

**CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
SAN MATEO COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
1250 SAN CARLOS AVENUE, SAN CARLOS CA 94070
BACCIOCCO AUDITORIUM, 2ND FLOOR**

MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 3, 2009

MEMBERS PRESENT: B. Arietta, J. Bigelow, P. Dixon (Chair), J. Fox,
R. Hedges, R. Hees, S. Krause, D. Maez, L. Shaine, N. Stern,
A. Vargas, P. Young (Vice Chair), G. Zimmerman

MEMBERS ABSENT: A. Mader-Clark

STAFF PRESENT: T. Bartholomew, M. Choy, J. Hurley, M. Knuckles, R. Lake, B. Lee,
S. Murphy, R. Schmedes

Chair Pat Dixon called the meeting to order at 4:32 p.m., and Jim Bigelow led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Jim Bigelow was absent from the January 6, 2008 meeting. Rich Hedges added the Elderly and Disabled Advisory Committee of the MTC, changed MTC Web site to State of California Web site and changed 'the plan' to 'a plan' in paragraph four on page 2 of 7. With these corrections a motion (Zimmerman/Arietta) to approve the minutes of January 6, 2008 was passed.

Public Comment

Pat Giorni, Burlingame, attended the Congestion Management Environmental Quality Committee (CMEQ) meeting last Monday and said MTC is presenting its freeway enhancement in San Mateo, which may include high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) and high-occupancy toll (HOT) lanes. She said everyone should start thinking that by putting more accommodation on the freeway for vehicles; people will not have a great incentive to get out of their cars.

PRESENTATION – CALTRAIN ELECTRIFICATION PROJECT UPDATE

Electrification Program Manager Rick Schmedes said he has been working on the project exclusively for more than three years. He will present a status of where the project stands today and details of some main project components.

- The initial concept of was introduced in 1988; project planning began in 1999; environmental/conceptual engineering was completed in 2000-2005 and program milestones were updated in 2006.
- Electrification supports Caltrain's future operational growth, is compatible with regional interfaces and supports statewide initiatives.
- Main components of electrification are traction power supply (TPS); an overhead catenary system (OCS) and communication system.
- Pictures of the project showed minimal visual impact from outside the Caltrain right of way, integration of OCS poles into station design, multi-track design in terminal areas, right of way modifications and vegetation clearing requirements, two electrical substations in South

San Francisco and San Jose with incoming PG&E power lines, fiber optic network links control center with field devices, TPS and OCS and communications within one system design and rolling stock options, which include electric multiple units (EMU) and electric locomotives.

- There are no adverse impacts identified in the environmental assessment and Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Benefits include reduced train noise and vibration, substantially lower air pollutant emissions; lower energy consumption and travel time reduction due to enhanced acceleration/deceleration characteristics of electric vehicles.
- Current electrification activities include coordination of project details with PG&E, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), Union Pacific Railroad, Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), Transbay Terminal and High Speed Rail (HSR).
- Construction of the project systems is scheduled for 2011-2013.
- Estimated costs in 2008 dollars including TPS and OCS electrification systems, signals, communications, grade crossings and infrastructure total \$608 million.
- Project risks include funding constraints, regulatory support, development pressures along the Caltrain right of way, managing construction under live operations and community constraints, coordination with other capital projects and maintenance and regional agencies and public support.

Chair Dixon said she is concerned about birds and asked if the overhead lines will be coated-wire. Mr. Schmedes said all wires will be bare conductors. The wires are typically at least four to five feet apart and a bird could land on any one of the wires and not be affected. The length of the insulators for 25,000 volts is about two feet, which is typically a wide enough space that doesn't allow an animal to bridge the span.

Doris Maez said there is a 50 foot height limit in downtown San Bruno. She said a grade separation is above ground level and asked if the poles for the wires that are added on top of the grade separation would that exceed 50 feet. Mr. Schmedes said local ordinances were reviewed during conceptual design. In grade separation areas such as San Carlos, a 30 foot pole on top of the track bed would still be about the same height as other utility lines than run along the right of way. All wires will also be below any flight paths of area airports.

Chair Dixon asked how towers on the system are protected so children can't climb on them. Mr. Schmedes said the electrical transmission towers for the project near the substations are similar to towers that already exist along the Bay and cross railroad tracks. Towers for the project would be on the PG&E right of way and are not climbable poles. Substation facilities will be fully fenced with a 10 foot high secured anti-climbing perimeter fence.

John Fox asked if braking provides regenerative returning power to the overhead rail or is it dissipated as heat as in an automobile. Mr. Schmedes said it is assumed that the system can regenerate. All electric rail vehicles since the 1980s to 1990s have the ability to regenerate but many times because the electrical network can't accept power or the utility company doesn't want to accept it, it is wasted as heat. In work with PG&E, Caltrain wants to regenerate power and wants it to be used by other trains on the system.

Mr. Fox asked if there is redundancy so the system could be run on one substation. Mr. Schmedes said there are two main substations in South San Francisco and San Jose. Caltrain could run the north half of the system on one substation from South San Francisco and if power

from both substations was lost, Caltrain could run a reduced service with power from the San Jose substation.

Barbara Arietta asked about the cost comparison of an EMU vs. an electric locomotive. Mr. Schmedes said there is a cash flow and life cycle estimate that has been done on both types. Making the transition to an EMU is a little more costly and difficult but in the long run it saves on energy and wear and tear and there are fewer units required to run the service. EMUs are more efficient with longer trains with more passengers moved. If Caltrain goes from six to eight cars with an electric locomotive there will be a loss in performance. EMUs have power in each unit so there is no loss in performance with more cars.

Mr. Zimmerman asked if it would be possible or probable to have both types of vehicles in transition because Caltrain would be buying all new equipment with EMUs and electric locomotives could pull existing equipment. Mr. Schmedes said this is correct. It takes several months if not years for all the units to be delivered. There is usually a blend of service in the middle of transition and this is why there needs to be a solution for the advanced signaling issues with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) because in order to make the transition to EMUs Caltrain will have to run both types of equipment at the same time.

Randy Hees asked if diesel vehicles on the Dumbarton or Gilroy service would be converted to electric locomotives. Mr. Schmedes said the operating plan now is to keep them as diesel trains but this depends on the level of service and the relative speed because there is such better performance from an EMU. Deputy Director of Rail Transportation Michelle Bouchard is putting together operational plans and has looked at whether Caltrain will do cross platform transfers at San Jose and then run an electric unit.

Larry Shaine asked about a comparison of environmental pollutants. Mr. Schmedes said the environmental document is complete and will be submitted to the Federal Transportation Administration (FTA) in February. A lot of mitigation will not be required. The visual portion of the system with the overhead single lines is not out of character with the use of a railway. The diesel noise and vibrations will be decreased with lighter weight equipment, which also have zero emissions and a 90 percent reduction in particulates and diesel pollutants. The load on the PG&E network is about 0.1 percent of PG&E's overall capacity. Operational benefits include reduced travel time and reduced operational costs.

Mr. Hees asked where HSR fits into the electrification schedule. Mr. Schmedes said the electrification design can be tailored to accommodate a phased approach in which Caltrain and HSR can both benefit.

Mr. Zimmerman asked about the EIR signoff and release to the public in 2009. He asked if the EIR process requires approval by every jurisdiction from San Jose to San Francisco.

Mr. Schmedes said there has been outreach to the cities; comments answered; public hearings and answers to the public questions have been completed and a second volume to the environmental document will be released. Mr. Zimmerman asked which body will certify the document. Mr. Schmedes said the FTA.

Mr. Zimmerman asked about sources of funding. Mr. Schmedes said there is a substantial local contribution, which would be the three-member agencies.

TA Program Director Joe Hurley said the TA is expected to be asked to pay for San Mateo County's share.

Mr. Shaine asked why electrification was not continued from San Jose to Gilroy. Mr. Schmedes said it was economics. It is roughly another 25 miles with six to eight trains a day without full ridership and doesn't economically warrant electrification. The Union Pacific owns the property and this would require additional negotiations.

Mr. Shaine asked what would happen during bad storm conditions. Mr. Schmedes said Caltrain will tap into the main transmission line and would have a source of power unless the entire region is shut down.

Ms. Maez said she thinks San Mateo County is the mortgage holder for the Caltrain right of way; doesn't think San Francisco and Santa Clara counties have paid their share for the right of way purchase and Caltrain has not recovered the entire investment. She asked what the build-out of electrification will have on this issue, if any, once Caltrain builds and adds value to the right of way. Mr. Hurley said this would be part of the negotiations when the JPB member agencies come to the table.

Mr. Bigelow asked what happens to the foliage on the two-track area if it goes to four tracks in the Atherton/Menlo Park area and other areas along the Caltrain corridor. Mr. Schmedes said if there was a build-out to four tracks, and preliminary engineering has reviewed how much property is available; 75 feet of right of way is sufficient for four tracks and poles. It is not the intention to take any new property with this project. The main impacts may come from HSR build-outs, not from the electrification project. There are four track areas that have been identified that can be extended without any new property takes.

Ms. Arietta asked how much wind velocity the wires and poles can withstand. Mr. Schmedes said wire failure speed is 100 to 105 miles per hour and operations would be stopped before system damage would occur.

Mr. Fox asked if there was an emergency generator or contingency plan for reduced power in the event PG&E lost power. Mr. Schmedes said if all power is down in the area due to a major disaster, all equipment would have to be inspected and trains would not be running at that point. After the inspection train movement would be on diesel power.

Mr. Zimmerman asked, with regards to the extension to the Transbay Terminal, if all details of the project are predicated so that electrification would terminate at the 4th & King Caltrain station. Mr. Schmedes said the Transbay Terminal is a separate project and those project details would involve looking at extending Caltrain's electric network down into the tunnels for compatibility.

Public Comment

Pat Giorni, Burlingame, said if HSR is taken into consideration with electrification, she thought there is a need for a total of 85 feet of right of way for four tracks. She asked if that build-out should be done now to avoid replication and would it require taking of property. Mr. Hees responded by reiterating electrification is a separate project.

ITEMS FOR REVIEW – FEBRUARY 5, 2009 TA BOARD AGENDA

Approval of Minutes of January 8, 2009 – TA Item 4a

No discussion.

Acceptance of Statement of Revenues and Expenses for November 2008 – TA Item 4b

Mr. Shaine asked about footnote (B) on the Paratransit Funds table, which notes, “ The budget for the paratransit allocation will be adjusted to reflect the inability to fund paratransit services due to investment losses.” Mr. Hurley said the \$25 million paratransit trust fund corpus is intact. The interest from that corpus supports paratransit. When the current fiscal year started there was an interest income projection and that level of interest has decreased. Mr. Hurley said there may be a reduction in the money that was projected to be available to support paratransit from this funding source.

Mr. Hees asked if staff from paratransit could come to the next CAC meeting and explain impacts to TA funding, an understanding of what percentage of paratransit the TA is funding and what the impacts would be if TA payments were reduced. Mr. Hurley said this can be arranged.

Mr. Hedges said the level of paratransit service is beyond what the ADA requires and he is concerned that the service may have to be reduced with any reduced funding. He would like a full report on any impacts to paratransit funding.

South San Francisco Ferry Allocation Update – TA Item 7b

Mr. Hurley said there are continuing negotiations with the Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA) and the City of South San Francisco regarding the terms and conditions of the agreement.

Mr. Hees asked if WETA was missing a construction season because they have not received funding. Mr. Hurley said WETA is hoping it can move forward with construction this year.

Acceptance of Quarterly Investment Report and Fixed Income Market Review and Outlook for the San Mateo County Transportation – TA Item 11a

Treasury Manager Brian Lee said the report is a summary of a report by Tamalpais Wealth Chief Advisor Bill Osher, who will be presenting the report at the February TA Board meeting.

Mr. Zimmerman asked what the ratings are for TA’s corporate bonds. Mr. Lee said there is a new type of security as a result of the federal bailout program and the TA corporate bonds are insured by the FDIC with the full faith and credit of the U. S. Government behind them. There is no rating on these bonds because they are fully backed by the United States Treasury.

Mr. Zimmerman asked who manages the San Mateo County money pool. Mr. Lee said the fund is managed by County Treasurer Lee Buffington.

Mr. Hees asked if there is a loss of core TA capital. Mr. Lee said the TA lost \$22 million in Lehman Brothers securities in the County Pool. He said at this time the TA is cautious of retaining the principal rather than chasing after any higher rates.

Paul Young asked if there were any guarantees on the government bonds. Mr. Lee said those have protection and he would follow up with staff on the exact type of protection.

A motion (Shaine/Arietta) to recommend support of the acceptance of the quarterly investment report was passed. Ms. Maez and Mr. Zimmerman abstained.

Adoption of the 2009 Transportation Authority State and Federal Legislative Program – TA Item 12a

Manager of Government Affairs Seamus Murphy presented details of the proposed state legislative program and updates on federal and state issues.

- This is the first TA Legislative Program the TA is being asked to adopt, which will guide TA's advocacy efforts in Sacramento and Washington, D.C. over the coming year.
- The state program is organized around four primary themes: Financial stability for transportation, state implementation of the American Economic Recovery and Reinvestment Plan, project delivery and regulatory reform and greenhouse gas reduction policy implementation.
- The federal program is focused on the stimulus plan; SAFETEA-LU reauthorization, FY 2009 and 2010 appropriations and the Trouble Asset Relief Program (TARP) assistance for Local Governments Act of 2009.

Federal Update

- The most important issue is the federal stimulus package, which is called the American Economic Recover and Reinvestment Act.
 - a. On January 22 the House approved \$819; \$275 million for middle-class tax cuts and \$544 billion for spending.
 - b. Transportation and Transit component of package: \$30 billion for highways, \$7.5 billion for transit, both of which include a provision that prevents states from backfilling cuts they are making at the state level with federal stimulus funding.
 - c. The Senate introduced an \$885 billion package with \$27 billion for highways and \$8.4 billion for transit.
 - d. The difference in the two bills is that the Senate version includes \$5.5 billion for surface transportation competitive discretionary grants for highway or transit projects and \$2 billion for HSR projects.
 - e. Senator Charles Schumer is proposing an amendment on the floor that would include an additional \$2 billion each for transit grants and rail modifications and \$2.5 billion for new starts.
 - f. After any approval of the budget, work will begin on SAFETEA-LU reauthorization and FY 2010 appropriations. The TA will be deeply involved with federal advocates on these processes to try and identify specific projects that are eligible for funding and to try and craft a new transportation and transit funding structure that will benefit District agencies.

- g. Senator Diane Feinstein is introducing a TARP bill, which would provide \$10 billion to local governments to cover losses from the collapse of the financial industry and specifically for the approximate \$25 million loss of TA funds.

State Update

- There is a \$42 billion, 18-month deficit. The package approved by the legislature capped State Transit Assistance (STA) funding at \$150 million, which is down from the \$306 million approved in September 2008. The package would have repealed existing sales tax and excise taxes on gasoline and replaced them with a fee structure that would have provided no guaranteed funding for transit. It would have prevented the District from using the funding for any operations or rolling stock and could be used only for capital project.
- The TA is pushing four issues through the California Transit Association: ensuring STA funding be preserved at the \$150 million level; lowering voter threshold approval for local transportation/sales tax measures; advancing later year funds from voter-approved infrastructure Prop 1A-HSR bond, Prop 1B-transportation infrastructure bond and Prop 1C – housing bond, which applies to the Grand Boulevard Initiative and ensuring that sales tax extension applies to local sales tax to cover services, which means Measure A sales tax would apply to a whole new pool of services that would create revenue for the TA.

Mr. Zimmerman asked which elected officials and federal agencies will the TA work with to ensure enactment of the economic recovery package. Mr. Murphy said the TA is working with elected officials including Senators Diane Feinstein and Barbara Boxer and Representatives Anna Eshoo and Jackie Speier.

Mr. Hees referred to item 4 under the greenhouse gas reduction policy implementation in the State Legislative Program. He would like to see a statement in the comments section that says the TA supports the reduction of greenhouse gases and then go into the secondary statement that the TA is looking for support so that it is not an unfunded mandate.

Mr. Young asked if there are numbers on how the service tax may increase the TA budget. Mr. Murphy said staff is looking at this but does not have any preliminary estimates.

Mr. Young asked if anyone is evaluating a gasoline tax increase. Mr. Murphy said there has been conversation on this issue and the TA saddles that with the same caveat that the threshold should be reduced for approval of an increase in gasoline tax if it requires voter approval.

A motion (Zimmerman/Hees) to endorse the TA Legislative Program and incorporate individual member comments and commend staff on the excellent job in creating the program was passed.

REPORT OF THE CHAIR – PAT DIXON

- It was great to see recognition of the CAC members on the back page of the Strategic Plan and the TA Board will be thanked for the acknowledgment. Mr. Hurley said the TA very much appreciated the involvement of the CAC in last summer's outreach on the Strategic Plan.
- She will attend the Caltrain celebration on the completion of the California Avenue station improvements.

REPORT FROM STAFF

No report

COMMITTEE COMMENTS

April Vargas attended the inauguration in Washington, D. C. She said the Metro System was easy to use. Visitors could print out itineraries on various modes of transportation and receive transit alerts. Transit maps were easy to read and transit officials were very patient. She said a phone call must be made in order to receive transit information in San Mateo. She will talk to SamTrans to see if this can be improved.

Mr. Young said BART is now charging for parking at the South San Francisco station and it is important to arrive before 8:30 a.m. to find a parking space when parking is free.

Mr. Bigelow reported:

- Caltrain and HSR are working on a Memorandum of Understanding on how to work together.
- Distributed the fall Caltrain Connection newsletter and pointed out the article on EMUs.
- There were HSR scoping meetings in February in San Mateo, San Francisco and Santa Clara counties. HSR is accepting email comments/questions until March 6 at 5 p.m., with a draft report to follow. The scoping process is to be completed by the end of 2011.
- Ninety-one million dollars for Dumbarton Rail was officially given to the BART Warm Springs Project at the end of January. The Dumbarton EIR and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) are moving ahead. MTC is required to report in March on alternative funding for replacement of the \$91 million. Project updates will be reviewed at a meeting in Redwood City Council Chambers on February 18 at 1 p.m.

Ms. Arietta said the Pacifica Pilot Service-City/County Association of Governments (C/CAG) grant program has been a success with a 14 percent ridership increase on Route 14 since FY07 and a 10.7 percent increase on Route 110.

Ms. Maez said BART is also charging parking for handicap spaces and customers must use cash or some other means for parking.

Ms. Maez attended the MTC hearing on the 2035 Plan and said everyone should review this plan, which turns HOV lanes into combined HOV/HOT lanes. She asked how the TA will deal with this.

Mr. Hurley said the normal practice is that a new HOV lane will be constructed and if there is extra capacity in the HOV lane it could be sold to single occupancy vehicles (SOV). The TA in partnership with C/CAG and the MTC is investigating the possible conversion of a single occupancy vehicle lane to an HOV lane along the 101 Corridor. Data is being collected before any decision is made to support or oppose this idea. Ms. Maez said comments on the MTC 2035 Plan are due March 3.

Mr. Zimmerman said the Caltrain ticket vending machines could be made more user-friendly.

Mr. Hees attended the HSR scoping meeting in San Carlos. He is excited about HSR but also concerned about the impact of HSR along the Peninsula with tree removal, installation of grade crossings and impact on Caltrain during the construction phase.

Mr. Bigelow said there needs to be a study process to gather data on HOV and HOT lanes to see if there is merit for it along the Peninsula corridor.

NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting of the TA CAC will be held on Tuesday, March 3, 2009 at 4:30 p.m. at 1250 San Carlos Avenue, Bacciocco Auditorium, 2nd Floor, San Carlos, CA 94070.

ADJOURNMENT

6:46 p.m.