

**BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BAC)
SAN MATEO COUNTY TRANSIT DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING
Bacciocco Auditorium, 2nd Floor
1250 San Carlos Avenue, San Carlos CA 94070**

MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 21, 2013

MEMBERS PRESENT: A. Banerjee, J. Brazil, W. Brinsfield, D. Forsell, D. Provence, E. Saum, M. Sonn, G. Turner, S. Vanderlip

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: J. Averill, T. Bartholomew, C. Fromson, A. Maguigad, M. O'Donnell, S. Petty, M. Simon

Chair Darcy Forsell called the meeting to order at 6:45 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. She welcomed the new San Mateo County General Public representative, Amitabha Banerjee, to the BAC.

Mr. Banerjee said he lives in Belmont, works in Palo Alto and bikes three to four times per week. He said he has been riding Caltrain the last five years. He said part of his responsibility is to draw questions and challenges from the public and bring them to the committee.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

John Brazil said on page five in the fourth paragraph, the word "phrasing" should be changed to "phasing."

A motion (Brinsfield/Turner) to approve the minutes of September 19, 2013 as amended was approved (Banerjee abstained).

PUBLIC COMMENT

Shirley Johnson, San Francisco, said she is a member of the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) Bicycle Advisory Task Force. She said the BART Board unanimously voted to lift the bike blackout and bicyclists can now bring their bikes onboard any time of day. She said BART was worried about safety, dwell times and crowded trains. She said 79 percent of BART bike passengers favored ending the blackout. She said she witnessed staff's attitude go from negative and skeptical to positive and supportive. She thanked Caltrain for being a leader in onboard bike service and the BAC for passing their resolution of support for the BART bike service.

BICYCLE BUMP REPORT – Mark Simon

Mark Simon, Executive Officer, Public Affairs, said this committee has frequently discussed the issue of creating a monthly bump report. He said he wanted to understand what the BAC wants to achieve by creating a bump report, what the best way to do it would be and what form it should take.

Garrett Turner said the reason a bump report is important is for talking about bike capacity and bike usage on Caltrain. He said the annual survey shows bikes are at 95 percent capacity, but if there are 200-250 bike bumps each month it is probably over capacity and staff needs to look at options to increase bikes onboard and secure bike parking at stations to get bicyclists out of their cars and on to Caltrain.

Steve Vanderlip said it is important to keep visibility about the bumps issue on the BAC's mind and in the official minutes of meeting. The information is in the correspondence, but the BAC does not discuss it and it is not very visible.

Mr. Brazil said there is a need for more a quantitative, objective and consistent measurement for bumps. To get to a quantified issue it would be wise if JPB budgeted and had a consistent program to survey and collect accurate data about bumps. He said this information would inform the mid-range and long-term planning for constrained and unconstrained Capital Improvement Programs (CIP) and programs for the 10 to 11 percent of the customer base who use bikes. This would improve customer service and performance.

Wes Brinsfield said some analytics would be helpful to the BAC and the JPB to give them the ability to plot bumps versus train number, time of day, direction, type of car, and to influence the designs of the new electric cars and the new schedule with the Caltrain Modernization (CalMod) Program.

Mr. Banerjee said another criterion to add is the stations at which people get bumped. He said some stations are more prone to bumps and result in the customer having to wait an hour for the next train.

Mr. Brazil said when he spoke about informing the CIP budget he did not mean to just expand capacity onboard, he meant to think broader and include something like building storage capacity at the stations, because at some point increasing onboard capacity will be impossible so there has to be a plan to accommodate bikes at stations.

Mr. Simon said bikes onboard should be part of the solution not the entire solution. He said gathering data is the place to start. He said the current bike report is anecdotal, which makes it hard to rely on because the person making the report might have exaggerated or might not have seen every bump. He asked what other form this could take that would get the number in a way that is meaningful and useful.

Mr. Banerjee said the conductors could manage a count. Mr. Simon said conductors aren't at every bike car every time and they have numerous other responsibilities and they won't be able to provide an accurate count, especially if the idea is to plot stations, times and trains.

Mr. Turner said there is no data available to bicyclists, so they have no idea if they might get bumped. He said starting with some data gives people an idea about how often and what the odds are to make a train. He said the long-term benefit of being able to

have live reports would be to know from the live feed that the bike cars are full, and the customer can then go to the secure bike parking and still make their train.

Mr. Brazil said there are intercept surveys and consultants who could gather the information. He said it would be ideal to have it budgeted on an annual basis to institutionalize the process.

Mr. Brinsfield said it is partly the responsibility of the BAC to educate riders to report bumps knowing that there will be anomalies and outliers, but use that information as a starting point. He said he has heard there are services where a person can be hired to stand at the station and count bike bumps.

Mr. Simon said that is done as part of the annual counts and the data confounds the reality of what people think they're experiencing, so that is not satisfactory. He asked if formalizing the self-reporting tool and requiring the person to leave a name, train number, direction, and other information would be something the BAC would be comfortable with.

Mr. Turner said yes if there is a console at each station where people can report from or if there was an application for a smartphone, but that does not give everyone the same opportunity to report they were bumped.

Mr. Vanderlip said the information is already in the correspondence and it could be formalized for use. Mr. Simon said that is the anecdotal information he was referring to. It is useful, but not quantitative.

Mr. Brazil said staff could have system-wide audits of every train just one day a year and compare that data to the self-reporting data and then make some assumptions.

Mr. Banerjee said he suspects the numbers are low because many bicyclists don't bother to report being bumped. He asked if there is a possibility of putting a sticker in the trains that reads, "Got bumped? Report here." Mr. Simon said staff would need to make sure bicyclists are aware of the process, that it is not onerous and is convenient.

Dan Provence said the message boards should let people know how to report bumps.

Mr. Brinsfield said this information will still give staff and the BAC relative knowledge about which trains and which days are most affected.

Michael Sonn said if a formal application or website method of reporting bumps is created it should be on the Caltrain website and staff could download the data into a spreadsheet.

Chair Forsell said the BAC felt the bike bump numbers from the annual counts were low and a solution could be to do those counts twice a year or quarterly because weather affects ridership. She said February does not capture bike bumps accurately. She said the anecdotal data appears to be higher than the actual count reports.

Public Comment

Shirley Johnson, San Francisco, said in 2004 Caltrain did two annual passenger counts and found there were 60 percent more bike boardings in October, so she believes bike boardings skyrocket in the summer. She said in 2010, Caltrain did a bike count and dwell time study. Bikes Onboard took that count and compared it to the bump reports and found there are 10 times more actual bumps than reported bumps.

Steven Judd, Santa Clara, said the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency advertises on their message signs that if someone sees graffiti they can report it to the phone number listed, and Caltrain could do something like that for bike bumps.

Mr. Simon said he appreciates those who recognize this data would be useful in the long-term in addressing the service in its entirety. He said Caltrain has capacity issues everywhere on trains, not just in the bike cars. He said the flexibility to take this data and immediately transform it into additional bike space could be complicated. He said he will be back at a future meeting after internal staff discussions.

CALTRAIN MODERNIZATION PROGRAM/LEVEL BOARDING – UPDATE – Casey Fromson

Casey Fromson, Government Affairs Officer, presented:

- The CalMod Program does not include funding for level boarding.
- Level boarding is important to Caltrain so passengers do not have to step up or down between the platform and train.
- Key benefits include safety, operating efficiencies, passenger convenience and passengers in wheelchairs can get on and off trains without assistance.
- There are 32 Caltrain stations and the tracks are shared with multiple tenants including freight trains.
- Currently Caltrain does not have level boarding. Caltrain has two cars: bi-level and gallery.
- Station platforms are eight inches above top of rail. Caltrain vehicles are 18 inches from top of the rail.
- Caltrain is subject to conflicting regulations. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirement states there should be level boarding with trains and platforms next to each other. The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) requirement states that today Caltrain is fine, but if the platform height becomes higher than eight inches, a gap must be provided between the platform and trains.
- To be ADA compliant mini-high platforms and various types of lifts are used.
- Intermodal stations with dedicated platforms include Essen Central Station, Germany, Los Angeles Union Station and Denver Union Station. These facilities house multiple tenants and have dedicated platforms at different heights to support the different systems.
- The future Caltrain-shared corridor will have an increase in multiple tenants with different floor and first-step heights. Freight requirements and conflicting regulations will need to be addressed.
- In the future Caltrain will strive for level boarding at 27 stations from San Francisco to Tamien. It is unclear what will happen to the five stations south of Tamien to Gilroy because this is Union Pacific right of way. At the Santa Clara and Diridon stations there would be dedicated platforms because they are shared stations

with the Altamont Commuter Express, Capitol Corridor and Amtrak. At Millbrae and the new Transbay Terminal, there will be dedicated platforms for high-speed rail (HSR).

- Multiple stakeholders have asked staff why Caltrain is at 25 inches and not at eight, 18, or 50 inches. It would be ideal to have the same floor and platform heights for all trains. Staff is challenged with a corridor that supports different systems with different operating objectives.
- Caltrain has been looking at the industry for in-service vehicle options for the light weight electric multiple units (EMUs). There are two options, single level cars with a floor height of 50 inches and bi-level cars with a floor level height of 25 inches. It is important to find service-proven options.
- Staff is recommending the bi-level at 25 inches. This provides the most number of seats which are critical to support increased ridership and this floor height will be compatible with the Bombardier cars after removal of the first step.
- As staff works on the procurement for EMUs, the CAC and BAC will be consulted for input.
- Next steps include:
 - Long-term level boarding effort in planning, analysis and timing
 - Presentations to stakeholders and Friends of Caltrain
 - Discussions used for procurement of the EMUs

Mr. Brinsfield asked what's driving the change to level boarding. Ms. Fromson said staff is looking at procuring EMUs and is now considering what that would mean in the long term, what the system-wide goals the JPB would like to meet, and how staff can do the right thing now for future.

Mr. Brazil said as Caltrain goes through modernization and the EMU purchases staff should think about opportunities with electric assist bikes. He said in Europe they are outselling motor vehicles and he thinks it will be trend in the United States. He said staff should think about charging facilities for electric bikes.

Mr. Banerjee said a big advantage to the electric system is trains can speed up faster and the schedule can be squeezed to have more trains in the busy hours. He said bikes often slow down trains because it takes time to get the bikes up onto the train. He said it will be helpful to get bikes onboard faster with level boarding.

Chair Forsell asked what the timeframe is for the selection of EMUs. Ms. Fromson said after the environmental document is finalized. She said she will be back at the early part of next year to discuss the process and a range of other things.

**BICYCLE ACCESS AND PARKING PLAN – Sebastian Petty
Ad Hoc Committee Report – Wes Brinsfield, Edward Saum, Garrett Turner,
Steve Vanderlip**

Mr. Brinsfield said the ad hoc committee met to provide feedback to staff about good ways to organize and prioritize the projects so they could easily be handled and understood, but do not lose information about why they were generated or updated. He said one reason for grouping the projects the way they are is based upon ability to get funding.

REVIEW PROJECTS AND DISCUSSION OF PRIORITIZATION AND FUNDING – Sebastian Petty

Sebastian Petty, Senior Planner, presented:

- Staff is in the process of updating the project list, figuring out how to pay for the projects and making sure they get implemented. Staff has started looking at funding sources in more detail to match up projects and prioritization with funding in a way that is realistic and can best leverage the limited funds.
- Prioritization gets complicated in some ways because certain funding sources are only available for certain projects, and some projects are outside Caltrain's jurisdiction.
- Staff and the subcommittee discussed retaining the detail from the 2008 plan, pulling out some larger system-wide projects, and keeping prioritization simple.
- Funding and implementation challenges are that Caltrain funding is limited and project eligibility depends on the grant source.
- Local external grant sources include San Francisco County's Proposition K, San Mateo County's Measure A, and Santa Clara's Bike Expenditure Plan.
- Regional, State, and Federal grant sources include the Transportation Fund for Clean Air, California Active Transportation Program, Lifeline Transportation Program, and Transportation Development Act Article 3.
- System-wide plans and programs are core planning efforts the agency needs to do. It includes defining a series of bike programs for Caltrain and defining an implementation approach for Caltrain-led projects.
- Feasibility studies are important planning efforts on which work needs to be done to determine if the project is feasible.
- Internally-led capital projects are entirely or primarily within Caltrain's jurisdiction, initiated by Caltrain, and include parking, access, and information and safety projects.
 - Parking includes locker and rack additions, conversions, and adjustments. The suggested prioritization approach includes projects that add capacity, enhance parking security, improve parking efficiency, high bike usage stations, and stations where bike parking is full.
 - Access includes circulation and gateway enhancements. The suggested prioritization approach includes projects that are supported by local jurisdictions, benefits pedestrians and bicyclists, and have opportunities to be incorporated into other station projects.
 - Information and safety includes projects related to way finding, system information, lighting and cameras. The suggested prioritization approach includes projects that address safety issues, benefits pedestrians and bicyclists, have opportunities to be incorporated into station projects, and can be implemented under existing programs or contracts.
- Externally-led capital projects are outside Caltrain's jurisdiction and are initiated by external agencies. Caltrain's role is to advocate, support, and be a partner.

Mr. Turner said one addition needed for being able to prioritize is to see if several less costly projects can help more people than just one costly project.

Chair Forsell said another item to use is the feasibility to get funding, understanding which projects will have the most success at getting funding.

Mr. Brazil said he does not want to limit the eventual project list to only those that have existing grant funding opportunities because that would narrow the list too exclusively. He said priority for funding should be added, but do not eliminate the projects with no current funding. He said it would be helpful to look at zoning within a mile radius of the station. Project readiness would be helpful to look at. He said there may be an opportunity for Caltrain to coordinate with cities that assess traffic impact fees to benefit from those fees and help the city improve development.

Mr. Vanderlip said there should be a way for the public to read about the projects and push to get them done and provide the public a way to be more active.

Mr. Brinsfield said one of the objectives is transparency in process, prioritization and in progress. He said Caltrain should make the public are aware of which projects are on the table and being done and why some rank higher than others.

Mr. Banerjee asked if the information projects are restricted by funding and if there is an easier way to get them done. Mr. Petty said they are much larger than they seem, and it is important to track them as needs that affect cycling and whether or not to fund them as a bicycle project or other system-wide project.

Chair Forsell said the city of San Mateo got funding for e-lockers and racks for stations, so they can be removed from this list. She said she hopes real-time capacity information can get funded on the EMUs.

Mr. Provence said lockers have been prioritized as the top choice, then racks. He said racks are good for short-term parking but he discourages Caltrain from adding more because customers need longer-term parking. Bike racks leave opportunities for bicyclists to lose a seat or a tire, so he would emphasize an increase in lockers.

Chair Forsell said racks are for a short-term timeframe, like two-hour parking, and they appeal to a different demographic of cyclists. She said e-lockers also provide a way to gather data for monitoring and share success.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT – Darcy Forsell

Charter Amendment

Chair Forsell said the changes to the charter include:

- Changing the meeting start time to 5:45 p.m.
- Removing non-relevant language from a previous iteration
- Updating the chair term to state no person may occupy the chair position for more than two terms and the chairmanship will no longer need to rotate between representatives of the three counties

A motion (Brazil/Saum) to amend the charter was approved (Banerjee abstained).

Officer Elections

Mr. Brinsfield said his term is expiring in December and there is a potential effect on nominees and their ability to serve in the officer positions.

Chair Forsell said she is not seeking a third term.

Chair Forsell nominated Mr. Turner for chair. Mr. Brazil seconded the motion.

Mr. Turner said he accepts the nomination.

Chair Forsell called for other nominations. None were made and the nominations for chair were closed.

The motion (Forsell/Brazil) to elect Mr. Turner chair was approved.

Mr. Brinsfield said he would be interested in the vice chair position but he is not sure if he will be reappointed to the BAC. Chair Forsell said the vote for vice chair will be delayed until January after the BAC learns if Mr. Brinsfield has been reappointed.

STAFF REPORT – T. Bartholomew

Tasha Bartholomew, Community Relations Officer, reported:

- BAC recruitment is still in process to fill four positions.
- Improvements have been made to the Caltrain bike locker webpage. The bike locker rental agreement and application has been revamped, staff has added dimensions of bike lockers, details to the table of lockers including rack spaces at each station, and noted available lockers to rent by station.
- The Holiday Train will be running December 7 and 8 in partnership with the Silicon Valley Community Foundation.

Mr. Petty said Caltrain is engaged in an update of the Strategic Plan and staff will be going to the Citizens Advisory Committee and the Board and will be conducting outreach in all three counties. He said it is a high-level policy document to guide Caltrain's priority over the next 10 years. He said the timeline to adopt the plan is July 2014.

WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE

Chair Forsell said a question in the correspondence packet asked if there can be tape on the aisle or a device indicating the boundary or bike placement to keep the area free and clear so there can be more than four bikes per rack. She said she would like to have it answered in future.

Public Comment

Shirley Johnson, San Francisco, said she sent an e-mail with information that she thinks should go onto the BAC work plan next year. She said she would like a pilot program for three bike cars on Bombardier train sets. She said her other suggestions are priority boarding for bikes at bike cars and marking the aisle width because it is more important than the number of bikes at the rack.

COMMITTEE REQUESTS

None

DATE, TIME AND LOCATION OF NEXT MEETING:

January 16, 2014 at 5:45 p.m., San Mateo County Transit District Administrative Building,
2nd Floor Bacciocco Auditorium, 1250 San Carlos Avenue, San Carlos, CA.

Meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m.