

Report of the TA Community Advisory Committee

Meeting of April 1, 2025

Committee Actions

- **6) A Board Item 11.a. Awarding Contracts to Arup US, Inc.; Fehr & Peers; HNTB Corporation; and Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc. for On-Call Planning, Grants, & Engagement Services for an Aggregate Total Not-to-Exceed Amount of \$14 Million for a Five-Year Base Term, with up to Two Additional One-Year Option Terms -**
unanimously approved by roll call vote
 - Ivan Bucio asked what “contract management qualifications” were and why it is the highest priority. Staff said that experience and communication with their team is very important, as is their previous project history. He questioned whether this should be the highest priority. He asked why cost is a lower priority. Staff said that this is for on call assistance and thus the specific project cost is determined at a later point.
 - Peter Ohtaki asked about the \$14 million maximum. Staff said that this is in aggregate, across all four contracts.
 - Sandra Lang asked whether this work would leverage old studies when possible. Staff said that focus would be on new feasibility studies for new projects. She wanted to make sure that efforts weren’t duplicated; staff said that they watch out for this.

Consent Calendar - all approved unanimously by roll call vote

- **4a) Approval of Minutes of the CAC Meeting of March 4, 2025**
- **4b) Approve Revised 2025 TA CAC Meeting Calendar**
- **4c) TA Board Item 5.a. Approval of Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting of March 6, 2025**
 - Ms. Lang asked whether the TA Board received the CAC’s commentary on the Broadway grade separation discussion. Staff said that the CAC’s write-up/report to the Board, prepared by Mike Swire, is very detailed, while the meeting minutes are action minutes. The meeting video is the official complete record of the meeting, however.
 - Mike Swire said that he provided the Board a personal comment on the US 101 Express Lanes North of 380 project. He said that Supervisor Speier made a comment, reflected in the San Mateo Daily Journal, questioning the rationale for the project, especially considering the difficulty of funding other projects such as the Broadway grade separation.

- Giuliano Carlini asked how long the TA keeps the CAC videos. Staff said that they keep videos for at least seven years. After that point, the action minutes become the official record.

- **4e) TA Board Item 5.c. Approve Revised 2025 Board of Directors Meeting Calendar**

Other Items

- **3) Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda**

- No public comment

- **5) TA Board Item 10.a. US 101/SR 92 Direct Connector Status Update (including two sub-projects)**

- Near-Term Area Improvements (not the Direct Connector future part of the project) / current project:
- Mr. Bucio asked what safety improvements are included as these roads are very unsafe in his experience. Staff said that a problem is drivers unsafely bypassing queuing to get to the Fashion Island Blvd exit.
- Rich Hedges said that the near-term improvements would cost \$51.6 million; staff confirmed this figure. The longer-term (Direct Connector) project will cost over \$150 million.
- Ms. Lang asked who drove the safety improvements analysis. Staff said that Caltrans looked at collision rates in the area and compared them to state averages to identify opportunities for improvement. She asked whether updates to the older analyses are necessary. Staff said that they will revisit the crash history only if there are significant changes to traffic patterns or the geometry that would affect collision patterns. Staff said that all modes of travel/crashes are included.
- Mr. Swire asked why the current design isn't safe; was it designed incorrectly or has something changed? Staff said that the infrastructure is old and was designed to different standards and traffic patterns. He asked whether an increase in traffic had increased dangers. Staff said that queuing contributes to unsafe behaviors. This project will start soon - a contractor was hired and funding is allocated.
- Mr. Hedges said that prior to 1982, the freeway ended at South Norfolk Street with an off-ramp. Drivers then needed to go through a stop light, with many crashes. He said the current design is a major improvement.
- Direct Connector / future project:
- Mr. Carlini asked whether Measures A and W prioritized congestion relief along the US 101/SR 92 corridor. Staff said yes. Mr. Carlini said that since he moved here in 1997, the capacity of SR 92 tripled from one to three lanes in each

direction, yet congestion is worse now. Staff said that the potential for worsening congestion would be assessed as part of the project's traffic analysis. He said historically there were various capacity expansions failing to improve congestion and, in his opinion, this project is doomed to fail. He indicated that this project should not continue and funding should be spent on projects that will improve congestion. He said that money spent to date here is wasted and additional spending should stop.

- Mr. Hedges said that the eminent domain taking of over 30 properties in several years could increase the project cost beyond the current \$150 million estimate. He worries that the project would displace less wealthy, long-term residents. He also said that it will be difficult to get enough funding for this given the current political situation.
- Mr. Ohtaki asked whether the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will look at traffic patterns and statistics for the three alternatives and their impact on congestion at peak hours. Staff said that the EIR will look at these details. He said that the process should go forward, relying on the experts who will do the quantitative analysis to determine the congestion benefit. He said he moved back to the area in 1990 and for the past 34 years this has been a major traffic congestion chokepoint. He said that traffic flows like water and that blockages can migrate to other roads. He said that residents voted for Measures A and W and Regional Measure 3 based on improvements to this interchange and there is a reliance on voters to perform a thorough analysis before money is spent on construction. He said let's see what the EIR comes up with.
- Gus Mattammal said that the Bay Area population since 1997 has increased by 7.7 percent and San Mateo County is up by 6.5 percent. Traffic congestion increases greatly with small increases in population. He recommended keeping an open mind on causes and effects.
- Mr. Swire disagreed with Mr. Mattammal's statement. He said that a six percent increase in population doesn't require a 50 percent increase in capacity (assuming two existing lanes). Mr. Swire said he believed this is the worst project that the CAC has reviewed in recent years. He said that millions of dollars should not be spent every year in hopes that magical data will solve congestion in this corridor. He said that congestion is not a stated objective of the project; the objectives say that those paying for the Express Lane will see travel time reliability (but those in general purpose lanes will not see improvements). According to Mr. Swire, no one in San Mateo (the location of the project) supports the project; and three of five San Mateo City Council members oppose the project. The San Mateo Council will meet Monday, April 7,

on the subject. He said the carpooling goal was not realistic given that a carpooling benefit has not been determined in the recent US 101 Express Lane project given the increase in drivers electing High Occupancy Vehicles (HOV3+), potentially to avoid payment. He said that there is currently no public transit on the San Mateo Bridge and thus the only people who will benefit from the lanes will be East Bay residents, corporate shuttles, and those who can afford to pay for the Express Lanes. Those that suffer from the project will be lower income and more diverse residents who live adjacent to the highway. He criticized the TA for not mentioning potential property takes related to over 30 homes and two parks; he said that the TA will lose credibility by failing to be up front with this. He said that San Mateo County taxpayers shouldn't be paying for projects that facilitate commuting for East Bay residents when trying to increase housing on the Peninsula. He also said that the project summary fails to mention any pollution impact. He said that spending additional money for two years on a project that won't work should not take place.

- Ms. Lang asked about effective outreach to commuters. Staff said that they will make sure to be thoughtful in reaching out to all (including commuters), especially those in the project area. She asked whether funding will be available. Staff said that they will come up with a new cost estimate, schedule, and funding plan to determine if/how to move forward with the project.
- Mr. Bucio said that Measure A was approved long ago, featuring this project, but that the construction might not start until much later; why this delay given our promise to voters? Staff said that when new Measure A was authorized, the TA was not an authorized sponsor for highway program projects. Thus, the planning phase was initiated and led by the Cities of Foster City and San Mateo. Later, the TA took on sponsorship given the project size and cost. He asked whether future processes could be expedited. Staff said that the technical assistance program aims to expedite project development and delivery by helping lead these large projects; nevertheless, government funded transportation projects take a very long time. He also asked whether if there are rough cost estimates by phases and how this compares to other projects; this would help the public understand project costs and funding needs. Staff said that they can provide historical cost data, but it is difficult to forecast future costs in the EIR process. He noted that the Broadway project cost had increased significantly.
- Mr. Ohtaki recommended outreach through San Mateo County Economic Development Association (SAMCEDA) and to teachers, many of whom live in the East Bay. Staff confirmed they will be reaching out to SAMCEDA.

- Mr. Carlini suggested conducting outreach to those who would not use the project and would not benefit from the \$200 million cost. He said that there are many other uses of the money that would benefit those who do not travel from the East Bay. He asked about current spending for Phases I and II of the project. Staff said that \$10.2 million has been allocated for the Environmental Phase (including public scoping). To date, \$1.5 million has been exhausted. He asked who initiated the project. Staff said that that congestion in the US 101/SR 92 interchange was mentioned in the original and new Measure A sales tax measures approved by voters. Both the City of San Mateo and Foster City were the original leads for the project and transferred it to the TA in the last seven years when the Board gave authorization to lead projects. He asked whether the cities had asked for this specific solution. Staff said that the cities asked for projects that addressed congestion relief in the area, and they led the initial planning process, as well as Caltrans, that suggested the direct connector as a potential solution to congestion in the interchange idea. Staff said that this specific project was not listed in the sales tax measure, rather addressing congestion within the US 101/SR 92 interchange. Mr. Carlini indicated he believes this project will not reduce congestion or improve safety and is thus silly. He said that usage will exceed the additional capacity and queue depths will increase again. Staff said that they will compare no build to the build alternatives. He said that, in his opinion, past engineering projections have dramatically underestimated demand, resulting in a continual ask for additional capacity. He said that he believes safety won't improve and drivers will flow over into the local streets. He said that the project is thought to be necessary because of failure to develop housing for our workforces and thus many need to live across the bridge. He said that it would be better off using the \$200 million for the project to build more housing on the Peninsula. He said the project is a boondoggle and bound to fail and will ultimately increase the number of people living far in the East Bay.
- Mr. Hedges said that his main concern is the potential elimination of 33 homes, including residents who have lived there for multiple generations. The freeway was two lanes each way when they purchased their homes. He said this is a more affordable neighborhood that shouldn't lose housing. He worries about insufficient project funding with the potential eminent domain requirements, similar to what was proposed for the Peninsula interchange. He said that the increase in businesses on the Peninsula, not the increase in population, has driven the increase in congestion. There are almost 700 new AI startups in SF, all working five days per week in the office; this will increase traffic in SM County.

He asked whether existing flyovers would remain. Staff said that the existing connectors would not be removed because of the project. He said that stop and go traffic and pollution leaves black residue on his porch and that reducing stop and go traffic would be a pollution benefit. He asked for a way to do the project without the impacting properties in San Mateo. Staff acknowledged the concern and said that there is a prescriptive process for property takings that requires many more steps before any acquisitions may be done and they would look for ways to minimize/avoid the need for takings. He asked whether part of Fiesta Gardens Park will be taken. Staff said that Fiesta Gardens was mentioned in the Project Initiation analysis but that an updated assessment would be done as part of the current environmental review that will use more refined designs that may avoid or minimize those potential impacts.

- Mr. Swire asked how confident staff is in the \$200 million cost. Staff said that this was a 2021 estimate and that it will change given that it is based on a very conceptual design. The cost estimate will be updated at the end of this phase. He said that since then, massive inflation has affected construction costs. Staff agreed that the cost could be significantly higher than \$200 million. He said that Measure A did not mention Express Lane Direct Connectors; it simply mentioned “operational improvements”, which could mean several things. He said that it is misleading to say that this project is owed to taxpayers. He said that if another regional tax measure was to take place, it’d be best to not mislead the public.

Public Comment

- Karen Cutler, a San Mateo resident, said that she is upset. She asked TA staff if they were contacting her neighbors on Adams and Washington Street about the project. She only found out about the project last year and has yet to hear from staff. She said that her neighborhood will be impacted by the project and doesn’t want her home taken. Many cannot afford new housing, and this will ruin their lives. She said that the \$200 million spent will not reduce congestion. She said that without changes on the bridge, the bottleneck will remain. She believes the project will increase noise, traffic, congestion, construction, pollution, and ugly infrastructure. She said that the \$200 million should instead be spent on better public transportation. She said neighborhoods shouldn’t be destroyed when more housing is needed on the Peninsula. She said the project should not benefit only East Bay commuters. She said that the loss of homes could cost people their jobs if they need to move. These two neighborhoods are diverse and pay taxes; they are not expendable. She encouraged the TA to explore alternatives to address traffic. She asked why there has been no

outreach besides word of mouth and door-to-door visits from their local elected officials. Staff noted that public outreach to the neighborhood has yet to start; staff said that invitations have been sent to those identified as having a potential property impact in the Project Initiation Document. The invitation should arrive this weekend.

- Chair Barbara Arietta asked whether the TA offered legal and financial assistance for those impacted. Staff said that property acquisition, if necessitated by the chosen alternative, won't happen anytime soon; it is a very long process. If there were a need to acquire property, owners would be provided with financial assistance during the acquisition process. She said that even 15 years can go quickly and there is worrying in the process; people want to be prepared.
- Olivia McNally, the President of the Shoreview Parkside Neighborhood Association President in the City of San Mateo, said that she also lives in the area. She said that the only outreach has been from her neighbors and San Mateo City Council member. She said that starting outreach now is too late. There is an uproar, and people are frantic in the neighborhood. She said that if the TA has been discussing this for four years, the outreach is four years too late. Many residents have limited savings beyond their home equity. Neighbors beyond the 33 homes are also impacted, and the outreach needs to reach the whole neighborhood. All homes will lose value. She urged the TA to get out and start talking to the community.

- **7) TA Board Item 12.a. Receive Legislative Update**

- Mr. Hedges asked how Assemblywoman Wicks' bill on reducing the need for EIRs for housing was playing in the legislature. Staff will look into this.

- **8) Report of the Chair**

- Road Conditions - San Mateo County - Pavement Condition Index (PCI)
- Overall, pavement conditions on the Bay Area's 44,000 lane miles of local streets and roads landed once again in fair territory in a recent report by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), with the typical stretch of roadway showing serious wear and likely to require rehabilitation soon. Data released by MTC put the region's 2023 pavement condition index (PCI) score at 67 out of a maximum possible 100 points on a three-year moving average basis. This marks the ninth consecutive year Bay Area streets and roads have registered an average score of 67.
- PCI is a numerical score (0-100) that measures the condition of a street's surface. New streets start at 100 and lower over time. This data helps determine

maintenance needs, needed budget for improvements and contributes to planning for long term street upgrades.

90 or higher - "Excellent"

These are newly built or resurfaced streets that show little or no distress.

No cities or towns in San Mateo County have this rating

80 to 89 - "Very Good"

Shows only slight or moderate distress requiring primarily preventive maintenance.

County, Cities, and Towns	Miles	3 Year Average		
		2021	2022	2023
Hillsborough	166.4	78	79	81

70-79 - Considered "Good"

County, Cities, and Towns	Miles	3 Year Average		
		2021	2022	2023
Daly City	256.8	79	77	78
Foster City	117.9	80	78	78
Menlo Park	196.8	79	78	77
Burlingame	170.8	79	77	77
Portola Valley	70.9	77	77	77
Colma	26.9	78	76	75
South San Francisco	295.4	72	73	75
Woodside	96.3	81	76	75
Atherton	105.4	75	75	74
San Mateo County	629.0	74	74	74
Brisbane	67.9	76	74	73
San Mateo	428.9	73	70	71

60-69 - "Fair"

Becoming worn to the point where rehabilitation may be needed to prevent rapid deterioration. Because major repairs cost five to ten times more than routine maintenance these streets are at an especially critical stage.

County, Cities, and Towns	Miles	3 Year Average		
		2021	2022	2023
Redwood City	359.3	73	70	69
Belmont	139.0	60	65	67
Half Moon Bay	95.4	66	67	66
East Palo Alto	82.6	62	60	60
San Bruno	180.5	62	62	63

50-59 - Deemed "At Risk"

County, Cities, and Towns	Miles	3 Year Average		
		2021	2022	2023
San Carlos	179.3	61	58	57
Millbrae	112.6	56	55	53

25-49 - Considered "Poor"

These roads require major rehabilitation or reconstruction.

County, Cities, and Towns	Miles	3 Year Average		
		2021	2022	2023
Pacifica	189.1	42	43	47

Below 25 - Considered "Failed"

No cities or towns have this rating.

- Ms. Lang asked whether the road quality grades included State highways. Staff said that only locally controlled roads (i.e., not El Camino Real) are included, based on input from local jurisdictions.
- Mr. Swire asked how road maintenance was funded. Staff said that the Local Roads and Streets bucket (22.5 percent of Measure A and 10 percent of Measure W) funds road maintenance, although it can be used for non-maintenance purposes, too. Staff said that in Measure W, maintenance spending is required if a city's road quality is below 70. Mr. Carlini said that other local funding measures can also fund maintenance .

- Chair Arietta said that road quality is very important to residents and that coast side roads are in rough shape. She said that potholes can cause expensive repairs for autos.
- Mr. Hedges said that street quality is a good indicator of a city's economic viability, as it is very important to residents.
- Chair Arietta also said that she has heard from local community college students requesting shuttle service between their campuses.
- **9) Report from Staff**
 - Executive Officer Peter Skinner encouraged CAC members to put forward ideas for the new CAC-initiated discussions on non-agenda topics.
 - Mr. Carlini said that the US 101/Holly Street project should include quick build options with posts and protected intersections like in San Francisco. He didn't think this was in the initial design. He thanked staff for the graphs on Managed Lanes but asked for the underlying data over a longer timeframe.
- **10) Member Comments/Requests**
 - Ms. Lang emphasized the importance of road quality.
 - Mr. Swire urged CAC members to attend the April 7 San Mateo City Council meeting regarding the US 101/SR 92 Direct Connector project. He also mentioned that the City of Burlingame is considering a bike lane proposal for which it has received Bike and Pedestrian funds from the Transportation Development Act Article 3 program , although they may adopt something different from their grant application. He thanked staff for their vigilance in ensuring that grant recipients follow through on their promised upgrades.
 - Mr. Bucio said that many East Bay residents don't have a choice when they move to the East Bay; many are displaced from the Peninsula. He said it will take time to build more affordable housing on the Peninsula.
 - KarenKuklin said that there is a good flow chart online with 18 categories of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review. She said that projects can fail in this phase.
 - Mr. Carlini thanked staff for their assistance. He said that public money should be spent to help people continue to live here, instead of commuting from afar.
- **11) Date/Time of Next Regular Meeting: Tuesday, April 29, 2025, 4:30 pm**