

Report of the TA Community Advisory Committee

Meeting of February 4, 2025

Committee Actions

- **4) Election of CAC Chair and Vice Chair for 2025** - The Committee elected Barbara Arietta as Chair and Mike Swire as Vice-Chair.
 - Staff presented the updated Rules for CAC elections and a list of candidates nominated for the roles.
 - Rich Hedges proposed a process for nominations for the floor as this was not mentioned in the new rules.
 - Mr. Hedges moved that the Chair determine the order of the vote.
 - The nominees were Ms. Arietta and Mr. Swire for Chair and Mr. Fox and Mr. Swire for Vice Chair. Mr. Swire asked that his name be removed from the nomination for Chair.
 - The Committee elected Ms. Arietta for Chair with eight ayes and one abstention.
 - Mr. Hedges took over temporarily as Chair as Mr. Fox was running for Vice Chair.
 - For Vice Chair, Mr. Fox and Mr. Swire each gave one-minute speeches:
 - Mr. Fox said that he has served on the Committee and as Vice Chair for many years. He said that the value of the Vice Chair position is institutional memory and running meetings in absence of the Chair. He also said that other members should get experience in leadership, too. Over the years, he has learned that the best use of the Committee is as eyes and ears for the Board and as the CAC aren't a policy making body.
 - Mr. Swire said Mr. Fox has done a great job but there is value in new voices and leadership. He said that while the CAC isn't a policy body, the CAC charter is to inform the Board what the public is thinking. He said that he was concerned that this wasn't always happening. He said that the write-ups were short and not capturing the detail of CAC conversations. He thus started doing the write-ups instead of the Chair. He said that he attends most Board meetings and has met with several Board members in-person. He said that he is passionate and vocal but has put his views aside in the write-ups, representing all the voices of the CAC.
 - Staff said that the vote needs to be done openly, not via secret ballot.
 - Mr. Swire received six votes, Mr. Fox received 3 votes, and one abstained.
 - Mr. Swire thanked Vice Chair Fox for doing an excellent job.

- Sandra Lang said that she likes both candidates and said that experience and institutional knowledge is important.
- Giuliano Carlini thanked Vice Chair Fox for his service but appreciated the value of rotating leaders.
- Nheeda Enriquez said that she was surprised that Vice Chair Fox didn't run for Chair because of the new rule on term limits for Chair. Staff said that the term limits are forward looking only. Vice Chair Fox said that he is willing to lead again but that this is a good solution for the present.

Consent Calendar - all approved unanimously

- **5a) Approval of Minutes of the CAC Meeting of January 7, 2025**
 - Giuliano Carlini asked that his adjustments to the minutes be accepted. Staff confirmed that they updated the minutes.
- **5b) TA Board Item 7.b Acceptance of Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for the Period Ending December 31, 2024**
- **5c) TA Board Item 7.c Accept Quarterly Investment Report and Fixed Income Market Review and Outlook**

Other Items

- **3) Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda**
 - No public comments
- **9) Report from Staff**
 - Staff explained that Board Item 12.a, Amending the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget to Increase Total Expenditures from \$191,035,418 to \$215,172,949, was left off the CAC Agenda in error. Thus, the CAC will discuss it as part of the Report from Staff. The CAC can provide feedback but cannot vote on the item.
 - Gus Mattammal asked why this issue was being reflected on the expense side and not the revenue side, as it is income. Staff said that the revenue was already recognized in prior years (except 2025).
 - Mr. Hedges asked how much money was left in the Dumbarton account. Staff said \$2.5 million, adding back the rental income for the original Measure A account. The new Measure A account has \$25 million remaining. Mr. Hedges said that the TA had \$50 million in the account at one time. He said that \$90 million in regional funds were reallocated to BART a while back. Staff said the expenditures probably occurred under

the original Measure A; there have been no Dumbarton expenditures in the new Measure A.

- Mr. Carlini said that this amount is large and asked why an audit didn't capture this? Mr. Carlini asked what is being done to ensure this doesn't happen again. Staff said the Finance team will investigate this issue and will ensure that Staff won't miss it in the future; audits will scan for this too.
- Ms. Lang asked about the audit process. Staff said that this is part of the annual audit by external auditors, not an internal audit.
- Mr. Swire asked why the Board was voting on this item but the CAC wasn't. Staff said this was an oversight as the item was not placed on the TA CAC agenda. However, Legal counsel informed staff could present the item under the report from staff and the CAC could comment and members could indicate how they would potentially vote, but no vote was possible due to the Brown Act.
- Vice Chair Fox asked during what period the amount accumulated and whether the TA accrued interest on this amount. Staff said that the money was included in the investment accounts (and thus accrued interest) but not the programming budget (for programming and allocation). Vice Chair Fox asked about the time frame to spend the money. Staff said that they will try to expend all original Measure A money by the end of the fiscal year but it may slip to the next year due to processes. Staff will bring back to the Board and CAC how this money will be used. Vice Chair Fox asked if this would help free up money on current Measure A. Staff confirmed that this is the case and that there is some flexibility in swapping money between the old measure and the new measure.
- Mr. Hedges said he is happy that the TA found the money and urged the TA to spend it wisely.
- Mr. Carlini asked what the annual upside will be from additional rental revenue. Staff said that it is roughly \$1 million per year across Measures A & W; they will provide a more precise number in the future.
- Mr. Hedges asked how much of the rental money comes from the property around the Broadway grade separation. Staff did not have the number available at the meeting and would look up the information.
- Vice Chair Fox asked the Board to identify internal accounting measures to make sure not to miss things like this going forward.

- **6) TA Board Item 7.a - Approval of Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting of January 9, 2024**
 - No discussion

- **7) TA Board Item 13 - Legislative Update**
 - No discussion

- **10) Report of the Chair**
 - *Chair Arietta wrote:*
 - Another good piece of news to report. Last month the positive news was about remuneration, the remuneration it had received from the sale of its original diesel trains to Peru. This month Caltrain is reporting that the positive news is about regeneration, the regeneration of energy. The agency is now stating that regenerative braking on the new electric trains is generating and sending back to the electric grid approximately 23 percent of the energy consumed by the system, thus, showing the new electric fleet to be more efficient than expected. Originally estimated to cost approximately \$19.5 million annually, Caltrain's electricity use since the launch of electric service averages 207 MWh on weekdays and 175 MWh on weekends, revising cost estimates to \$16.5 million. With the agency expecting approximately \$6 million annually in energy credits from the California Air Resources Board's Low Carbon Fuel Standard Program, Caltrain says the first year of electric service will have lower fuel costs than the previous diesel services. Currently, Caltrain is providing that power to the grid free of charge, as there is no legal requirement for the agency to be reimbursed for the energy generated. How does this regenerative braking work? Regenerative braking works by driving an electric motor in reverse to recapture energy rather than losing it as heat during braking. Caltrain's fleet is designed to return that power to the Overhead Contact System, which feeds it to the nearest traction power facility. From there it can be used to power other trains on the system or returned to the grid. According to Caltrain's Executive Director, Michelle Bouchard, this new electric fleet is delivering on its promise of providing state of the art service, living up to its mission of providing sustainable transportation that enhances the quality of life for everyone.

- **11) Member Comments/Requests**
 - Mr. Carlini said that the electric trains are nice, but bike car seats are not as comfortable as elsewhere. He hopes that the TA will measure Vehicle Miles

Traveled and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) on the 101/92 project, so the CAC can better inform future projects. He said that the Atherton Complete Streets project is asking the public for input on the width of bike lanes; however, the public doesn't weigh in on the width of auto travel lanes. This created a question of why National Association of City Transportation Officials or other standards are not followed when designing bike lanes. He would like to see a GHG source report from San Mateo County and lamented that there has been no progress in reducing GHGs on the Peninsula, urging for more action.

- Vice Chair Fox expressed his interest in licensing requirements for electric bikes/vehicles/motorcycles. He said that many of these vehicles should require licenses. He has been asking who in the County is working on this. He will report back on this.
- Karen Kuklin congratulated the election winners and thanked Vice Chair Fox for his service.
- Ms. Enriquez said that she was encouraged by the TA's coordination with the City of San Carlos regarding the Holly Street overcrossing danger. She said that the Board will be reviewing the CAC rules and asked about Board's perception of the CAC proposing agenda items. Staff said that it was discussed this with the Board Chair and Vice Chair and Legal, with an expectation of some discussion regarding the topic.
- Mr. Swire said that he will try to attend the Board meeting to help with the agenda question. Staff encouraged CAC members to write to the Board on the issue. He said that the City/County Association of Governments Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee is looking at the e-bike safety issue and trying to establish some guidelines to help cities develop informed policies. He discouraged bans on e-bikes but acknowledged safety is a concern. He said that the City of San Mateo just decided to rip out bike lanes in the North Central neighborhood, an equity priority neighborhood with the most dangerous streets in the City, many residents without cars, and several schools. He pointed out that the original bike lane project received grant funding and that the TA needs to have policies on reversal of projects funded through grants. He said that most bike boulevards aren't safe and shouldn't be considered for funding going forward. Vice Chair Fox said that there are challenges with separated bike lanes. Staff said that the TA will be sending a letter to the City of San Mateo, saying that TA funds cannot be used to fund the removal of bike lanes as the City of San Mateo. Staff also said that future agreements will have language warning of potential funding reimbursements if projects are removed.

- Mr. Hedges said that he is concerned with the Trump Administration taking back transportation money again. He said that the bike lane meeting with the San Mateo City Council went poorly, making the situation worse. He said that the Council was trying to find a compromise which isn't always the best solution. He said that several Councilmembers are rethinking their decision to remove the bike lanes. He said that removing parking is always controversial. He said that progress requires placating those concerned with parking; this turns many against bike lanes.
- Ms. Lang praised the election process. She would like to learn more about transportation and its details/acronyms. She said that Burlingame is looking into Vision Zero which should make streets safer. She encouraged the CAC to learn about this as the CAC is the eyes and ears of the community. Mr. Swire said that he circulated the Metropolitan Transportation Commission glossary.
- Mr. Mattammal thanked Vice Chair Fox for his service. He voted for Ms. Arietta and Mr. Swire as a mix of continuity and change. He noted that value engineering had greatly reduced the cost of a grade separation project by \$130 million. He wanted to know why the initial price was much higher and wonders whether California could save a lot of money through value engineering. Staff said that they will be providing updates on grade separations soon. All major projects go through grade separations, but the community planning process can point toward options that aren't always the cheapest; perhaps, costs need to be incorporated into the public discussions earlier in the process. He said that a CAC wiki could be helpful. Staff will try to find their training materials and suggested the MTC site.
- Jeff Londer praised the talents and dedication of the CAC Members. He thanked the current leaders and welcomed new leadership.

- **15) Date/Time of Next Regular Meeting: March 4, 2025, 4:30pm**