

## Report of the TA Community Advisory Committee Meeting of July 8, 2025

### Committee Actions

- **6) (TA Board Item 11.b.) - Programming and Allocating Measure A Caltrain Category Funds to the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board for Purchase of Property Along the Caltrain Right of Way in Burlingame; Making Required Findings Under the Surplus Land Act; and Authorizing the Executive Director to Convey Grant Deeds to the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board for Such Properties - *approved with one opposed***
  - Sandra Lang asked whether business displacement costs are included. Staff said that Caltrain will need to follow established rules for relocating businesses. Staff confirmed that Caltrain can do what it wants with the property. The Joint Powers Board (JPB) will manage the transaction.
  - Rich Hedges said that he estimates the property is worth \$2+ million based on recent inflation; thus, the buyout amount is nice. Staff agreed.
  - John Fox said that the “make whole” concept suggests that the TA is not a for-profit business. He asked who got the lease payments. Staff said the TA has received the revenue. He said that thus the “make whole” value should reflect the revenue and expenses. He wondered whether this was the right methodology. He suggested a quick accounting summary versus a more formal present value analysis. Staff said that they have recouped costs, including rental income.
  - Giuliano Carlini asked whether the money would eventually come back to the TA. Staff said it won’t be coming back to the TA; it is a credit for what the TA owes for the Burlingame grade separation project - the credit facilitates the sale.
  - Mr. Hedges said that the TA are getting a credit on Measure A Caltrain funds for the land.
  
- **7) (TA Board Item 11.c.) - Programming and Allocating Measure A Grade Separation Category Funds to the City of Burlingame and Measure A Caltrain Category Funds to the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board for the Redesign of the Broadway Grade Separation Project - *approved with one opposed***
  - Chair Barbara Arietta asked why the total dollars aren’t included in the Motion description in the agenda; this should be in there for the public’s information.
  - Mike Swire asked about the timing of construction. Staff said estimated construction would start in 2027, for cost purposes, and require three years.
  - Ms. Lang asked whether the costs were for a new design. Staff said that costs will change after getting to the 65 percent point.
  - Mr. Carlini asked whether the \$15 million was in the total project cost. Staff said yes. He asked whether it was realistic to get the other required \$300

million. Staff said that they are prepared to seek grants, taxes, loans, or state/federal funding. He expressed concern about spending another \$7 million when the project is not funded and very uncertain. These funds can only be used for this project. Staff said that the Board's ad hoc committee is looking at this in August.

- Karen Kuklin was concerned with the danger of the intersection and was willing to take the risk that there would be funding. She suggested looking at costs before getting to the 65 percent rate.
  - Mike Swire asked how much is available annually for grade separations. Staff estimated \$15-20 million. He hoped that there could increase grade separation funds through a renewed Measure A, but staff said that these projects poll poorly.
  - Ms. Lang asked whether the ad hoc committee would address the concerns.
- **8) (TA Board Item 12.a.ii.) - Receive Legislative Update - Approve Legislative Proposal: Assembly Bill 476 (González), Assembly Bill 1014 (Rogers), and Assembly Bill 1085 (Stefani) - approved unanimously without discussion**

**Consent Calendar - all approved unanimously**

- **4a) Approval of Minutes of the CAC Meeting of June 3, 2025**
- **4b) (TA Board Item 5.a.) - Approval of Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting of May 31, 2025**
  - Vice Chair Mike Swire asked why the TA Board had a robust discussion on the 101/92 Direct Connector last month while the CAC did not. He stated the CAC's agenda is supposed to mirror the Board's. Executive Officer for Transportation Authority Peter Skinner stated this topic was part of the Executive Director's Report and that the lengthy discussion followed comments/questions from one Board Member. Mr. Swire said that the Executive Director spoke at length prior to answering questions. Mr. Swire said that it is important that controversial matters like this project should be presented to the CAC, too, so that the TA CAC can hear the same information/depth as the Board.
- **4c) (TA Board Item 5.b.) - Accept Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for the Period Ending May 31, 2025**
- **4d) (TA Board Item 5.c.) - Approving and Ratifying the Transportation Authority Insurance Program for Fiscal Year 2026**

**Other Items**

- **3) Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda – None**
- **5) (TA Board Item 11.a.) - 84-101 Reimagined Project Update**
  - Gus Mattammal liked the design as he frequently travels the corridor and its congestion. He noted that construction costs have skyrocketed, and construction is still a ways out. He asked what contingency is in place for future

increases. Staff said funds can be shifted. Construction costs are extremely volatile, and costs will change. Any cost overruns will require additional grants and local funds and money from Caltrans.

- Mr. Swire praised the bike/pedestrian improvements in the project. He asked for the labor versus materials breakdown of the 25 percent increase in construction. Staff said that material cost inflation was largely responsible and that materials make up more than 50 percent of the cost. He said this means an increase of material cost of more than 50 percent in a year. Staff said that tariffs are partially to blame.
  - Mr. Hedges asked if most concrete, steel, and lumber come from abroad and are thus uncertain. Staff confirmed the foreign sources and thus the inability to predict future costs.
  - Mr. Fox asked whether cost estimates include contractors' input on how to reduce costs. Initially, staff uses internal estimates but will ask contractors for input later in the process. He also asked where bike and ped traffic will come from and whether Port and Caltrain access will improve. Staff said that the project will improve access to Bay Trail (via the Regional Transit Connections program), ferry, and other amenities in Redwood City.
  - Giuliano Carlini praised the project's benefits, especially for those who bike, as he rides it frequently. He said that the Class II portion of the bike lanes won't feel safe for many people who bike and thus won't encourage mode shift to cycling; is a separated bike lane an option? He said that this was mentioned previously to staff/consultants, but it doesn't look like his concern/question had been addressed. Staff will investigate this. He asked how much money was spent on car versus bicycle infrastructure (instead of miles of infrastructure). Staff will find this info. He asked how steep the Veterans bike flyover would be; if it was too steep it would not be usable by many cyclists. Staff will find this info. He said that \$105 million is coming from federal sources and asked whether this was at risk given federal uncertainty. Staff said that it is "safe" for now as it has been allocated.
  - Karen Kuklin said that construction estimates are based on the mid-point of construction and suggested clarifying this in the presentation.
  - Mr. Swire asked whether the lanes were increasing. Staff said that only off/on ramp lanes were increasing.
- **8) (TA Board Item 12.a.) - Receive Legislative Update -**
    - Mr. Hedges said that Proposition (Prop) 35 set a level for MediCal. Given the cuts to Obamacare grants, he asked about the impact on California's budget. Staff agreed that this will have a huge impact.
    - Ms. Lang asked what is happening with Appropriations in the House. Staff said that these will become allocations or appropriations. She asked whether there would be money prior. Staff said not before Fiscal Year (FY) 26.

- **8) (TA Board Item 12.a.iii.) - Receive Senate Bill 63 and San Mateo County Polling Updates**
  - Mr. Hedges asked what the maximum level of sales tax is and whether this will hit the limit.
  - Mr. Swire pointed out that slide #13 from the SamTrans meeting, demonstrating that voters do not want to raise taxes to reduce traffic congestion, was not shown to the CAC.
  - Mr. Fox said the issue is testing the waters on a local versus regional measure. Staff said that only the regional measure would allow full funding of current Measure A investments.
  - Mr. Mattammal said that he doesn't support any additional revenue measures without simultaneously addressing the cost side of the equation.
  - Ms. Kuklin said that it is a complicated measure that requires a lot of clarity. It needs to clearly illustrate the benefit to voters.
  - Mr. Swire said that he supports the regional measure although he shares Mr. Mattammal's concern over lack of cost control and the opacity of costs. He said that this problem is driven by the balkanization of governance and transit agencies across the Bay Area; thus, a regional measure (at least) is required. He said that if transit drives, there will be a flood of additional drivers.
  - Chair Arietta supports a regional funding measure. Caltrain has a constant need for funding. She said various regions need to work together.
  - Mr. Hedges said that increasingly blue states are on their own and this self-help is necessary. He agreed with Mr. Swire on the problem of our plethora of agencies. He used El Camino Real as an example of the lack of regional coordination. He frequently uses San Francisco Municipal Transportation (Muni). He supports a regional measure.
  - Mr. Swire said that he would prefer a gross receipts tax but it is too late for that option. He would have preferred for the richest corporations in the world to pay their share.
  - Ms. Lang supports a regional measure. She said that transit is a necessity for daily life, and it is beyond means to have a patchwork based on parochialism.
  - Ms. Kuklin said that she doesn't have faith in local voters and doesn't believe in a fearmongering message. She encourages the Board to come up with a positive way to understand the benefits.
  - Mr. Hedges said that he hopes that the TA use social media to encourage young people to support this.
  
- **9) Report of the Chair**
  - "Update on Senate Bill (SB) 63
    - Since Chair Arietta first reported on the new Regional Transportation Measure SB 63 last month, this newly written piece of legislation has been met with a robust mixture of both support and skepticism by a number of leaders in San Mateo County.

- Key Considerations
  - Factors influencing the decision indicate the flexibility of funding allocation, the impact on existing transportation funding sources like Measure A, and the overall effectiveness of the proposed regional coordination.
- City Leader Responses
  - Thus far, the City Council of San Mateo, after discussing the measure, has issued “no opinion” on the bill. Additionally, there is no other information on any other specific cities’ support or opposition votes, as the decision to either opt in or out will be made at the county level.
- County Leader Responses
  - Jackie Speier, a member of the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors, as well a member of the Executive Board of the San Mateo County Transportation Authority (TA), along with Gina Papan, a member of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), have both expressed concern about Bay Area Rapid Transit’s (BART) fiscal responsibility and the proper use of funds.
- County Agency Responses
  - San Mateo County agencies, including San Mateo County Transit District (SamTrans), the TA, and City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County (C/CAG) have reportedly recommended eliminating funding for transit coordination initiatives in a letter with proposed changes to the bill.
- Additional Information Requested
  - There’s also a call for further information on BART operations in San Mateo County to understand what its losses were in San Mateo County and what its operations will be in the future. BART is one of the transit agencies that would be sharing in the revenues derived from the new bill. Page 1 of 2 Item #9. 7/8/2025 It’s been reported that a number of representatives in San Mateo County feel that BART has really “dropped the ball” when it comes to its stations, and they are not sure that BART is even up to the task of taking care of its stations.
- Importance of Supporting the Bill
  - In spite of these concerns, others have noted the importance of continuing to support the bill, as it could have devastating impacts if significant funding is not shored up for the major transit operators. “The Senate passage of SB 63 signals the beginning of a broad regional effort to keep Caltrain alive. If the County does nothing, Caltrain and its fleet of new electric cars may come to a ‘screeching halt’ and simply shut down...,” said David Canepa, MTC Commissioner and President of the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors. It has yet to be reported if San Mateo County will opt in or not. It still has until August to make that final decision. Polls among the public are still being evaluated.
- Why Support of or Reject

- The big decision is whether it is better to pursue a regional funding measure (broad-based funding source) or focus on local initiatives (for local control and funding priorities). As reported, some San Mateo County officials, who have strong concerns about securing an additional funding source for various transportation needs, such as keeping Caltrain alive, support the regional bill and then there are also those that have equally strong concerns about the potential impacts on local control and funding priorities and don't support the regional bill.
- Decision Deadline
  - The decision on whether San Mateo County will opt in or not is due to be reported by August 11, 2025."

#### **10) Report from Staff**

- Peter Skinner noted the Executive Director Report in the TA Board agenda packet and mentioned that there was a new hire in the department.

#### **11) Member Comments/Requests**

- Mike Swire made a speech
  - He has enjoyed serving on the CAC, making an impact, making friends, and spending hours creating the report for the Board and representing the public to the Board.
  - He said that removing him from the CAC is bad for the TA and San Mateo County. He said that the CAC plays an oversight role in protecting taxpayer dollars. If CAC members can't say what they believe outside of official duties, how is the independence of the CAC maintained. San Mateo County relies on taxpayers to approve revenue measures to fund transportation. How can TA expect voters to renew Measure A or SB 63 if voters don't have independent visibility of how their money is used. His dismissal would also discourage other community members from staying on or applying for the CAC, which has been short on members for several years.
  - He encouraged other CAC members to express their opinion on this issue and how it impacts their service and the CAC in general.
- Peter Skinner said that the CAC cannot have a discussion on the item as it isn't on the agenda.
- Ms. Kuklin said she was caught off guard at Mr. Swire's comment.
- Chair Arietta said she believes in egalitarian leadership and wants to see the CAC reflect what is heard in the community. She said that Mr. Swire is an honest broker and hopes everything works out for everyone.
- Mr. Fox said that Marin County has a minimum age and enforcement for electronic bikes. They are writing parents and kids notices without a fine. He questioned whether there was countywide interest here.

- Mr. Carlini said that he was recently in Europe where there is a push to get people out of cars into bikes and transit. There is the continuation to do things ad hoc. There needs to be a holistic, regional approach.
- Mr. Carlini said that he has been worried about Board comments that would threaten the CAC. Now, it has come to fruition. It is bad policy for the Board and taxpayers and the community to discourage CAC Members from advocating. Board members advocate all the time, but if CAC Members express an opposing view, they are told this is inappropriate. This will have a negative impact on how people will serve and function on the CAC, which represents the community. They are being told, however, that views must align with the majority. He said that he worries about what will happen to him now personally. He will go to the Board meeting to say the same thing. He encourages other CAC Members to do the same. Why are CAC Members here and what is your purpose? Is this a good policy?
- Ms. Lang said that Mr. Swire's dismissal sets a bad precedent. This is not a rejection of someone's application; it is a precedent from removing members of the CAC. The TA CAC members are more than volunteers. The TA CAC members serve a noble purpose. They aren't just overseers of public opinion, they are here to project the public. This includes respecting volunteers' roles. They shouldn't be put under different scrutiny (from Board Members). They all bring a lot of valuable talent. Mr. Swire has shown a lot of knowledge that is very important to the CAC. CAC Members can't be made to feel less than, as a volunteer. This action, without compelling grounds not to serve, is not right. She doesn't agree with it and Mr. Swire should remain. This sets a dangerous precedent. They bring heartfelt commitment to the Board and it is a dangerous precedent to lose any valuable member.
- Mr. Hedges said the vote on Items 6 and 7 that projects need to be shovel ready to get grants.
- Mr. Mattammal subscribes to the substack of democratic socialist writer, Hamilton Nolan. Nolan's perspective is very different from his. Nevertheless, Mr. Mattammal upgraded to paid status to get this perspective, even though he doesn't agree with him. He told Nolan that he agrees with his ability to articulate a different perspective. Dissenting views help pressure test one's own views and people are better off engaging with those whose opinions are different from their own.
- Mr. Swire thanked the CAC Members who spoke up for the CAC.

**12) Date/Time of Next Regular Meeting: Tuesday, September 2, 2025, 4:30 pm**