



DRAFT MINUTES

Community Advisory Committee

Wednesday, March 26, 2025

1. Committee Meeting Call to Order

Chair Siegal called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

CAC members present at Roll: Najuawanda Daniels, Phoebe Ford, Sean Kim, Jerry Levine, Sharon Ng, Rachael Ortega, and Kat Siegal (7)

CAC Members absent at Roll: Sara Barz, (entered during Item 2), Venecia Margarita, (entered during Item 2), and Austin Milford-Rosales (3)

2. Chair's Report - INFORMATION

Chair Siegal reported that at yesterday's Transportation Authority Board meeting, several Board members and staff had presented highlights from a study tour on New York City's Congestion Relief Zone, which had been in operation since January 5. She said that the program had reduced traffic congestion, shortened commute times for private vehicles and buses, and increased transit ridership and foot traffic. She reported that the U.S. Department of Transportation was seeking to end the program, with a deadline set for late April, while New York's Metropolitan Transportation Authority (NY MTA) had a pending lawsuit. She said there was a slide deck on the trip available on the Transportation Authority's website, with more details on the NY MTA website.

Chair Siegal reported that amendments to Senate Bill (SB) 63, the Connect Bay Area Act, were published yesterday, adding substantive language to authorize a regional transportation revenue measure for the November 2026 ballot. She explained that the measure, which was proposed by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) or a citizens initiative, aimed to stabilize and improve Bay Area transit, focusing on AC Transit, BART, Caltrain, and Muni. She stated that staff from BART and Caltrain had provided updates on financial outlooks, ridership growth, cost reductions, and efficiency improvements, while Transportation Authority staff had reviewed SB 63.

Chair Siegal reported that staff had planned for SFMTA to return to the CAC in May to provide an update on the Muni Funding Working Group and efforts to address project deficits through regional, local, and non-revenue strategies.

There was no public comment.

Consent Agenda

3. Approve the Minutes of the February 26, 2025 Meeting - ACTION

4. Adopt a Motion of Support to Adopt a Motion of Support to Exercise Contract Option for On-Call Project Management and Engineering Services in an Amount Not to Exceed \$2,700,000, for a Combined Total Contract Amount Not to Exceed



\$10,700,000 – ACTION

Member Levine reflected on a concern raised by Member Margarita at the prior meeting regarding the new signal at Monterey Boulevard. He stated that the signal was costly and would take time to implement. He suggested an alternative approach of installing speed bumps after the off-ramp, which would be accompanied by warning signs, as a simpler, more cost-effective, and quicker solution to enhance pedestrian safety.

Member Barz said that subsequent to the CAC meeting, she had met with SFMTA's Paul Stanis to discuss traffic issues on Monterey Boulevard and that SFMTA had expressed willingness to consider additional interventions beyond the quick-build toolkit to address high traffic volume and speed. She concluded by saying she had planned to record traffic activity to provide to SFMTA to aide with their assessment.

Member Barz moved to approve the Consent Agenda, seconded by Member Margarita.

The Consent Agenda was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: CAC Members Barz, Daniels, Ford, Kim, Levine, Margarita, Ng, Ortega, and Siegal (9)

Absent: CAC Member Milford-Rosales (1)

End of Consent Agenda

5. Adopt a Motion of Support to Approve Programming Priorities for Up to \$4,565,603 in San Francisco's Estimated Fiscal Year 2025/26 State Transit Assistance County Block Grant Funds, with Conditions – ACTION

Projects: SFMTA: Paratransit Program (\$3,300,000). BART: Elevator Attendant Program (up to \$1,265,603)

Mike Pickford, Senior Transportation Planner, presented the item per the staff memorandum.

Member Kim stated that he did not see elevator attendants in all the MUNI stations, and then asked what kind of authority the elevator attendants have.

Mr. Pickford clarified that given limited resources, the elevator attendant program was just for the four downtown shared stations: Embarcadero, Montgomery, Powell, and Civic Center.

Mili Choudhury, Senior Manager of Social Services Partnerships BART, stated that elevator attendants were trained to de-escalate situations and if a situation escalated to a certain point where the police or a station agent needed to be called over, the elevator attendants had the tools to do so.

Member Kim followed up by raising concerns about the deficits that BART was facing and suggested that cutting the elevator attendant program could save money that could be put toward something else like preventing service cuts.

Ms. Choudhry stated that there was data showing that this program did deter a lot of negative activity in elevators such as drug usage that could cause the elevators to be



out of commission. She said that deterring those more minor incidents saved operational costs day to day in the high traffic stations.

Member Barz asked how the agencies measured Paratransit and Elevator Attendant Programs. She commented that she regularly used the elevators with a stroller and appreciated that the elevators stayed operational but was simply curious about how effectiveness of the program is measured.

Mr. Pickford stated that the packet had some information on the metrics that BART measured and invited Ms. Choudhry to add on.

Ms. Choudhry elaborated by saying that BART looked at the times that the elevators were not operational and at the maintenance that was required for the elevators without attendants.

Mr. Pickford explained that similarly for the SFMTA Paratransit program there were statistics that could be found in the packet for performance indicators such as the number of trips taken as well as breakdowns for some of the sub programs mentioned in the presentation.

Member Barz said that she saw that there were between 300,000 and 600,000 Paratransit trips a year and asked if there was any benchmarking against other paratransit systems.

Jonathan Chang, Paratransit Manager at SFMTA, stated that every paratransit program was unique so it was difficult to compare, for example the East Bay had a paratransit program that covered Alameda and Contra Costa counties. He said that SFMTA's Paratransit program provided traditional van service, but also provided an on-demand same day taxi service. He added that SFMTA conducted a customer satisfaction survey annually and last year found a 90% satisfaction rate on both service and the survey trip.

Vice Chair Daniels asked if there were any plans to bring the elevator attendant program on board permanently.

Pam Herhold, BART's Assistant General Manager for Performance and Budget, stated that while it had been discussed, given the current financial situation it was in the best interest to consider to work with nonprofit partners for this type of service and it might be something to revisit later when financials were stabilized.

Member Margarita asked about the potential of expanding the program to the 16th and 24th Street stations considering the situations that had happened at those stations recently.

Ms. Choudhry stated that while BART had been considering expanding to those stations, BART did not have the financial capacity at that time to do so, but that BART would consider doing so in the future.

There was no public comment.

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

The item was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: CAC Members Barz, Daniels, Ford, Kim, Levine, Margarita, Ng, Ortega, and Siegal (9)



Absent: CAC Member Milford-Rosales (1)

6. Adopt a Motion of Support to Adopt the Final Prop L Strategic Plan – ACTION

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

Member Levine inquired whether there were any partnerships with UCSF, the Giants, or the Warriors regarding the Mission Bay Ferry Landing project.

Anna LaForte, Deputy Director for Policy and Programming, responded that private partnerships were in place. She added that in the coming months, the CAC was expected to review an allocation request for the project that would contain an updated funding plan for the project. Additionally, she noted that WETA had received a federal grant from the Environmental Protection Agency to support the ferry landing at Mission Bay.

Member Levine followed up, asking whether CAC would see specific funding contributions from private partnerships.

Ms. LaForte stated that she would review the information in the 5YPP and provide an update.

Member Ortega sought clarification on programming and cash flow changes outlined, asking whether the total funding remained the same while the timing of fund distribution was delayed.

Ms. Walley confirmed that the programming amount was fully preserved, and allocations could be requested in full, but the reimbursement schedule - which drove financing, was delayed.

Member Ortega noted that, in procurement industry terms, this had been described as extending the net payment period.

Member Ford asked whether delaying cash flow would impact project delivery, increase financing costs, or both.

Ms. LaForte responded that delaying cash flow while maintaining programming ensured that the agency received the full grant amount. She added that spending could begin once the board approved the allocation and that the timing of reimbursements was coordinated with project sponsors, noting that sometimes other project funds might be available to draw from earlier, allowing sales tax funds to be reimbursed later. She noted that the Mission Bay Ferry Landing project had significantly delayed cash flow, requiring the Transportation Authority to work closely with the sponsor before staff recommended the extended cash flow.

Maria Lombardo, Chief Deputy Director, added that Transportation Authority staff typically aimed to align reimbursement schedules with project schedules and noted that sponsors often billed more slowly than allowed by the approved cash flow schedule. She also explained that in some cases - such as the Mission Bay Ferry Landing and The Portal, the project sponsor was willing to extending the cash flow schedule to enable a larger sales tax funding amount.

Member Barz asked, referencing slide 20 in the staff presentation, whether future projects would face significant scope reductions due to funding changes, such as



whether there would be 20% fewer curb ramps, for example.

Ms. LaForte acknowledged that programming reductions were occurring due to a lower revenue projection and that may lead to reduced project scopes and /or fewer projects being delivered in the future. She added that the next few years would determine the scope of future projects in the following 5YPP period (years 6 to 10 of the Prop L program) and said that factors such as timing of invoicing, actual debt levels, and revenue trends would influence available funding for projects. She said that while fewer funds were expected, a clearer picture would emerge when the 5YPPs were updated starting in Fall 2027.

Member Margarita asked how the Transportation Authority determined which programs had not advanced, specifically referencing the Neighborhood Transportation Program and Equity Priority Transportation.

Ms. LaForte stated that the Transportation Authority largely aimed for equitable reductions across programs rather than prioritizing certain programs. She explained that programs that advanced more in the first five years had seen greater reductions in year six on, while those that advanced less had experienced smaller reductions.

Ms. Lombardo added that program advancement decisions had been established through the five-year project list process working with project sponsors and ultimately approved by the Board. She said that the Final Strategic Plan effort sought to ensure that nearly all programs retained a proportional share of total funds, as set by the voter approved Expenditure Plan.

Member Margarita asked whether programs would receive additional funding if more resources became available in Fall 2027.

Ms. LaForte confirmed that the hope was that revenues would come in higher than projected and that the Transportation Authority would be able to restore funding through the next 5YPP update. She reiterated that funding had been preserved as approved in the first five years through the 5YPPs.

Chair Seigal asked whether the 5YPP and Strategic Plan process was always a two-year process or if it had been unusually long this time due to being the first under Prop L.

Ms. LaForte confirmed that this process took longer because it was the first Prop L Strategic Plan and 5YPP update. She noted that there was carryforward from the prior measure, Prop K, that required consideration when determining available funds for new Expenditure Plan programs and that the process was further complicated by the introduction of several new programs under Prop L. In addition, she noted that the MUNI Maintenance 5YPP amendment had been just approved at the last meeting.

Chair Seigal inquired whether there were regular check-ins between five-year periods or if adjustments were made only as needed in response to revenue fluctuations.

Ms. LaForte stated interim updates could be made when necessary. For example, she said that when the COVID-19 pandemic affected San Francisco, the Transportation Authority undertook an off-cycle Strategic Plan amendment to align revenues with economic conditions and ensure sufficient funding for ongoing projects while working on reauthorization of the sales tax measure.



There was no public comment.

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

The item was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: CAC Members Barz, Daniels, Ford, Kim, Levine, Margarita, Ng, Ortega, and Siegal (9)

Absent: CAC Member Milford-Rosales (1)

7. BART Financial Outlook / Regional Transportation Measure – INFORMATION*

Pamela Herhold, BART's Assistant General Manager, presented the item.

Member Ortega asked about the BayPass program for corporations, citing past issues with Caltrain's all-or-nothing buy-in model. She recalled her employer rejecting the program due to cost and instead offered employees a tax-exempt purchase option. She asked whether BART's BayPass program followed a similar model or allowed partial buy-in for companies.

Ms. Herhold explained that BART's BayPass pricing was customized for each company based on employee transit usage. Companies with lower transit ridership received lower pricing than those with higher ridership. She stated that the BayPass team worked individually with companies to set attractive rates while reflecting potential transit costs and that the goal was to maximize ridership and break even rather than generate revenue. She welcomed suggestions for companies to engage with.

Ms. Herhold also mentioned that BART was considering an accumulator fare system, used by other Bay Area transit agencies, where riders would receive free trips after a set number of rides. She noted that this could not be implemented under the current Clipper system but was being explored for the new system (Clipper 2.0). She stated that those were the two ways BART planned to improve the system in the future.

Member Ortega asked if BayPass included the ferry.

Ms. Herhold stated that BayPass included all transit operators, including Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA) and Golden Gate Ferry.

Member Ortega stated that many of her coworkers preferred taking the ferry, as it was easier for them to travel from Alameda to San Francisco compared to BART.

Member Levine asked about the status of reauthorization of federal transportation funding, noting that a significant portion of funding was dedicated to older rail systems like BART and Muni.

Ms. Herhold clarified that they do not receive federal funds for operations but have applied for and received other federal capital grants. She said that some grants were currently on hold as the administration reviewed their guidelines, while others were proceeding as planned.

Member Levine asked if this was being factored into revenue projections.

Ms. Herhold stated that no potential grant funds had been revised or removed from projections and that the capital forecast included funds that were secured, with a separate category for those identified but not yet secured. She expressed hope that no funds would be removed from the funding outlook.



Member Ford raised a question about the \$400 million saved on new BART railcars that was mentioned in the presentation, asking whether it could be recaptured and reallocated or if it would return to another funding pool. She also asked about the impact of BART's extension to Silicon Valley, specifically the high cost of the tunnels in San Jose, on the agency's funding outlook and maintenance of the system and whether BART was pursuing capital grants for infill stations to shift from a park-and-ride model to a more urban, point-to-point transit system.

Ms. Herhold explained that there were three main funding partners for the BART railcar project that realized the cost savings: Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), MTC, and BART. She noted that funding saved was credited back proportionately to VTA and MTC while BART utilized its portion of savings to avoid using operating funds to capital projects which was especially helpful during the early years of the pandemic. She noted that VTA was responsible for the San Jose extension, including capital and operating costs, and stated that infill stations were not feasible given the current financial situation and the required capital, maintenance and operations costs.

Chair Siegal asked if operating costs related to BART police were typical compared to similar transit agencies and if costs were expected to decrease as a result of the new fare gates on the system.

Ms. Herhold noted that the police budget was around \$120 million per year, possibly exceeding 10% of BART's annual budget. She stated there were challenges in comparing budgets, as many agencies contract for or rely on city police services whereas BART requires dedicated coverage given it operates across five counties and over 30 cities. She expressed hope that police budget increases would not be substantial in the future. Additionally, she highlighted the difficulty of recruiting and retaining officers, emphasizing the need to offer competitive pay in the Bay Area, acknowledging the significant cost but deeming it necessary. She said she hoped the need would decrease as fare gates were rolled out to other stations, but BART had not discussed the impact on police department staffing.

Chair Siegal asked if BART had considered making fares free for children over four to help families and make the system more affordable, and whether BART had evaluated the potential associated increase in ridership and revenues.

Ms. Herhold explained that fares were free for children up to age four, with a youth discount available for those ages five to 18 while those 19 and older paid full fare. She stated that BART was currently focused on the rollout of Clipper 2.0, but the system was designed to be flexible to accommodate potential pilot programs encouraging group travel and other innovative programs that could be rolled out later.

Chair Siegal encouraged exploring options to grow ridership, noting that cost, particularly for families crossing the bay, was a significant concern according to feedback she'd received from commuters.

Ms. Herhold agreed, stating that introducing young people to transit and familiarizing them with tapping and using fare gates was a good practice.

During public comment, Edward Mason stated he has observed private commuter buses at the Fremont, South Fremont, and Millbrae stations using parking lots and suggested marketing BART to these companies to create a revenue stream. He stated



that while BART was working with some companies, he believed there was a moral responsibility for these companies to contribute to BART and use buses as shuttles to work sites rather than having the shuttle buses running on freeways.

8. Caltrain Financial Outlook / Regional Transportation Measure – INFORMATION*

Jason Baker, Caltrain's Director of Government and Community Affairs, presented the item.

Member Ortega acknowledged that her question was addressed earlier but expressed concern about company buy-in, particularly on the peninsula. Despite the proposed solution being strong, she remained worried that tech companies, amid various cuts, might not engage. She suggested that companies consider breaking up large programs to better encourage participation from businesses on the peninsula.

Member Ortega also shared concerns about bike cars on Caltrain, noting that they often overfill. She said her partner, who takes Caltrain daily, bikes to 4th and King instead of 22nd Street Station due to bike overcrowding. She specifically mentioned the "last mile" issue, where commuters like her partner must bike additional distances, and also suggested that shuttle services should be better coordinated with train schedules. She recommended adding more bike cars to accommodate more commuters and improving shuttle services, particularly in the Peninsula, to address these issues. She also emphasized the importance of fostering partnerships to improve commuter experience.

Mr. Baker stated that they were re-evaluating the GoPass program to ensure it met the needs of companies and current ridership. He suggested improving education for shuttle drivers about real-time Caltrain arrivals. Regarding the bike car, he explained that the trains were limited to seven cars, one of which was specifically for bikes, but they would work on better education and oversight with riders.

Member Ortega asked if it was possible to run seven cars with two designated as bike cars, or if the issue was a lack of cars. She asked whether the train cars could be swapped.

Mr. Baker stated that the trains were one piece with no way to swap in an additional bike car.

Member Daniels noted the projected seven-year hiring freeze under cost containment and asked if Caltrain had implemented any layoffs or planned to do so.

Mr. Baker stated that the extended hiring freeze aligned with the current budget. He said while serious questions about the workforce might arise, there was no specific plan for layoffs.

Member Ford commented that the polling results were just shy of the 66% threshold, meaning new voter-approved funding would likely require a citizen ballot initiative, which only needs a 50% threshold. She referenced San Francisco's Prop C as an example of a citizen initiative and asked how grassroots efforts could be engaged to lower the threshold.

Mr. Baker acknowledged the importance of the citizen initiative's threshold, emphasizing its relevance. He noted that MTC and Senators Weiner and Arreguín were focusing on a simple majority approach based on polling data. While Caltrain



was not currently considering this for its own measure, Mr. Baker said Caltrain might consider it if a backup measure became necessary. He mentioned that polling in San Francisco and San Mateo for previous measures like Measure RR had fluctuated, peaking at 69% on the ballot despite earlier polls at 63% and 66%. Mr. Baker also highlighted the significant effort and cost required to gather the signatures needed for a measure.

Member Ford commented on Caltrain's Billie Eilish train and supported this approach noting that the Atlanta transit system successfully leveraging this strategy to attract new riders by doing something similar with a Taylor Swift theme. She also stated that the improved Caltrain schedule made it a viable alternative for her. However, she highlighted the lack of level loading on the bike car, especially for larger e-bikes, as a significant issue contributing to congestion, with more people riding e-bikes. She then asked whether the Union Pacific agreement for track right-of-way work in the freight industry was renegotiable or if it was fixed.

Mr. Baker stated that everything was renegotiable with enough funding, but currently, there were no plans to renegotiate given constrained resources. He stated Caltrain ideally would have wanted to electrify south of Gilroy but acknowledged it wasn't possible at the time. He also noted pilot programs for battery electric trains that don't require overhead catenary as something that was being explored.

Member Ford expressed the opinion that freight should be electrified and supported joining India in leading the electric freight train market with overhead catenary.

Chair Siegal asked for clarification on the one-eighth cent sales tax, confirming if it was mentioned as a backup option, not an addition.

Mr. Baker stated that if there were a regional measure in the counties involved and/or contributions from other counties, such as San Mateo and Santa, Caltrain would not proceed with a separate one-eighth sales tax. He said Caltrain had polled a potential measure for three counties for 30 years with a one-eighth cent sales tax, using language similar to Measure RR.

Chair Siegal asked what percentage of the deficit that would cover.

Mr. Baker explained that the measure would cover the operating deficit based on Measure RR currently bringing in about \$120 million, and it would also allow for some capital improvements. He said the recent Caltrain poll included two parcel taxes: a five-cent per square foot tax and a nine-cent tax and that the five-cent tax raised around \$120 million, similar to the one-eighth-cent sales tax. He said that while the two-thirds threshold was not reached, the poll results showed over 50% support, even with the margin of error.

During public comment, Edward Mason reiterated the issue of commuter buses in San Francisco, highlighting a culture of convenience where commuters prefer direct corporate buses over other options. He argued that companies should recognize their moral responsibility for climate change, as many buses run empty, contributing to pollution. He suggested that companies collaborate to create a combined Muni-Caltrain fare to make public transportation more appealing and convenient, aiming to change commuters' reliance on convenient, but environmentally harmful, options.

During public comment, Roland Lebrun acknowledged Caltrain as a strong funding



partner, noting its track record. He mentioned that Measure B would not have passed without it, but the current 52% support in Santa Clara County was due to the lack of viable Caltrain service south of San Jose, despite three tax measures (2000, 2016, and 2020). He concluded that membership contributions, terminated after Measure RR, should be restored. Regarding BayPass, he proposed transitioning Caltrain to four-car trains with front and rear cabs, one bathroom car, and one bike car, which could be coupled for large events. He also praised India's freight transportation capabilities.

9. State and Federal Legislation Update – INFORMATION*

Martin Reyes, Principal Transportation Planner, presented the item per the memorandum.

Member Kim asked what San Francisco's sales tax rate would have been if the regional revenue measure had introduced a new half-cent or a full-cent sales tax for the city.

Mr. Reyes had responded that a half-cent sales tax would have increased San Francisco's sales tax rate to just above nine percent [from 8.65% to 9.15%], while a full-cent sales tax would have resulted in a higher total rate [9.65%].

Chair Siegal asked for more information on the legislative schedule for the bill and how much time a citizen initiative had to qualify for the ballot.

Mr. Reyes responded that the region would need to decide on certain aspects of the revenue measure including duration and the sales tax rate in San Francisco by July 31, 2025. Mr. Reyes added that signature gathering for a citizen initiative could begin in January 2026 and continue through May 2026.

During public comment, Roland Lebrun suggested that the financial efficiency be applied to all five counties instead of just the counties participating in the revenue measure.

Other Items

10. Introduction of New Business - INFORMATION

There were no new items introduced.

11. Public Comment

During public comment, Edward Mason proposed a solution to part of the fiscal dilemma by suggesting an electricity utility tax and a surcharge on large commercial users and data centers, exempting residential users. He highlighted the strain on the electrical grid caused by AI, autonomous vehicles, and large commercial users. He pointed out that data centers, such as those in Santa Clara County, consume significant electricity, even when in a dormant state. He also noted delays in power access from PG&E, which further exacerbated the issue. His recommendation was to generate revenue through a surcharge on these large users.

During public comment, Roland Lebrun expressed appreciation for the staff, acknowledging their role in saving the Zoom transcript.

12. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:22 p.m.