

**CalMod Local Policy Maker Group (LPMG)  
Summary Meeting Notes for June 27, 2019**

**Summary Notes**

The purpose of these notes is to capture key discussion items and actions identified for subsequent meetings.

<b>City / County</b>	<b>Representative or Alternate</b>	<b>Present</b>
Atherton	C. Wiest	
Belmont	J. Mates	X
Brisbane	T. O'Connell	X
Burlingame	E. Beach	X
Gilroy	C. Tucker	
Menlo Park	R. Mueller	
Millbrae	R. Holober	
Mountain View	J. McAlister	X
Morgan Hill	R. Constantine	X
Palo Alto	L. Kou	X
Redwood City	S. Masur	X
San Bruno	M. Salazar	X
San Carlos	R. Collins	X
San Francisco	P. Supawanich	X via phone
San Jose	S. Jimenez	X
San Mateo	E. Rodriguez	
Santa Clara	K. Watanabe	X
South San Francisco	K. Matsumoto	X
Sunnyvale	N. Smith	X
San Francisco BOS	TBD	
San Mateo BOS	TBD	
Santa Clara BOS	TBD	
Chair	G. Gillet	
Acting Chair	E. Beach	X

VACANT SEATS: Santa Clara BOS, San Francisco BOS, San Mateo BOS

CALTRAIN STAFF: Casey Fromson, Sebastian Petty

**1. Call to Order**

Vice-Chair Emily Beach called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

## **2. Staff Report**

Casey Fromson, Caltrain Government and Community Affairs Director, told members that the June LPMG meeting will focus primarily on the Caltrain Business Plan and the July meeting will be devoted to High-Speed Rail and their staff-recommended alternative. The August meeting will be a large update on the Caltrain Business Plan.

## **3. High-Speed Rail**

Vice-Chair Beach proposed that because High-Speed Rail has a short presentation, that the agenda be modified and they present before the Caltrain Business Plan. No members objected. Boris Lipkin, Northern California Regional Director for California High-Speed Rail, updated the members that the staff recommendation for the preferred alternative for the two project sections (SF-SJ, SJ-Merced) will be discussed at the July LPMG meeting. Morgan Galli, Government Relations Specialist, provided members and update at the outreach efforts of HSR and some of the key feedback received.

*LPMG members' key comments regarding the High-Speed Rail Project discussion included the following:*

- *A member asked what the "South Peninsula" region is regarding the HSR community working group meetings. (HSR staff said that it included Santa Clara, Sunnyvale, Mountain View, and Palo Alto.) The member followed-up saying that the name may not resonate with the community. Another member suggested renaming the group to be the 'North Santa Clara County Working Group'.*
- *A member asked where exactly the meeting in Santa Clara will be. (HSR staff answered that the meeting will be in the Adrian Wilcox High School Multi-Purpose room.)*
- *A member asked if all residents are welcome to all meetings regardless of location and if the meetings will all be delivering the same content or if it will be tailored to the specific region. (HSR staff answered that anyone is welcome to any of the meeting, that being said some of the meetings will focus on the San Francisco to San Jose portion and others will be focused on the San Jose to Merced section.*

*Public Comment:*

- *A member of the public stated that the CWG meetings may have been lightly attended because the content being presented was a timeline of the project and the next set of meetings which will discuss the staff recommendation for the preferred alternative will be a larger draw for the public.*
- *A member of the public described that he submitted an alternative from Gilroy to Hollister and then to Panoche Pass. The member of the public also stated that the Board did not approve of \$20 billion for the project in the Central Valley.*

## **4. Caltrain Business Plan**

Sebastian Petty, Caltrain Senior Policy Advisor, provided an update on the development of a 2040 service vision. The presentation discussed ridership projections, grade separations, and grade crossings.

*LPMG members' key comments regarding the Caltrain Business Plan discussion included the following:*

- *A member asked why they are assuming High Speed Rail (HSR) is going to be built congruently with Caltrain's electrification, when they know that HSR will not be on the corridor by 2040. (Caltrain staff answered that they have political and financial commitments to HSR that they are*

*obligated to keep.) A member followed up asking why Caltrain still going down this path. Morgan Hill is worried that the path Caltrain is pursuing will not help South County. (Caltrain staff answered that the Business Plan vision must encompass all the commitments that Caltrain has made. Caltrain needs to prepare for HSR either in 2040 or later. Think of the vision for the Business Plan as the end-state goal, rather than a milestone that will be achieved by 2040.) Another member noted that electrification of Caltrain is not tied to HSR. The member then explained that this does not help South County; it is even more concerning because the Caltrain Electrification project does not extend that far south.*

- A member asked if the HSR timeline would have any impacts on the need for new infrastructure. (Caltrain staff answered, potentially. The sequencing of investments will be laid out in the second part of the plan. There is still a lot of uncertainty, including the need for funding that Caltrain does not currently have. Once the board decides on the end-state vision, Caltrain will fill in the gaps to figure out how to get there.)*
- A member noted, considering infrastructure costs, they believe that any 4-track areas will need to be grade separated. The member asked if this is true. They also asked if high growth or moderate growth are selected, then are there opportunities for Caltrain to run more trains even if HSR does not go online. (Caltrain staff answered yes and that are many options to consider in the interim, including running more trains.*
- A member asked if Caltrain is talking to other agencies about setting policies regarding transit connections. (Caltrain staff answered, that all our JPB partner agencies are very involved in the Business Plan, but they are a few steps away from deciding on transit connection policies. Those conversations are starting to happen, especially with electrification coming online. There is an opportunity to discuss how our agencies can be more integrated.)*
- A member asked if it is true that the moderate growth scenario will not accommodate interlining. (Caltrain staff said that it can accommodate it, but not on a large scale. Caltrain would have to prioritize some markets and underserve others.)*
- A member stated that Caltrain has a commitment to its community here in the Bay Area, but if 1/3 of trains are going to be HSR trains then aren't they are making it even more difficult for commuters to commit to taking Caltrain on a regular basis. (Caltrain staff answered that that is the policy decision that was made when they decided the corridor would serve multiple markets, including a state-wide market. The corridor has a capacity limitation and through this Business Plan effort, they are trying out layout the trade-offs and potential scenarios for serving a variety of markets, local, regional, state.)*
- A member asked what criteria Caltrain is using when looking at the Redwood City station for the Dumbarton integration. (Caltrain staff answered that the Redwood City station is a key junction for future increased Caltrain service as well as the Dumbarton corridor. Redwood City station is the key connection point for the Dumbarton station because there are existing tracks that go from the Dumbarton spur to Redwood City. From a rail planning standpoint, with the high-growth scenario, up to eight trains per hour per direction could come across the Dumbarton Bridge, then four could go north and four could go south – effectively replacing the Caltrain express slots in the high growth scenario.)*
- A member asked, for the HSR train slots, if there is an opportunity for HSR to “sell off” those slots if they do not ever come online and if Caltrain can run more trains if that happens. The member noted that it would be interesting to find out if that opportunity exists within the Caltrain and HSR agreement. (Caltrain explained that it is not known at this stage. That would require*

*changes to the laws and policies currently in place. There is an opportunity for Caltrain to run more trains in the short-term. Part of this work is to focus on the long-term vision while still utilizing the corridor.)*

- *A member noted, regarding the 2040 network interface, that the end of the line is usually crowded and asked if Santa Clara be considered a high-quality transit connection. (Caltrain staff answered yes, it can.)*
- *A member referenced in the presentation that Diridon Station is currently constrained and asked if Santa Clara can be used as a back-up transit hub to help offset that constraint. (Caltrain staff answered, potentially. Caltrain benefits from owning its corridor, so they can talk about operating with a precise schedule. With ACE and CCJPA, they must operate within the freight right-of-way, so it is harder for them to commit to an exact schedule.)*
- *A member asked, when looking at interlining opportunities, how Caltrain's strong bi-directional flow affects this. (Caltrain staff answered that a very complicated study would be needed to identify opportunities.)*
- *A member asked if the need to expand passing tracks in Redwood City is in both the moderate and high growth scenarios, regardless of HSR coming online. The member also asked how much planning Caltrain could do with Redwood City staff before bringing this to the Board. (Caltrain staff answered, yes. Caltrain has been having conversations with Redwood City staff about this. The Caltrain Board will not be deciding on a service vision until October most likely, meaning there is still time to provide input. There are options that could work in downtown vs. other locations in Redwood City so they can leave that flexibility in the plan. Other cities have asked for this kind of flexibility as well.)*
- *A member asked how the electrification of the Caltrain corridor could affect ACE and others still using diesel and how the board can make sure they are all on the same page. (Caltrain staff answered that the short answer is that there is no conflict. Long-term there could potentially be conflicts they would need to resolve if ACE or other agencies also want to ramp up frequency at the same time since the performance of diesel trains do not match the high-performance of electric EMU trains. Caltrain is having continuous conversations with other transit agencies. Part of the Business Plan is making sure all stakeholders and partners are part of the process.)*
- *A member noted that Caltrain mentioned they would present on all three scenarios. They then asked how much of this context will Caltrain be providing during that presentation to the Board. (Caltrain staff replied that a shortened version of this presentation is going to the Caltrain Board this month and a long detailed one with additional context will go to the Caltrain Board in August.)*
- *A member noted that when the board close the door to meaningful interlining, they close the door to integrating transit with the East Bay. The member thinks that it would give more opportunities for State and Federal funding if the corridor could become a fully integrated transit system. The member challenged the board to think big. (Caltrain staff stated that they want to note that Caltrain is involved in discussions around the Faster Bay Area transportation tax measure; all regional partners are discussing that now.)*
- *A member noted that they had recently talked about grade separations and the organizational assessment. The member asked if the intent is for staff to present this assessment and recommendations along with the business plan presentation. The member also asked if Caltrain is planning to pair organizational assessment recommendations with the scenarios. (Caltrain*

*staff answered that the organizational assessment is separate from the Business Plan service vision. Organizational change will take place regardless of what service vision is chosen. Caltrain knows that grade separations are a huge deal for the corridor, so they have put a significant ask in the Caltrain budget to include \$5 million to study and prepare for a grade separation strategy.)*

- *A member noted that the baseline scenario is not very interesting, but moderate and high growth will mean lots of infrastructure is needed. They then noted that it seems like Caltrain is making the case for the high growth scenario.*
- *A member asked if the organizational assessment is specifically part of the Business Plan. (Caltrain staff answered yes, but it is a separate track in the Business Plan. It's not directly part of the service vision decision.)*
- *A member asked, regarding the grade separation study [note this is separate from the Business Plan], how long it will go and if it will include San Jose past Tamien Station. (Caltrain staff answered that Caltrain has not decided the scope of the study yet.)*
- *A member asked what the timeline is for corridor-wide grade separations. Some cities are already pursuing grade separations. (Caltrain staff answered that they are aware that some grade separation projects are advancing. Caltrain will be working with cities to make sure their grade separation projects continue. At the same time, Caltrain needs to think about the entire corridor. Both individual projects and corridor considerations will be pursued at the same time.) The member then stated that they should connect offline about this.*

*Public Comments:*

- *A member of the public stated that they are trying to move people to specific destinations, so they need a Peninsula HSR station. They then asked why they are building 2-track stations and why they are turning trains around at Diridon and not Blossom Hill. They stated that it seems like there are many opportunities that still need to be explored.*
- *A member of the public urged the board to consider aiming high with the business plan. They then noted that if they think about traffic trends all over the Bay Area, they are the result of East Bay commuters trying to get to and from the Peninsula. The Peninsula is drowning in traffic. It is critical that they go with the high growth scenario to allow for interlining. Moderate growth means a ton of stations do not get good service. They need to think about the freeway capacity slide – high growth is the way to go.*
- *A member of the public encouraged the members to aim high, but also embrace the uncertainty. If there is some way of framing for the Board that they would like to get to high growth, but not commit to making high-impact decisions until they are studied further, that would be ideal. The member of the public also asked, in order to achieve huge change, which option will help us achieve the goals of a fully integrated transit system better.*

## **5. Caltrain Electrification Project**

*Item 5, the Caltrain Electrification Project update was available in the packet. There was no verbal update due to time constraints.*

*Public Comment:*

- *A member of the public noted that they saw poles on the east side of the Union Pacific tracks.*

**6. Public Comment**

- *A member of the public recommended board members research Deutsche Bahn and explained their service model. They also recommended that the JPB and High-Speed Rail be under the same governance structure, similar to Deutsche Bahn.*

**7. LPMG Member Comments/Requests**

None.

**8. Next Meeting**

Thursday, July 25, 2019 at 5:30 p.m.

**9. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:36 p.m.