



# DRAFT MINUTES

## Community Advisory Committee

Wednesday, March 27, 2024

### 1. Committee Meeting Call to Order

Chair Siegal called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

CAC members present at Roll: Sara Barz, Rosa Chen, Phoebe Ford, Sean Kim, Jerry Levine, Venecia Margarita, Austin Milford-Rosales, Rachael Ortega, and Kat Siegal (9)

CAC Members Absent at Roll: Najuwanda Daniels, Mariko Davidson (entered during Item #2) (2)

### 2. Chair's Report - INFORMATION

Chair Siegal shared an update on the Transbay Joint Powers Authority's The Portal/Downtown Rail Extension project, one of the signature projects in the Prop L Expenditure Plan, which had received a "Medium-High" rating under requirements of the Federal Transit Administration's Capital Investment Grant program. She noted that earlier in the month, U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg recommended The Portal for \$500 million in federal support for construction as part of President Biden's Fiscal Year 2025 budget proposal.

Chair Siegal also announced that the agency will receive a \$2 million grant award from the U.S. Department of Transportation Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Program for the Geary-Fillmore Underpass Community Planning Study. She said that the study would develop transportation and land-use concept designs to better connect the Japantown and Fillmore/Western Addition neighborhoods that were divided and displaced when the underpass was constructed in the 1960s, and help with engagement through an establishment of a Community Council which included representatives of displaced Black, Japanese, and Jewish communities. The Chair reported that staff anticipated bringing a Prop L funding request to the CAC in the summer with project launch soon to follow. She said that community organizations interested in participating were encouraged to reach out to the project team at Geary-Fillmore@sfcta.org.

During public comment, Roland Lebrun noted that the remote video was blurry.

### 3. Approve the Minutes of the February 28, 2024 Meeting - ACTION

There was no public comment.

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

The item was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: CAC Members Barz, Chen, Davidson, Ford, Kim, Levine, Margarita, Milford-Rosales, Ortega, and Siegal (10)

Absent: Daniels (1)



**4. Adopt a Motion of Support to Allocate \$1,600,000 in Prop L Funds, with Conditions, and Allocate \$1,200,000 in Prop AA Funds for 2 Requests – ACTION**

Amelia Walley, Program Analyst, presented the item per the staff memorandum.

Member Ford noted that the repaving segments in Various Locations Pavement Renovation No. 62 seemed short. She asked what caused one segment of roadway to deteriorate faster than adjacent segments.

Edmund Lee, San Francisco Public Works (SFPW) Project Manager, responded that there are a variety of factors, but one cause of localized deterioration was utility work. He explained that various utility companies dug into the ground which affected the overall life of the street. He added that SFPW coordinated with other city agencies and private utility companies to ensure when possible that paving came last in order to maximize the investment.

Member Ortega asked if the reduced costs for the Oakdale project were due to new lighting technologies.

Carol Huang, SFPW Project Manager, responded that new streetlights were LEDs which were more efficient and were one reason for the reduction in cost. Ms. Huang continued that SFPW was constrained to San Francisco Public Utility Commission (SFPUC)'s standard catalogue for streetlights and that SFPUC updated their catalogue from year to year. She explained that in this specific project, SFPW was able to replace existing lights and reduce costs, but the ability to retain existing poles - another cost factor - was determined on a project-by-project basis.

Member Margarita commended the project organizer for including 4,000 residents and five community organizations during the two-year planning period.

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

The item was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: CAC Members Barz, Chen, Davidson, Ford, Kim, Levine, Margarita, Milford-Rosales, Ortega, and Siegal (10)

Absent: Daniels (1)

**5. Adopt a Motion of Support to Award a Construction Contract to the Lowest Responsible and Responsive Bidder, Thompson Builders Corporation, in an Amount Not to Exceed \$22,132,978; Authorize an Additional Construction Allotment of \$4,541,599, for a Total Construction Allotment Not to Exceed \$26,674,577; Approve a Contract Amendment with WMH Corporation in the Amount of \$750,000; and Authorize the Executive Director to Execute All Other Related Supporting and Supplemental Agreements for the Yerba Buena Island Hillcrest Road Improvement Project – ACTION**

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

Member Kim asked if there were measures to prevent delays or cost overruns, and if Thompson Builders' past record indicated that they completed jobs on time and budget and if those factors were considered.

Mr. Holmes responded that because this was a low-bid procurement, the selection



process could not consider the contractor's past delivery record; however, as an aside he said in his previous work experience he had contracts with Thompson Builders for two projects and both projects were completed successfully. He continued that one project had challenges but wasn't due to the contractor and the other contract was finished a year early. Director Holmes said preventing delays was part of the purpose of the construction allotment, and staff had listed and budgeted for things that may go wrong as part of risk management. Mr. Holmes added that the project team would institute a partnering effort between the contractor and City departments to identify and solve issues quicker.

Member Barz asked about implications of low bid procurement and what could or could not be evaluated.

Mr. Holmes responded that with low bid procurement, the bidder was screened to make sure they had the license and the necessary bonds to do the work, which was different from procuring professional services with a two-step process to shortlist companies, often used for projects that were large and complex. He added that many public works projects were procured with low bid method, as long as the company was licensed and not debarred from state certification in terms of safety or contract practices.

Member Barz asked for verification that the agency couldn't take into consideration reputation or Google reviews, just certification of license and bonding. Mr. Holmes confirmed the information.

Member Margarita asked Mr. Holmes to share who was the highest bidder.

Mr. Holmes responded that Golden State Bridge was the next highest bidder at \$23.9 million.

Member Ortega asked about the 8% contingency and how comfortable the team was with that amount in comparison with other big projects.

Mr. Holmes responded that there were two types of contingency built into the budget, one which was supplemental covering possible expenses the project team thinks might happen like additional utility work and one which was the 8% project contingency.

During public comment, Edward Mason asked which of the 17 firms contacted were prime contractors and if they represented most of the Bay Area construction industry base. He expressed concern over whether there were enough major contractors capable of doing this type of work and whether the industry was able to maintain staffing at pace with retirements. He also asked why only two bids were received for this procurement.

Roland Lebrun expressed concern over construction administration cost being double the cost of the preliminary engineering plan and wondered why, as well concern over contracting with WMH Corporation since its President and Chief Executive Officer William Hadaya used to be the chair of the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority CAC.

Member Milford-Rosales moved to approve the item, seconded by Member Levine.

The item was approved by the following vote:



Ayes: CAC Members Barz, Chen, Davidson, Ford, Kim, Levine, Margarita, Milford-Rosales, Ortega, and Siegal (10)

Absent: Daniels (1)

**6. Adopt a Motion of Support to Adopt I-280 Northbound Geneva Avenue Off-Ramp Study – ACTION**

Mike Tan, Senior Engineer, presented the item per the staff memorandum.

Member Davidson mentioned that the southbound I-280 on-ramp intersection pedestrian traffic light had already been knocked down multiple times by vehicles and she was nearly hit multiple times walking to BART across eastbound Geneva Avenue, which was worse at night. She asked for a new traffic system that included no right on red signs, additional lights for the crosswalk, and a pedestrian only light. She also noted the off-ramp on the other side of the street which was extremely dangerous to drive through as well.

Mr. Tan responded the team was aware of these issues and recommended the mid-term signal upgrade and improved streetlight which required additional coordination with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and City departments.

Deputy Director for Capital Projects, Carl Holmes responded that the team would evaluate Member Davidson's recommendations and did discuss the pedestrian only light as well. He added that there was a concern of being a trade-off somewhere else in the signal cycle.

Member Davidson said the trade-off was that no one was injured or killed by a car and the change only worked if there was no right turn on red.

Member Barz echoed Member Davidson's comments, expressed concern about what seemed to be a narrow set of ways to fix the safety problem, and asked about bigger solutions like closures of off- or on-ramps.

Mr. Tan responded that staff discussed several different solutions and believed there could be long-term improvements such as potential off-ramp lengthening that could be part of bigger changes.

Member Barz commented that she was inclined to oppose the item due to only insignificant changes being proposed when faced with climate and safety crises in the city. She added that she did not want to invest public dollars in a lane lengthening study and the trade-off for prioritizing vehicle throughput at the expense of everything else was not appealing.

Director Holmes responded that the team was tasked with a exercise focused on vehicular improvements. He added that staff did not recommend off-ramp widening due to dangers like potential double right turns and had worked with Caltrans and SFMTA on increased visibility through streetlights, which was a months' long process due to the complexities of the old signal infrastructure in that area. He continued that partner agencies worked closely together to ensure alignment of signal timing. Director Holmes said that the question of shutting down the off-ramp altogether would be a different study and staff would bring back members' feedback to the team discussions.

Member Barz said she appreciated the extra context but mentioned that a lane



lengthening study was just adding more highway miles.

Director Holmes responded that the purpose of the ramp lengthening was not to add more highway capacity but to get people off the highway and into the off-ramp sooner to prevent a potential rear-end collision.

Member Ford echoed the other members' comments and added that there were not many options to get to Balboa Park BART station by bike, as it was one of the only rights-of-way to get across I-280. She said she did not see suggestions about managing the freeway and asked how to directly address the queuing problem. She also asked, noting the signal timing changes, how long were pedestrians expected to wait for freeway traffic and if the European style signaling system of one car at a time was considered.

Mr. Tan responded that the team talked to Caltrans about different options on the freeway and noted the existing off-ramp did not meet standard Caltrans off-ramp specifications and the San Jose Bridge acted as a bottleneck. He said there would be trade-offs when making changes to the freeway and having to accommodate at least a half mile for vehicle transitions.

Member Ford asked what happened to the 2014 recommendation of closing the northbound on-ramp and turning it into a frontage road. She also asked if the signal cycle would be lengthened.

Mr. Tan responded that staff looked at the frontage road option and determined that it would not work as well for overall traffic circulation and would require additional coordination to account for the near proximity of the BART train tracks and other structural issues. He said the average cycle time at city intersections was 90 seconds and the team had already increased it to 95 seconds during peak hours. He said this was the optimal solution based on the current signal technology.

Director Holmes stated that the team was still evaluating and monitoring the project so member feedback was valuable and timely.

Member Milford-Rosales also echoed CAC member concerns already expressed and said he alternated between biking and taking BART at Balboa station, which was especially difficult after dark. He continued by commenting that there appeared to be lot of bad traffic interactions near major multimodal transfer points, that people transferring should not be in the middle of complicated interchanges for vehicles, and would like any study to take that into account.

Member Margarita also agreed with prior CAC member concerns. She asked if there were engagement efforts with local community members to give their perspective during the planning process, noting low-income housing, childcare facility, and elderly persons located nearby the BART station, some of whom were dependent on walking and may go at a slower pace to get around. She requested that staff engage members of the community and she suggested adding an exit marker line on the freeway a half mile out like at the San Jose Avenue exit to alert drivers earlier to slow down or change lanes.

Director. Holmes responded that community engagement was part of the approval process for the study and noted the freeway line suggestion, which was related to the San Jose Avenue bridge and staff would need to work with Caltrans on that.



Member Margarita suggested providing stipends and free childcare for community input to show people that their feedback and time was valued.

Member Davidson commented that the crosswalks, particularly the one next to City College of San Francisco (City College), at the on-/off-ramps of the Ocean Avenue side, also were dangerous and she was almost hit numerous times at that crosswalk. She noted the entire BART station and anchor institutions like City College and Lick-Wilmerding High School were surrounded by highspeed off-ramps and on-ramps, so it would be remiss to focus only on the Geneva Avenue side when the Ocean Avenue side was also a problem. She echoed Member Barz' request to be bold in prioritizing pedestrian and bicyclist safety, even if it inconvenienced drivers.

Mr. Tan responded that there was a separate I-280 Southbound Ocean Avenue Off-Ramp Realignment project that would turn the free-flow right turn into a T-intersection and install a crosswalk with signal lights.

Member Ortega commented on how similar some of the issues were between the Geneva and Ocean ramps. She said that she avoided the right lane when exiting at San Jose Avenue because there were a lot of drivers that slammed their brakes from a sudden stop on the highway. She said that even though the study came from concern about freeway collisions which drew more attention than street collisions, there were still two dangerous intersections next to critical infrastructure and she avoided having to live near that area. She suggested that, due to the strong committee concerns about the study recommendations, the CAC may want to request additional or bigger studies and asked Chief Deputy Director Maria Lombardo to advise on what options the CAC had beyond a simple vote on the staff recommendation.

Ms. Lombardo said she would respond, but asked through the Chair if she could invite Rachel Hiatt, Deputy Director for Planning, to comment on another study in the area that may help CAC Members decide how to form their next steps.

Director Hiatt explained that the CAC had previously approved a Vision Zero Ramps Phase 3 Study that was funded by a federal Safe Streets for All grant and Prop L, which included both Geneva and Ocean avenues ramps for bold and permanent multimodal transformation. She said that she valued all of the feedback shared by members and that the Vision Zero Ramps study was one of the ways to address the bigger picture concerns. Ms. Hiatt added that the study was in the process of seeking technical/professional support and outreach support services and expected to kick-off outreach in the next quarter.

Member Ortega clarified that she wanted to ensure that members understood what options were available to them in the actions they could take on the item.

Chair Siegal asked Ms. Lombardo if members could break out pieces of the item to vote on or vote with conditions.

Ms. Lombardo answered that members could amend the staff recommendation to express support for just a subset of study recommendations, urge the agency to expedite the Vision Zero Ramps study, etc.

Member Barz commented that she supported near-term but not the mid-term nor long-term recommendations in the study as they didn't ref the concerns voiced by members nor the current state of affairs on city streets. She continued by stating that



she would support an amendment to approve near-term signal and timing changes but not the remainder of the recommendations and that she would like to urge the Transportation Authority to accelerate the Vision Zero Ramps work.

Member Davidson added to the amendment suggestions that the agency should be bold and prioritize pedestrian and cyclist safety, even at the expense of drivers, since the priority should be to save lives.

Chair Siegal asked staff, related to the queuing and speed portion of the presentation, if they thought reducing congestion in the area would decrease severe injury and fatal collisions.

Mr. Tan answered that due to the curve from I-280 traffic north of the exit queue, drivers may not be expecting to slow down or deal with a sudden lane change from a driver within the queue, which led to collision incidents in the area.

Chair Siegal asked if there was a traffic calming measure such as a lower speed limit that could be included in the freeway changes as part of collision prevention rather than speeding up the queue.

Mr. Tan suggested that there could be improved signage on the freeway and staff could work with Caltrans on that.

Director Holmes added that improved signage was part of the consideration for the mid-term ramp lengthening study as well as continued discussions with Caltrans on solutions. He also noted Mr. Tan's previous comment about considering narrowing lane widths on the freeway as another way to calm the speed pattern that was part of the mid-term recommendation.

Member Levine suggested that a solution could be a large, prominent (possibly blinking) sign that told drivers to beware that traffic may back-up and to slow down. He noted the sign on southbound U.S. 101 coming from Marin on Blithedale Avenue was very effective, and suggested this could be duplicated around the Geneva Avenue exit.

Director Holmes said staff would incorporate the suggestion into the study.

There was no public comment.

Member Barz motioned to amend the staff recommendation to approve only the near-term recommendations in the I-280 Northbound Geneva Avenue Off-Ramp Study, to urge Transportation Authority staff to expedite the Vision Zero Ramps Phase 3 Study, and to urge the agency to approach projects through the lens of improving safety for the most vulnerable users and to be bold in developing potential solutions. Member Davidson seconded the amendment.

The amendment of the item was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: CAC Members Barz, Chen, Davidson, Ford, Levine, Margarita, Milford-Rosales, Ortega, and Siegal (9)

Abstain: Kim (1)

Absent: Daniels (1)

Member Barz moved to approve the motion as amended, second by Member



Davidson. The amended motion was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: CAC Members Barz, Chen, Davidson, Ford, Levine, Margarita, Milford-Rosales, Ortega, and Siegal (9)

Abstain: Kim (1)

Absent: Daniels (1)

**7. Adopt a Motion of Support to Amend the Adopted Fiscal Year 2023/24 Budget to Increase Revenues by \$5,104,102, and Decrease Expenditures by \$9,414,037 and Decrease Other Financing Sources by \$15,000,000 for a Total Net Decrease in Fund Balance of \$1,324,367 – ACTION**

Lily Yu, Principal Management Analyst, presented the item per the staff memorandum.

There was no public comment.

Member Ford moved to approve the item, seconded by Member Kim.

The item was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: CAC Members Barz, Chen, Davidson, Ford, Kim, Levine, Margarita, Milford-Rosales, Ortega, and Siegal (10)

Absent: Daniels (1)

**8. Vision Zero Overview and Quick-Build Program Update – INFORMATION**

Vicente Romero, SFMTA Transportation Planner, presented the item.

Member Barz commented that the presentation should have stated that Vision Zero goals were not met, commended the substance of materials and the commitment to the initiatives, and added the trend and statistics required more context as the number of bicyclist and pedestrian commuters was low. She stated the West Portal incident supported the need for speed safety cameras and asked if Junipero Serra Boulevard, Portola Avenue, or 19th Avenue were considered for the cameras.

Mr. Romero responded that those locations were not part of the final selection. He said SFMTA used crash and injuries data for camera locations. He added there were only 33 cameras for the entire High Injury Network and the cameras required distribution across the city. [Note the authorizing legislation does not allow cameras to be placed on state highways as part of the pilot.]

Member Barz asked if the High Injury Network intersections goal would be achieved by the end of the year.

Mr. Romero responded that one commitment was to cover the whole High Injury Network with safety improvements. He said there were two components including corridor Quick-Build projects and intersection level work for the High Injury miles without corridors. He added the whole High Injury Network would have safety improvements at the corridor or intersection level by 2024. He said this would include all 900 plus intersections referenced in the presentation.

Member Barz commented that it appeared a rate increase would be needed to achieve the Quick-Build and intersection improvements.

Member Milford-Rosales commended the 3rd Street Quick-Build which connected





South of Market and Mission Bay neighborhoods. He asked why the location was selected for a fully protected lane for this Quick-Build and not others in the area. He asked if this was due to engineering reasons or due to local business considerations.

Mr. Romero responded that he would reach out to the project engineers for a response.

Christy Osorio, SFMTA Vision Zero Education Coordinator, affirmed that they would follow up and provide a response to the CAC.

Member Milford-Rosales commented that Vision Zero was adopted in 2014 and the Quick-Build toolkit plan was from 2021. He asked if there were other projects implemented before the toolkit or if it took seven years to develop an approach.

Mr. Romero responded SFMTA implemented a variety of safety improvements, even before 2014, including signal upgrades, mast arms, painted safety zones, pedestrian scrambles, citywide spot treatments, road diets, and stop signs. He said the Quick-Build program was created in 2019 for corridor level improvements before more permanent work took place. He added that there were different dashboards on all the different treatments implemented before and since Vision Zero.

Ms. Osorio reiterated that the Quick-Build program was adopted in 2019 allowing utilization of cheaper materials and flexibility for pilots. She said the development of the toolkit was recent and based on Quick-Build project outcomes.

Mr. Romero added that Quick-Builds allowed SFMTA a way to implement more streamlined safety improvements while continuing work on capital improvements, street safety, and streetscape improvements.

Anna LaForte, Deputy Director for Policy and Programming, added that the High Injury Network was established in 2017 which allowed SFMTA and the Department of Public Health to target limited dollars based on fatalities and injuries data. She continued that Vision Zero went through multiple reiterations since 2013, such as the Walk First Initiative. She said the creation of Quick-Builds in 2019 allowed SFMTA to conduct reversible or near-term, low-cost improvements that could be studied in a pilot manner and added upon or tweaked. She stated that the Transportation Authority was funding the Safe Streets Evaluation program annually and that SFMTA committed to do Quick-Builds on the entire High Injury Network. She added that they recently conducted a study with Fehr & Peers that produced a toolkit on how to achieve this goal.

Member Ford asked how to faster achieve Vision Zero as a city.

Ms. Osorio responded that SFMTA Director of Transportation Jeff Tumlin stated that funding and capacity was needed. She said the Vision Zero Program Manager and/or Department of Transportation would be the appropriate parties to provide the response.

Member Ford directed comments to the SFMTA program manager, asking how much funding was needed and what level of staffing was required to achieve Vision Zero.

Mr. Romero responded that SFMTA wanted to do but was unable to, citing how they pursued speed safety cameras for 10 years and just recently been able to implement a five-year pilot program. He said there were factors such as vehicle size, density, and



policies to achieve Vision Zero that were beyond SFMTA's capacity. He said that substantive funding was needed for streetscapes and capital improvements.

Ms. Lombardo added staff could share with the CAC Director Tumlin's response to a similar question asked at the Board meeting on March 26 meeting.

Member Margarita said she appreciated the graph of the data and asked if there were additional details on the cause of the fatalities, noting that outside circumstances lead to these.

Mr. Romero responded that there was a [dashboard created in 2022](#) available at [visionzerosf.org](http://visionzerosf.org). He said the report, along with a map of fatalities, included additional details that were published 15 days after the occurrence of a crash.

Director LaForte said that the Department of Public Health 2023 fatalities presentation presented to the SFMTA Board Vision Zero Committee at its February meeting that could be shared with the CAC.

Mr. Romero added that the Department of Public Health was additionally working on the 2023 fatalities and injuries reports and these would be available in the following weeks.

Chair Siegal said that the data didn't seem to reflect what SFMTA presented and asked for further explanation on how traffic and fatalities were trending down.

Mr. Romero shared two graphs showing the decrease from 2014. He said there were lower fatalities since Vision Zero and this information would be included in a 10-year retrospective report that would be released in April.

Chair Siegal responded that there was a stop in a steep increase but not a dramatic decrease. She asked for Director Tumlin and the Vision Zero Program Manager give a formal presentation to the CAC. She said she was supportive of Quick-Build work and No Turn on Red, but the spot fixes were not getting the city to Vision Zero. She added that vehicle mode share had increased, and transit mode share had decreased. She asked SFMTA to consider bolder actions such as closing streets to automobiles around major transit hubs.

Member Margarita asked SFMTA to consider people with disabilities for Vision Zero work.

During public comment, Edward Mason said that engineering could not solve the issue as it required modified cultural behavior and consideration for others. He commented that the speed safety cameras had a \$50 citation but did not affect a driver's record.

Roland Lebrun reiterated a comment he made at a prior CAC meeting regarding bus shelters placement to protect waiting passengers from speeding vehicles and include protective barriers. He added that all bus shelters in the city should be evaluated with a different lens to ensure safety.

## **9. State and Federal Legislation Update – INFORMATION**

Martin Reyes, Principal Transportation Planner, suggested that the item could be deferred to the next meeting given the lateness of the hour.

Chair Siegal appreciated Mr. Reyes for waiting and continued the item to the next



meeting.

## **Other Items**

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

There were no new items introduced.

### **11. Public Comment**

During public comment, Edward Mason commented on commuter buses creating traffic congestion delays on city streets due to lack of ability to traverse city hills. He said one of the drivers noted that no one rode the commuter buses on weekdays, but they still were running, and this was contributing to pollution rather than reducing it.

Roland Lebrun said street closure should be considered in major areas of transportation hubs, citing the recent pedestrian fatality at 4th and King streets. He said Caltrain Townsend station had potential for more people getting killed trying to transfer between transportation modes. He said if 7th Street, between Berry and King streets (around the creek), was closed off to vehicular traffic, Vision Zero would be achieved in that area.

### **12. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:08 p.m.