**JPB Board of Directors**  
Meeting of December 5, 2019

(November 7, 2019 Meeting Cancelled)

Correspondence as of October 18, 2019

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The Bay Area Transportation Working Group (BATWG) is an all volunteer organization formed in 2012 to keep up with and respond to ongoing Bay Area transportation issues and events. Our primary objective is to find ways of easing regional traffic congestion by improving the reliability and general appeal of the Region’s passenger rail and bus systems. BATWG is dedicated to working with like-minded groups to bring about these needed changes. To learn more about BATWG, please go to www.batwgblog.com.

Save the Date: BATWG meetings occur on the third Thursday of the month from 10 a.m. to noon. The next meeting will be on Thursday, October 17, 2019. You may participate either in person or by telephone. To receive our meeting Agendas please contact us at BATWGNewsletter@gmail.com.

Donate Online

Joining or donating to BATWG is easier than ever! Just open the BATWG website, www.batwgblog.com, find the donate button and follow the on-line instructions. If you have any trouble let us know.

NO on AB 1487 Coalition Letter to Governor Newsom

October 10, 2019

NO on AB 1487 COALITION

c/o Law Offices of Jason A. Bezis
3661-B Mosswood Drive Lafayette, CA 94549-3509
(925) 708-7073 Bezis4Law@gmail.com

September 25, 2019
Re: Recommendation to Veto AB 1487 with Message to Legislature to First Enact Reforms of MTC

Dear Governor Newsom:

This office represents a coalition of organizations, including the Bay Area Transportation Working Group (BATWG), which urge you to veto AB 1487 with a message to the Legislature to investigate the structure, activities and effectiveness of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and to enact necessary reforms of MTC first. MTC is ill-suited to govern a "Housing Finance Authority."

AB1487 would give significant new power and taxing authority to a "Transportation Commission" that is not qualified to handle housing. Every four years, the eighteen voting MTC commissioners are "selected for their special familiarity with the problems and issues in the field of transportation." Government Code §66504. The new four-year term began in February 2019. The selection process did not include 'housing.'

The MTC commissioner selection process is opaque and undemocratic. Our coalition found legal irregularities in seven of the Bay Area's nine counties in the 2018-19 selection process. In many cases, commissioners were appointed with literally nothing in writing: no application, no statement of qualifications, not even an e-mail requesting appointment. The Brown Act violations are too numerous to discuss herein. MTC sent letters to many jurisdictions that explicitly asked them to re-appoint the incumbent. In one case, a 32-year incumbent was re-appointed to another four-year term during a six-minute "special meeting" held in the backroom of an Italian restaurant four days before the November election.

Click [here](#) to read more.
New York subway train

As has been pointed out before in these pages, the Muni level of the Market Street subway is currently operating at less than half its peak-period passenger-carrying capacity. This is because 20 years ago, instead of coupling the one and two-car trains operating along the Avenues (namely the K, L, M, J, N trains) into longer trains suitable for subway operation, the Muni gave up on the coupling. So now it operates one and two car trains in the subway as well as on the Avenues, therefore sending many fewer LRV’s through the tunnel than needed during peak commute periods.

In an attempt to counteract the resulting overcrowding, the SFMTA tries to push as many of its short “trains” into and through the subway as possible. This has not worked. Continue reading.

Valley Link Political Juggernaut
September 10, 2019

Valley Link seems to be advancing quickly, once again proving that political push seldom relates to validity and cost-effectiveness.

Valley Link is a train project and, provided they make sense, BATWG normally supports train projects. In this case a new BART-like single-tracked passenger rail line would be diesel operated, cost upwards of $2 billion and require a projected 26.7 billion a year in operating costs during its 40-year lifespan. As a result of climate change, already jammed peak period conditions in the central part of the BART system, even this tiny increase would not be not good news for BART riders.
Nor would Valley Link be of much use to the unhappy auto-commuters habitually burdened with I-580 traffic, which according to Caltrans was as high as 250,000 trips a day through much of the morning. The 580 Express Network has significantly decreased since 2017 and is projected to reach at least 360,000 by 2040. The Valley Link proponents say their rail project would encourage more people to leave their cars at home and switch to bus or rail. The very same number of commuters who would switch to the rail from the highway would have little to no discernible effect on I-580 traffic, given the Bay Area’s current approach to its regional transportation. Continue reading [here](#).

**Read the latest BTWG posts [here](#)**

**Join or Donate Today**

BATWG’s annual membership fee is $20 a year. To join, please either come to a meeting or mail a check made out to BATWG to **3001 Ashbrook Court, Oakland, CA 94601**. Contributions in any amount are gratefully accepted.
Caltrain Fully Elevated Grade Separations: Save $11B, Attractive, Better SF Stations

Mike Forster - www.mikeforster.us mike@mikeforster.us Version 2.1 - October 2019

[Author’s Note:
The previous document, Caltrain 2.0 - Elevated v1, presented an idealistic description of what could have been.

This Caltrain Fully Elevated Grade Separations (FEGS) v2.1 is a more practical approach that makes fuller use of the latest Caltrain estimates, and builds upon and fits into the infrastructure that exists: many miles already grade-separated crossing and existing roadway overpasses.]

October 16, 2019

- Board of Directors, Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board

- Board Members:

- Implementing fully elevated grade separations (FEGS) for Caltrain could accomplish the benefits listed below. Please see the attachment or visit www.mikeforster.us for a white paper detailing the analysis supporting these benefits.

- Thank you.

- Mike Forster, Palo Alto, mike@mikeforster.us, 650 464 9425
SPUR Member

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Figure 1: Electrified Caltrain fully elevated over roadways and a pedestrian-bike pathway.
Caltrain Stadler Kiss image from Caltrain: https://twitter.com/caltrain/status/870330342820823041; viaduct image by Mike Forster

1 **Total Cost: $12.7B and completed within 2 years.**
   Saving more than $11B over $24.6B current estimates including underground DTX.

2 **Attractive elevated grade separations** in sections from Gilroy to SF.
Including support for freight and nostalgic / holiday traffic.

3 Better service to high traffic stations along 3rd and 2nd Streets in San Francisco: Bayview, Arena / UCSF, Giants Park, and Montgomery BART / STC.

4 14+ miles of pedestrian-bike pathway and park under the elevated tracks.

5 Enhances resilience against rising sea levels.

6 A 21st century showcase of American infrastructure success.

7 Conclusion: Caltrain FEGS - A Better Approach than Lowering Roadways.

Appendix 1: Construction Cost Basis - No More Than $50M per mile

Appendix 2: Attractive Elevated Railway Viaducts