

San Mateo County Transportation Authority
1250 San Carlos Avenue, San Carlos, California
Minutes of Board of Directors Meeting

September 7, 2023

Members Present: E. Beach, N. Corzo, J. Mates, R. Medina (Chair), R. Mueller (arrived at 5:15 pm), M. Nagales (arrived at 5:10 pm), C. Romero (Vice Chair)
(In Person)

Members Present: None
(Via Teleconference)

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: A. Chan, J. Cassman, S. van Hoften, P. Skinner, C. Mobley-Ritter, C. Fromson, J. Brook, D. Seamans

1. Call to Order

Chair Rico Medina called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

2. Roll Call/Pledge of Allegiance

Dora Seamans, Authority Secretary, confirmed that a quorum was present. Chair Medina led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda

There were no comments.

4. Report of the Citizens Advisory Committee

Chair Medina noted that the report was posted on the website.

5. Consent Calendar

5.a. Approval of Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting of August 3, 2023

5.b. Acceptance of Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for the Period Ending July 31, 2023

5.c. Acceptance of Capital Projects Quarterly Status Report for 4th Quarter Fiscal Year 2023

5.d. Deprogramming and Deallocation of Three Pedestrian and Bicycle Program 2022 Cycle 6 Projects – *Approved by Resolution No. 2023-18*

5.e. Program and Allocate \$9,650,560 in Measure A Funds to the San Mateo County Transit District for the SamTrans Paratransit Program and Caltrain – *Approved by Resolution No. 2023-19*

Public Comment:

Regarding Item 5.d:

- Adina Levin said she was dismayed the Holly Interchange funding was going away given its importance and noted that other current projects also experienced cost overruns but were retained.
- Sandhya Laddha, Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition, requested the TA to explore more funding options for the Holly Interchange project.
- Sonia Elkes, San Carlos Bikes Advocacy, echoed the comments made by Ms. Levin and Ms. Laddha.

Director Emily Beach requested staff to comment on the funding gap for the project. Chair Medina said that TA staff worked with the City of San Carlos for two years to close the funding gap and the City elected to cancel the project. Peter Skinner, Executive Officer, Transportation Authority, said the project had a funding gap of \$16 million and had also lost two multimillion-dollar grants because the project could not move forward in a timely manner.

Director Mark Nagales arrived at 5:10 pm.

Director Beach also asked if the City of San Carlos was precluded from requesting funds for this project in the future, and Mr. Skinner said the City was not precluded from seeking funding for the project.

Vice Chair Carlos Romero thanked the advocates for their comments but noted if funds are not used by a city, they need to be returned. He encouraged City staff to continue to look for funds for the project.

Motion/Second: Romero/Medina

Ayes: Beach, Corzo, Mates, Medina, Nagales, Romero

Noes: None

Absent: Mueller

6. Report of the Chair

Chair Medina said he had attended a Complete Streets event on El Camino Real in South San Francisco on August 16, which featured a SamTrans bus platform. He said he and April Chan, Executive Director, planned to attend a ribbon cutting on September 8 for the western element of the Westborough area shuttle in South San Francisco.

7. SamTrans Board Liaison Report

Chair Medina said that the report was in the packet and posted on the website.

Director Ray Mueller arrived at 5:15 pm.

He said the Board approved the appointment of Brooks Esser. He noted the first of the battery electric buses had arrived and was put into service on El Camino Real. He added that SamTrans had received the full \$15.2 million payment from VTA (Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority) and SFMTA (San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency).

8. Joint Powers Board Liaison Report

Ms. Chan said that the report was posted on the website. She said that the JPB Board adopted a fare structure for the next five years, and decided to delay the fare increases until the electrification project is completed.

9. Report of the Executive Director

Ms. Chan said the report was in the packet. She announced regarding the Cordilleras Creek Bridge Replacement Project in Redwood City that the southbound lanes of Highway 101 will be closed the weekend of September 29 through October 2, and the northbound lanes will be closed October 13 through 16.

Public Comment:

Roland noted that Brightline intercity rail in Florida increased their fares by 16 percent while managing to increase their ridership.

10. Program

10.a. 101 Corridor Connect Program Update

Martin Reyes, Principal Transportation Planner, provided the initial part of the presentation on 101 Corridor Connect, a program of projects that will improve mobility across the US 101 corridor in San Mateo County.

Amy Linehan, Government and Community Affairs Officer, provided the community/stakeholder engagement and schedule section of the presentation.

Director Beach wanted to confirm the study was looking at projects within one mile perpendicular to US 101, and staff stated that was correct. She also asked if the TA was leveraging other planning work, such as the C/CAG Bike and Pedestrian Plan, that had been done. Mr. Reyes said they are building on existing planning documents. Director Beach asked how the project will help develop some kind of consistency across projects and how this would play out, given the different communities' needs and wants. Mr. Reyes said one way it plays out is through the TA's grant strategy, which could bundle projects identified under 101 Corridor Connect to develop more competitive grant applications. Ms. Beach also asked if this project could help reduce local planning costs. Mr. Reyes confirmed the work being done under 101 Corridor Connect would help reduce local planning costs, especially in terms of community outreach and engagement. Ms. Beach also wanted to ensure equity was being considered and that those communities who needed technical assistance would be prioritized. Mr. Reyes indicated that equity-priority communities would be a priority in the study.

Vice Chair Romero asked for a definition of the 101 corridor and why the TA was focusing on enhancing mobility along this corridor rather than along the Caltrain corridor. Ms. Chan said the TA needs to look at multimodal projects along the 101 corridor to encourage other modes of travel to ensure the TA is supporting all modes and improving mobility for more than just motorists when making improvements to the highway system.

Director Julia Mates said if the surveys and community outreach are to be effective, there needs to be more awareness of the universe of projects that could be implemented.

Ms. Linehan indicated the first step in the public engagement process was to get information about the general transportation priorities along the corridor.

Director Noelia Corzo said she is not able to envision what kinds of projects would come out of the work. She noted that improving mobility in dense communities may be difficult and encouraged staff to provide some visualization of what kinds of projects could come out of the work.

Director Mark Nagales said he also had a hard time understanding the scope of the program, and suggested simplifying the language before putting it out to the community.

Director Ray Mueller said community members in his district had many ideas of how multimodal improvements could be made. He also stated the distillation process was going to be tough.

Director Beach said she echoed the comments of her colleagues and was hopeful that the study would look at ways to implement convenient access to express buses that would use the US 101 express lanes to provide an option to those commuters who cannot afford Caltrain.

Vice Chair Romero noted there were many low-income housing areas in the corridor.

10.b. 101/92 Mobility Hub and Smart Corridor Concept Plan Progress Update

Mr. Reyes provided the initial part of the presentation on the components of the Concept Plan.

Ms. Linehan provided the second part of the presentation on community and stakeholder engagement.

Sue-Ellen Atkinson, Principal Transportation Planner, City of San Mateo, said they were excited to be working with the TA and SamTrans. She said the 19th Avenue/Fashion Island Corridor project was one of the top priorities for their City Council this year, so the Mobility Hub and Concept Plan was an important step.

Director Beach said that she was excited about the project and noted that lighting is important to encourage people to use the corridor.

Director Corzo said it was difficult for her to envision how a mobility hubs would work in areas where there was less space, but was generally excited for the project.

Vice Chair Romero noted a wayfinding issue of getting to the Hayward Park Caltrain station from El Camino Real. Mr. Reyes said they had heard from others who had heard from residents to the east of the Hayward Park station that they would use that station more if there were a way to bike there.

Public Comment:

Adina Levin asked about bringing back the Holly Street/101 project. She said real-time information should be available on signage. She said that instead of proposing an express bus to serve low-income people because Caltrain is too expensive, efforts should be considered to make Caltrain more affordable for low-income people.

11. State and Federal Legislative Update

Jessica Epstein, Manager, Government and Community Affairs, provided a summary of federal and state legislation.

On the federal side, she said they anticipated a continuing resolution (CR) to keep the government running through December .

On the state side, she said the legislature reconvened on August 14. She outlined legislative personnel changes. She said for those advocating for more flexibility with teleconferencing under the Brown Act, there has not been much progress.

She said Caltrans is taking the lead on climate adaptation planning and they are working on developing and implementing the Caltrans Systems Investment Strategy (CSIS), which the TA is following to determine what types of projects are likely to be receive funding in the future.

Director Ray Mueller talked about the TA being able to provide funding for road repair for legacy roads that had been incorporated into cities over time. Ms. Chan said they would look into it. She noted that there was currently funding in both Measures A and W for each of the jurisdictions plus the County itself, explaining that it is a formula allocation by lane miles and population .

12. Requests from the Authority

There were no requests.

13. Written Communications to the Authority

Chair Medina noted that the correspondence was available on the website.

14. Date/Time of Next Regular Meeting

Chair Medina announced the next meeting would be on Thursday, October 5, 2023, 5:00 pm in person at the SamTrans Auditorium and via Zoom teleconference.

15. Report of Legal Counsel

15.a Approval of Policy for Settlement of General Liability Claims – *Approved by Resolution No. 2023-20*

Joan Cassman, Legal Counsel, presented the staff report. She said that SamTrans has always had a policy for delegation of authority to settle claims, while this is a rare occurrence for the TA. She said that with the changes in governance of Caltrain, it was decided that the TA and SamTrans should have separate policies also. She noted the policy outlines which staff has authority to settle claims based on dollar amount.

Vice Chair Romero requested some periodic reporting of settlement claims under \$100,000, and Ms. Cassman said they could add a provision in the policy to report such claims to the Board.

Director Beach said she appreciated that the policy spells out the checks and balances.

Director Mates concurred with Vice Chair Romero on adding a provision to the policy to make periodic reports to the Board.

Motion/Second: Mueller/Nagales

Ayes: Beach, Corzo, Mates, Medina, Mueller, Nagales, Romero

Noes: None

Absent: None

16. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 6:33 pm.

An audio/video recording of this meeting is available online at <https://www.smcta.com/about-us/board-directors/video-board-directors-cac-and-smcel-jpa>. Questions may be referred to the Authority Secretary's office by phone at 650.508.6242 or by email to board@smcta.com.