



# *DRAFT MINUTES*

## **San Francisco County Transportation Authority**

Tuesday, September 14, 2021

### **1. Roll Call**

Chair Mandelman called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Present at Roll Call: Commissioners, Chan, Haney, Mar, Mandelman, Peskin, Preston, Safai, Stefani, and Walton (9)

Absent at Roll Call: Commissioners Melgar and Ronen (entered during Item 3) (2)

### **2. Community Advisory Committee Report - INFORMATION**

David Klein, Vice Chair of the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) reported out on the July 28 and September 1 CAC meetings. With regard to the July 28 meeting, he shared that the CAC was in support of the item to allow more detailed analysis of sales tax transaction and use records (Item 9) and were in support of the adoption of the District 4 Mobility Study Report (Item 4). He said during the Caltrain Modernization update, it was good to hear how everyone was collaborating. He noted that CAC members raised concern about grade crossings and asked for more clarification on carbon credits and how they were being used to help improve air quality. Vice Chair Klein added that with regard to the Better Market Street project, questions were raised on whether they were showcasing the initiatives and whether the current plan warranted the investments being made. Vice Chair added that during the Better Market Street presentation, members commented that it provided very little quantitative data about the trade offs, cost benefits, or improvements to help inform a decision about the options presented.

With respect to the September 1 meeting, Vice Chair Klein shared that CAC members supported the Prop K and AA allocations (Item 6). During the discussion about the Active Communities Plan request, he shared that CAC member Pete Tannen commented on the shift in public sentiment over time about reappropriating space used for parking spots for bike facilities. He also shared that the CAC was provided an ethics training by Nossaman LLP.

There was no public comment.

### **3. Approve the Minutes of the July 27, 2021 Meeting - ACTION**

There was no public comment.

Commissioner Melgar motioned to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Walton.

The Minutes were approved by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Chan, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Melgar, Peskin, Preston, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, and Walton (11)



Absent: (0)

#### **Consent Agenda**

#### **4. [Final Approval] Adopt the District 4 Mobility Study Report - ACTION**

Vice Chair Peskin moved to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Commissioner Mar.

The consent agenda was approved without objection by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Chan, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Melgar, Peskin, Preston, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, and Walton (11)

Absent: (0)

#### **End of Consent Agenda**

#### **5. State and Federal Legislation Update - INFORMATION**

Mark Watts, State Legislative Advocate for the Transportation Authority, and Amber Crabbe, Public Policy Manager, presented the item per the staff memorandum.

Chair Mandelman stated he was disappointed that a potentially game-changing investment in California transportation, especially with respect to High Speed Rail (HSR), wasn't moving forward at this time. He asked if there was an appetite to resolve the funding issue or whether there was an impasse.

Mr. Watts said that Southern California representatives, including the Chair of the Assembly Transportation Committee, Laura Friedman, and the Chair of the Senate Transportation Committee, Lena Gonzalez, were not supportive of the current plans and want to apply more of the available HSR funding committed to regional rail projects. He said the California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) determined the project should initially proceed with steel wheel propulsion while some constituents prefer electric propulsion from the start of service. He noted that there was initial concern about a lack of near-term funding for CHSRA and the project, but that the CHSRA would still receive a small amount of funding in the state budget as well as some cap and trade funding so they would be secure until Spring.

Chair Mandelman asked Mr. Watts to elaborate on the electrification issue.

Mr. Watts replied that the HSR project is planned to be implemented with conventional rail until it connects to the regional rail system in Southern California, at which time it would convert to an electrified system. Mr. Watts said that Southern California legislators would prefer early electrification of the system.

Commissioner Preston said that he wanted to make sure staff was tracking the federal Public Transportation and Expansion Act that was just introduced in Congress. He added that in addition to providing funding, the bill, for the first time in decades, would allow transit operators to use federal funds for operating expenditures in addition to capital expenditures. He directed staff to not just track it but to work to elevate it given its importance.

During public comment, Roland Lebrun stated that the HSR project would only reach 126 miles per hour. He suggested the CHSRA should implement a double track system instead of a single track system and electrify it from the start. He stated that he also thought that Los Angeles should electrify their regional rail between Burbank and



Anaheim, similar to the approach between San Francisco and Gilroy.

**6. Allocate \$885,777 in Prop K Funds and \$410,000 in Prop AA Funds, with Conditions, for Four Requests - ACTION**

Anna LaForte, Deputy Director for Policy and Programming, presented the item per the staff memorandum.

Vice Chair Peskin thanked the Transportation Authority staff and San Francisco Public Works for their work on the Joice Alley Lighting Improvements project to increase public safety in one of the oldest alleys in Chinatown. He thanked the community for developing a Chinatown alley way master plan to preserve and improve the historic attributes of the vital pedestrian set of alleys that connects residences and business around Chinatown.

Commissioner Mar commented on the New Signal Contract 66 request, particularly on 41<sup>st</sup> Ave and Lincoln Way. He said he was pleased to see it on the list and noted that one of the key recommendations on the District 4 mobility study was traffic calming on Lincoln Way. He added that traffic volume at the intersection had increased significantly and had doubled since 2018, and some of it was due to the closure of the Great Highway. He expressed concern with the proposal being removed from the list if Martin Luther King (MLK) Drive in Golden Gate Park were to be reopened and asked for clarification why this location would be de-prioritized.

Bryant Woo, SFMTA, responded that the key issue in terms of operation of that particular signal was related to the volume that could be served in different directions. He said the signal would not work well if MLK was open to east/west traffic, because the two intersections between MLK and Lincoln Way are only 60 feet apart. Mr. Woo continued saying that SFMTA added the asterisk, because the future status of MLK is unknown and they did not want to promise the intersection would work well unless they could deliver.

Commissioner Mar acknowledged the point on the close proximities and asked how the 4-way stop at the intersection of MLK and Chain of Lakes would change if it were a slow street versus open to vehicles.

Mr. Woo replied that the operation of the intersection would change. He said with only 60 feet between the two intersections, only three cars could be stored in between the two intersections, so a green light could create a rush of traffic trying to get through the next intersection. He said there was concern about bicycle and pedestrian safety as well as operation of the signal. He also said the lights were required to stay green for a certain amount of time, a function based off the width of the intersection, which would allow slower moving pedestrians to be able to clear the intersection. He said there would be times when traffic sees a green light but would not be able to use it.

Commissioner Mar thanked Mr. Woo and said he and his staff look forward to working with the SFMTA on traffic calming and pedestrian safety measures on Lincoln Way where the proposed signal light could be a key part.

There was no public comment.

Vice Chair Peskin moved to approve the item, seconded by Commissioner Mar.

The item was approved without objection by the following vote:



Ayes: Commissioners Chan, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Melgar, Peskin, Preston, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, and Walton (11)

Absent: (0)

**7. Authorize the Executive Director and Other Authorized Representatives to Enter Into a Revolving Credit Agreement for \$125 Million with U.S. Bank National Association; to Execute and Deliver Legal Documents Relating Thereto; and To Take All Necessary or Appropriate Related Actions in Connection Therewith - ACTION**

Cynthia Fong, Deputy Director for Finance and Administration presented the item per the staff memorandum.

There was no public comment.

Vice Chair Peskin moved to approve the item, seconded by Commissioner Chan.

The item was approved without objection by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Chan, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Melgar, Peskin, Preston, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, and Walton (11)

Absent: (0)

**8. Accept the Downtown Rail Extension (DTX) Phasing Study Final Report, Support the DTX Phasing Strategy of the Transbay Joint Powers Authority, and Release \$2,644,557 in Previously Allocated Prop K Sales Tax Funds, with Conditions, for DTX Project Development - ACTION**

Jesse Koehler, Rail Program Manager, presented the item per the staff memorandum.

During public comment, Bob Planthold noted that both the Transportation Authority CAC and the Transbay Joint Powers Authority (TJPA) CAC had supported the DTX phasing approach. He noted his own support for the phasing strategy and requested that the Board support it as well. Mr. Planthold also indicated his support for the release of funds to TJPA and said that it was important to proceed without hindering the ability to pursue further expansion in the future.

During public comment, Roland Lebrun noted that he had provided written commentary to the Board in advance of the meeting. Mr. Lebrun proposed not deferring the BART/Muni pedestrian connector. He also proposed continuing with design for the train box extension, until such time as the new Transbay rail crossing alignment is defined. He emphasized the importance of the vertical elevation of the rail infrastructure relative the future Transbay rail crossing. Mr. Lebrun noted that the DTX includes more ventilation structures than London's Crossrail project and he asserted that this reflects an insufficient understanding of tunnel design.

Commissioner Haney asked for clarification regarding the impact of reducing the train box extension, including with respect to capacity.

Mr. Koehler said that the train box extension would extend eastward the existing train box that was constructed in conjunction with the Salesforce Transit Center, in order to accommodate Caltrain and future High-Speed Rail (HSR). Mr. Koehler noted that the train box extension was designed to permit planned HSR trains to serve the facility. He said that a reduction to the train box extension was enabled by a modified operational approach agreed by the California HSR Authority (CHSRA). Mr. Koehler added that the



reduced train box extension would now be able to be constructed wholly on property already owned by TJPA, providing for a reduction in construction costs and right-of-way costs.

Commissioner Haney described the importance of the BART/Muni pedestrian connector in addressing transit connectivity at the Salesforce Transit Center.

Chair Mandelman said that there is uncertainty regarding the future alignment of rail to the east of the Salesforce Transit Center and noted that the reduced train box extension was helpful in light of this uncertainty.

Mr. Koehler concurred with Chair Mandelman's observations and said that the reduced train box would make the project more resilient to future alignments for a future Link 21 Transbay rail crossing.

Chair Mandelman noted that there was public feedback regarding the engineering design process for the train box extension.

Mr. Koehler said that it would be through the preliminary design process for DTX that further consideration with respect to future connectivity to Link 21 would be considered, including in coordination with the Link 21 project team.

Alfonso Rodriguez, TJPA Project Director, concurred with Mr. Koehler's remarks regarding design coordination with Link 21.

Chair Mandelman asked for elaboration on the rationale for deferral of the BART/Muni pedestrian connector and noted that BART had expressed support for the deferral.

Mr. Koehler confirmed that BART had submitted a letter to TJPA expressing support for deferral of the pedestrian connector. Mr. Koehler noted that prior to the pandemic, BART experienced capacity challenges at the Embarcadero and Montgomery stations during peak commute hours. He said that deferral of the connector would permit time for BART to develop a strategy to address these capacity constraints, which could entail structural changes to Embarcadero Station. Mr. Koehler added that the design of the Link 21 project is not yet known but could also impact the preferred design for the connector.

Chair Mandelman expressed thanks to staff from both the Transportation Authority and the TJPA for their work on the item. He noted that funding commitments had been sought from DTX partner agencies. He noted that larger commitments had been sought, but that initial commitments had been made the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), Caltrain, and CHSRA. Chair Mandelman noted that the project team is working to prepare the project for a funding submittal to the Federal Transit Administration in 2023.

Chair Mandelman moved to approve the item, seconded by Commissioner Haney.

The item was approved without objection by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Chan, Haney, Mandelman, Melgar, Peskin, Preston, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, and Walton (11)

Absent: Mar (1)



**9. Authorize Examination of Transaction and Use Tax Records - ACTION**

Cynthia Fong, Deputy Director for Finance and Administration presented the item per the staff memorandum.

There was no public comment.

Vice Chair Peskin moved to approve the item, seconded by Commissioner Chan.

The item was approved without objection by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Chan, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Melgar, Peskin, Preston, Ronen, Safai, Stefani, and Walton (11)

Absent: (0)

**10. Plan Bay Area 2050 Update - INFORMATION**

Dave Vautin, Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) presented the item.

Chair Mandelman thanked MTC/ABAG staff for attending the meeting and stated that he had previously expressed his frustration with the Plan Bay Area (PBA) 2050 process at ABAG meetings. He said this included the December 2020 last-minute doubling of San Francisco's housing allocation over the course of the plan's 30 years, which was done in a non-collaborative way. Chair Mandelman said that MTC/ABAG was not interested in hearing from the San Francisco Planning Department about the assumptions used for this forecast, which included assuming the demolition of existing affordable housing for redevelopment in southern and eastern parts of the city. Chair Mandelman noted that he voted against the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) at ABAG and hoped that San Francisco and the region can have a better relationship moving forward. He noted that this would depend on MTC being able to help fund additional transportation investments in San Francisco to support this planned housing development. He said that he was troubled that the modest request for Priority Development Area (PDA) planning funds, for a study on the west side, was not funded. He stated that San Francisco was the only county to not receive funding in this round of the program, and that he worried this would be indicative of problems moving forward. Chair Mandelman noted that there would be many opportunities to collaborate in the future, including many important regional projects such as the Caltrain Downtown Extension, Muni state of good repair investments and train control, the Treasure Island Mobility Management Program, and the Yerba Buena Island West Side Bridges. He stated that these are the types of projects the region should help fund if they expect the city to deliver this kind of housing. Chair Mandelman said his experience with regionalism has been poor so far, and he hoped it would be better moving forward.

Commissioner Ronen stated her agreement with Chair Mandelman and said that it was important for MTC/ABAG staff to hear these comments from the Board's ABAG representative and the Board's MTC representative. She said that she was very disturbed by the last-minute significant housing allocation increase without San Francisco's input, and that it was mostly expected to be built in the east side neighborhoods that have seen significant gentrification. She noted that this was something the city had been carefully fighting against for many years, and that the plan undermines that work. Commissioner Ronen stated that she didn't want the



impression to be that Chair Mandelman was on his own with these concerns and she stated her appreciation for Chair Mandelman's leadership on this effort.

Vice Chair Peskin stated that he would reinforce what Chair Mandelman and MTC Commissioner Ronen stated. He said that he thought the MTC needed to understand that this current Board of Supervisors and mayor, and the previous Board of Supervisors and mayor, had successfully endeavored to do more than San Francisco's part in building housing, and expressed his profound displeasure with the process and the final plan for the record. He said that if MTC/ABAG wants to be a regional organization that is respected regionally, this behavior cannot continue.

During public comment, Roland Lebrun stated that slide 12 could serve as a segue for conversations over the next month. He stated that the California High Speed Rail Authority's plan was to connect to Sacramento via Gilroy and Merced. He noted that now Plan Bay Area 2050 has introduced a new direct route with a crossing between San Francisco and Oakland, which should require a complete rethink of the Downtown Rail Extension and Salesforce Transit Center, which would no longer serve as a terminus. He said that these two components are now an approach to the next Transbay crossing and need to be rethought in that light.

**11. Update on the Expenditure Plan Advisory Committee and Outreach Efforts for Development of a New Expenditure Plan- INFORMATION**

Chair Mandelman noted that the Expenditure Plan Advisory Committee had their inaugural meeting last week and thanked all the members of the committee for their participation as well as the other commissioners for their work identifying candidates for the committee. He noted that it was a diverse group representing every district and many interests and expects the group to come up with a good recommendation to guide the sales tax renewal and next thirty years of transportation investments. He expressed his thanks to Ms. Beaulieu, Tilly Chang, Executive Director, and all the other staff at the Transportation Authority and his aide Jacob Bintliff for their work on this effort.

Michelle Beaulieu, Principal Transportation Planner, Government Affairs, presented the item per the staff memorandum.

During public comment, David Pilpel asked how the planned outreach coordinates with other ongoing efforts including the Caltrain Downtown Extension, the City's Capital Plan and Climate Action Plan, Information and Communications Technology Plan and Transit First Policy, ConnectSF, major development projects like Balboa Reservoir, Hunters Point Shipyard, Mission Rock, Parkmerced and Treasure Island, MTA's budget, Capital Plan, Capital Improvement Program and facilities framework, and new revenue measures they may be considering, major projects like Van Ness, Geary and Better Market Street, the report of the MTC Blue Ribbon Transit Recovery Task Force and Plan Bay Area, Muni Forward, the 2022 Transit Network and efforts to restore all Muni service to pre-pandemic levels, the Muni fleet plan, the Railyard Alignment and Benefits study, and your ongoing Congestion Pricing study, the state of good repair efforts, the Transbay Transit Center, and the transportation sustainability program. Mr. Pilpel stated that there are a lot of other things going on and there is a compressed timeframe for this project, and that he hopes that staff can address how the new expenditure plan coordinates outreach and planning with those other efforts.



**Other Items**

**12. Introduction of New Items - INFORMATION**

There were no new items introduced.

**13. Public Comment**

During public comment, Roland Lebrun shared that he is working with 3 different 'time zones' with the public participation experience and encouraged the Transportation Authority staff to take on the same production methods as other agencies in the city.

Patricia Arack, with Concerned Residents of the Sunset commented on the neighborways stating that only 3% of residents ride bikes, but they are spending over \$1 million on them. She added that 29% are walkers and she sees nothing for them in the proposal. She said she is wondering if they could reduce the number of bus priority streets and use the remaining funds to put in more crosswalks or fix the sidewalks for the walkers.

Judi Gorski, District 4 agreed with Ms. Arack stating that she did not approve of the funding. She said the funding should not be approved to be spent on reconfigured streets to become a neighborway without full transparency first and added that there has not been sufficient public outreach on the matter. Ms. Gorski complimented Commissioner Mar on his questions raised during Item 6, regarding pushing the solutions of the dangerous conditions exasperated on the Great Highway.

**14. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:04 p.m.