



# DRAFT MINUTES

## **Community Advisory Committee**

Wednesday, September 6, 2023

### **1. Committee Meeting Call to Order**

Chair Ortiz called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

CAC members present at Roll: Sara Barz, Rosa Chen, Najuawanda Daniels, Sean Kim, Jerry Levine, Rachael Ortega, Kevin Ortiz, and Kat Siegal (8)

CAC Members Absent at Roll: Mariko Davidson (1) (entered during item 2)

### **2. Chair's Report - INFORMATION**

Chair Ortiz thanked Eric Rozell for his service to the CAC as the District 6 representative. Next, Chair Ortiz announced that it was Bay Area Transit Month and that there was a series of events scheduled throughout the month. He then reported that Caltrain would be hosting a public tour of their new electric train at the San Francisco Caltrain station at 700 4th Street on September 23<sup>rd</sup>. He then moved on to a state legislation update, announcing that AB 645 (Friedman), which would authorize a pilot for speed safety cameras, was still in play in the current legislative session, but that SB 532 (Wiener), which have temporarily raised Bay Area bridge tolls to help fund transit operations, would not be moving forward this year as the Senator wanted time to work with stakeholders to explore various proposals to help stabilize transit's financial status. Finally, he gave a preview of the Vision Zero items that would be heard at the September 26<sup>th</sup> Transportation Authority Board meeting.

During public comment, Edward Mason stated that it was also Rail Safety Month.

## **Consent Agenda**

### **3. Approve the Minutes of the July 26, 2023 Meeting - ACTION\***

### **4. Community Advisory Committee Vacancies - INFORMATION**

There was no public comment on the Consent Agenda.

Vice Chair Siegal moved to approve the Consent Agenda, seconded by Member Levine.

The Consent Agenda was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: CAC Members Barz, Chen, Daniels, Davidson, Kim, Levine, Ortega, Ortiz, and Siegal (9)

## **End of Consent Agenda**

### **5. Adopt a Motion of Support to Release \$4,687,100 in Previously Allocated Sales Tax Funds, with Conditions, to the Transbay Joint Powers Authority for**



**Downtown Rail Extension Engineering Development and Procurement Preparation – ACTION \***

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

During public comment, Edward Mason noted the inclusion of level boarding retrofits in The Portal project definition. He expressed concern regarding the need to modify the Caltrain fleet to serve The Portal's stations and concern regarding the inability to identify a common platform height for the corridor.

Roland Lebrun noted the impact of the High-Speed Rail Authority's vehicle specifications on platform heights for the system. He encouraged the CAC to approve the item, and he said that the governance recommendations were needed to keep the project on track.

Gerald Cauthen said that the project was at risk because of bureaucracy. He said that the project's organizational structure was more complicated than the Central Subway. He cautioned against spending too much time explaining the project to others and there needed to be a focus on getting the project done.

Vice Chair Siegal moved to approve the item, seconded by Member Ortega.

The item was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: CAC Members Barz, Chen, Daniels, Davidson, Kim, Ortega, Ortiz, and Siegal (8)

Abstain: CAC Member Levine (1)

**6. Adopt a Motion of Support to Accept the Transportation Capital Projects Delivery Study – ACTION\***

Carl Holmes, Deputy Director for Capital Projects, presented the item per the staff memorandum.

Mr. Holmes noted that subsequent to the July CAC meeting, staff met with Members Kim, Ortega, and Chair Ortiz to walk through what was in the Capital Projects Delivery Study, answer questions and listen to their concerns. He appreciated the time they took to dive into the report.

During public comment, Edward Mason stated that the study was missing a designated, certified project manager role. He said that he would feel more comfortable having certified project managers overseeing capital project delivery. He also stated it was important to have transparency when reporting the bad news.

Chair Ortiz thanked Mr. Holmes and Transportation Authority staff for meeting with CAC Members and for the robust conversations on procurement and issues when it came to project delivery challenges.

Member Ortega expressed appreciation to the staff for taking the time to discuss this item and stated that she agreed with what the study was trying to accomplish. Member Ortega still had outstanding questions on topics like city procurement practices and was advised they should be directed to the City and Mayor's office. Member Ortega said she believed the study was a good step in the right direction that would improve transportation project delivery across the city.



Member Kim stated his primary concern was the economic impact on small businesses but understood that question was out of the scope of the study. He also asked whether the Capital Project Management Oversight office would be an independent organization. He pointed out that the study lacked specifics for how its feedback would be incorporated into projects. He hoped the tools and powers of the office would be described and established in the later study.

Member Barz noted that one of the study's first key findings was the need to streamline city department decision making. She questioned how creating a new department would help do that.

Mr. Holmes explained the idea was for the City Administrator's Office to be a neutral party which would be able to get multiple departments together quickly and would be able to help prioritize the work. He gave the example of the Transportation Authority delivering a project on Yerba Buena Island where there were utilities that have to be installed, moved or rerouted. The Transportation Authority would have to work with SFPUC and SFMTA to do this so now there were really three agencies delivering projects, each managing their own staff, and prioritizing their own projects. The City Administrator's Office does not own projects and therefore would be able to remain neutral and avoid perceived conflicts of interest while also being a respected agency.

Member Barz appreciated the response and noted that the report identified The Portal Project delivery phase as a potential pilot project and asked what would change if it were selected as a pilot program.

Mr. Holmes stated it was not about what would change, but rather improving collaboration by including it under the purview of the City Administrators Office. He said there were already six agencies working together on this project, so it was about utilizing the available resource to support project delivery.

Member Levine stated he was trying to get a sense of the power that the office would have and noted it seemed as if they would be operating as more of an arbitrator than a decision-making body. He stated that it sounded like the decisions were still going to lie in the hands of the lead agency and this new entity might not have the power to make decisions.

Mr. Holmes responded by saying he would not underestimate the power of the City Administrator's Office to step in if entities were not able to reach agreement. He agreed that the City Administrator's Office would act mostly as an arbitrator but at some point, decisions would need to be made and he would not underestimate the City Administrator's Office power to make that decision.

Member Levine asked if authority would be written into city regulations or the charter.

Mr. Holmes stated that he wouldn't presume how the CMPO would be set up but thought the City Administrator's Office would do whatever was necessary to get the right information and facilitate decision-making knowing there would be pressure to produce the right results.

Member Levine moved to approve the item, seconded by Member Barz.

The item was approved by the following vote:



Ayes: CAC Members Barz, Chen, Daniels, Davidson, Kim, Levine, Ortega, Ortiz, and Siegal (9)

**7. Adopt a Motion of Support to Adopt the Treasure Island Supplemental Transportation Study [NTIP Planning] Final Report - ACTION\***

Rachel Hiatt, Deputy Director for Planning, presented the item per the staff memorandum.

During public comment, Edward Mason requested that new bus shelters be placed so that they protect waiting passengers from the prevailing winds which he said were strong on the island at times.

Roland Lebrun added that shelters should be placed to protect waiting passengers from speeding vehicles by placing them near barriers such as trees or light poles.

Vice Chair Siegal observed that the new SFMTA shelters do not offer as much weather protection as the old shelters, and this needed more exploration as there was more extreme weather on the Island. She also proposed that the SFMTA 25 route was a good candidate for a free fare pilot and expressed interest in a financial analysis of this.

Ms. Hiatt noted that the Treasure Island Mobility Management Program was charged with providing a subsidized transit pass for Island residents, which would provide unlimited transit access to the three modes serving the Island. She explained that the amount of subsidy had yet to be determined but potentially could be fully subsidized.

Member Barz supported the idea of exploring a free fare for the 25 route relative to the administrative cost of a pass program. Regarding microtransit, Member Barz asked whether the study considered any models other than the Bayview Community Shuttle.

Ms. Hiatt responded that the community wanted to have one-seat rides to more mainland destinations particularly during evenings and weekends, and that microtransit was a way to identify frequent mainland destinations prior to a new fixed route SFMTA service being introduced later in the development.

Member Barz expressed that the Silicon Valley Hopper, a microtransit service in Sunnydale, had been successful and suggested looking at that as a model.

Chair Ortiz seconded the idea of exploring a fare free route 25 and expressed that Treasure Island was a true transit desert, and that improvements should not only make the 25 free but should improve the quality and reliability of service.

Vice Chair Siegal moved to approve the item, seconded by Member Kim.

The item was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: CAC Members Barz, Chen, Daniels, Davidson, Kim, Levine, Ortega, Ortiz, and Siegal (9)

**8. Adopt a Motion of Support to Increase the Amount of Professional Services Contract with WMH Corporation by \$350,000, to a Total Amount Not to Exceed \$3,050,000 for the Design Phase and Caltrans Right-of-Way Approval for the Yerba Buena Island Hillcrest Road Improvement Project – ACTION\***



Items 8 and 9 were called together.

**9. Adopt a Motion of Support to Approve a Two-Year Professional Services Contract with WSP USA Inc. in an Amount Not to Exceed \$4,300,000 for Construction Management Services for the Yerba Buena Island Hillcrest Road Improvement Project; and Approve a Two-Year Professional Services Contract with GHD in an Amount Not to Exceed \$1,200,000 for Construction Management Services for the Torpedo Building Preservation Project and Pier E-2 Phase 2 Project – ACTION\***

Carl Holmes, Deputy Director for Capital Projects, and Mike Tan, Senior Engineer, presented the Items 8 and 9 per staff memorandum.

During public comment, Roland Lebrun stated that he had hoped that Hillcrest Road would be more curved, rather than 90 degrees. He was concerned because this is where the future Link21 Transbay Tube shaft would be located. He said the shaft would be 50-60' in diameter and he requested that staff keep this in mind as they designed these projects.

Member Ortega stated that she was concerned about the stop sign immediately before the merge getting on the Bay Bridge heading towards San Francisco leaving the island. She stated anecdotally that it was a dangerous situation, especially at night. She was wondering if that would be addressed as a part of this project.

Mr. Tan stated that the project was not directly working on the on/off ramps, rather the road leading up to the ramps.

Mr. Holmes confirmed that the merge was not a part of this project as it was more a bridge function, but said he would follow up with Caltrans to see if anything could be done. He opined that there may be limitations given the width of the bridge.

Member Ortega moved to approve the item, seconded by Member Levine.

The item was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: CAC Members Barz, Chen, Daniels, Davidson, Kim, Levine, Ortega, Ortiz, and Siegal (9)

**10. Autonomous Vehicle Update - INFORMATION\***

Jean Paul Velez, Principal Transportation Planner, presented the item per staff memorandum.

During public comment, Edward Mason stated that in 2016 a Google car got in a crash with a Valley Transportation Authority bus. He stated that the research and development costs for AVs was getting passed onto the city residents. He stated that the City should charge an oversight fee to create some local control.

Roland Lebrun asked if Tesla was on staff's radar as Tesla had more advanced technology than Waymo and Cruise.

Member Levine stated that he was concerned because AVs were supposed to reduce accidents but that was not happening. He stated that the City was powerless to regulate these companies and that the CAC should support the effort to gain more local control over AVs. Member Levine suggested that since control was at the state level, the Transportation Authority should consider having it as an item in their state



legislative program.

Member Barz asked whether the City had explored the option of a voluntary permit program similar to the commuter shuttle bus program.

Mr. Velez responded that they had not, but it could be explored further.

Member Ortega stated that AVs should be held to a higher standard than human drivers. However, she stated that the bad driving behavior displayed by AVs was also displayed by many human drivers and said the lack of overall enforcement was troubling. She stated that some of the accidents involving AVs were caused by a human driver. She asked what the City was going to do about bad human driving behavior.

Mr. Velez stated that AV companies do not yet have enough vehicle miles traveled to make a statistically sounds comparison between the safety data of AVs and human drivers.

Vice Chair Siegal stated that while the City had no power to regulate, the SFMTA controlled the right of way and that some streets had vehicle restrictions. She asked whether this could be an avenue to limit where AVs could operate in the city.

Mr. Velez responded in the negative.

Chair Ortiz asked if there had been any exploration into levying fines on AV companies for interfering with emergency response.

Mr. Velez stated that there was no path to issuing fines but that could be created in the future through the legislative process.

Chair Ortiz stated that the Teamsters had gotten creative by trying to block all new charging stations. Chair Ortiz asked whether AV companies could be charged an impact fee. He also asked if there was an estimate of the total job loss brought on by the AV industry.

Mr. Velez responded that there was a study available on the latter topic.

Chair Ortiz asked if the State government representatives had weighed in publicly yet.

Mr. Velez responded that yes, but that it had been a more recent event.

Chair Ortiz recommended that the Transportation Authority reach out to Speaker Emeritus Pelosi's office and/or explore the possibility of federal regulation.

## **Other Items**

### **11. Introduction of New Business - INFORMATION**

Member Kim stated that an economic impact report on the proposed SFMTA parking meter extension was scheduled to be released in September. He requested a presentation on this report when it was released.

Vice Chair Siegal requested an estimate of how much it would cost to make the SFMTA 25 bus line free for all riders, relative to the cost of the proposed transit subsidy programs proposed as a part of the development on Treasure and Yerba



Buena Islands. She also requested performance data for the 25 line compared to other bus lines in the city.

Chair Ortiz formed a subcommittee on autonomous vehicles. Member Ortega and Vice Chair Siegal volunteered to join the subcommittee.

During public comment, Edward Mason alerted the CAC to the SFMTA Board meeting the following day where parking meters were the second item on the agenda.

**12. Public Comment**

During public comment, Edward Mason stated that his documentation of commuter bus violations was very limited as he was tied to one location at a time. Commuter buses were committing violations all along their routes, not just where he documented them. He said given the ridership levels, most were net contributors to pollution.

Roland Lebrun stated that he was working on two letters that he would be sharing soon. The first was on Caltrain's electric multiple unit (EMU) train set. He stated that the Caltrain prototype was not a true EMUs and cost 10 times more than a battery electric locomotive. The second letter was on High-Speed Rail procurement. He stated that High-Speed Rail should have followed a recommendation from 2017 to use bilevel trains that are compatible with Caltrain level boarding platforms.

**13. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:16 p.m.