



Memorandum

AGENDA ITEM 7

DATE: February 16, 2023
TO: Transportation Authority Board
FROM: Carl Holmes - Deputy Director for Capital Projects
SUBJECT: 3/14/23 Board Meeting: Adopt the Recommendations of the Caltrain 22nd Street Station ADA Access Improvement Feasibility Study for the Preferred Improvements to Achieve Street-to-Platform Accessibility

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| <p>RECOMMENDATION <input type="checkbox"/> Information <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action</p> <p>Adopt the recommendations of the Caltrain 22nd Street Station ADA Access Improvement Feasibility Study.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southbound Ramp: a 465-foot ramp with a 6.1 percent slope and three switchbacks • Northbound Ramp A: a 305-foot ramp with 6.5 percent slope and one switchback <p>SUMMARY</p> <p>The Caltrain 22nd Street Station is the railroad’s only regular-service station that is not currently wheelchair accessible. While the Caltrain system as a whole provides meaningful access to passengers with disabilities, the platforms at 22nd Street Station are located below street-level and are only accessible by stairs. In November 2019, the Transportation Authority Board allocated \$350,000 in Prop K funds to Caltrain to conduct a feasibility study on potential improvements that would bring street-to-platform ADA accessibility to the station. Caltrain has conducted feasibility-level technical work and community engagement to develop recommended improvements to be advanced for further design. In order to advance these recommendations, Caltrain has submitted a request for Prop K funds to conduct preliminary engineering and develop a full funding plan for implementation which is included as a separate agenda item at this meeting. Caltrain estimates that implementation of the recommended</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Fund Allocation <input type="checkbox"/> Fund Programming <input type="checkbox"/> Policy/Legislation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Plan/Study <input type="checkbox"/> Capital Project Oversight/Delivery <input type="checkbox"/> Budget/Finance <input type="checkbox"/> Contract/Agreement <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
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| alternatives, including design, environmental clearance, and construction, would require a minimum of 2.5 years, subject to funding availability. | |
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BACKGROUND

The 22nd Street Caltrain Station is one of three Caltrain stations in San Francisco and, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, had approximately 1,900 daily riders – placing the station among the top ten Caltrain stations by ridership. Currently, the station can only be accessed via stairs from 22nd Street and Iowa Street for southbound and northbound service, respectively. There are no ramps, elevators, or escalators to reach the platforms.

In November 2019, through Resolution 20-16, the Transportation Authority Board allocated \$350,000 in Prop K sales tax funds to Caltrain for the 22nd Street Station ADA Access Improvement Feasibility Study (Study). The Study developed and evaluated alternative design concepts for providing an accessible street-to-platform connection for station users. The enclosed Final Report for the Study identifies a recommended alternative for both the northbound and southbound platforms, as discussed below. In support of the Study, Caltrain conducted stakeholder outreach in the community and with accessibility advocacy groups. Caltrain staff presented a draft of the Study’s recommended alternatives to the Transportation Authority Board in October 2021.

DISCUSSION

Alternatives. Based on an assessment of existing conditions, physical constraints, and stakeholder engagement, Caltrain identified multiple alternatives that could provide street-to-platform accessibility to the 22nd Street Station, specifically two alternatives for the southbound platform, and three for the northbound platform:

- Southbound
 - Ramp: a 465-foot ramp with a 6.1 percent slope and three switchbacks
 - Elevator: an elevator connecting to the existing 22nd Street sidewalk
- Northbound
 - Ramp A: a 305-foot ramp with 6.5 percent slope and one switchback
 - Ramp B: a 240-foot ramp with 6.9 percent slope with no switchbacks
 - Elevator: an elevator connecting to the existing Iowa Street sidewalk

The Study team confirmed that all five alternatives were feasible from a conceptual-level design and implementation perspective and advanced all five to evaluation.

Evaluation. The Study team evaluated each of the alternatives using to the following criteria:

- Ease of Use



- Safety and Security
- Reliability
- Ease of Maintenance
- Operational Impacts
- Construction Time
- Construction Cost
- Constructability

The criteria and scoring were informed by both internal (Caltrain) and external (community) feedback and input. The evaluation process revealed a number of challenges that would result from the installation of the elevator alternatives, including with respect to safety, security, and maintenance. Existing elevators in the Caltrain system suffer from maintenance issues and frequent outages, which creates a considerable burden for riders who depend on them for access. Although the alternatives that utilize ramps would require passengers to travel longer distances, they come with significantly lower maintenance requirements, longer lifespans, and near 100 percent availability.

Public and Stakeholder Outreach. In consultation with Commissioner Walton's office, Caltrain formed a community stakeholder group to provide input and feedback during the course of the Study. This working group included representatives from the San Francisco Mayor's Office on Disability, the Dogpatch Neighborhood Association, the Dogpatch and Northwest Potrero Hill Green Benefits District, and the Potrero Boosters. The working group provided input early in the process on key design criteria for the concepts under development: the group agreed that ramps were preferred over elevators; that longer ramps with gradual slopes are preferred to shorter, steeper ramps; and that improved accessibility at 4th and King and Bayshore stations was not an acceptable substitute for improvements at 22nd Street Station.

After initial concept development and evaluation, the Study team shared concept designs with the working group for further input and refinement. The Study team also presented concept designs to the Caltrain Accessibility Advisory Committee and the SFMTA Multimodal Accessibility Advisory Committee, as well as with representatives from San Francisco Senior and Disability Action and from LightHouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Feedback from this second round of review included: a desire to incorporate broader accessibility improvements; the need to resolve potential platform circulation issues raised by some ramp configurations; and consideration of broader safety and security concerns.

In future phases, Caltrain proposes to continue to convene the community stakeholder working group to review and provide input as designs continue to be refined.

Recommendations and Next Steps. The Study identifies the Southbound Ramp and Northbound Ramp A as the recommended options to be advanced to further design, development, and implementation. The Study identifies a total preliminary cost estimate of



approximately \$12 million (in 2021 dollars) and a potential implementation timeframe of at least 2.5 years for delivery of both the southbound and northbound ramps, assuming funding availability. Because the Study represents only a feasibility-level analysis, further engineering work is required to refine both the design details and cost estimates. In particular, Caltrain staff has identified the need for more in-depth analyses of the station's underground utilities and the geotechnical conditions of the slope upon which the Southbound Ramp would be constructed to confirm the design of the foundation and supports. Given these considerations, depending on the final scope and implementation schedule, total costs could be on the order of \$20 million in year-of-expenditure dollars.

The Study inventoried potential funding sources at the federal, state, regional, and local level; however, the Study did not develop a comprehensive funding plan for implementation. There are promising discretionary funding sources for which the project would be expected to be competitive, including the federal All Stations Accessibility Program (ASAP). ASAP is a new Federal Transit Administration (FTA) program established by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, specifically aimed at funding improvements to legacy rail stations to bring them in to compliance with ADA requirements. The FTA recently made \$686 million of awards through this program for federal Fiscal Years 2022 and 2023, and \$350 million is available each year through federal Fiscal Year 2026. ASAP requires a minimum 20 percent local funding match.

Caltrain's position is that station-specific improvements on the Peninsula Corridor are the responsibility of the city or county in which a station is located. However, given the importance and high ridership of this station, and the need for investments to bring it to an ADA-compliant standard (and with it, the entirety of the Caltrain system), Transportation Authority staff has proposed development of a cost-sharing approach. Caltrain and Transportation Authority staff believe the project will be highly competitive for future cycles of ASAP grant funding, and working together to prepare an application to that or other grant programs may support this cost-sharing proposal. Caltrain and its funding partners, including the Transportation Authority, will need to work together to develop the complete funding plan. Development of a more detailed funding plan is included in the scope of work for the for the next phase of project development proposed in the Prop K allocation request included under a separate item on the February 14, 2023 Board meeting agenda.

Relationship to Future Projects. The Transportation Authority and partner agencies are currently advancing multiple planning and project development efforts which will impact the Caltrain corridor within San Francisco. The Pennsylvania Avenue Extension (PAX) is planned as a future project to replace existing at-grade crossings at Mission Bay Drive and 16th Street with a new rail tunnel. The PAX alternatives currently under consideration would have varying levels of impact on 22nd Street station; however, all PAX alternatives would require some level of re-design/reconfiguration or relocation of the existing 22nd Street station. The PAX project will require, at minimum, an additional 15 years to plan, approve, and construct. Given



the need to upgrade access at the existing station, the Study's recommended alternatives should be implemented in the immediate term, regardless of potential longer-term changes to the station associated with PAX.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The recommended action would not have an impact on the adopted Fiscal Year 2022/23 budget.

CAC POSITION

The CAC will consider this item at its February 22, 2023 meeting.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

- Attachment 1 - Caltrain Presentation: 22nd Street Station ADA Access Improvement Feasibility Study
- Enclosure 1 - Caltrain 22nd Street Station ADA Access Improvement Feasibility Study Final Report

22nd St Station ADA Access Improvement Feasibility Study

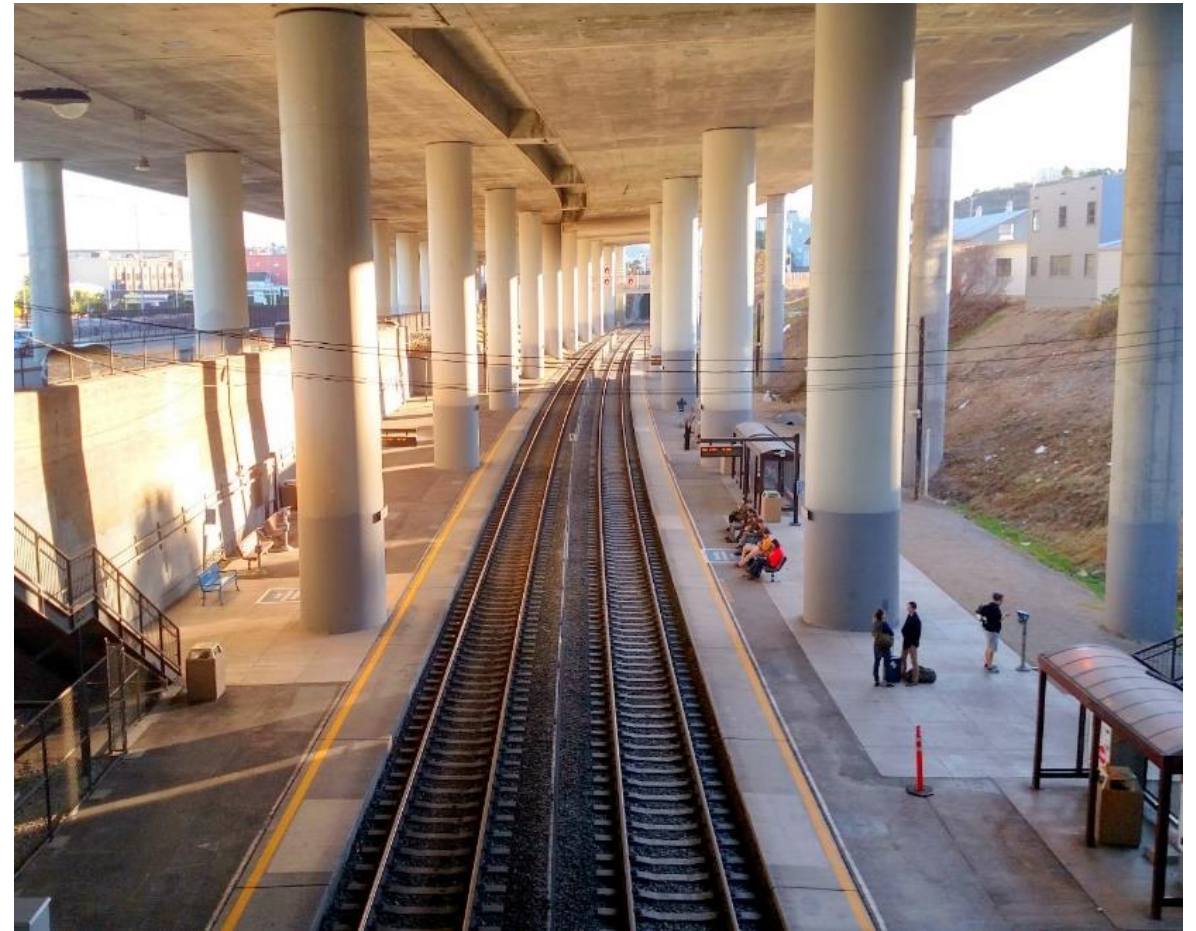
SFCTA Community Advisory Committee



February 2023

Context

- When PCJPB purchased the Caltrain right of way, it inherited several stations which were not wheelchair accessible
- Today, the Caltrain system as a whole is accessible to riders with disabilities
- 22nd Street Station is currently only accessible via stairs
- Riders unable to use stairs must instead use 4th & King or Bayshore
- The current station configuration is highly constrained



Long-Range Planning Work

Pennsylvania Avenue Extension (PAX)

- Preliminary environmental and engineering work led by SFCTA
- Proposed realignment of the Caltrain service which may conflict with the existing 22nd Street Station

Southeastern San Francisco Rail Station Study (SERSS)

- Initially led by the San Francisco Planning Department
- Evaluating options for a reconfigured or relocated Caltrain station in the Dogpatch/Potrero Hill and/or Bayview neighborhoods
- Next phase of study will be led by SFCTA

Study Overview

- Study kicked off in February 2020 at the request of D10 Supervisor Walton
- Scope was focused on determining the feasibility of street-to-platform ADA access improvements at 22nd St Station
- Recommendations must be contextualized within the findings of Southeastern San Francisco Rail Station Study (SERSS) and PAX
- Study identified feasible ramp and elevator alternatives for each platform, then analyzed constructability, implementation timeline, costs and funding opportunities

Outreach Participants

Study Community Stakeholder Group:

- San Francisco Mayor's Office on Disability
- Green Benefit District
- Dogpatch Neighborhood Association
- Potrero Boosters

Additional Outreach:

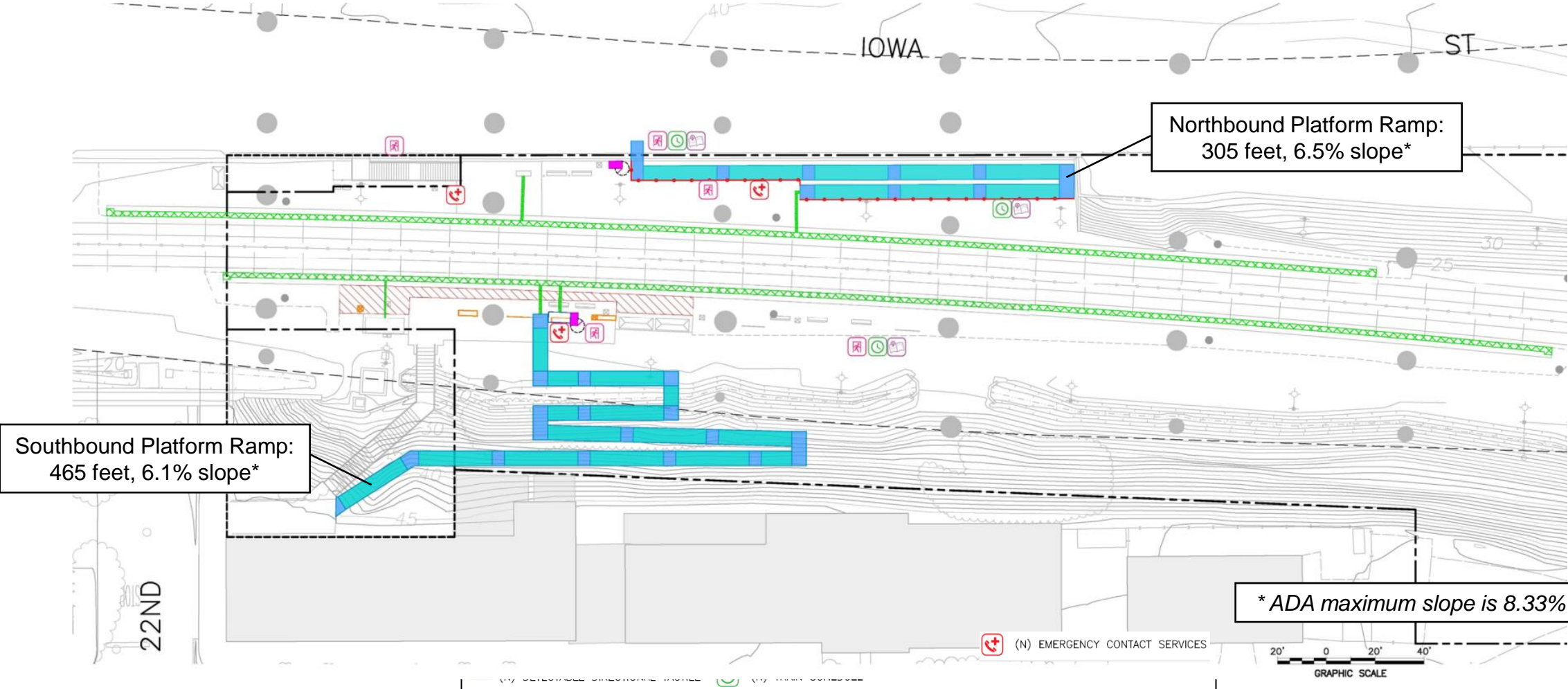
- Caltrain Accessibility Advisory Committee
- SFMTA Multimodal Accessibility Advisory Committee
- Senior and Disability Action
- Lighthouse for the Blind



Stakeholder Feedback

- Ramps yield better overall user experience than elevators (cleaner, more secure, and more reliable)
- Elevators create substantial maintenance issues
- Long ramps are acceptable, but slopes should be decreased where possible
- The Study's alternatives are acceptable interim solutions, but a station rebuild/relocation is preferred in the long term

Recommended Alternative



Next Steps

- Adopt the Caltrain 22nd St Station ADA Access Improvement Feasibility Study
- Advance preliminary design of recommended alternative
 - Funding request for \$447,197 deobligated Proposition K funds
 - Scope to include development of funding and implementation plan
- Secure funding to advance designs through 100% engineering and construction
 - Project well aligned for FTA All Stations Accessibility Program Grant

FOR MORE INFORMATION

WWW.CALTRAIN.COM

