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Civic News Lamorinda

Transportation Wish List Requests Wanted

By Cathy Tyson

You don't need a crystal ball to look into the next quarter of a century and see continued county-wide growth fueling more traffic and congestion. At a recent meeting hosted by the Contra Costa Transportation Authority, or CCTA, the presentation underscored this point via colorful graphs that illustrated expected increases in population, households and jobs within the county.

The CCTA plans, funds, and delivers transportation infrastructure that connects communities throughout Contra Costa County; it's in the midst of updating the Countywide Transportation Plan for the next 25 years and is looking for public input at a series of meetings.

Residents are probably familiar with CCTA's high profile projects, such as the fourth bore of the Caldecott Tunnel, but may not be aware of other projects to reduce traffic congestion, including the butterfly bridge at Treat Boulevard, improved bike and pedestrian access to BART, and new carpool lanes on I-680.

Right now CCTA leaders are

gathering suggestions. "We want to take your ideas," said Dave Hudson at the Veterans Hall meeting on Sept. 10. Knowing up front that there simply isn't capacity to accommodate the projected increase in traffic, and seeking solutions that help get California to the 2035 goal for reduced greenhouse gases – focusing on transit is a no-brainer.

Lafayette mayor Don Tatzin outlined CCTA goals, research and smart phone technologies that could help build transportation solutions. "What should be on the list that isn't?" asked Tatzin.

What followed was a range of polite comments covering a wide variety of topics, from having a third BART tube under the bay to smart stop lights on Mt. Diablo Boulevard.

A number of people discussed having more funding for bicycle transit. A fellow from Bike East Bay explained that increasing bike access offers several benefits – it gets more cars off the road which decreases traffic, reduces greenhouse emissions, and lowers health care costs via rider

fitness. He also pointed out it's the cheapest bang for the project buck – improving bike paths is very economical, compared to widening a freeway or extending BART service.

Other topics included feeder lots with adequate parking and shuttles to BART; a trolley, similar to Walnut Creek's Free Ride, that would run up and down Mt. Diablo Boulevard; and express BART trains.

Rather ironic that almost everyone in attendance arrived via single occupancy vehicle to the planning workshop. For those who missed the meeting, the CCTA is still looking for suggestions and bright ideas; simply visit www.KeepContraCostaMoving.net and let your voice be heard. If you'd rather have paper, the survey can be mailed to you – just call (925) 256-4720 or email 2014CTP@ccta.net.

The organization believes that the future success of the county lies in the ability to ensure safe, reliable mobility for all. To take a peek at the draft Countywide Transportation Plan, go to www.ccta.net/funding/our_future.

From Front Page

Destination Downtown for Rockin' Good Time

... continued from page A1



Photo Gint Federas

With a near perfect layout – shade, plus a Sierra Nevada beer tent, grilled sausage tent, porta potties not far away, chairs and room for an asphalt dance floor, who wouldn't want to set a spell and listen to "Sledgehammer," "Kiss," and "In a Cold Sweat?"

Later in the afternoon cover bands Stealin' Chicago and Night Moves had amazing energy and

played many crowd favorites.

Talented Santana tribute band Zebop enchanted the crowd at the large Fiesta stage, near The Cooperage, with Latin classics. Lead guitarist Antonio Marquez, possibly separated at birth from Carlos Santana judging by his soulful delivery on lead guitar, was accompanied by a rocking percussion section complete with timbales, congas and talented singer Alfredo Lazo on lead vocals. Following Zebop on stage was cleverly named nine-piece band East Bay Mudd, who really got the crowd moving with their danceable, upbeat rhythm and blues songs, and yet another fantastic horn section. Wrapping up the day was Foreverland – a 14-piece tribute band to Michael Jackson – on the Fiesta stage, which featured a slamming horn section and four vocalists who covered MJ complete with funky dance moves.

It takes a village to put on an event this big: members of the Chamber of Commerce and a bevy of volunteers from a variety of groups including the Acalanes cheer-leading squad, who were at the Kids Zone, and lots of student volunteers kept the event rolling along – even tending the doggie cooling stations. Some very professional kids from Stanley Middle School's Opportunity Knocks program were minding the bike valet parking area – probably the best way, along with BART or walking, to get to the event.

Presented by the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce, the festival is a fundraiser that supports the chamber's many programs, Lafayette Partners in Education and other local nonprofit entities.

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