

# Report of the TA Citizens Advisory Committee

## Meeting of August 1, 2023

### Committee Actions

- Approved the Consent Calendar including:
  - Minutes of the CAC Meeting of May 30, 2023
- Motions Regarding TA Board Items for June 1, 2023
  - Acceptance of Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for the Period Ending May 31, 2023
  - Acceptance of Quarterly Investment Report and Fixed Income Market Review and Outlook
  - Authorize the Request for Allocation of \$2 Million in Regional Measure 3 Funding for the US 101/ State Route 92 Direct Connector Project
- First Amendment to Reimbursement Agreement to Extend Expiration Date of Letter of Credit Supporting the \$100 Million Variable Rate Bonds
- Approval and Ratification of the Fiscal Year 2024 Transportation Authority Insurance Program

### Discussion Highlights

#### US 101 Express Lanes: Quarterly Update on Variable Rate Bond and Operations

- Connie Mobley-Ritter, Director of Treasury, provided the presentation on the variable rate bond, showing that it is the most effective and least cost-intensive way of funding the \$100 million loan. Mike Swire asked if the project cost is over \$581million. Peter Skinner, Executive Officer, Transportation Authority, said that \$581 million was the total project cost. Vice Chair John Fox said that contractually some payments are due on certain dates and does the TA have the liquidity to make the payments on those dates. Ms. Mobley-Ritter said they had allowed a three-year-plus runway.
- Lacy Vong, HNTB, provided the presentation on the operations of the Express Lanes. The members requested a future presentation on both financial and non-financial metrics. Mr. Swire asked if the revenues were going to increase going forward. Ms. Vong said they expect toll revenue to increase as there is still capacity in the lane allowing for drivers to opt out of congestion. She added that the non-financial metric would be congestion relief. Vice Chair Fox said he would like to see a metric about solo drivers versus three-plus in vehicles. He suggested the more we can document for the public, it can improve their acceptance. Ms. Vong said the suggestions from the CAC were helpful in suggesting what data needs to be collected to impact future policy and to manage congestion. Ivan Bucio said that more than 50 percent of their revenue is being used to maintain the system. Peter Ohtaki asked if the TA had learned from Alameda County about post-pandemic versus pre-pandemic congestion levels on I-880. Ms. Mobley-Ritter said they do not have the comparison data yet.

*First Amendment to Reimbursement Agreement to Extend Expiration Date of Letter of Credit Supporting the \$100 Million Variable Rate Bonds*

Ms. Mobley-Ritter presented the staff report. She said that since they issued the bonds, the interest rates have increased. Mr. Ohtaki asked if the amendment was related to the variable rate. Ms. Mobley-Ritter said the letter of credit provides a financial backstop in the even the bonds cannot be remarketed.

*Approval and Ratification of the Fiscal Year 2024 Transportation Authority Insurance Program*

Ryan Hinchman, Director, Financial Planning and Analysis, presented the staff report.

*State and Federal Legislative Update*

Amy Linehan, Government Affairs Officer, provided a summary of federal and state legislation. She said the House would be in recess until September 12 and the Senate would be in recess until September 5. She said the House only passed on of their appropriations bills. She said the Senate has not yet passed any appropriations bills. She said there is not a clear plan to get the bills over the finish line. She said a CR (continuing resolution) may be necessary if no bills are passed before the deadline of September 30. She noted several leadership changes in the Senate. Mr. Ohtaki said re the breakdown of what funds go to operations versus capital improvements and asked how the TA is monitoring that. Ms. Linehan said they try to balance where they apply for discretionary, grant, and operations money. She said when they receive funds, they ensure that the money goes to the projects with the most immediate need.

**Report of the Chair**

Chair Arietta noted that public transportation use went up to record levels with fans attending the recent Taylor Swift performances on the weekend of July 28-29. She said the San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury released a report on July 10, 2023 regarding making bicycling safer in the County. She said the report details the measures that each municipality in the County is taking. She noted the Caltrain electric train preview event that took place on Saturday, July 29, in San Jose.

**Report From Staff**

Mr. Skinner said the report was in the packet. He summarized his experience in a ride-along with a CHP (California Highway Patrol) officer providing toll enforcement in the Express Lanes. He noted the majority of people who were pulled over were driving electric vehicles. Chair Arietta expressed her concern that the officers were paid overtime for their Express Lanes patrolling duties and suggested having a dedicated enforcement team. Mr. Skinner noted this is how express lanes enforcement is handled statewide. Mr. Mattammal noted that there was currently a shortage of CHP officers.

**Member Comments/Requests**

There was extensive discussion among the CAC members regarding the public perception of transportation and a suggestion to have a future agenda item on transportation choices. Mr. Skinner noted that the funds managed by the TA have categories that were approved by the majority of the County voters and that they have no ability to move sales tax revenues between expenditure plan categories without voter approval. He said the TA Strategic Plan would be updated in 2024, which could involve reexamining the scoring criteria for expenditure plan categories.