

Report of the TA Community Advisory Committee

Meeting of April 29, 2025

Committee Actions

- **5) (TA Board Item 10.a.) - Programming and Allocating \$13,652,753 in New Measure A Local Shuttle Program Funds for the San Mateo County Shuttle Program Call for Projects for Fiscal Years 2026 and 2027 and Programming and Allocating \$400,000 in New Measure A Oversight Funds for San Mateo County Shuttle Study - *unanimously approved***
 - Giuliano Carlini asked how cities request these shuttle funds - e.g., for College of San Mateo. Staff said that cities can submit applications for new shuttle services after doing a shuttle study. Mr. Carlini asked what funding match was required. Staff said 25 percent was required.

- **6) (TA Board Item 10.b.) - Allocation of Regional Transit Connection Funds - *unanimously approved***
 - Sandra Lang asked whether the Broadway Grade Separation project could qualify for this money (similar to Redwood City grade separation which is listed under Project Submissions). Staff said the project at Broadway could not apply due to lack of a station .
 - Peter Ohtaki asked whether the Dumbarton Connector project would connect to Redwood City 4-Track Hub Station and thus potentially Dumbarton Rail. Staff said the two projects are being coordinated and would interact with potential rail projects.
 - Mr. Carlini asked about the rough cost of a potential Dumbarton rail connection. Staff said this would cost billions of dollars. He asked whether SamTrans qualifies for first/lastmile funding. Staff said that the last mile to SamTrans routes is in scope. He asked how the Bay Trail qualifies for last mile connectivity. Staff said that the interchange project in the Port area would connect to the Bay Trail. He asked why the Huntington project was so expensive. Staff said that regrading and landscaping are driving much of the cost. He worried that car projects were getting “bike” money. He asked what level of bike lane safety is required for the TA for these projects, given that comfort drives adoption and mode shift. Staff said that standard Class III Bike Routes are not funded, but Class III Bike Boulevards qualify if they include adequate traffic calming. This aligns with National Association of City Transportation Officials All Ages and Abilities standards. He said that separated bike lanes are the best solution for

safety. He said that station access and bike storage is important for people who bike; he asked whether the TA has requirements and hoped that the TA encouraged this. Staff said that Caltrain has a station access policy, too. He said that safe storage is very important to increasing adoption.

- Vice Chair Mike Swire asked whether the Next Generation Fare Gates program was proposed by Bay Area Rapid Transit and how this improves transit. Staff said the gates improve revenue capture, safety, and rider experience. Staff said that this project didn't meet all of the TA's requirements but generally scored well. He suggested that in the future, "last mile" should be its own category, combining this with shuttles. Staff said that this could be considered as they serve similar purposes.
- **7) (TA Board Item 11.a.) - Public Hearing: Adopting a Budget in the Amount of \$187,105,622 for Fiscal Year 2026 - *approved unanimously***
 - Mr. Carlini said that bike programs received a 0.1 percent distribution; that is very small. Staff said that the original Measure A (1988) had very different priorities from the current measures.
 - Mr. Ohtaki applauded the balanced budget and surplus. He said that the TA has \$876 million in the bank on the balance sheet, earning little interest. This amount will increase in the coming years, but federal and state money might be tighter. Can this money be used to fund larger projects, regardless of federal and state shortfalls, to make projects happen more quickly? If not, should the Express Lane loans be paid more quickly? Staff said that they are looking at this issue and how to get money out the door more quickly. Staff said that many large projects take years to move forward (e.g., SR-84/US-101 interchange) but once they go to construction, funds will be spent down. Much of the funding is already programmed or allocated. Staff said that there is a lag between accrual and spending, and staff is working on shortening this timeline. He suggested that someone look at whether bonds should be retired - a financial decision.
 - Sandra Lang asked why the recategorization of original Measure A was necessary. Staff said that the recategorization helps migrate "old" funds to new categories, facilitating the closure of the original Measure A. There is no "loss" of funds as the collection of sales tax ended in 2009.

- **8) (TA Board Item 12.a.) - Receive Legislative Update and Approve Legislative Proposal: Senate Bill 239 (Arreguin) and Assembly Bill 259 (Rubio) - *unanimously approved***
 - Rich Hedges said that Proposition (Prop) 35 set high Medicaid/Cal reimbursements in California, potentially impacting other funding needs. He asked whether the currently difficult budget situation would thus mean little money for transportation. Staff said that they will look into this.
 - Ms. Lang remarked that Governor Newsom's budget raised concerns for state funding for transportation (and education), especially in light of Prop 35.
 - Mr. Carlini said that the proposed federal budget bill will hurt hundreds of millions of people to give more money to a few thousand people at the top of the income scale.
 - Ms. Lang asked whether there is still time for more state budget revisions. Staff said that there is time for more revisions, and that transit agencies are weighing in prior to a revised budget coming out.
 - Mr. Hedges said that nothing is sure until the budget is signed by Governor Newsom, as he has a line-item veto.
 - Mr. Carlini asked about the 2030 sunset for the Brown Act bills, given the ubiquity of teleconferencing. Staff said that these changes take time due to opposition from some parties in other areas of the state.
 - Vice Chair Swire suggested that the TA support Assembly Bill (AB) 1085 (Stefani) to improve enforcement of illegal license plate covers, especially given the need to collect revenues for the Express Lanes. Staff said that they can bring this forward at a later date.

Consent Calendar - *all approved unanimously*

- **4a) Approval of Minutes of the CAC Meeting of April 29, 2025**
- **4b) (TA Board Item 5.a.) - Approval of Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting of May 1, 2025**
- **4c) (TA Board Item 5.b.) - Accept Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for the Period Ending April 30, 2025**
- **4d) (TA Board Item 5.c.) - Accept Capital Projects Quarterly Status Report for 3rd Quarter of Fiscal Year 2025**
 - Mr. Carlini asked whether these projects will require metrics that evaluate success in meeting goals - e.g., reducing pedestrian crashes. Staff said that a closeout report includes what is built but not the resulting performance; there is no such requirement. Mr. Carlini said that it's important to know whether projects are successful when determining whether they are worthwhile.

- Nheeda Enriquez noted that US 101 North of Interstate 380 project delays are caused by various causes. She asked what it meant to decommission funding for the Plans, Specifications, and Estimates (PS&E) phase. Staff said that delays may require de-obligation and application for future funding. Different projects apply for one or more phases at a time.
- **4e) (TA Board Item 5.d) - Accept US 101 Express Lanes Quarterly Update on Variable Rate Bonds and Express Lanes Performance**
 - Mr. Carlini is grateful that 101.expresslane.org has data in chart form. He would still like to see the underlying data on the number of vehicles and distributions, as he has asked for in the past. Staff said that they will need to talk with the Joint Powers Authority Policy/Program Management team and answer.
- **4f) (TA Board Item 5.e.) - Establishing the Appropriations Limit Applicable to the San Mateo County Transportation Authority During Fiscal Year 2026**
- **4g) (TA Board Item 5.f.) - Authorizing Funding for Matching Contributions for the El Camino Real: Fast Tracking Corridor-Wide Implementation of a Safe, Connected and Transit-Oriented Boulevard Project**
 - Mr. Carlini asked if this is the same as the SamTrans Central Multimodal Plan. Staff said that this is different - a Metropolitan Transportation Commission grant for the Grand Boulevard initiative for the entire corridor, including all cities and partner agencies. Mr. Carlini praised this initiative. He asked whether it would only look at buses. Staff said that SamTrans had asked for a reliability study to improve travel times. Mr. Carlini said that mass transit is our biggest need and that El Camino buses serve a similar need/corridor to Caltrain. Staff said that the El Camino Real (ECR) bus largely serves short distance patrons.
 - Mr. Hedges said that many bus riders stop at the community hospital and use short hops from home to employment.
- **4h) (TA Board Item 5.g.) - Programming and Allocating \$5,393,205 in Measure A Funds to the San Mateo County Transit District for its Paratransit Program and to the Peninsula Traffic Congestion Relief Alliance for Commute.org's Operations and Transportation Demand Management Monitoring Program**

Other Items

- **3) Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda-** No public comment
- **9) Report of the Chair- direct report from packet**
 - "There are many transportation challenges that the San Mateo County Transportation Authority and other Bay Area transit agencies face in order to operate efficiently. But in the 18 years that I have been a member of the

Transportation Authority's Community Advisory Committee (CAC), the last 15 of which being the Chair of same, I have concluded that the infusion of a steady stream of funding for any and all projects is of the utmost importance, and the more financial support that you can get for a project, the better the chances are that it will have a successful completion.

- Money is the "bottom line." Money is the deciding factor in what projects go forward and what projects do not. Without a sustainable source of funding, budget challenges will force transportation agencies across the Bay Area to make major cuts in both projects and services.
- Currently, the passage of a Regional Measure authorized by Senate Bill (SB) 63 is crucial for the future of transportation funding in the Bay Area, particularly for San Mateo, San Francisco, Alameda, Contra Costa and Santa Clara Counties, due to the potential for a dedicated funding source of major transit systems such as Caltrain.
- Here's why it's so important:
 - 1. Addresses a Dire Funding Need:
 - Major transit agencies like BART, SF Muni, Caltrain and AC Transit face significant operating deficits of over \$700 million by 2026, potentially leading to drastic service cuts without new funding being supplied.
 - SB 63 provides a mechanism (a sales tax) to generate most needed revenue to sustain and improve these critical transit systems.
 - 2. Enables a Regional Funding Solution:
 - The bill allows for a regional tax measure to be placed on the 2026 ballot, creating a dedicated and reliable funding source for transit.
 - It encourages a collaborative approach requiring counties and transit operators to work together on a spending plan to allocate funds effectively.
 - 3. Promote Financial Efficiency and Coordination:
 - SB63 mandates financial efficiency revenues for transit agencies receiving funding potentially leading to cost saving measures.
 - It requires agencies to comply with regional coordination, policies promoting better integration and a more seamless transit experience for riders.
 - 4. Provides an Opportunity for Voter Approval:

- The bill allows for the tax measures to be placed on the ballot, giving voters the opportunity to decide whether to invest in the future of public transit.
 - A tax measure placed on the ballot through a citizen's initiative would only require a simple majority to pass, raising the likelihood of success.
 - Specific Importance for the Three Counties:
 - San Francisco: Muni faces a significant funding gap and SB63 offers a potential solution through a dedicated sales tax.
 - San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties:
 - These counties can opt into the Regional Measure, potentially benefiting from the funding to support services like Caltrain, which is facing its own financial challenges.
 - The Legislature has given both San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties until July 31, 2025, to opt in.
 - City Councils are presently holding City Council meetings to decide whether to support this new Regional Measure."
 - Mr. Carlini said that the Board has received public letters of support for Senate Bill (SB) 63.
- **10) Report from Staff**
 - The CAC briefly discussed the two information sessions that have been approved for the coming year. After this meeting, staff will circulate a list of potential topics, asking members to volunteer as owners. At the next meeting, the CAC can vote on potential topics. It will only consider topics where a CAC member has volunteered as owner and is willing to organize the session (potentially with one to two other CAC members). Ideally, there should be a variety of presenters and the topics will be of interest/concern to much of the CAC.
 - Mr. Carlini asked whether the CAC could recommend a topic to the Board. Staff said they would look into this possibility and the meetings will also be captured in the CAC Meeting Notes.
 - **11) Member Comments/Requests**
 - Mr. Carlini wanted the CAC to weigh in on the SamTrans Central El Camino Multimodal Plan. He thought that the CAC could have suggested bus rapid transit and other bus priority options that would encourage more people to take the bus. He said that current Measures A & W confuse people. He thinks that subsequent renewals should be simpler and more flexible. This will encourage

public support. He thought that goals, not projects/modes, should drive the funding options - e.g., fund safety, mode shift, etc.

- Ms. Enriquez voiced support for the Grand Boulevard Initiative and Regional Connections programs. Staff said that the plethora of jurisdictions can impede progress.
 - Ms. Lang also expressed interest in the Grand Boulevard project. She thanked Jeff Londer for his service to the CAC. She also said that potholes on El Camino need to be addressed by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans).
 - Mr. Londer said goodbye to the CAC after twelve years of service. He plans on continuing his travels around the world.
 - Mr. Ohtaki announced that he, too, is stepping down from the CAC, after six years of service.
 - Mr. Hedges praised Los Angeles's (LA) recent transit improvements and funding mechanisms. He said that having a car in LA may no longer be necessary.
- **12) Date/Time of Next Regular Meeting: Tuesday, July 8, 2025, 4:30 pm**