



JPB Board of Directors
Meeting of August 6, 2020

Correspondence as of July 17, 2020

Subject

- 1 Caltrain CARES Act Funding
- 2 Bay Area Transportation Working Group Newsletter
- 3 Budget Suggestion
- 4 Idling Trains
- 5 Shelter in Place Shutdown
- 6 Plan Bay Area 2050 and South Santa Clara County Transportation Priorities



**City of
Santa Clara**
The Center of What's Possible

Mayor

Lisa M. Gillmor

Councilmembers

Raj Chahal
Debi Davis
Karen Hardy
Teresa O'Neill
Kathy Watanabe

July 10, 2020

Commissioner Scott Haggerty, Chair
Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Bay Area Metro Center
375 Beale St., Suite 800
San Francisco, CA 94105-2066

Dear Chair Haggerty:

We urge you to support the Blue Ribbon Task Force's recommended tranche 2 CARES Act allocations, with the understanding that the amount allocated to Caltrain will not be sufficient to maintain service through the end of the year.

Caltrain is an essential transit service for thousands of riders that continue to rely on the system to meet their mobility needs. As more and more sectors of the Bay Area's economy open up, a growing amount of survey data suggests that former riders will eventually return to the system. Without sufficient funding from tranche 2 of the CARES Act, there is a strong likelihood that Caltrain will need to shut down before they do so. This would create an unacceptable gap in the Bay Area's transit network, stranding riders that depend on the system, and leaving hundreds of the system's workers without a job.

To prevent this, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission should be using CARES funds as they were intended: to protect jobs and preserve service as long as possible. The best way to do this is to base CARES allocations on the actual losses that agencies experience. Caltrain is set to receive \$15 million, but that will not cover the system's fare revenue losses unless ridership returns to an average of 30% of normal levels by the end of the year, which is incredibly unlikely.

The other allocation options evaluated by MTC were worse. They would have provided Caltrain with even less revenue and would have dramatically increased the likelihood that Caltrain will shut down and lay off workers in the fall.

According to the most recent economic data, sales tax revenues are recovering faster than MTC's assumptions and ridership is recovering more slowly. If the MTC assumptions prove to be inaccurate, swift steps will be needed to provide additional support to the fare dependent agencies like Caltrain to preserve them as critical services that are essential to the region's recovery efforts.

Sincerely,

Lisa M. Gillmor
Mayor, City of Santa Clara

Cc: Members, Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Members, Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board of Directors



July 13, 2020

San Mateo County Supervisor Dave Pine, Chair
Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board of Directors
1250 San Carlos Avenue
San Carlos, CA 94070

Dear Chair Pine:

Thank you for your efforts to help the Caltrain commuter rail system navigate the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The impacts of the pandemic on public transportation are likely to continue for a prolonged period of time. We recognize that Caltrain is particularly vulnerable because, unlike other Bay Area transit agencies, it does not have a dedicated source of revenue. The survival of Caltrain is critical to the region's recovery from the pandemic and to our long-term need for safe, reliable, equitable, congestion-reducing transit alternatives. We urge Caltrain and its member agencies to take the actions needed to place a measure on the November 2020 ballot that will finally provide Caltrain with a dedicated funding source to help it endure this crisis, and eventually expand service to accommodate regional growth.

We were troubled to learn that the allocation of Federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds will not be sufficient to cover Caltrain's operating needs, even in the near-term, and that the slow return of ridership could force the system to shut down entirely unless a dedicated source of funding is secured.

In 2017, we worked to pass SB 797 (Hill), which allows Caltrain to place a 1/8-cent sales tax on the ballot as long as it is authorized by the transportation agencies and boards of supervisors in the three counties that Caltrain serves. We have reviewed recent polling showing that this measure is politically viable in 2020. Last year, the Caltrain Board directed staff to evaluate moving forward with this measure. It is clearly needed now more than ever before.

Last year, the Caltrain Board also approved a 2040 Service Vision that would transform Caltrain into a modernized, frequent mass-transit system that carries nearly 180,000 riders, almost three times the current ridership. The implementation of this vision starts with the operation of 8-train-per hour expanded electrified service that will put the equivalent of two additional freeway lanes of traffic on Caltrain instead of our local streets and roads. This cannot be accomplished unless significant new local investment in the system is secured.

A 1/8-cent sales tax would generate enough revenue to make this service a reality. It would also relieve Caltrain's member agencies from their obligation to cover the system's annual operating shortfalls, providing millions of dollars in new revenues to support Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), San Mateo County Transit District (SamTrans), and San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) transit services at a time when these systems will need it most.

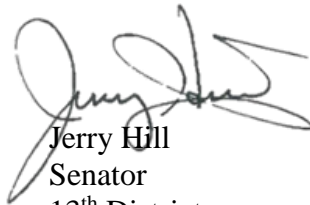
We understand that the Caltrain Board has also made significant progress to evaluate the current management and governance structure. Ultimately, given the size, complexity, and unique structure of the Caltrain system, it is critical for the long-term resiliency of the system that Caltrain eventually become an agency with its own staff — potentially independent of the San Mateo County Transit District — that can focus and specialize solely on the needs of our regional rail commuters. The continued evaluation of reforms that would achieve this should be prioritized. However, given the urgency of this catastrophic funding shortfall, this necessary reform need not be an explicit condition for the desperate need to put a Caltrain dedicated funding measure on the ballot this year. We look forward to continuing to work with Caltrain and the San Mateo County Transit District on this governance reform.

Again, we thank you for all you are doing to position the system to make it through this current crisis and to continue Caltrain's long track record of successfully serving our communities. If we can offer any help to advance this incredibly important effort, please let us know.

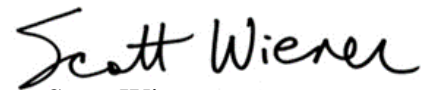
Sincerely,



Kevin Mullin
Speaker Pro Tempore
22nd District



Jerry Hill
Senator
13th District



Scott Wiener
Senator
8th District



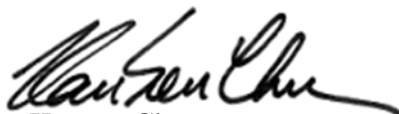
Jim Beall
Senator
15th District



Marc Berman
Assemblymember
24th District



David Chiu
Assemblymember
17th District



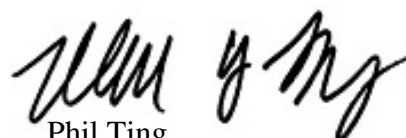
Kansen Chu
Assemblymember
25th District



Ash Kalra
Assemblymember
27th District



Evan Low
Assemblymember
28th District



Phil Ting
Assemblymember
19th District

cc: San Francisco Mayor London Breed
San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo
San Francisco City and County Board of Supervisors
San Mateo County Board of Supervisors
Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors
San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors
San Mateo County Transit District Board of Directors
Santa Clara Valley Transportation Agency Board of Directors

Mayor Diane Howard
Vice Mayor Shelly Masur

Councilmembers:
Alicia C. Aguirre
Ian Bain
Janet Borgens
Giselle Hale
Diana Reddy



1017 MIDDLEFIELD ROAD
Redwood City, California 94063
Telephone (650) 780-7220
www.redwoodcity.org

July 15, 2020

Commissioner Scott Haggerty, Chair
Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Bay Area Metro Center
375 Beale St., Suite 800
San Francisco, CA 94105-2066

Dear Chair Haggerty:

We urge you to support the Blue Ribbon Task Force's recommended tranche 2 CARES Act allocations, with the understanding that the amount allocated to Caltrain will not be sufficient to maintain service through the end of the year.

Redwood City relies on high quality transit service to meet our mobility, climate and economic development goals. Caltrain service, in particular, has supported the revitalization and growth of our downtown. In many ways Downtown Redwood City is a textbook example of successful transit-oriented development. But, without Caltrain's high-quality transit service, mobility will suffer – jeopardizing our efforts to promote sustainable development in downtown settings where is it most suited and has the least environmental impact. At a time when the City is tasked with supporting the development of thousands of new housing units to address our regional housing crisis, transit service is critical to supporting smart growth while maintaining the mobility of our residents and employees.

Caltrain is an essential transit service for thousands of riders that continue to rely on the system to meet their mobility needs. A growing amount of survey data suggests that former riders will eventually return to the system but without sufficient funding from tranche 2 of the CARES Act, there is a strong likelihood that Caltrain will need to shut down before they return. This would create an unacceptable gap in the Bay Area's transit network.

To prevent this, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission should use CARES funds as they were intended: to protect jobs and preserve service as long as possible. The best way to do this is to base CARES allocations on the actual losses that agencies experience. Caltrain is set to receive \$15 million, but that will not cover the system's fare revenue losses unless ridership returns to an average of 30% of normal levels by the end of the year, which is unlikely. MTC needs to support

fare-dependent agencies like Caltrain to preserve them as critical services that are essential to the region's recovery efforts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Diane Howard", written over a light gray rectangular background.

Diane Howard
Mayor, City of Redwood City

Cc: Members, Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Members, Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board of Directors
Redwood City Councilmembers

From: Bay Area Transportation Working Group <cautn1=aol.com@vrmailer3.com>
Sent: Monday, July 13, 2020 10:22 PM
To: Board (@caltrain.com)
Subject: Second Attempt to send BATWG Newsletter #26



Bay Area Transportation Working Group (BATWG)

BATWG is a 501 c3 Non-Profit Corporation organized by a group of experienced transportation professionals and activists in 2012. Mostly volunteers, we are dedicated to working with like-minded groups to improve the reliability and appeal of the Bay Area's passenger rail and bus systems and to significantly ease regional traffic congestion. To learn more about BATWG, please go to www.batwgblog.com.

BATWG meetings occur on the third Thursday of the month from 10 a.m. to noon. To receive an Agenda please send a note to BATWGNewsletter@gmail.com. To participate by telephone call 712-775-7031 and, when prompted, enter 791318 and announce yourself. Dues are \$40 a year, with discounts for seniors and students. To pay dues or otherwise contribute, go to www.batwgblog.com and click on the donate button, or mail a check to BATWG, 3001 Ashbrook Court, Oakland, CA 94601.

BATWG Newsletter

Issue No. 26, July 11, 2020

Proposal to Divert Alameda County Measure BB Funds to Valley Link

July 11, 2020

This \$400 million diversion of Alameda County taxes is part of a relentless effort on the part of mostly non-elected local and regional public officials to abrogate the constitutional rights of Bay Area citizens by diverting funds earmarked for projects approved by the voters to other purposes. In most instances actions designed to alter ballot measure votes are preceded by backroom “stakeholder” meetings, committee meetings & “workshops”

invariably used to sell a project or program favored by insiders. Unfortunately these sessions often become opportunities to sell pet ideas to agencies and business groups with one-sided presentations before anyone is burdened by having to cope with countervailing opinions.

In 2014 the voters of Alameda County approved Measure BB funds to improve the Tri-Valley's access to BART. Now, the Alameda County Transportation Authority (ACTC) is being asked to divert \$400,000,000 of these Measure BB funds to building a mostly single-track Valley Link rail line to San Joaquin County. BATWG, as dedicated to improving Bay Area mobility as it is, opposes this action for the following reasons:

- The \$400 million directed to the BART-to-Livermore project, the single largest cost item in Measure BB, was intended to improve Pleasanton's and especially Livermore's access to BART. Valley Link does little to achieve that objective. Instead, by helping mostly San Joaquin County it would result in a major shift of transportation benefits from Alameda County residents to non-Alameda County residents. This is a fundamental change from what the Alameda County voters voted for in 2014, and it goes without saying that \$400,000,000 diverted to help San Joaquin County are funds denied to important Alameda County projects.



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Keeping BART's Ongoing Bay Crossing Study in Bounds

July 11, 2020

At BATWG's May 21, 2020 Zoom meeting, members of the BART staff briefed us on BART's and the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority's (CCJPA's) \$50 million, five-year study to augment BART's transbay service, which pre-COVID, was rapidly running out of carrying capacity.



The study is now over a year old. Yet our meeting there was virtually no indication that any real progress had been made. On the contrary much of the presentation seemed to center on how much bigger the scope has become since the study was first defined as finding a second way of sending trains back and forth between Oakland and San Francisco.

The study now seems to be looking at a proposed extension under Geary Boulevard to the Pacific Ocean, a connection to Santa Rosa and another to Auburn, an improved connection in Fremont to the Altamont Commuter Express and ties many other elements throughout Northern California. Here are some of BART's statements about the Bay Crossing Study, followed by BATWG responses.

[Continue reading →](#)

SFMTA Continues to Duck Questions about the Siemens Couplers

July 11, 2020

San Francisco's Muni Metro Subway was designed to accommodate four and five car trains. Since the 1997 introduction of new BREDA LRVs and the Automated Train Control System (ATCS), the Muni and now the MTA have refused to operate with more than two car trains, thereby reducing the carrying capacity of the subway and adjoining Twin Peaks and Sunset Tunnels to less than half their design capacity.

To be able to form at least three and four car trains the MTA would need to restore its previous ability to couple trains together at the West and Duboce portals. It was anticipated that with the incoming Siemen's LRVs this essential capability would be possible. Last Fall BATWG, Save Muni and others began asking the MTA whether or not the new Siemens couplers had this capability. However, since the arrival and testing of 68 new Siemen's LRVs, no attempt has been made to either answer our questions or demonstrate this capability.

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VTA's Subway Extension Goes Off the Rails

July 11, 2020

Certain San Jose business interests, apparently in reaction to the Market Street subway construction program of yesteryear, have been stridently demanding that the San Jose subway be entirely tunneled, even at stations. These demands have radically increased the costs and risks of the project.



Maybe San Jose's business people don't know that despite the fact that all four of BART's downtown stations were to be built by cut-and-cover methods San Francisco insisted that BART keep the City's active streetcar lines in full operation throughout the subway construction period.

This decision made it necessary for the contractors to "shoofly" (shift) the streetcar tracks a total of 8 times: 1. eastbound track to the south edge of street and westbound track to north edge, 2. then both tracks on north edge, 3. then both on south edge, 4. then both back to the center....a process that was repeated at the end of the job. This added greatly to the time and cost of building the subway and also caused a significant amount of unnecessary construction disruption. But there are no streetcars on Santa Clara Street.

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From: [Albert Ortiz](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: We Need Cal Train
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 3:30:40 PM

Do away with grossly overpaid officials like the CEO and his exorbitant \$600,000.00 plus annual salary. We need CalTrain.

A concerned San Mateo County Commuter

Sent from my iPad

From: [Raymond Chang](#)
To: [Tietjen, Brent](#)
Cc: [Public Comment](#); [Board \(@caltrain.com\)](#)
Subject: Re: Idling Trains at San Francisco Station Caltrain
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 4:28:47 PM

Hi Brent,

I'd like to follow up on my previous email. I'm aware that the funding situation for Caltrain is probably the biggest issue right now, and I do hope that Caltrain can have its funding situation figured out. But I personally would also greatly appreciate it if Caltrain is able to be a good neighbor to the people who happen to live around the 4th and King Station.

If the idling situation cannot be improved upon, can operations at least consider my proposal to have the idling trains idle in the middle tracks surrounded by trains that are done for the day?

Thanks,
-Raymond

On Wed, Jul 8, 2020 at 12:41 PM Raymond Chang <raymond.cj.chang@gmail.com> wrote:
Hi Brent,

Thanks again for your time responding to my concerns. However, I still feel like there's a need for me to follow up.

In regards to the wayside power unable to be used for cleaning / unloading of passengers - that doesn't make much sense to me. I know it's easier to leave the train idling during cleaning, but when there's a long turnaround time, then shouldn't the trains be shut down as soon as possible upon arrival and unboarding of passengers? I was cc'd on an email from Adrian B. who echoed the same sentiments regarding the usage of wayside power.

For example, last night I observed one of the trains idling on Platform 12 as early as 9:30 PM (which is... already quite late). I thought the train was going to be done for the night, but it turns out that it was idling prior to the **12:05 AM** departure, so that particular train was idling for at least 2.5 hours, only to depart carrying less than 10 passengers total. And the last arrival into San Francisco decided to park at Platform 11, so I heard idling trains at least until **1:20 AM**. And both of these trains happened to be powered by the MP36PH-3C (aka the newer locomotives), which from my observation happen to be the loudest.

Proof:

https://twitter.com/ray__chang/status/1280751810978803712

https://twitter.com/ray__chang/status/1280760657441255424

Once again, I'm asking for:

1. reduced **unnecessary** idling of locomotives. Per our previous correspondence, you mentioned that under normal circumstances, trains should not be idling for more than 1 hour prior to departure. But I've observed cases (per my example above) where that is clearly not the case. I understand that train idling is necessary to some extent, but having a **train idling for almost 3 hours** past 9 pm seems... unnecessary.

2. I would kindly ask for more consideration regarding track placement of locomotives. I would ask that:

- trains that need to idle past 8/9 pm **aren't placed on Platforms 11/12**. If they need to idle, place them in the **middle tracks** so that the other trains can absorb some of the noise.
- to **not have locomotives 923 - 928 idle at the outer tracks** at any time. Those ones seem to be the **loudest** trains in Caltrain's fleet (which is odd, considering they are newer)

It's really frustrating to have to write these emails and have nothing to show for them - it's been 3+ months, and nothing really has changed at all. I know that Caltrain is suffering from funding issues and is considering a sales tax measure to help support Caltrain's operations. I'd normally be all for such a measure, but based on my interactions the past several weeks, all prior goodwill with Caltrain has been completely lost.

Thanks,
-Raymond

On Tue, Jun 30, 2020 at 4:05 PM Tietjen, Brent <TietjenB@samtrans.com> wrote:

Hi Raymond,

Thanks again for your email. In response to your question #1 on June 22, our operations team let me know that the wayside power cannot be used during cleaning because both the HEP and main engine are connected and provide the power/air for all of our safety devices such as the radio, intercoms, brakes, doors, and lighting.

With regards to trains operating past 8pm, please note that we have many revenue service trains coming in and leaving the San Francisco Station past 8pm with our last train arriving at 12:05am. There are also times when operations will have to run dead head trains to prepare for service in San Jose, shift trains to our maintenance facility for repair as well as a number of other circumstances where you may see trains that are not on the schedule.

Unfortunately, we do not have the agency staff and resources to provide evidence of train movements, platform arrivals and start/end time of each train. Our crews are doing what they can to reduce idling as much as possible with the constraints of running a railroad. I have forwarded your suggestion for track placement the operations team for consideration.

Thank you again for your comments and suggestions.

Best,

From: [Martin J Sommer](mailto:Martin.J.Sommer@caltrain.com)
To: [Board \(@caltrain.com\)](mailto:Board@caltrain.com)
Cc: CalMod@caltrain.com
Subject: Re: During Shelter In Place Public Health Order ... Shut down Caltrain
Date: Thursday, July 16, 2020 8:51:31 PM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the San Mateo County Transit District. Unless you recognize the sender's email address and know the content is safe, do not click links, open attachments or reply.

Dear Caltrain Board,

I want to restate the idea of shutting down Caltrain for 12 months, and expediting the electrification project. This is a perfect time to rejuvenate Caltrain, and bring it back as an electrified service. Running empty trains during the Covid-19 crisis, is a complete waste of money, and is literally getting in the way of completing the project. Without the trains, crews could work 24 x 7 to finish the project.

Please consider it.

Martin

On 3/21/20 11:54 AM, Martin J Sommer wrote:

Hello,

I find it strange, that Caltrain continues to run during the "Shelter In Place Public Health Order". Can you please, just shut the trains down, until the order is lifted?

Perhaps, now is a good time to advance electrification construction, without the trains running?

Martin

--
Martin Sommer
650-346-5307
martin@sommer.net
www.linkedin.com/in/martinsommer

"Turn technical vision into reality."

--
Martin Sommer
650-346-5307
martin@sommer.net
www.linkedin.com/in/martinsommer

"Turn technical vision into reality."



July 8, 2020

Santa Clara County Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Representatives:
Jeannie Bruins
Dave Cortese
Sam Liccardo

RE: Plan Bay Area 2050 and South Santa Clara County Transportation Priorities

Santa Clara County MTC Representatives:

On behalf of the City Councils and communities of Morgan Hill and Gilroy, we want to thank you for your service on the MTC. South County is thriving and we are excited about the continued collaboration with our partners – Valley Transportation Agency, Caltrain, and MTC to enhance transportation services offered to our communities.

In anticipation of MTC's review and approval of Plan Bay Area 2050, we wanted to share with you South Santa Clara County's transportation priorities (see attached). Our number one priority is expanding Highway 101 with an express lane to Highway 25. Highway 101 in South Santa Clara County is a bottleneck as drivers travel north in the morning to job centers and return home in the evening.

Our next most important priority is the modernization of the rail's tracks and fleet with electrification. Gilroy and Morgan Hill fully support this effort and want to ensure that plans for electrification include the service Caltrain provides to our Cities. Transportation options are very limited for the thousands of commuters that make their way daily from the South County to the metropolitan Bay Area. Caltrain will remain the primary mass transit choice in the future.

The center of Silicon Valley employment will continue to drive south, making train service paramount. We fully understand the difficulties of bringing electrification to the South County, not the least of which is the existing single track that is owned by Union Pacific Railroad. We are committed to working with our partners to overcome all obstacles.

We want to ask you to support these transportation priorities of expanding Highway 101 and electrification of the rails for South Santa Clara County. Thank you for the opportunity to collaborate and we look forward to working with you as partners into the future. We would be happy to further discuss our request at your convenience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Richard Constantine".

Rich.Constantine
Morgan Hill Mayor
Rich.Constantine@morganhill.ca.gov

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Roland Velasco".

Roland Velasco
Gilroy Mayor
Roland.Velasco@ci.gilroy.ca.us



Larry Carr
Morgan Hill Council Member
VTA Board Member

DocuSigned by:

9EE7CEC2F0D8427...

Marie Blankley
Gilroy Council Member
VTA Board Member (Alternate)