Required**

**4. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**5. Adjournment**

All business having been concluded, the meeting was declared adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

James C. Eddie, Chair