Caltrain Poll Shows Support for Dedicated Revenue

Nearly two-thirds of voters in the three counties Caltrain serves would support creating new investment from local sales tax to expand rail service, according to a recent public opinion poll commissioned by the agency.

The poll was conducted as Caltrain considers options for a dedicated revenue source, something the agency lacks when compared to other public transit systems in the Bay Area. The Caltrain Board of Directors reviewed the results at their May 2 meeting.

Approving dedicated investment in Caltrain from local sales tax is being considered thanks to legislation passed by State Senator Jerry Hill. The legislation allows the Caltrain Board to place a measure on the ballot in all three counties, provided that the transportation agency and board of supervisors in each county concurs. The measure would then require approval from two-thirds of residents that vote in the three counties.

If approved, the measure would provide stable, dedicated funding to operate and maintain the service, and to invest in infrastructure that will be needed to expand service in all three counties. With peak hour trains that are well over 100% capacity, Caltrain will need to offer more service to meet current and projected demand. The ability to operate expanded service is made possible by the Caltrain Electrification project, which is currently under construction. The Caltrain Business Plan is evaluating what infrastructure will be needed to operate the system’s new electric trains and what service levels will be needed to meet ridership demand that is expected to increase by 300% over the next 20 years.

The poll identifies voters’ top reasons for supporting a potential measure, with easing highway traffic congestion, reducing air pollution, and improving Caltrain frequency and capacity topping the list.

22nd Street Station

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added secure bike lockers and a bike share station and recoded curbs around the station for easier pick up and drop off. San Francisco Public Works installed new LED lights adjacent to the station.

“The Dogpatch and Potrero are vibrant and growing neighborhoods, and they deserve a sharp, modern station to match,” said Caltrain Board Chair Gillian Gillett. “This collaborative effort to benefit transit users is a model of partnerships done right. “Development in San Francisco is edging closer and closer to our major transit corridors,” said Julie Christensen, Executive Director of the GBD. “That’s great because it makes those modes of transportation more accessible, but it also makes it important to better integrate those pathways into the urban fabric.”

A newly designed entrance to the 22nd Street Station

Summer Onboard!

Caltrain recently celebrated its newly refurbished 22nd Street Station at an event held in June to thank the Dogpatch and Northwest Potrero Hill Green Benefits District (GBD) for improving the station.

In February of this year, GBD began work on the station, delivering a newly resurfaced plaza and walkway, seat walls, improved fencing, enhanced landscaping and new lighting. Funding for the renovation was provided to Dogpatch neighbors by the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF).

The renovation benefited from the help of numerous San Francisco City Departments. The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) collaborated with the GBD to provide a new, designated parking area for motorcycle and scooter parking. The SFMTA also continued on page 4

Caltrain will operate a Sunday schedule on September 2.

The schedule is available at www.caltrain.com

From Giants Baseball to the San Mateo County Fair, to Pride, Caltrain is your ride to an exciting summer!
At a past job, I occasionally went to grab a few beers after work in downtown Sunnyvale. The drinking hole of choice at the time was dark, dank, and wouldn’t have imagined that pepperoni needed a companion, let alone such a non-traditional one, but the spicy-sweet combo actually worked quite well. The diablo burger brought the heat, with a bun that managed to be both airy and crispy, while also holding up to the many toppings. My vegetarian-inclined coworker enjoyed the veggie burger, with its nutty taste and two forms of onions, caramelized and pickled. The cod sandwich also hit the spot, with a thick cut of fish that was perfectly flaky, and a good slaw kicked up by the addition of jalapeños.

If you’re waiting on a train in Sunnyvale, step into the light. Off the Rails offers a good array of food and plenty to imbibe. So if you’re looking for a way to blow off some steam after a long day of work, don’t sit in the dark and complain; sit in the light and celebrate the end of the day and the potential of the next. Then grab a handful of garlic curry fries, because they’re on point.

With the 25th Avenue Grade Separation Project expected to be complete in 2021, the major aspects of the project are beginning to take shape. The project was designed to provide grade separations in San Mateo, allowing 25th, 28th and 31st Avenues to continue under Caltrain’s tracks to prevent traffic jams and make both the tracks and roads safer. If you’ve been around 25th Avenue lately, you would have noticed the rail bridge that’s been installed, where future trains will be running. This, combined with a lowered roadway, will be of great help to drivers looking for a shortcut from El Camino Real to Highway 92.

There’s been a great deal of progress around the Hillsdale Station as well in anticipation of the closure of the station in December to allow for the construction of the brand new station. The Hillsdale Station has gone without an overhaul since SamTrans acquired it back in 1991, so a new and improved station for the newly elevated track seems in order. The new station will be located at 28th Avenue, and Hillsdale riders can use SamTrans to connect to Belmont Station in order to minimize the inconvenience during the six months of construction.

Of course, any construction in a busy area such as San Mateo will cause some disruptions, and some road closures will be necessary during this process. You can learn more about what’s going on with this project by going to www.caltrain.com/25thGS and signing up for weekly notices.

● Always watch for second train. When crossing multiple tracks, be careful of other trains that you may not see. The first train can block your view and give you the impression that the tracks are clear when they’re not. Wait for the first train to completely clear your view of the tracks in both directions before crossing.

● Always walk your bike on the platform.

Caltrain Safety Tips