



## SAN FRANCISCO PENINSULA RAIL PROGRAM EXECUTIVE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

### MINUTES

Friday, April 16, 2021

11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

### WATCH LIVE:

<https://transbaycenter.webex.com/transbaycenter/onstage/g.php?MTID=e0e8bdea62c621d62083c3628358fd22f>

PUBLIC COMMENT CALL-IN: 1-855-282-6330 — Access Code: 182 486 3320

Due to the COVID-19 health emergency, the Executive Steering Committee (ESC) will meet via teleconference. Members of the public are encouraged to participate remotely. Please see additional information on the next page for remote meeting access.

In compliance with the Governor's Executive Order N-25-20 (March 12, 2020) as superseded by Order N-29-20 (March 17, 2020), this meeting will be held *exclusively* via teleconference participation of a quorum of ESC members in locations not open to the public. The purpose of the orders is to provide the safest environment for all persons consistent with San Francisco Department of Public Health Orders of the Health Officer and current public health recommendations, while allowing the public to observe and address the ESC.

### EXECUTIVE STEERING COMMITTEE

San Francisco County Transportation Authority, Tilly Chang (Chair)  
Metropolitan Transportation Commission, Andrew Fremier (Vice Chair)  
California High Speed Rail Authority, Boris Lipkin  
City and County of San Francisco, Alex Sweet  
Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board/Caltrain, Michelle Bouchard  
Transbay Joint Powers Authority, Nila Gonzales

**REMOTE MEETING ACCESS**  
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**PUBLIC COMMENT CALL-IN: 1-855-282-6330 — Access Code: 182 486 3320**

**Providing Public Comment**

Ensure you are in a quiet location – Speak Clearly – Turn off any TVs or radios around you

1. When prompted, “raise hand” to speak by pressing \*3 (star, 3) to be added to the queue.
2. Callers will hear silence when waiting for their turn to speak.
3. When prompted, callers will have two minutes to provide comment.

**AGENDA**

1. Call to Order

Chair Chang called the meeting to order at 11:02 a.m.

2. Roll Call

Secretary Pollitt noted that Michelle Bouchard has officially been appointed as the Caltrain representative to the ESC, and Sebastian Petty has been appointed as Member Bouchard’s alternate. He also noted that Doug Johnson was joining as the alternate for Alex Sweet.

Members Present: Michelle Bouchard, Nila Gonzales, Doug Johnson, Boris Lipkin, Andrew Fremier, and Tilly Chang

Members Absent: Alex Sweet

3. Communications

Secretary Pollitt provided instructions on the Public Call-in/Comment process.

- Chair’s Report

Chair Chang acknowledged Member Hartnett’s retirement from Caltrain, thanked him for his service, and welcomed Member Bouchard in her new official capacity. She acknowledged Member Gonzales and her staff, particularly TJPA Communications and Legislative Affairs Manager Lily Madjus Wu and Interim Downtown Rail Extension (DTX) Project Director Stephen Polechronis, for their work on federal advocacy and coordination related to the upcoming federal infrastructure bill. She noted the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) has begun looking for potential coordination opportunities to ensure joint regional partnership among agencies and plans to agendize it for a future ESC meeting.

4. Action Item:

Approval of Meeting Minutes: March 19, 2021

There was no member of the public wishing to comment. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Member Bouchard and seconded by Member Lipkin. A unanimous voice vote approved the motion.

5. Informational Item:  
Legislative Update

TJPA's state advocates Niccolo De Luca and Andres Ramirez of Townsend Public Affairs and federal advocate Julie Minerva of Carpi & Clay, along with Keith Hartwell and Richard Sherman of BlankRome, collectively presented the item. Ms. Madjus Wu introduced the item by providing an overview of the TJPA's legislative strategy to advance the project, identify funding opportunities, and engage stakeholders. Ms. Madjus Wu reported that over the past few months, TJPA staff led by Member Gonzales along with ESC Chair Chang have met with legislators at the local, state, and federal levels, in addition to MTC Commissioners, to reintroduce the DTX project, its benefits and foster relationships. The briefings have been well received. She stated that the TJPA is encouraged by President Biden's American Jobs Plan and highlighted that in anticipation of increased federal spending on infrastructure, staff has identified a range of elements of the DTX project that could be funded when the opportunity arises.

With regard to the state update, Mr. De Luca reported that in late 2020, briefings began with Bay Area caucus members on the status of the Salesforce Transit Center and the regional importance of the Transbay Program, specifically completing DTX. He noted the strong support of the San Francisco delegation, which includes Senator Weiner and Assembly Members Ting and Chiu among others. Mr. Ramirez elaborated on the legislative briefings they have held with transportation leaders in the legislature including Senate Transportation Committee Chair Lena Gonzalez and her Chief of Staff, Senator Dave Cortese's office, and Assembly Member Alex Lee and his staff that manages transportation policy. Mr. Ramirez stated they will continue to set up meetings with others in the Bay Area delegation with the end goal to provide a sense of connection to the DTX project; support understanding of the regional and statewide significance of the TJPA and the Transbay Program; and foster relationships that will benefit the project when state funding opportunities arise. Mr. Ramirez also noted TJPA support letters were sent to Senate and Assembly transportation committees in support of the California High-Speed Rail Authority's (CHSRA) Revised Draft 2020 Business Plan, advocating for the allocation of remaining Prop 1A funds to CHSRA; supporting the completion of the Central Valley high-speed rail segment; and emphasizing the importance of the Transit Center as the system's Northern California terminus.

With regard to the federal update, Julie Minerva introduced her colleagues Keith Hartwell and Richard Sherman. She noted President Biden's top two priorities: rescue and recovery. With implementation of the American Rescue Plan, which provided \$2 trillion in emergency COVID relief and \$30 billion for the transit industry, the next federal priority is the upcoming infrastructure package. She emphasized that the package proposes a new \$25 billion program for "ambitious projects that have tangible benefits to the region or national economy that are too large or too complex for existing funding programs." She emphasized that this program presents a tremendous opportunity for DTX but stressed the importance of

a comprehensive approach that includes pursuing competitive grants, legislative proposals, and existing transit programs. To this end, her team is working with the TJPA to create a menu of sub-projects to take advantage of immediate opportunities. For example, they are working with the TJPA on grant applications to the Federal Railroad Administration's Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements program and the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Transit Security Grant Program. They are working with congressional stakeholders to develop federal financing proposals, such as modifications to the Railroad Rehabilitation & Improvement Financing program that would allow the TJPA to increase its loan capacity. She emphasized that both grant and loans must be used, and that federal loans repaid with local funds count toward the local match requirement of the Federal Transit Administration's Capital Investment Grant (CIG) funding program. She noted that they are supporting the TJPA's entry into the CIG program, which will be a key element for delivering DTX.

Chair Chang thanked the presenters. Member Gonzales thanked the state and federal teams and noted that TJPA staff has been working closely with them and are very optimistic regarding the upcoming opportunities. She acknowledged the unity that the ESC brings to support the project and thanked the members for their work on behalf of the project. Chair Chang asked Ms. Minerva about the jobs bill and the federal surface transportation reauthorization process. Ms. Minerva responded that they would learn more in May and that the funding levels in the draft proposal for reauthorization will likely indicate whether portions of the American Jobs Plan are being inserted into the reauthorization. She noted that, currently, it appears that the bigger infrastructure proposals within the American Jobs Plan are similar to those within the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, meaning that those funds would most likely become competitive funding opportunities.

6. Informational Item:  
Communications and Outreach Update

TJPA Communications and Legislative Affairs Manager Lily Madjus Wu presented the item. She reported that short-term goals for communications and outreach are focused on reinvigorating interest and support for the DTX project through meetings with stakeholders and legislators in collaboration with the TJPA's state and federal advocates. She noted that the reception to the project has been positive and emphasized the importance of working collaboratively with the ESC and other transit partners. She stated that she is working closely with staff from SFCTA, Caltrain, and CHSRA in addition to coordinating with her counterparts at MTC. She emphasized the importance of transparency, responsibility, and accountability when communicating about the work completed to-date. Ms. Madjus Wu also reported the long-term communication goals include building sustained support for the project and highlighting the project's role of bringing rail to downtown San Francisco and to the region. The messaging strategy focuses on building momentum for delivery of the Transit Center by realizing the promise of the already-constructed train box. Presenting the 2021 communications timeline, Ms. Madjus Wu reported that the planning phase, currently underway, will last until June. This phase involves understanding the audience to develop a key findings report and a messaging framework for the next phase of communications work. As part of this planning phase, in coordination with Davis and Associates (D&A), a five-

minute online survey for 400 registered voters in San Francisco and San Mateo counties is being developed that will ask what they think and know about the project. Key findings will be documented in a report that will be presented to the ESC and TJPA Board. The second phase of the outreach plan is the execution phase, which will begin in July and involve further engagement of the public; messaging will coincide with project milestones including entry of the project into the Federal Transit Administration's New Starts program this Fall.

Member Lipkin thanked Ms. Madjus Wu for the collaboration with CHSRA and for coming to CHSRA's community working group meeting. He noted that the group often has questions, so hearing from the TJPA directly is important. Chair Chang asked Ms. Madjus Wu to go over how the Transbay Program established its status as a project of national significance. Ms. Madjus Lu responded that the project was designated as a project of national and regional significance by the federal SAFETEA-LU Act (the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users) as well as by MTC through Resolution 3434 (the regional transportation expansion policy for the Bay Area). She also highlighted the benefits of the Transbay Program in terms of jobs—Phase 1 created over 24,000 construction jobs in 47 states. Chair Chang reiterated that the articulation of the project benefits will become sharper as project development advances during the execution phase of the communications plan. She asked how the TJPA is approaching rebranding in terms of the project. Ms. Madjus Wu responded that the TJPA and D&A are working on the rebranding plan, which will focus on leveraging the project's overall regional benefits. Member Gonzales thanked Ms. Madjus Wu for taking the lead on communications and quickly gaining an understanding of the Program, emphasizing that she has done a good job of connecting with agencies and partners, both on communications and on the legislative work. Member Bouchard reiterated her appreciation for the overview. She said that Caltrain is looking forward to the regional collaboration, which will support the project's status as a project of regional and national significance. Chair Chang followed by stating that a fact sheet focused on the project's regional significance would be important for outreach and branding and she cited the Gateway Program in the northeast rail corridor as a project that makes the case for regional importance really well. She noted that Ms. Madjus Wu is coordinating with the Link21 team and said she was pleased to see the project being positioned for success.

#### Public Comment:

Jim Patrick said he is reading about a plan to merge BART and Caltrain and asked if the ESC has integrated this thinking into its planning and presentations about what the future might be. Chair Chang responded that this is an idea included in Caltrain Board workshops on governance. Member Bouchard agreed, stating that Caltrain is beginning to discuss options. The regional approach is one of many that will be considered over the next year.

#### 7. Public Comment

Members of the public may provide comment on matters within the ESC's purview that are not on the agenda.

Roland Lebrun expressed concern in regard to the 7th street alignment and it potentially not being considered. He advised the ESC to consider how DTX would connect to the existing Caltrain tracks, and he suggested development of an animation for the construction sequence. Mr. Lebrun said that the DTX should not have impact on Caltrain operations.

8. ESC Agenda items for upcoming meetings.

Chair Chang said that Connect SF, San Francisco's long-range transportation planning effort, had just released its transit investment strategy proposal. She shared that Connect SF is a partnership of the SFTCA, the San Francisco Planning Department, the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency, and the Mayor's Office of Economic and Workforce Development. Ms. Chang noted that a virtual town hall would be held on April 21. The DTX and Pennsylvania Avenue Extension (PAX) are included in the strategy. Ms. Chang added that an update regarding PAX would be soon brought to the SFCTA Board and that a presentation to the ESC may be made as well.

9. Adjourn

Chair Chang adjourned the meeting at 11:54 a.m.