San Francisco
County Transportation
Authority

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DRAFT MINUTES

Community Advisory Committee

Wednesday, September 9, 2026

1. Committee Meeting Call to Order

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

CAC members present at Roll: Najuawanda Daniels, Sean Kim, Venecia Margarita, Austin Milford-Rosales, and Kat Siegal (5)

CAC Members Absent at Roll: Jerry Levine, Clara Baumgarten, Phoebe Ford, and Rachael Ortega (4)

2. Chair's Report – INFORMATION

Chair Siegal recognized September as Transit Month in the Bay Area, celebrating transit agencies, drivers, workers, and riders, and encouraged everyone to explore the region by transit and thank transit operators and workers.

Chair Siegal reported that public engagement was underway for the Transportation Authority-led Bayview Street Safety and Truck Relief Study and the Western Addition-Geary Boulevard Community Study. She noted that the first round of Bayview outreach concluded in August and included engagement with community leaders and organizations, neighborhood tabling, and a multilingual survey, with additional stakeholder workshops planned in October and a second round of outreach anticipated next spring. She said that Western Addition-Geary Boulevard outreach included September community events and town halls, along with a multilingual survey seeking feedback on study goals, neighborhood priorities, safety concerns, and desired uses and amenities along the corridor. Chair Siegal pointed interested parties to the agency website (www.sfcta.org) for more information about the studies.

There was no public comment.

3. Approve the Minutes of the July 22, 2026 Meeting – ACTION

There was no public comment.

Vice Chair Daniels moved to approve the item, seconded by Member Milford-Rosales.

The minutes were approved by the following vote:

Ayes: CAC Members Daniels, Kim, Margarita, Milford-Rosales, and Siegal (5)

Absent: CAC Members Baumgarten, Ford, Levine, and Ortega (4)

4. Adopt a Motion of Support to Allocate $22,500,000 in Prop L Funds, with Conditions, to the Transbay Joint Powers Authority for The Portal Project Engineering Phase Activities Starting October 1, 2026, and Appropriate $3,500,000 in Prop L Funds, with Conditions, for The Portal Project Oversight, Engagement, and Work Program for Initiation of Pre-Construction – ACTION

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

Chair Siegal asked how recent California Air Resources Board (CARB) changes impacting the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund could affect anticipated state funding for The Portal Project, how much funding was expected from that source, and whether alternative funding sources had been identified.

Mr. Holmes replied that staff was monitoring the funding risk and had noted it in the Board memorandum. He stated that the final outcome was not yet known, but that the overall funding amount had been reduced for sources the project is targeting, increasing the risk. He added that staff was discussing contingency options with TJPA, including adjustments to early works or contract phasing, but that no alternative had been finalized.

Member Margarita asked about the risk of project funding partners withdrawing, particularly the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) given its significant share of project funding.

Mr. Holmes replied that the partnership with the FTA remained strong and that the project continued to advance through the engineering phase toward a full funding grant agreement. He added that the project team met monthly with FTA and its oversight consultants.

Member Margarita asked for clarity on planned service to the Salesforce Transit Center in the future.

Mr. Holmes clarified that Salesforce Transit Center would be the terminus of the rail extension, with Caltrain serving it initially and California High-Speed Rail planned to serve it in the future.

Member Ford asked about the role, organizational structure, staffing, and governance of TJPA, including who it reported to. She also asked how the approximately $600 million work plan was divided between construction and land acquisition versus professional services and how much of the project management and engineering work was performed by staff versus consultants.

Mr. Holmes replied that TJPA was a partnership including but not limited to board representation from San Francisco and the Peninsula. He noted that San Francisco Board of Supervisors President Mandelman served as Vice Chair and that Jeff Gee, representing Caltrain, served as President of the TJPA Board.

Alfonso Rodriguez, Project Director at TJPA, added that TJPA was a joint powers authority whose membership included the City and County of San Francisco [including the SFMTA], Caltrain, California High-Speed Rail, and AC Transit, with a total of four of seven voting Board members appointed by San Francisco. He explained that TJPA drew its authority from its member agencies, had fewer than 25 employees, and relied heavily on consultants to support The Portal Project. He added that the request included right-of-way and design work and that TJPA planned to issue requests for proposals for designers. Mr. Rodriguez also stated that nearly 10% of the project's estimated cost had already been constructed in the form of the train box beneath Salesforce Transit Center and that FTA had allowed approximately $730 million in previously invested costs to count as local match toward the planned CIG funds.

Member Ford stated that when The Portal Project returned to the CAC in future meetings,

it would be helpful to clarify the respective responsibilities of TJPA, the City, and other agencies and establish a baseline for monitoring consultant costs compared with in-house work.

Member Kim asked how the existing train box would be maintained while it remained unused and how future changes in train specifications could affect the train box.

Mr. Holmes replied that the train box was essentially an unused concrete basement beneath Salesforce Transit Center and did not yet contain rail infrastructure. He stated that its maintenance requirements were minimal and that rail would be installed as part of future project work.

During public comment, Edward Mason asked how much had been spent on consultant reports for the project over the years including for work that was no longer relevant citing vents planned to accommodate diesel-Caltrain service. He expressed concern about anticipated ridership, citing several Bay Area transit projects that he said had achieved substantially less ridership than originally estimated, and asked what ridership was anticipated for the $8 billion Portal Project and whether autonomous vehicles would reduce future transit ridership.

Roland Lebrun stated that options should remain open in the coming months in case other funding sources were needed to keep Muni and BART operating. He disputed describing Salesforce Transit Center as a terminus, citing the California State Rail Plan and stating that it was intended as a through station with multiple rail operators. He also referenced a proposal he said he had submitted to MTC regarding regional rail assets and private-sector operation and cited the Société Nationale des Chemins de Fer Français (SNCF), the French national railway company, in connection with earlier California high-speed rail planning and Morocco's high-speed rail system.

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

The item was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: CAC Members Daniels, Ford, Kim, Margarita, Milford-Rosales, and Siegal (6)

Absent: CAC Members Baumgarten, Levine, and Ortega (3)

5. Adopt a Motion of Support to Adopt San Francisco's One Bay Area Grant Cycle 4 Project Nominations – ACTION

Nicolette Chan, Senior Transportation Planner, and Erin Slichter, Transportation Planner, presented the item per the staff memorandum.

Member Kim asked what the 120% nomination target meant.

Ms. Chan explained that MTC asked each Congestion Management Agency (CMA) to submit project nominations totaling up to 120% of its nomination target. She stated that San Francisco's 120% target was $56.6 million and that, after the set-asides for CMA planning and the Safe Routes to School Non-Infrastructure Program, $48.7 million remained for the call for projects. She added that when MTC selected projects, it would aim to fund each county close to its 100% target, which was $39.2 million for San Francisco.

Maria Lombardo, Chief Deputy Director, added that MTC is the agency that selects the projects to be funded and to do this, they need a larger pool of projects to choose from, which was why counties were asked to nominate projects totaling 120% of their target.

Member Kim asked whether the $5.8 million for the Safe Routes to School Non-Infrastructure Program over the next four years included staff expenses or was entirely for third-party expenses.

Anna LaForte, Deputy Director for Policy and Programming, replied that the $5.8 million covered a combination of staff time to administer and oversee the program, as well as funding for the contractor that runs the program and its subconsultants. She added that she could not recall whether the current funding also supported staff at the school district, although it had in past iterations.

Member Kim requested that the SFMTA provide information for the past four years on the total funding for the Safe Routes to School Non-Infrastructure Program, including a breakdown of funding for third-party expenses and in-house staff expenses.

Ms. LaForte stated that the CAC typically considered an item annually for the local match required for federal OBAG funds and that the approximately $220,000 annual allocation Member Kim recalled was the required local match. She added that staff would provide background information on what had been approved in April.

Member Ford asked for the individual project scores and asked about the relative scoring of the Treasure Island Electric Ferry Pilot compared with the proposed BART improvements at the 16th Street station, citing the difference in ridership between the two projects and indicating that she would have thought the BART project would have scored higher than the ferry project.

Ms. Chan stated that the total scores for each project were provided in Attachment 3 of the memorandum.

Member Ford noted that the Treasure Island Electric Ferry Pilot scored three points higher than the 16th Street Mission Elevator Modernization project and one point lower than the 22nd Street Station ADA Improvement project. She stated that the scores appeared somewhat subjective and asked what was distinctive about the proposed first-of-its-kind electric ferry and what caused it to score higher.

Ms. Slichter stated that the Treasure Island Electric Ferry Pilot scored well on many factors such as project readiness and deliverability and transit reliability and accessibility because the electric ferry would provide three times the capacity of the current ferry, which she said sometimes could not accommodate all waiting passengers. She stated that the project also received strong scores for community support, serving an Equity Priority Community, and environmental sustainability.

Member Ford asked whether the additional ferry capacity would come from more ferry trips or from greater passenger capacity on each vessel.

Ms. Slichter replied that the additional capacity would come from the larger vessel, which could carry approximately 150 passengers compared with about 50 on the current ferry. She added that the electric ferry also would include additional bicycle parking to support bicycle travel between the East Bay and San Francisco as part of the Bay Skyway.

Member Ford stated that the project readiness criterion could favor projects that had already advanced over projects that might provide greater benefits or value. She requested that, when the scoring criteria were considered in the future, staff consider reducing the weight given to project readiness, noting that access to funding itself could help make projects more ready.

Ms. LaForte explained that the federal funds used for OBAG were subject to strict timely-use-of-funds requirements [set by federal entities and layered on by MTC to avoid loss of funds to the region] and that those requirements were a primary factor in evaluating project readiness and deliverability. She added that two prior OBAG cycles had provided funding for BART elevator projects, including elevator work at Embarcadero Station.

Ms. Slichter added that the prior OBAG-funded BART elevator work also included BART stations along Market Street.

Ms. LaForte continued to explain that since both of the prior OBAG-funded BART elevator projects had experienced delivery issues and neither BART elevator project was completed, that this factored into the evaluation of project readiness for the 16th Street Mission Elevator Modernization project in the current cycle.

Member Milford-Rosales asked whether the Treasure Island ferry service would include any frequency improvements or whether the proposed change was limited to increased vessel capacity.

Suany Chough, Assistant Deputy Director for Planning, replied that staff was developing the business plan for the ferry service and did not anticipate significant changes to the schedule. She stated that the service was expected to operate about 14 trips, approximately the same as the current service.

Member Milford-Rosales noted that state requirements to transition transit vehicles to electric propulsion could increase costs for local transit agencies, including infrastructure and vehicle costs. He asked how the ferry's increased passenger capacity was considered as an environmental benefit relative to the benefit of electrification itself, stating that a primary benefit of public transportation was shifting people from cars to shared vehicles.

Ms. Chough replied that the larger ferry would accommodate more passengers as population and jobs grew on Treasure Island and would be more efficient to operate with the same size crew. She stated that most funding for the new vessels and electrification infrastructure had come from other state and federal grants as part of broader San Francisco Bay ferry electrification efforts. She added that the ferry business plan was evaluating operating costs and developing a 10-year funding plan and that OBAG funding would provide significant support for the service. She also stated that providing emission-free ferry service was important for Treasure Island as an Equity Priority Community.

Member Milford-Rosales asked whether he correctly understood that most funding for electrification had come from broader state and federal ferry electrification grants and that the current request was primarily to support initial service.

Ms. Chough confirmed that the OBAG funding was for the first three years of the pilot service (operations). She stated that after the pilot period, the service would rely on Treasure Island-specific funding sources, including a developer subsidy and a congestion management tool identified in the plan.

Member Milford-Rosales stated that he supported increasing ferry capacity and frequency between Treasure Island and the rest of San Francisco given the difficulty of traveling to and from the island without a car. He stated that available funding should prioritize improving transit service over related improvements.

Chair Siegal stated that she was surprised the 16th Street Mission Elevator Modernization

project had not ranked more highly given its importance for reliability and accessibility at a heavily used station in an Equity Priority Community and appreciated staff's earlier responses. She noted that the project application indicated limited competitiveness for other funding sources and asked whether alternative funding could be identified to help fund the project. She also asked whether the Transportation Authority could help BART complete its current elevator projects more quickly so that future elevator projects, such as those at 24th Street and Balboa Park stations, could be more competitive for funding.

Ms. LaForte replied that the Transportation Authority had previously funded BART elevator projects through Prop AA, as well, which dedicates a portion of revenues to transit reliability and accessibility improvements, and that Prop L also included funding for BART state-of-good-repair projects. She stated that the next five-year Prop L programming process would begin around the same time the following year and added that, depending on project readiness, the 16th Street elevator project might be positioned to seek construction funding through OBAG 5.

Michael Gerbracht, Project Manager at BART, stated that the 16th Street elevator project was in the early stages of design and was scheduled to be ready for construction in 2029. He said BART hoped to identify additional funding before then and noted that other elevator projects, including Embarcadero, other Market Street stations, and Glen Park, were further along. He added that 16th Street was expected to be approximately the 10th or 12th elevator delivered through the program and that 24th Street and Balboa Park were among the priorities for future planning and design.

Member Ford asked whether BART's elevator project delivery had improved over successive projects, how BART was measuring that performance from project to project, and what key barriers continued to affect project delivery.

Mr. Gerbracht stated that BART had made changes to elevator design requirements and technical specifications after addressing accessibility and construction challenges. He said vendor, consultant, and industry input had resulted in stronger contract packages and that lessons learned from projects further along in design were being incorporated into the 16th Street elevator project. He added that BART expected these changes to improve the project's schedule and delivery and said the program was continuing to apply lessons learned from earlier projects.

During public comment, Roland Lebrun expressed concern about the recommendation to advance Oakdale Avenue rather than Evans Avenue as the preferred location for the Bayview Caltrain Station and asked why the station location recommendation had not previously come before the CAC. He referenced prior planning for an Oakdale station, the vacation of Quint Street, relocation of the Southeast Community Center, and nearby San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) digester facilities as reasons for his concern. He asserted that work on the Pennsylvania Avenue Extension had influenced the station location and advocated instead for stations at Evans Avenue and Paul Avenue. He also opined that the Downtown Rail Extension (or The Portal) cost twice as much as the proposed new Transbay tunnel and requested that the Oakdale recommendation be brought back to the CAC for discussion.

Ms. Lombardo added that the Bayview Caltrain Station Location Study would come before the CAC for approval before going to the Board. She added that staff was completing public outreach prior to bringing the item to the CAC.

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

The item was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: CAC Members Daniels, Ford, Kim, Margarita, Milford-Rosales, and Siegal (6)

Absent: CAC Members Baumgarten, Levine, and Ortega (3)

Other Items

6. Introduction of New Business – INFORMATION

Member Kim requested that SFMTA be invited to a future CAC meeting to provide an update on parking fees in Golden Gate Park, including how the changes would be implemented and when they would take effect.

Member Margarita stated that the CAC should reconsider how it evaluates and approves large transportation investments in light of other needs facing San Francisco, including housing and homelessness. She also expressed concern about the transportation budget deficit and its potential effects on workers and employment and encouraged greater consideration of how individuals and the community could support the transportation system.

Chair Siegal requested an update on San Francisco programs and projects that could be at risk due to reliance on Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) and Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) funding following changes to the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF). She noted her understanding that the recently concluded legislative session had not identified new funding to backfill the reduced funding available.

Ms. Lombardo stated that the CAC would receive a legislative update at the next meeting and noted that staff was also awaiting the Governor's decisions on pending bills.

There was no public comment.

7. Public Comment

During public comment, Edward Mason expressed concern about disruptions caused by corporate commuter buses in residential neighborhoods. He described recent incidents at 21st and Church streets and 24th and Noe streets in which disabled or stranded commuter buses required large tow trucks and disrupted traffic and Muni service for extended periods. He added that multiple commuter buses arriving around the same time near 24th and Church streets also contributed to neighborhood congestion.

Roland Lebrun responded to concerns raised about the scale of transportation spending and stated that he had recently written to MTC proposing a different approach. He raised concerns about the Downtown Rail Extension, citing concerns about its cost, lack of a connection to the East Bay, platform design, transfers to Muni light rail, and potential construction impacts in SoMa. He stated that, after advocating on these issues for many years, he proposed turning the broader rail alignment over to the private sector, with work performed in-house rather than through consultants, and referenced a $20 billion project with $5 billion in private investment.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:32 p.m.