

**CalMod Local Policy Maker Group (LPMG)
Summary Meeting Notes for May 28, 2020**

Summary Notes

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

City / County	Representative or Alternate	Present
Atherton	C. Wiest	X
Belmont	T. McCune	X
Brisbane	T. O'Connell	X
Burlingame	E. Beach	X
Gilroy	C. Tucker	
Menlo Park	B. Nash	
Millbrae	R. Holober	X
Mountain View	J. McAlister	X
Morgan Hill	R. Constantine	X
Palo Alto	L. Kou	X
Redwood City	S. Masur	
San Bruno	M. Salazar	X
San Carlos	R. Collins	X
San Francisco	P. Supawanich	X
San Jose	S. Jimenez	X
San Mateo	A. Lee	X
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	Jeannie Bruins	X
Vice Chair	E. Beach	X

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

CALTRAIN STAFF: Casey Fromson, Sebastian Petty, Brent Tietjen, Ryan McCauley

HIGH-SPEED RAIL STAFF: Boris Lipkin, James Tung, Yvonne Chan

1. Call to Order

Chair Jeannie Bruins called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

2. Staff Report

Casey Fromson, Director of Government and Community Affairs for Caltrain, updated the members on Caltrain ridership, projects, and funding. Since the start of the pandemic, Caltrain ridership is down 98%. Caltrain has reduced service by 54%, suspending express and baby bullet trains. This pandemic has highlighted the vulnerability of Caltrain funding as it generates 70% of its revenue from fare box recovery. Fromson also detailed the federal funding provided to Caltrain through the CARES Act and how long that will sustain the agency. Caltrain is also pursuing SB 797, a one-eighth cent sales tax measure across its three operating counties to provide a dedicated source of funding. Staff is currently working with all 7-member agency boards to keep the possibility open of putting the measure on the November 2020 ballot.

LPMG members' key comments regarding the staff update included the following:

- A member asked to clarify how much the sales tax would be. *(Caltrain staff responded that it would be a one-eighth cent sales tax.)*
- A member asked if there are any other revenue measure being considered. *(Chair Bruins answered no, since FASTER decided not to move forward, this is the only measure that would provide funding for Caltrain.)* The member followed up asking if there were any measures besides a sales tax being considered. *(Chair Bruins responded no, because anything else would require additional legislative allowance.)*
- A member asked how is information from a public health standpoint on understanding the risks, being communicated to riders. *(Caltrain staff answered that the communications team is working on messaging, and there is a regional messaging task force.)*
- A member asked how Caltrain is managing large employers having announced permanent work from home rules. *(Caltrain staff answered that a survey is going out to Go-Pass subscribers to make sure the agency is understanding the trends.)* The member followed up asking if Go-Pass subscribers' pre-pay for the service. *(Caltrain staff answered yes and that it is one of the major variables for funding for the agency. The other major source of funding is member agency contributions)*
- A member asked if Caltrain has had to furlough or layoff any workers. *(Caltrain staff answered no, and the intent of the CARES Act is to save jobs. Layoffs and furloughs are a last-resort measure. Chair Bruins said, without the CARES Act, Caltrain would've had to furlough and lay off employees.)*
- A member asked if there are other plans besides a one-eighth cent sales tax and care packages that could be used to fund the agency. *(Chair Bruins answered that the Board is having robust discussions related to that topic as are most public transit agencies at this time.)*

Public Comments:

- A member of the public claimed that Caltrain is the only agency in the Bay Area where ridership is down so significantly and believes this is because of the types of service that was suspended. The member of the public also believes Caltrain shouldn't put a funding measure on the ballot. The member of the public also advocated that Caltrain follow Bart's 15 point plan for cleaning and reopening.
- A member of the public proposed reallocating funding from the High-Speed Rail Authority to regional rail systems to fund grade separations, service improvements and operating subsidies.

- A member of the public commended the regional approach on safety and re-attracting riders. The member of the public said they support a ballot measure to fund Caltrain and that ridership is so low because of the type of service Caltrain and other commuter rails focus on.

3. Caltrain Business Plan

Sebastian Petty, Caltrain Deputy Chief of Planning, provided a verbal update on the Caltrain Business Plan. Staff bandwidth has primarily swung to recovery planning, which has caused a pause and pivot from Business Plan work. Work continues related to near-term issues such as equity and connectivity.

Public Comments:

- A member of the public commended the shift of staff to work on recovery planning and believes the equity analysis should be put on the back-burner. The member of the public believes Caltrain should focus its resources on trips from San Francisco to San Jose in less than thirty minutes.
- A member of the public believes that white collar commuters will be the slowest to return and the business plan demonstrated that there is pent up demand for non-traditional commute trips from across the income spectrum. They believe connectivity to other systems is a better strategy.

4. Caltrain Electrification Project

Brent Tietjen, Government and Community Affairs Officer for Caltrain, updated the members on where the construction is happening and what types of activities are occurring. An update was also provided on the manufacturing of the new electric trainsets in Salt Lake City.

LPMG members' key comments regarding the staff update included the following:

- A member noted the accelerated pace Caltrans was able to perform highway repairs and if Caltrain was able to expedite any construction work during the shelter-in-place order. *(Caltrain staff answered that construction has increased productivity in part due to single tracking throughout the corridor. Some Operations staff have also shifted to work on Capital Projects. Work has also accelerated for the San Mateo 25th Avenue Grade Separation Project.)*
- A member asked if the time savings in construction equal cost savings. *(Caltrain staff answered that they would hope so and generally if things are on-time or early tend to save money.)*
- A member asked if this changes the timeline. *(Caltrain staff answered that the current timeline is still for electrification in 2022.)*

Public Comments:

- A member of the public commented that only one trainset is complete, the main test track is in Pueblo, Colorado, and asked how long the test track in Salt Lake City is. The member of the public also believes that the 25th Avenue Grade Separation project has nothing to do with grade separations. *(Caltrain staff explained that the Salt Lake City test track allows the train to do static and some limited dynamic testing. Once in Pueblo, more dynamic tests will occur. Chair Bruins also noted some delays due to the travel ban caused by the pandemic.)*

5. California High-Speed Rail Update

Boris Lipkin, Northern California Regional Director for California High-Speed Rail, updated the members on the release of the Draft 2020 Business Plan, construction progress, economic impact analysis report,

and workforce development center. Environmental Documents have been released for the San Jose to Merced section of the project and will release the San Francisco to San Jose section in early July.

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

- A member asked what the first segment that will be open is. *(HSR staff answered that the Merced to Bakersfield will open first.)* The member followed up asking if there is a projected date. *(HSR staff answered yes, 2029. The San Francisco to Merced section is projected to open in 2031, depending on resource availability.)*
- A member commended HSR for getting a lot of turnout in the virtual outreach strategies and asked if the same strategies will be pursued for the San Francisco to San Jose Section. *(HSR staff answered that they are considering it, and could do a hybrid approach.)*
- A member asked how the meeting and virtual tools were advertised. *(HSR staff answered that they used multiple tools including; press release, email blast, and social media.)*
- A member asked for clarity on the numbers used to measure participation in the virtual town halls. *(HSR staff explained the difference between the online open house and the webinar information sessions.)*
- A member asked if direct mailings were included. *(HSR staff answered yes.)*

Public Comments:

- *A member of the public stated that there was a hearing in Sacramento related to the HSR Business Plan and that they believe too much money is being spent on consultants and not enough on construction workers.*

6. Public Comment on Items not on the Agenda

- *A member of the public commented that Gilroy should have attended.*

7. LPMG Member Comments/Requests

- A member wanted to thank Caltrain staff for their work and dedication in this tumultuous time.
- A member asked if cities are still able to contact agency engineers to vet grade separation design plans. *(Caltrain staff answered yes.)*
- A member expressed their thanks to presenters and is happy to see projects moving forward.
- Chair Bruins thanked the rest of the members for taking the time to attend the meeting and added that because attendance was so high, all meetings moving forward may be virtual.

8. Next Meeting

Thursday, June 25, 2020 at 5:30 p.m.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:43 p.m.