



SAN FRANCISCO PENINSULA RAIL PROGRAM EXECUTIVE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

NOTICE OF MEETING AND CALENDAR

Friday, January 15, 2021

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

WATCH LIVE:

<https://transbaycenter.webex.com/transbaycenter/onstage/g.php?MTID=e61443fb5765fd46e55c1cce81eb225c1>

PUBLIC COMMENT CALL-IN: 1-855-282-6330 -- Access Code: 126 768 2132

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In compliance with the Governor's Executive Order N-25-20 (March 12, 2020) as superseded by Order N-29-20 (March 17, 2020), this meeting will be held *exclusively* via teleconference participation of a quorum of ESC members in locations not open to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, Jim Hartnett
Transbay Joint Powers Authority, Nila Gonzales

REMOTE MEETING ACCESS

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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 the standard three minutes to provide comment.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order

Chair Chang called the meeting to order at 11:03 a.m.

2. Roll Call

Secretary Pollitt noted that alternate Michelle Bouchard was attending on behalf of Jim Hartnett.

Members Present: Michelle Bouchard, Nila Gonzales, Boris Lipkin, Alex Sweet, Andrew Fremier, and Tilly Chang

Members Absent: Jim Hartnett

3. Communications

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

4. Action Item:

Approval of revised Special Meeting Minutes: October 23, 2020

Approval of Meeting Minutes: November 20, 2020

Secretary Pollitt stated that revised minutes from the October 23, 2020 Special Meeting were included in the ESC packet for reference.

There were no comments or questions from ESC members or the public.

A motion to approve the October 23, 2020 Special Meeting Minutes and November 20, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes was made by Vice Chair Fremier and seconded by Member Bouchard. A unanimous voice vote approved the motion.

5. Informational Item:

Demand Forecasting

Chair Chang introduced Jesse Koehler, Rail Program Manager at the San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA), stating that Mr. Koehler joined the SFCTA about month ago and will be leading certain tasks of the work program under the San Francisco Peninsula Rail Program Memorandum of Understanding. She stated that Mr. Koehler brings experience working on capital and strategic planning for funding approvals for similar types of projects in Vancouver and Toronto.

Mr. Koehler presented an overview of the SFCTA's approach to travel demand forecasting. He noted that he presented to the Integrated Program Management Team (IPMT) at their January 12 meeting. He explained that ridership forecasting is a key component of the work program that will be used to define the project in terms of phasing and operating pattern as well as to characterize the benefits of the project for communicating with the public and stakeholders. He acknowledged his colleagues at the SFCTA technology data and analysis group and their role in developing their in-house ridership model, which has been used in federal New Starts and Small Starts development processes in the region, including the Central Subway and Van Ness Bus Rapid Transit projects. He stated that they will be working with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to ensure that their work is supporting funding milestones and technical development of the project.

Member Lipkin welcomed Mr. Koehler, thanked him for the presentation, and said that he appreciated the SFCTA's reaching out to staff at the California High-Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) to start a dialog on this topic. He asked which models are being used for the different sets of analyses and how the results are being pieced together. MTC, SFCTA, and CHSRA each have their own travel demand forecasting model, for example. He noted that while each model is geared toward performing specific functions well, each will have weaknesses. He emphasized that the ridership data must be defensible and accepted by all stakeholders and added that he is glad the agencies are all working together.

Mr. Koehler replied that they are starting with the City's forecasting tool SF-CHAMP and recognized that there are unique considerations with respect to high-speed rail, which was the motivation for reaching out to CHSRA staff. He explained that SF-CHAMP is regional (includes all nine counties), has strong representation of travel behavior and geographic distribution within San Francisco, and can load other models. He stated that the SFCTA will be exploring other tools, noting as an example that the FTA may want the project to use their travel demand STOPS model. Through peers in the region, the SFCTA will also be looking at other New Starts projects for insight on bridging potential gaps between the various regional models.

Chair Chang concurred that there are many models and emphasized the importance of ensuring that all agree on the underlying assumptions on land use, the transportation network, the definition of "no project," and future conditions. She referred to other planning in the region that is currently underway—Link21 program (BART and Capitol Corridor) and recollected that MTC's Plan Bay Area 2050 may have evaluated high-speed rail in concert with Caltrain service levels to represent the blended service in the corridor. Vice Chair Fremier said he did not know off-hand but that he would look into how ridership projections

were handled for Plan Bay Area 2050. He agreed with Member Lipkin that all stakeholder partners need to spend time on this topic and be comfortable with the results.

Member Bouchard welcomed Mr. Koehler to the project and thanked him for the presentation. She asked about the format for discussions with FTA and who is taking the lead in those discussions. Interim Downtown Rail Extension (DTX) Project Director (PD) Stephen Polechronis replied that the TJPA contacted FTA Region 9 a week ago to set up an initial technical discussion on ridership modeling as well as the financial plan—both are required tasks for overall project planning and for the federal process and both are being led by the SFCTA. The purpose of the meeting is to agree on the structure for these studies to ensure a coordinated and comprehensive approach and results that will be accepted by the FTA. He mentioned that Region 9 staff quickly responded to the meeting request and advised that regional administrator Ray Tellis intends to attend the meeting. The TJPA expects the meeting to be scheduled within the next two to three weeks. Member Gonzales, clarified, and Chair Chang and Interim DTX PD Polechronis agreed, that while the regional partners are collectively a team, the TJPA as the grantee would be submitting the application for the full funding grant agreement to the FTA. Chair Chang suggested that a brief internal coordination call prior to the meeting might be in order (while respecting the Brown Act). She emphasized that with the new federal administration, engaging and working with not only the Region 9 administrator but also other federal and state entities is vitally important and that the team needs to prepare for every opportunity.

Vice Chair Fremier complimented Mr. Koehler on his presentation. He asked about the sensitivity testing associated with new the transbay crossing project, noting the importance of keeping the project aligned with the ongoing Link21 study. He asked what the team is doing to stay connected with the Link21 program. Mr. Koehler responded that his team has not yet done intensive definition for the transbay crossing scenario but will be working with the Link21 team to explore various scenarios. He noted that some countywide planning work has been done using relevant transbay crossing alternatives and combining those with the DTX, and his understanding is that a through station would allow for more trains per hour (potentially 12 Caltrain/4 high-speed) as opposed to the 8/4 scenario with the current stub-end station. Interim DTX PD Polechronis added that the IPMT and TJPA's program management consultant staff have met with BART and its Link21 partners. To date, a memorandum that informs the alternatives being analyzed has been completed and the TJPA has shared historical project information, such as alternative alignment studies and information on the existing facility. He confirmed that ongoing coordination with Link21 is a top priority, noting that he understands that BART is still selecting an environmental consultant. He underscored that the ongoing operations analyses will evaluate the through station scenario. Chair Chang added that the long-term planning needs to be consistent with the blueprint of Plan Bay Area, as it includes both the DTX and the new transbay crossing projects.

Public Comment:

Roland Lebrun said that hiring of Jesse Koehler is a game changer, and wondered whether Mr. Koehler, having most recently worked in Toronto, was familiar with the tunneling technology being used in the United Kingdom (on the Crossrail project, for example). He

stated that he and others have been studying this technology for the past 10 years; it is the basis for his proposal for a 7th Street alignment as well as the Pennsylvania Avenue Extension. He agreed with Vice Chair Fremier that looking at Link21 should be a priority because his model of eight years ago showed that using two tracks and three platforms, 12 trains per direction per hour would be possible through the DTX. He continued that if a signaling system similar to BART's planned signaling system were implemented, 30 trains per direction per hour would be possible; this would result in a capacity of 2,000 passengers (or 60,000 per hour in each direction) and suggested the team to start working on this.

6. Informational Item:
Project Progress Update

Stephen Polechronis, Interim DTX PD, presented this item.

Chair Chang thanked Mr. Polechronis for his presentation and the team for working well together. She said the Comprehensive Work Plan was well received by the TJPA Board of Directors in December 2020 and emphasized that the team needs to engage on the funding plan, which will address the project cost and funding by phase. She mentioned the draft funding plan and advised that ESC members will need to engage with their respective staffs on this plan, which include the cost of the project and funding by phase. A draft of the plan is scheduled for review by the IPMT in February 2021 and for initial review by the ESC in March 2021. She stated that as work begins with federal and state funding partners, the team needs to be careful not to get ahead of local funding partners (as the source of matching funds). She reminded ESC members that they had asked about accelerating the work program to meet a 2023 date for the FTA funding submittal and reported that the SFCTA received a funding request to shift allocated funds to an earlier timeframe. She noted, however, the funding shift (should it be approved) would not fully fund the work through 2023 and, therefore, she is seeking support to ensure that adequate funds for near-term project development are secured, given that RM 3 is being challenged and those funds are in question. She noted that positive developments include the voter passage of Caltrain Measure RR (which allocates sales tax revenue to Caltrain) and the potential for funding through the City's bond financing. She highlighted signs of momentum and renewed focus on transit and stated that with the changes happening nationally now is the time to begin strategizing and working collaboratively to support the TJPA in its advocacy for the DTX. Interim DTX PD Polechronis added that Member Gonzales has asked TJPA and consultant staff to consider how the project could leverage near-term federal stimulus funding should that opportunity arise. He said that the team will be bringing ideas to the ESC for information and guidance.

Public Comment:

Roland Lebrun said that he has asked for IPMT reports and the risk register, but they have not been forthcoming. He reported that that he would be submitting a Public Records Act Request to the TJPA for access to these documents. Additionally, speaking about Measure RR, he was critical of a resolution that Member Bouchard, the incoming Caltrain Acting Executive Director, brought to the last Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board meeting, saying that it essentially allocates 100% of the Measure RR funds for the next six years to Transit America Services, Inc. He added that he hopes the next Caltrain director will be more flexible.

Jim Patrick stated that he supports moving the project development timeline ahead by one year. He said he worries about calling the Fourth and Townsend station the “ballpark” station. He also wanted to call the ESC’s attention to the Amazon project on 7th Street, stating that it is a 500,000-square-foot warehouse and suggested that the basement space could be used for train storage or possibly a station. He said such a station would be equidistant to both the Chase Center and Oracle Park.

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 commented on Jim Patrick’s previous comments regarding 7th Street, advising the team to be conscious of Amazon’s plans and suggesting that a connection to the BART line from Alameda to 16th Street station should be considered at 7th Street, adding that transfers between BART, Caltrain, and high-speed rail would make sense at this location. He asked that a 7th Street station be integrated into project planning.

8. Discussion Item:

ESC Agenda items for upcoming meetings

No new agenda items were suggested.

9. Adjourn:

Chair Chang adjourned the meeting at 12:01 p.m.

ACCESSIBLE MEETING POLICY

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, California Law, and the Governor’s Executive Orders, any individual with a disability may request reasonable modifications or accommodations so that they may observe and address the Executive Steering Committee at this teleconference meeting. If you are disabled and require special accommodations to participate, please contact the TJPA at 415.597.4620 or dtx@tjpa.org, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting. Late requests will be honored if possible. Calendars and minutes of the meeting may be available in alternative formats; please contact the TJPA at 415.597.4620 or dtx@tjpa.org at least 72 hours in advance of need. Written reports or background materials for calendar items are available online at www.tjpa.org.

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