

Randy Iwasaki:

Hello, and welcome to this evening's Telephone Town Hall hosted by the Contra Costa Transportation Authority in partnership with the Transportation Partnership and Cooperation Committee representing Martinez, Pleasant Hill, Concord, Walnut Creek, Clayton, and Contra Costa County. Thank you for joining our discussion about the future of transportation in Contra Costa. If you have a question, please press "0" on your phone. My name is Randy Iwasaki and I'm the Executive Director of the Contra Costa Transportation Authority.

Joining me this evening are Contra Costa Transportation Authority Board Vice Chair and Clayton City Vice Mayor Julie Pierce and Contra Costa Transportation Authority Board Commissioner and Walnut Creek Mayor Pro Tem Loella Haskew. Tim Hale, our agency's Deputy Executive Director for Project, is also on the call, and we're looking forward to sharing our plans and taking your calls.

I'm just going to apologize now to those of you on the phone. Since you're one of the first callers to join the call, you'll probably hear me repeat this at least once or twice more as we get started with the full telephone lines. As a reminder, please press "0" on your phone if you want to ask a question.

As we're waiting for others to join the call, I'd like to do a quick poll to see if you've ever heard of our agency before you called this evening. Please use your numeric keypad on your phone to vote. Note: Have you ever heard of the Contra Costa Transportation Authority before this evening? Press "1" for yes, press "2" for no, or press "3" for "I'm not really sure. Maybe."

I'll repeat the question again. Have you heard of the Contra Costa Transportation Authority before this evening? Press "1" for yes, press "2" for no, or press "3" for "I'm not really sure. Maybe." Thank you very much for participating in that poll.

For those of you who have just joined us, welcome to this evening's Telephone Town Hall. I'm Randy Iwasaki, the Executive Director for the Contra Costa Transportation Authority, also known as CCTA, and we're here this evening to talk about our transportation in your communities. Thank you for taking time out of your evening to be part of this conversation.

It looks like our phone lines are full, so we're going to go ahead and officially kick off this Telephone Town Hall. To those who have been on since the beginning, I apologize since you've already heard part of the introduction, but I promise we're going to get to some more polling and your questions soon.

Hello and welcome to this evening's Telephone Town Hall, hosted by the Contra Costa Transportation Authority, also known as CCTA, in partnership with the Transportation Partnership and Cooperation Committee representing Martinez, Pleasant Hill, Concord, Walnut Creek, Clayton, and Contra Costa County. Thank you for joining in our discussion about the future of transportation in Contra

Costa. I'm Randy Iwasaki and I'll be your host for the Telephone Town Hall tonight. A few logistics and then we'll get started.

If you'd like to ask a question during our question and answer session, which will take place a little later in the call, please press "0" on your phone any time. This call is being recorded. The recording will be posted in the next few days to the Contra Costa Transportation Authority's website at [ccta.net](http://ccta.net). N-E-T. Dot N-E-T. We're going to limit our responses to questions to two minutes each so that we have as many callers as possible with an opportunity to ask their questions on the air. Remember, please press "0" at any time to ask any question.

During this call, we'll also be conducting a few informal polls.

Now, let's get started with our program. Before we introduce this evening's panelists, we'd like to begin by asking our first question of the evening. Do you feel that reducing congestion on highways and major roads would improve your quality of life as a Contra Costa resident? If your answer is yes, press "1". If you don't think so and your answer is no, press "2", and if you really can't decide press "3". Thank you for participating in the polling question.

Now I'd like to welcome Julie Pierce, who is the Vice Chair of the Contra Costa Transportation Authority Board. Welcome, Julie.

Julie Pierce: Hi, Randy.

Randy Iwasaki: Maybe we can share some of what Contra Costa Transportation Authority is and what do we do.

Julie Pierce: Thanks, Randy. I'd like to also introduce our Contra Costa Transportation Authority Deputy Executive Director of Projects, Tim Hale, and my fellow CCTA Commissioner, Loella Haskew, representing TRANSPAC, which is the acronym for the Transportation Partnership and Cooperation Committee in Central Contra Costa County.

The Contra Costa Transportation Authority plans, funds, and delivers critical transformation infrastructure projects and programs that connect our communities, increase sustainability, and safely and effectively get people where they need to go. We keep Contra Costa moving by planning, designing, funding, and managing key projects such as the Caldecott Fourth Bore project, the widening of Highway 4 and BART Extension to Antioch, as well as bus and paratransit service, creating better access to schools and funding new bike lanes.

We're helping to implement creative solutions like new crosswalks that protect pedestrians in Walnut Creek and working to create a hub for transportation technology in Concord with the GoMentum Station test facility at the former Concord Naval Weapons Station. We're also funding transit education programs

that teach seniors and people with disabilities how to use transit so they can get where they need to go. And we're entering a new era of transportation where technology is offering intriguing and transformational new solutions to old problems. There is so much we can do now that we couldn't do 10 or 20 years ago. It's important that we take advantage of future technology to move people efficiently and safely.

Let me give you a few examples. We can now use technology to synchronize traffic lights across and between cities, so if you drive on local streets from Pleasant Hill to Walnut Creek or Martinez to Concord, that means you'll spend less time waiting at red lights, and less "stop and go" means healthier air for our communities.

We're also testing new technology that will help protect connections between different modes of travel. Imagine if your BART train is running late. Remember that five minute delay? And you could send a signal to the bus you need to catch asking it to wait for you, so you don't miss your connection and have to wait for the next bus.

Finally, technology and innovation in transportation has come a long way in terms of helping to make car travel safer. Look at how many lives have been saved in traffic collisions by seat belts and airbags. Now car manufacturers are helping drivers avoid collisions entirely by installing sensor technology, so your car knows when there is another vehicle, object, or person nearby.

At the Contra Costa Transportation Authority, we are looking ahead and planning for the next 30 years of transportation in Contra Costa, and that's why we're hosting this Town Hall, to have an opportunity for you to share your opinion about what projects and programs matter most to you, and make sure that you are a part of a new transportation expenditure plan we are developing to keep Contra Costa moving.

Randy Iwasaki:

Thank you, Julie. Remember, please press "0" at any time to ask a question, and additionally, please press "7" on your phone if you would like to get e-mails from the Contra Costa Transportation Authority.

I see our phone lines are lighting up, so before we hear from my next speaker, I'd like to ask another quick polling question from our audience. 85% of you said that reducing congestion would improve your quality of life. One option to reduce congestion or traffic is to make bus travel faster and more reliable by creating lanes on major roads and freeways that allow buses to bypass slow or stopped traffic, which is something that already works in other parts of the county. Do you think this is something we should try in Contra Costa? Press "1" for yes, press "2" for no, and if you really can't decide, press "3".

I'll repeat that question again. One option to reduce traffic is to make bus travel faster and more reliable by creating lanes on major roads and freeways that

allow buses to bypass slow or stopped traffic, which is something that already works in other parts of the country. Do you think that is something we should try in Contra Costa? Press "1" for yes, press "2" for no, and if you really can't decide, press "3".

Okay. Thank you.

Now I turn to CCTA's Deputy Executive Director, Tim Hale, to describe what's a transportation expenditure plan, and your input is important to developing that plan.

Tim Hale: Thank you, Randy. A transportation expenditure plan is an important planning tool, intended to be a roadmap for the types of transportation improvements that get funded in the future. Contra Costa currently transportation expenditure plan, Measure J, which has helped fund highway, bus, and BART projects in the county, and expanded bicycle and pedestrian trails. With Contra Costa County growing and changing its time to be looking at how we can fund transformational transportation options to keep our county moving. A transportation expenditure plan not only directs how local dollars get spent on local projects but will also help us compete for additional money from state and federal funding sources.

In the past, we have been very successful at using sales tax dollars to leverage these additional funds, but we can no longer depend on state and federal dollars as those budgets are shrinking or becoming more restrictive in terms of how countywide agencies like ours can use available funds. We need to determine how we can best invest future dollars to make the improvements [inaudible 00:11:02] that you on this phone want to see and why we're asking for your input.

Randy Iwasaki: Thank you, Tim. We're going to dive into the question and answer portion of the call here in a moment, but before we do, I'd like to turn it over to Loella Haskew, CCTA board member and member of the Transportation Partnership and Cooperation Committee, or TRANSPAC, to say a few words about how this transportation expenditure plan will improve the communities it represents.

Loella Haskew: Thanks, Randy.

Tim is right. The trends show Contra Costa's population will continue to grow, and that will lead to more traffic and more time that you will spend trying to get to where you're going instead of spending the quality time that you want when you get there. We're trying to fix that, because we don't like being stuck in gridlock any more than you do, and fixing the problem is going to require that we look at the transportation system holistically. We've already done a lot of good work, like completing the Caldecott Tunnel, on time and on budget, and we want to build upon that legacy. We know there are some frustrating commutes out there like Interstate 680. That's why TRANSPAC, an association of

cities and transportation agencies in Central Contra Costa County, is proposing the following improvements for the transportation network.

First, moving traffic on major streets like Ygnacio Valley Road and Treat Boulevard by sinking traffic signals through multiple cities; then increased bus service, especially on nights and weekends, and run more buses to BART stations during peak commute hours; supporting school bus service and options for students to provide traffic relief on major roads with schools; creating what we call roads for all modes on busy streets by adding sidewalks and bike lanes; providing more reliable alternative modes so you don't always have to use your car for every trip; continuing to invest in transportation services that provide mobility options for seniors and people with disabilities; helping to maintain and improve the existing trail network; making improvements to BART to make stations cleaner and easier to access by car, biking, or walking; relieving traffic congestion on Highway 4, Highway 242, and Interstate 680. We're turning to the public now because we want to know which transportation solution you think should be funded in your neighborhoods to keep Contra Costa moving.

Randy Iwasaki: Thank you, Loella. Now let's take some questions. Our first question is from Jeff from Concord. He would like to ask a question about bus service.

Jeff: Hi. I'm sorry, this might be pie in the sky, but I'm thinking the federal and state would have to be, as well as local ... The Iron Horse Trail, if we're able to implement something like Caltrain to go up Iron Horse Trail, that might alleviate a lot of the transportation problems. They have the easements [inaudible 00:14:28] the trail. But I know that's a huge undertaking.

Randy Iwasaki: Jeff, this is Randy. That's not really a pie-in-the-sky question. It's actually one of the solutions that we're looking at along the 680 Corridor is how to better utilize the Iron Horse Trail. We're probably never going to put a train system down that trail, so maybe there's some quiet technology that coexists well with the bicyclists and the walkers that are using that corridor now. We know that we can't widen Interstate 680, so we're finding some solutions to help with the congestion along that corridor. It's a big corridor. My neighbor actually used to ride his bicycle all the way down to Dublin using the Iron Horse Trail to go to work and back every day. We're looking at that corridor, that whole corridor that not only includes Interstate 680 but also the Iron Horse Trail.

We'll take that down. Thank you for that question, and hopefully you'll get a response about how we're working on that solution in the near future.

Our next question is from Laurel from Walnut Creek. She has a question about BART.

Oh, it looks like we lost Laurel. Well, hopefully you'll try to dial back in.

Loella Haskew: And I'm anxious to hear Laurel's question about BART because Walnut Creek is one of the main stations that is an area where BART has some issues. More than a few times, I've wound up standing in a BART train rolling around like a pinball in a boxcar, so I am anxious to hear what her question is.

Randy Iwasaki: One of the Spanish speaking partners on the phone has asked a question about housing fits into transportation. Maybe, Julie, you can have an answer to their question about how housing fits into transportation and how the Contra Costa Transportation Authority is looking at how those synergies work together.

Julie Pierce: Sure. You know, on a regional level as well as here at Contra Costa County, we are focusing on helping our cities plan for better transportation to and from BART stations and hoping that most of our cities will follow the lead of Walnut Creek and Pleasant Hill and build more housing at our BART stations to help shorten the commute for a lot of folks so that they don't even have to get in their car. We certainly have a housing crisis here in Contra Costa and in the Bay Area, so having housing near BART and other major bus stops is a good thing for everybody.

Randy Iwasaki: Our next question comes from [Gail 00:17:48] from Martinez, and it has to do with striping on Interstate 680. Gail.

Gail: Good evening. I'm calling about a portion of 680 South before Olympic, is a good idea where it is. I have been traveling that road several times a week for the last month or so. There's a portion there that they have re-asphalted, but they've never put the white lines back in. I've almost gotten hit several times because everybody gets very squirrely when all of a sudden there are no lane markings. Why do they do this corrective work and not finish it? Thank you.

Randy Iwasaki: Great question, Gail.

When Caltrans does an overlay along any roadway, they put up temporary markers and then they'll bring in the striping crew afterwards. Sometimes, because there's a lot of paving going on, because there's a major investment in transportation rehabilitation projects because of the passage of Senate Bill 1, there's only so many contractors that can do the work. What we'll do is we'll get ahold of Caltrans for you and we'll ask them what the schedule is for striping Interstate 680. It's important for you. It's important for us. We'll make that call here tomorrow morning.

[Carol 00:19:22] from Walnut Creek. You have a question about buses.

Carol: Good evening.

Loella Haskew: Hi, Carol.

Carol: Hello. Your bus during noontime doesn't run every hour. It runs almost an hour and a half to two hours per bus, and I never could connect ... I don't have any those fancy cell phone that will tell me or tell the bus not leave. Friday I have to get someone to drive me so I could go and play ping-pong at Concord Senior Center, and if I go to make it on time, which means I have to leave early, catch the early bus to go over there and I have to wait at the library. When the time comes, which is noontime, we play. I have to wait another hour or so to go and play. So I stopped using the bus. I will ask someone else to take me there or pick me up.

Loella Haskew: Hi, Carol. This is Loella Haskew. I certainly understand your concerns. Bus travel has been a significant problem in getting buses adequately filled for their purposes has been difficult as well. I'm assuming you live in [Rossmoor 00:20:52]. Is that the case?

Have you hung up?

Carol: [Crosstalk 00:20:57].

Loella Haskew: I'm sorry?

Carol: No. I didn't hang up. I live off of [inaudible 00:21:01].

Loella Haskew: Off of [Erie 00:21:01].

Carol: I live off of Erie. In the old time when we first move in you used to have the bus run on Gary, and then you stopped it. Then I managed to be able to walk over to Buena Vista. Then you stopped it.

Loella Haskew: I want to leave time for other questions, so can I cut you off just a little bit? One of the things that this analysis is trying to discover is how we can make better services for seniors, not just by running the standard buses by getting some on demand transportation systems, or putting together smaller vehicles that would make it more comfortable for everybody and maybe not be as expensive to run. So that's why we think it's really important that one of the things that we've chosen to focus on is the bus transportation. I admire your cleverness in being able to solve your problem, but we're also working on solutions to try and help you so you don't have to pull all your friends in and get to those important ping-pong games. Bless your heart for playing ping-pong.

Randy Iwasaki: Please remember to press "0" if you have a question. Great questions are coming through. They're all lined up. I have a question from Laura in Central Contra Costa. She doesn't want to go live, so I'll ask her question for her.

People prefer to drive. How do we change their minds?

We have Tim Hale on the line. Maybe Tim can talk about our innovation program, incentive and reward program.

Tim Hale: Thank you, Randy.

This expenditure plan is looking at innovative ways to provide seamless connectivity [and 00:22:59] also providing incentives for people to take other alternative modes of transportation. Incentives can be shaped in many different ways to really induce travel behavior to move away from your car and ride other modes like transit or shuttle services or walking and biking, as well as taking potentially a scooter or other, smaller types transit service. Through this incentive program it would also be for transit for youth and students as well as people with disabilities and veterans and senior as well, so this incentive program that's really overarching through the entire expenditure plan is really intended to provide ways for people to get around more effectively and faster.

Randy Iwasaki: Thank you, Tim. Please remember if you joined us, press "0" to ask a question about transportation.

I have another polling question for all of you. In the next 25 years, a third of the population in Contra Costa County will be age 65 and older. Is it important to you that the Contra Costa Transportation Authority invest in more transportation options for senior and members of our community with disabilities? Please press "1" for yes, press "2" for no, and if you really can't decide, press "3".

I'll repeat the question. In the next 25 years, a third of the population in Contra Costa County will be age 65 and older. Is it important to you that the Contra Costa Transportation Authority invest in more transportation options for seniors and members of our community with disabilities? Press "1" for yes, "2" for no, and if you can't decide, press number 3.

Thank you for participating in that quick poll.

We have a lot of questions from seniors about accessing buses and taking transit. Julie, would you like to take that question?

Julie Pierce: I'll take that one.

"Since I am a senior and I am concerned about when I won't be able to drive anymore, will there be a way for me to get where I need to go?"

I'm happy to say that we are working really diligently here in Contra Costa County to find better ways to get everyone around, but particularly our seniors and those who have disabilities or are unable to drive themselves, or just shouldn't be driving themselves.

Some of those things are on-demand shuttles. In East County, they're piloting a program through their bus company out there called Tri Delta to get people to and from their eBART stations, and that's kind of an on-demand shuttle that makes a loop and gets people where they need to go. We're putting in more dedicated money for busing. We're concentrating on first and last mile, but the idea of shuttles for people who need to go run errands and things like that are things that we're also considering. The City of Walnut Creek has done a great job with their free downtown shuttle, from the BART station and around downtown, and that's very helpful. If we could do some of those projects in other parts of Central County, that would be a real boon.

The other thing we're trying to do is getting the bus service for students and trying to figure out how to coordinate that with our existing bus companies. We're working on that and technology, I would think, is going to be the answer to helping us get more frequent service, more customized service, for all of our seniors as well as the rest of our residents who choose not to drive.

Randy Iwasaki: Thank you, Julie. We have a question from Dan in Walnut Creek about cost. How do we choose projects? How do we prioritize projects? Dan.

Dan: Yes, this is Dan. Thank you for taking my question. Here are my thoughts, and I would like to know what announcer maybe. For a short span of road that causes commuters to lose a lot of time, versus a long span of road with a lot of commuters that are stuck in traffic, how are the two projects being budgeted, prioritized, and listed in terms of the chronology of implementation of improvement?

Randy Iwasaki: Tim, can you take that?

Dan: All right. This is it.

Tim Hale: Yes, I can take that question. Thank you, Dan. That's a great question. The projects that we identify are based on the needs through all of the subregions. In the Central County region, we work with our partners at local agencies such as the Regional Transportation Agency TRANSPAC, which Julie and Loella represent, and we essentially develop these projects in partnership with them and we prioritize those projects relative to priority of congestion relief, reducing travel times, reducing vehicle miles traveled, greenhouse gases, as well as providing a real impact to everyone's daily commute. These projects and cost estimates are developed from a bottoms up approach and then we basically, as we mentioned in our program, that we look for ways to leverage this local sales tax dollars against other state and federal funds, to fully fund projects so we can bring those projects and meet those needs for you sooner rather than later.

Randy Iwasaki: Thank you, Tim.

I have a question from Claudia in Clayton about Ygnacio Valley Road. Claudia.

Claudia: Am I on?

Randy Iwasaki: Yes, you are.

Claudia: This is more a thought or an idea I'm wondering if anybody's thought of, because as you know, over the years traffic has changed dramatically. People come from Antioch and everything and go across Ygnacio all the way out to the 680, so it's kind of become like a mini-freeway. There's a major problem at Oak Grove because people have to turn left to take children to school, so that increases also further backup of traffic. We're talking about almost a five mile backup in the mornings. I often thought, why couldn't they build an overpass or go underground so that traffic could keep flowing? I know that would be costly, but I think the way things are now today that it would be worth considering. Anyway, that's just ...

Julie Pierce: Hi, Claudia. That's an innovative idea, and you're not the first to have thought of that. We actually talked about that almost 20 years ago, and you're right. It's incredibly costly to do an overpass or something underground or something like that. However, there are a few things that we are working on, and I don't know what time of day you're going, but if you're talking about the school backup you're either talking about probably before 8:00 or 3:00 in the afternoon. And you're right, there is a backup there at Oak Grove, and we're working with the City of Walnut Creek on that.

But before you get to Walnut Creek, one of the things that is going to happen before too awfully long in the Concord section of Ygnacio is a third lane will be added from Michigan to Cowell, which will help get those folks headed for Treat Boulevard off of Ygnacio. That'll help. The other thing we're doing is using technology to synchronize some of the lights, and that's a project that the City of Concord is now working on and starting to plan, to synchronize the lights. You heard Randy at the top of the phone call talk about synchronizing lights across jurisdictions, and Walnut Creek has actually done a marvelous job of synchronizing their lights during the commute hour to flow pretty smoothly. Once you get past Oak Grove, Walnut Creek moves pretty well even though it's a ton of cars. If we can get the Concord section to work as well and sync with Walnut Creek, then we should be able to make a tremendous difference and diverting some of the traffic off of Ygnacio in that dedicated lane over to Treat would help as well.

So, we probably aren't going to build an overpass or a tunnel in our lifetimes, but another thought somebody had was "What about a dedicated bus lane or something like that up and down the median?" That might be something that is more doable in our lifetime. In the meantime, synchronizing lights and an extra lane between Michigan and Cowell is probably the best we can ask for in our Clayton to the freeway commute.

Randy Iwasaki: Thank you Julie, and I want to remind everybody if you just dialed in, press "0" to ask any question.

We're getting a lot of questions about traffic, especially around schools. Loella, can you help answer that question?

Loella Haskew: Well, I certainly can start the discussion. Clearly, schools have really focused arrival times and departure times, and that does choke up the area. Some of the things that we're looking to and have worked to improve are improving the safety around schools so that young people can feel confident that they can ride their bicycles or walk to schools. That is kind of old fashioned, but it turns out it's also fun and good socialization for the kids.

But we're also looking at more better things like increasing bus services or providing other options to get the kids to the schools without just choking up our main highways and streets around the areas. We have a lot of options and a lot to look at, and some things are expensive. Redoing traffic patterns, we need to figure out how to pay for what we need to get to. Like all of our problems, sometimes it's a matter of finding some extra funds when we can. We're working on it, we have some success, and we look to have way more success with the option of this.

Julie Pierce: I'm going to chime in on that too. This is Julie.

You know, we're looking at doing something that a couple of the other regions have done, and that is some form of bus service. It would probably have to be partially supported by the parents, and that might be problematic because Central County is so economically diverse. But I'd we can work with our bus company and they want to do this, to put together more specialized shuttles and route-specific shuttles that can coordinate with the school bell times, then we might be able to alleviate some of that traffic. I've talked with some folks who are younger folks that have lived on the East Coast and grew up there, and they're all used to school buses, and we're not so used to school buses anymore in California and maybe we really need to work on getting back to school buses in some way. That maybe is where we spend some of our transportation money here.

Loella Haskew: I'm Loella, and I was one of those kids who went to school buses, and you learn more friends and you get to talk about homework and social things to. It works on a number of [inaudible 00:35:59].

Randy Iwasaki: Hey. Thank you very much for that question and thank you for those answers. I wanted to introduce a Council member, Mark Ross from the City of Martinez. He's here tonight with us. Thank you for being here. There's a lot of questions about future ferry service after the successful launch of the Richmond in San Francisco. What's going on in Contra Costa about ferry service?

Mark Ross: Well, thanks Randy. A pleasure to be here. Interesting that you asked the ... Very recently, WETA, which is the Water Emergency Transportation Authority, which guides that use of ferries and the routes in the Bay Area ... Years ago,

Martinez went, as we have for a long time, to that board to see about getting support for a ferry stop in Martinez and in Antioch and other cities in Contra Costa, and previously there was kind of some ... "Well, it sounds like a boutique-type of an idea." But now, those commissioners, who drive, by the way, from Contra Costa to San Francisco for those very meetings, have expressed at their last meeting that "You know, it may be time to really look at this as a solution." It's not thousands of cars but it can be hundreds of cars taken off the road, and as we've seen in studies dating back to the Olympics in Los Angeles, you reduce traffic one to three to four or five percent in a region, you have a tremendous effect on the traffic.

What this plan embraces, it's not only innovative items like ferry service from Martinez or from Antioch, or even potentially Hercules; you have all these other smaller-scale ideas such as telecommuting. This plan encompasses a lot of bright ideas from the staff. Contra Costa's an innovator in terms of looking outside of the box, implementing solutions effectively with a lot of efficacy and a lot of results. Ferry's a part of that solution. But we are looking at all the things that we can, and this staff is leaving no pavement stone unturned.

Randy Iwasaki: Thank you, Council member.

Then next question is from Maria in Martinez, and I'm going to leave this up to Tim and Julie maybe to tag team on this question. It's about Interstate 680 State Route 4.

Maria from Martinez.

Maria: Yes. Good evening. I thank you for the opportunity to ask this question. I'm wondering if there is a plan or an ETA on adding a lane to leave Highway 4 and access either north or south 680, but preferably 680 because there's such a backup when people are going from Pinole, Richmond, Crockett, Martinez, toward Walnut Creek and San Ramon. Thank you for your time.

Randy Iwasaki: Tim, you want to start that?

Tim Hale: Yes. Thank you for that question, Maria. We are focused on really reducing the congestion at the 680/4 Interchange. This has been really a focused goal for CCTA for a long time, and there is actually construction happening out there right now in terms of an adding additional lane in the eastbound direction. That will in the future and as part of this expenditure plan, we'll be looking at adding additional westbound lanes to and from the east and south to San Ramon and Walnut Creek. Also we'll be looking at adding additional connectors, direct connectors that would eliminate a few of the loops to help with the weaving lanes and the congestion that's happening to really get in and out the loop ramps, so that way people will have a direct connector that's going to be going from westbound State Route 4 to southbound 680. That is all part of this expenditure plan to really relieve congestion at the 680/4.

Randy Iwasaki: Commissioner Pierce, would you like to add anything?

Julie Pierce: You betcha I would, because I've been working on this project for almost 20 years. It takes a long time to get projects like this going. The thing I'm excited about, even though there are more than five phases to this project, is that the first phase that we're working on right now that's under construction is going to add a third lane in the middle of the freeway in each direction that will help with that weaving between Morello and State Route 242. That's going to make it much, much safer getting on and off the freeway through that area from Pacheco Boulevard all the way to 242. That's under construction right now and there are future projects coming hopefully with additional money from the State and from the Regional Measure 3 to help us pay for those direct access on and off-ramps that Tim mentioned.

Randy Iwasaki: Very quickly, to add something ... This is Randy. We are widening State Route 4 all the way back to Morello, but we're also extending the HOV lane all the way back to Interstate 680. The idea is if you're heading eastbound in the evening on ... You're heading northbound on 680, you can actually access that HOV lane two miles sooner and then not have to avoid that 242 merging across the multiple lanes versus only merging across two. That project is going very, very well. So, we've got to focus in on Interstate 680/State Route 4 Interchange. It's the crossroads to Contra Costa and it's well within our sights to fix that.

The next question is from Bobby in Alamo. He wants to ask an HOV lane question.

Bobby: Hi. I actually have a question on the HOV, but I have kind of more of a bigger question or comment. I almost feel like you guys are kind of stuck in a place where you're swimming upstream because you've been doing this for years. I've been paying extra taxes and everything trying to get our transportation system up to snuff, but in the last 10 years we've surpassed the capacity of the Bay Area has to offer, and what I never hear people talk about is this is not a local problem. This is a State of California problem, and I think the State needs to be really more proactive on where they allow jobs to be created, and if they were more accurate on where to put the jobs to be created, we might not have the problems that we have today.

I'd like to lead with two examples of places that I think actually don't work, even though I hear them being [inaudible 00:42:52] all the time, and I've only seen this from my own experience and from a lot of the neighbors that I speak with. One is the city of Walnut Creek. That was an absolutely beautiful city when I moved from San Francisco to Walnut Creek, and I loved the whole town feel, and now a lot of the charm is gone and it's all apartment buildings. I hear daily how that's the solution to the problem. "More and more apartments." Well, I tell you on the weekends here there's no place to run anymore. There's no such thing as a nice Sunday drive.

The other thing I'd like to leave you with is what used to be the HOV lane on 680 between Walnut Creek and Pleasanton. I thought that worked really well, but now it's ... I'm not sure what you'd call it. It's a lane that you have to pay, and now it's very crowded to drive on 680 during the regular hours because the four lane freeway has now been reduced to three lanes, and unfortunately the only ones who tend to use that fourth lane now are the people with the economic means, and my taxes paid for that. I guess I'm not really asking questions. I'm more just kind of getting comments. I don't know if you have ...

Randy Iwasaki: Maybe what we do is we have Tim give you a comment on how express lane HOV lanes work. The issue is the population in this region has grown substantially over the last few years, and also the number of people that are working, but Tim can talk a little bit about the nuances and the mechanics of how HOV lanes work and whether or not they're successful on Interstate 680.

Tim Hale: Thank you, Randy, and thank you for the question. The expressways on 680 are managed by pricing in terms of only allowing people that are single occupants into the lanes by paying a price. The carpoolers in the lane continue to rise in that lane for free as they always have in the past, so by managing congestion in that lane through pricing, we have seen historically since it's opened, we have seen increased travel speeds in the Corridor.

I will say though, as Randy mentioned, 680 is getting more and more congested on a daily basis. CCCA recognized that and we've developed a seven prong approach to really reduce congestion in the 680 Corridor, and one of those strategies is to complete the HOV and express lane in the Corridor. I think there's some congestion in the express lanes because as you're approaching the State Route 24, that lane actually ends because there's a gap, so in this expenditure plan there is funding to close that gap and complete the HOV and express lanes between the 24 and State Route 242 where there's an existing carpool lane, and thereby having a complete lane that would go from Pleasanton or the Contra Costa County line all the way up to the Benicia–Martinez Bridge. That would then reduce or eliminate that bottleneck in the current express lane at the 24 Interchange, and that's one of the strategies that we're looking at with the Innovate 680 project that we have in place.

Randy Iwasaki: Thank you, Bobby, for those questions. Maybe the statement and the question.

I want to ask another polling question, Polling Question number 4. I'd like to pose another question. Do you think that CCTA should invest in efforts to reduce the number of cars on the road, encourage the use of zero emission vehicles, and install a network of electric vehicle charging stations to help keep Contra Costa residents and air quality healthy? Press "1" for yes, press "2" for no, and press "3" if you really don't know the answer or you don't have a position on that question.

I'm going to ask the question again. Do you think CCTA should invest in efforts to reduce the number of cars on the road, encourage the use of zero emission

vehicles, and install a network of electric vehicle charging stations to help keep Contra Costa residents and air quality healthy? Press "1" for yes, press "2" for no, or press "3" if you don't have an opinion.

We have Ed in Clayton who wants to know about incentivizing businesses in [eastern 00:47:31] Contra Costa. Ed.

Ed:

Yes. Thanks so much, and I apologize if there's a small echo of what Bobby just said, but my thoughts are along the same lines in the sense that I have heard some great ideas on the phone here tonight about senior busing, school busing, and some other things that really do indicate that you understand some of the things that are creating congestion [inaudible 00:48:01]. One of the things that I wonder is do you see opportunities for Contra Costa Transportation Authority to use transportation monies to incentivize companies to relocate jobs or build good transportation to areas like the Naval Weapons yard that recently came open, instead of filling that with housing and then all those people needing to drive down 680 and 4 to go to Santa Clara and San Francisco. Would it not make more sense to invest money to have employers go out there and then that's the end of the road for hopefully thousands of potential drivers on those freeways?

I understand what CCTA's charter is. It isn't necessarily zoning. It isn't necessarily financing business communities. But it might involve something like building good transportation between BART and the Naval Weapons Station or areas out in East County where there is little job density.

I'll conclude with this. In my opinion, we don't have a transportation problem. We have a job location problem, and if we solve that then we could do fewer projects that end with a B on the end of the dollar sign on transportation and just all kind of live where we work. Thanks very much for hearing my comments.

Julie Pierce:

Thank you for the question and the comment. This is Julie. You know, you're right on the money. It's one of the things we actually talked about at our last Authority meeting. One of the categories in here is going to be access to jobs and how do we build the transportation infrastructure to help bring access to job centers. Now, that doesn't get exactly to where you were. What you're talking about is "How do we get the jobs here in the first place?" We actually have some things going on in the county that are starting to bring jobs here that need to be amplified. There are some projects out in East County that are starting to ...

For instance, we're building the BART cars in Pittsburgh at the old plant out there. That's been reactivated and they're going to build the BART cars there. That's going to need employees, and that'll be good and if we can enhance that, that'll be even better. We need to bring some more of those jobs here. One of the things that our executive director, Randy Iwasaki, and the rest of our team have been working on for some time is GoMentum Station. I'm going to ask Randy to talk about how that is bringing jobs to Contra Costa.

Randy Iwasaki:

Thank you, Julie.

Probably seven years ago I was asked to go out to the weapons station to figure out a way of creating smart jobs, and as I stood on the bluff and looked down at that 5,000 acre facility, we decided we were going to create a test center. We created what we call GoMentum Station. It's the largest secure autonomous vehicle testbed in the United States.

There are a lot of car manufacturers in the connected autonomous vehicle space that are testing out at GoMentum station. One of the partners has recently signed and we're trying to get an agreement to build an additive manufacturing plant here. It's basically 3-D printing the chassis and other components of the self-driving vehicle that seats six and stands six more.

We also are looking at some startup companies that need office space and they're based out of San Francisco, but as you have mentioned about the jobs, their employees live in Contra Costa County, so they've got to take BART. They're looking at bringing their offices over to the Concord area or in and around Concord, and there's some space there.

Our Supervisor Glover has really focused in on the northern waterfront. It used to be manufacturing and maybe it's a different type of jobs, but we're trying to bring that new technology to Contra Costa County and make sure that our citizens, our residents here have an opportunity to work in the technology industry here rather than have to drive to San Francisco or to Silicon Valley.

So thank you. We're trying to our part. We're trying to use transportation dollars and we're trying to do everything we can to create a better jobs-housing balance, as both Bobby and Ed have mentioned. Thank you for those questions.

We're hearing a lot of questions about parking at BART stations, mostly that there isn't enough. We're working on that. Who would like to take that question?

Loella Haskew:

It sounds like a Walnut Creek question. This is Loella Haskew again. There is a lot of controversy about our BART situation, and I actually have spent a little time going through the history of how we dealt with it. Part of the problem is BART. BART wants to get the trains and BART just assumes that nobody wants to drive their cars to the stations. When we were looking at developing the BART area, and this is before my time but I have talked to the people who did it, and when we were looking at developing the Walnut Creek BART residences and mixed uses, we said "You need to provide parking, developer or BART," and BART agreed to essentially allow the private developer to build a parking structure. They did and it [inaudible 00:54:04] supplied more than the BART parking that was available at the first before they started the production. But it's truly part of BART's issue they don't ever think that people want to drive to BART.

Another reason we're looking at buses and alternative methods of getting to BART as part of our transportation expenditure plan ... Bicycling is possible, making walking possible, looking at other alternatives in terms of getting people to the trains are all the things that we're looking at to make BART be as effective as it can be.

Randy Iwasaki:

Thank you, Loella. Thank you for the question. We had just a countless number of great questions. We apologize. We're running out of time. But before we say good night, I wanted to make sure that if you want e-mails from Contra Costa Transportation Authority, please press "7" on your phone. We want to thank on behalf of our Board and our 20-person staff, 11-member board, thank everybody who joined the call. I know it takes time and hopefully it was interesting and we're going to do this again. We loved getting your comments. You asked some great questions.

Public comments from this evening's call and other feedback will be shared with the Contra Costa Transportation Authority Board during their August meetings about the transportation expenditure plan. If we didn't get to your question tonight or comment, we'd like to remind you that you can also visit our website at [www.ccta.net/theplan](http://www.ccta.net/theplan) if you'd like to learn more. Hear a recording this Town Hall or take the online survey. Please take the online survey and post any questions that you may have. We hope to hear from you and thank you all for participating in tonight's Telephone Town Hall. Good night.