



JPB Board of Directors  
Meeting of July 9, 2020

Correspondence as of July 9, 2020

# Subject

- 1 Ballot Measure/Governance Reform
- 2 Idling Trains



**SPUR**

San Francisco | San Jose | Oakland

July 8, 2020  
Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board  
1250 San Carlos Ave.  
San Carlos, CA 94070

**Re: JPB Board Meeting- Item 11**

Dear Chair Pine and Members of the Caltrain Joint Powers Board:

Thank you for your ongoing work to evaluate governance options to evolve the organization to deliver on its ambitious long-range service vision and to a better service to riders. A major new capital undertaking is often the compelling force behind governance changes.

The Bay Area has unreliable service and poor connections between modes and services; divergent maps, schedules and fares; uncoordinated capital investments leading to both under-building and over-building; and fare policies that make taking transit out of reach for many. In recent months, the outlook for transit's future has become dire. COVID-19 has drastically decreased ridership and revenue. Coupled with a backlog of maintenance and repair needs and mounting pension obligations, our transit agencies are facing a fiscal cliff that will not only result in less service for riders, but--in the case of Caltrain--the very real possibility of ceasing to operate altogether.

The challenges at hand demand a regional response. A coordinated regional response can do more to reverse course, save Caltrain, and create a better future than each agency could by acting alone. To that end, we recommend:

- Advance a ballot measure to reduce immediate financial volatility and sustain the system. There is no certainty that we will see another national emergency package in the near future. A future without high-quality rail service connecting communities along the Peninsula is not a future we wish to imagine.
- Evaluate options for governance reform that deliver mutual benefits for riders and for solving shared regional challenges. The MTC Blue Ribbon Task Force for Transit Recovery is an important venue to evaluate long-term options. Many of the challenges described above stem from attempts to solve shared problems independently. The end result is detrimental for regional equity, access and the financial stability of each agency.

The spirit of collaboration and ingenuity that we have seen from Bay Area transit agencies and MTC during the COVID-19 crisis has been remarkable. We must continue to draw on that same spirit to advance a better future for Caltrain.

Sincerely,

Laura Tolkoff  
Regional Planning Policy Director



2001 Gateway Place, Suite 101E  
San Jose, California 95110  
(408)501-7864 svlg.org

July 8, 2020

Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board  
1250 San Carlos Ave  
San Carlos, CA 94070

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**Re: SB 797 and Caltrain 1/8-cent sales tax on the November 2020 ballot (Item # )**

Dear Chair Pine and JPB Board Members:

There is insufficient funding for transit in our region. Federal money has helped stem the bleeding, but as deliberations at the Blue Ribbon Commission on transit recovery and today's vote at the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC's) Programming and Allocations committee made clear, we are looking at a future of very hard choices when it comes to transit funding in our area.

We would like to applaud the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) for handling what was a difficult situation with grace and cooperative spirit. However it has never been more clear that we need to grow the pie so that our entire system can be more financially stable. SB 797 offers the vehicle we need to finally provide Caltrain the dedicated source of operating funding it needs.

Setting Caltrain on a path towards financial independence would not only benefit Caltrain, its riders and the economy it helps fuel, but also would mean agencies like VTA would gain back badly needed funds - millions of dollars a year that VTA and other partner agencies now contribute to Caltrain -that VTA could use to strengthen its system for the long term as well.

The Leadership Group is dedicated to supporting the effort to support a dedicated source of funding for Caltrain. We see the recent poll results as heartening, particularly in light of the conditions in which they were taken. If the Caltrain board and all the transit agency boards and boards of supervisors involved allow this measure to be put on the ballot, we believe voters will pass it. We hope that any agency or board member who is concerned about funding for transit in our region will support growing the pie to make the entire network more stable and better able to meet the needs of our community.

Thank you for your leadership and service.

Sincerely,

*Jason T. Baker*

Jason Baker  
Vice President  
Transportation, Housing & Community Development  
Silicon Valley Leadership Group

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KEVIN MURAI

**From:** [BRUCE KARNEY](#)  
**To:** [Public Comment](#)  
**Subject:** I support the idea of a ballot measure for CalTrain  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 8, 2020 11:28:20 AM

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I am retired and seldom take the train anymore, but I would support a ballot measure to create a stable source of funding for the system. I also support higher parking fees and higher fares. It makes more sense to me to phase in higher fares after electrification improves the speed and frequency of service.

Cheers,  
Bruce Karney

833 Bush St., Mtn. View, CA 94041

**From:** [Jonathan Scott](#)  
**To:** [Board \(@caltrain.com\)](#)  
**Subject:** Yes on Broader thinking  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 8, 2020 10:11:43 PM

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In today's highly interdependent world, individuals and nations can no longer resolve many of their problems by themselves. We need one another. We must therefore develop a sense of universal responsibility . . . It is our collective and individual responsibility to protect and nurture the global family, to support its weaker members, and to preserve and tend to the environment in which we all live.

THE DALAI LAMA

We need Caltrain & to support the riders that need Caltrain.

**From:** Raymond Chang <raymond.cj.chang@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 8, 2020 12:41 PM  
**To:** Tietjen, Brent <TietjenB@samtrans.com>  
**Cc:** Public Comment <PublicComment@samtrans.com>; Board (@caltrain.com) <BoardCaltrain@samtrans.com>  
**Subject:** Re: Idling Trains at San Francisco Station Caltrain

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the San Mateo County Transit District. Unless you recognize the sender's email address and know the content is safe, do not click links, open attachments or reply.

Hi Brent,

Thanks again for your time responding to my concerns. However, I still feel like there's a need for me to follow up.

In regards to the wayside power unable to be used for cleaning / unloading of passengers - that doesn't make much sense to me. I know it's easier to leave the train idling during cleaning, but when there's a long turnaround time, then shouldn't the trains be shut down as soon as possible upon arrival and unboarding of passengers? I was cc'd on an email from Adrian B. who echoed the same sentiments regarding the usage of wayside power.

For example, last night I observed one of the trains idling on Platform 12 as early as 9:30 PM (which is... already quite late). I thought the train was going to be done for the night, but it turns out that it was idling prior to the **12:05 AM** departure, so that particular train was idling for at least 2.5 hours, only to depart carrying less than 10 passengers total. And the last arrival into San Francisco decided to park at Platform 11, so I heard idling trains at least until **1:20 AM**. And both of these trains happened to be powered by the MP36PH-3C (aka the newer locomotives), which from my observation happen to be the loudest.

Proof:

[https://twitter.com/ray\\_chang/status/1280751810978803712](https://twitter.com/ray_chang/status/1280751810978803712)  
[https://twitter.com/ray\\_chang/status/1280760657441255424](https://twitter.com/ray_chang/status/1280760657441255424)

Once again, I'm asking for:

1. reduced **unnecessary** idling of locomotives. Per our previous correspondence, you mentioned that under normal circumstances, trains should not be idling for more than 1 hour prior to departure. But I've observed cases (per my example above) where that is clearly not the case. I understand that train idling is necessary to some extent, but having a **train idling for almost 3 hours** past 9 pm seems... unnecessary.
2. I would kindly ask for more consideration regarding track placement of locomotives. I would ask that:
  - trains that need to idle past 8/9 pm **aren't placed on Platforms 11/12**. If they need to idle, place them in the **middle tracks** so that the other trains can absorb some of the noise.
  - to **not have locomotives 923 - 928 idle at the outer tracks** at any time. Those ones seem to be the **loudest** trains in Caltrain's fleet (which is odd, considering they are newer)

It's really frustrating to have to write these emails and have nothing to show for them - it's been 3+ months, and nothing really has changed at all. I know that Caltrain is suffering from funding issues and is considering a sales tax measure to help support Caltrain's operations. I'd normally be all for such a measure, but based on my interactions the past several weeks, all prior goodwill with Caltrain has been completely lost.

Thanks,  
-Raymond

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On Tue, Jun 30, 2020 at 4:05 PM Tietjen, Brent <[TietjenB@samtrans.com](mailto:TietjenB@samtrans.com)> wrote:

Hi Raymond,

Thanks again for your email. In response to your question #1 on June 22, our operations team let me know that the wayside power cannot be used during cleaning because both the HEP and main engine are connected and provide the power/air for all of our safety devices such as the radio, intercoms, brakes, doors, and lighting.

With regards to trains operating past 8pm, please note that we have many revenue service trains coming in and leaving the San Francisco Station past 8pm with our last train arriving at 12:05am. There are also times when operations will have to run dead head trains to prepare for service in San Jose, shift trains to our maintenance facility for repair as well as a number of other circumstances where you may see trains that are not on the schedule.

Unfortunately, we do not have the agency staff and resources to provide evidence of train movements, platform arrivals and start/end time of each train. Our crews are doing what they can to reduce idling as much as possible with the constraints of running a railroad. I have forwarded your suggestion for track placement the operations team for consideration.

Thank you again for your comments and suggestions.

Best,

Brent Tietjen