

Report of the TA Community Advisory Committee

Meeting of September 3, 2024

Committee Actions

- Approved the Consent Calendar including:
 - Minutes of the CAC Meeting of July 30, 2024 – *approved 9-0*
 - Motions Regarding TA Board Items for September 5, 2024 – approved 9-0
 - Acceptance of Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for the Period Ending July 31, 2024
 - Acceptance of Capital Projects Quarterly Status Report for 4th Quarter Fiscal Year 2024
 - Programming and Allocating \$250,000 in New Measure A Funds for the City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County (C/CAG) for the Countywide Transportation Plan

Discussion Highlights

TA Board Item 10.a Regional Transit Connections Plan Public Review Draft

Patrick Gilster, Director, Planning and Fund Management, provided the presentation.

Karen Kuklin asked if they would be accruing Measure W revenue and making estimates every four years, which Mr. Gilster confirmed.

Nheeda Enriquez asked how they arrived at the four-year cycle. Mr. Gilster said larger transit agency projects take longer to complete and the transit agencies are supportive of this approach.

Giuliano Carlini said the main reason people do not take transit is because of commuting the first/last mile.

Public Comment:

Chris Florkowski there is a direct link between ridership levels and that first/last mile problem that needs to be solved.

TA Board Item 11.a US 101 Express Lanes: Semiannual Update on Variable Rate Bonds and Express Lanes Performance

Kevin Beltz, Manager, Treasury Debt and Investments, provided the initial part of the presentation on the variable rate bonds.

Vice Chair John Fox said the revenue from the tolling operations was supposed to be sufficient to pay off the loan. Mr. Beltz said revenues are sufficient to cover the loan and once the reserves are funded to their required levels, they will be able to meet principal payment deadlines.

Lacy Vong, Policy Program Manager, San Mateo County Express Lanes Joint Powers Authority (SMCEL-JPA), provided the presentation on the Express Lanes Operations, which included highlights on quarterly performance.

Vice Chair Fox asked about invoiced violations versus collection of fees/penalties. He asked how to incentivize users of the express lanes to be honest. Ms. Vong said drivers who mis-declare their occupancy will risk getting an occupancy violation of \$490. She said there is no invoicing for express lanes, unlike with the bridges. She said the violations are for people without FasTrak accounts. The violations include the toll amount plus a penalty. Vice Chair Fox requested receiving a summary of enforcement. He asked for those using IBT (image-based toll), could there be a different pricing structure to incentivize people to get FasTrak. Ms. Vong said there are discussions going on across the region regarding establishing an IBT surcharge.

Chair Barbara Arietta said she disagreed with paying overtime to CHP (California Highway Patrol) to provide enforcement. Ms. Vong said express lanes operators statewide are required to use CHP for toll enforcement. Peter Skinner, Executive Officer, Transportation Authority, said changing the enforcement process would require a change to state law.

Karen Kuklin said it may not be convenient for people to obtain toll tags and suggested pop-up locations for commuters to obtain the transponders. She noted that rental car agencies may charge \$15 per day for a transponder. Ms. Vong said there have been popups, such as one at the San Mateo County Fair in June.

Ivan Bucio asked if they could have a graph of the toll revenue per quarter instead of community. He asked if there was a maximum value of assessed tolls. Ms. Vong said there is an operational max. Mr. Bucio said that you get charged double if you travel in both the Santa Clara and San Mateo express lanes.

Mr. Carlini requested data for VMT (vehicle miles traveled). Ms. Vong said they do not monitor that for the express lanes. Mr. Skinner said it would be up to the JPA (San Mateo County Express Lanes Joint Powers Authority) Board whether they wanted that data collected. Regarding the heat map, Mr. Carlini suggested providing him with the underlying data to analyze. Regarding the Community Transportation Benefits Program, he asked if the mobility debit card would track usage, which Ms. Vong confirmed.

Public Comment:

Chris Florkowski requested data on carpooling and transit use.

Mike Swire said the presentation is providing a spin to paint a positive picture and is unsatisfactory as it does not provide enough supporting data. He requested data about what percentage of users requesting HOV3 are cheating. He asked why are the tolls only for between 5:00 am and 8:00 pm only, which represents 44 percent of the time, and not during other times.

TA Board Item 12 State and Federal Legislative Update

Michael Wright Petrik, Government and Community Affairs Officer, provided a summary of federal and state legislation. On the federal side, she said Congress would have three weeks to pass a continuing resolution to keep the government running to November. On the state side,

she said the California Transportation Commission (CTC) approved fund estimates and guidelines for the next round of Senate Bill (SB) 1 competitive grant programs in August.

Sandra Lang asked if the regional funding measures would go into the legislative proposals. Ms. Wright Petrik said they would be covered in the upcoming draft 2025 legislative program.

Public Comment:

Mike Swire noted Senate Bills (SB) 960 and 961 regarding safety and warning lights being required in cars when drivers are speeding.

Report of the Chair

Chair Arietta discussed her report in the packet about the launch of electrified Caltrain service starting September 21. She said there was a promotional discount for youth and launch celebrations on September 21 and 22.

Report From Staff

Mr. Skinner said the report was in the packet. He noted the Broadway Burlingame grade separation cost increase. He said they are working with Caltrain and the City of Burlingame and to explore options to redesign the project to reduce the total project cost. He said the project is the number-one priority grade separation in the state.

Member Comments/Requests

Ms. Lang said she felt that the CHP payments for express lanes enforcement did not need to be legislated.

Mr. Bucio suggested asking the contractors to re-bid the Broadway Burlingame grade separation construction.

Mr. Carlini said he was supportive of increasing the frequency of Caltrain service to be comparative with other industrialized areas. He noted that the CAC turned away past applicants.

Public Comment:

Mike Swire said he had enjoyed riding the new Caltrain electric train.