

**Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (JPB) Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)**  
**San Mateo County Transit District Administrative Building**  
**1250 San Carlos Avenue, San Carlos CA 94070**

**MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 21, 2011**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** P. Bendix, K. Gardiner, J. Hronowski, B. Jenkins (Chair),  
S. Klemmer, C. Tucker, B. Wilfley

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** G. Graham, S. Richardson

**STAFF PRESENT:** T. Bartholomew, M. Bouchard, R. Lake, S. Murphy

Chair Bruce Jenkins called the meeting to order at 5:44 p.m. John Hronowski led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Introduction of New Members**

- Kevin Gardiner said he is a City Planning Consultant in Mountain View. His interest in Caltrain is both as a daily rider and with its role in the region serving the population and workforce.
- Scott Klemmer is a computer science teacher at Stanford University and has taken Caltrain to this job for four years. The introduction of the Baby Bullet made it possible for him to live in San Francisco and work at Stanford. He brings his bike on the train and hopes to help as a liaison to the bike community and with other Caltrain issues.

**Approval of Minutes**

A motion (Hronowski/Tucker) to approve the minutes of July 20, 2011 was passed.

**Public Comment**

Jeff Carter, Burlingame, said he was disappointed Amtrak's contract with Caltrain was not renewed. He said JPB Director Jerry Deal is running for reelection for the Burlingame city council and a flyer being distributed notes Director Deal is anti-high-speed rail because it would decimate the downtown and cost \$120 billion.

**Chairperson's Report – Bruce Jenkins**

No report

**Staff Report**

Director, Rail Transportation Michelle Bouchard reported:

1. Caltrain Rail Operating and Maintenance contract with Transit America Services Inc. (TASI):
  - A very rigorous and transparent procurement process was involved in finding a provider in the market place that had a very unique understanding of Caltrain's needs going into the future. The Request for Proposals (RFP) went out on May 5, 2010. Caltrain has been with Amtrak for 18 years and the last time the contract was competitively bid was 2001.

It was important to go back out into the market place at this point because of many changes including the Baby Bullet and a future with California High Speed Rail (CHSRA). It is a Federal Transit Administration Best Practice to bid contracts to ensure the public gets the best bang for the buck.

- The RFP included the complete operation and maintenance of all stations, right of ways, signals, and rolling stock as well as support services for Caltrain's capital program. The contract totals about \$60-70 million in scope of work per year.
- The evaluation committee included more than 30 individuals represented by technical experts, individuals from JPB member partners, and middle management from the JPB.
- TASI is a part of Herzog Construction Corporation, which has done work on the Peninsula including improvements that led to the Baby Bullet innovation and has experience in railroad construction and operations. They currently operate in San Diego, Dallas, Austin and New Mexico.
- Two hallmarks of TASI are a culture of safety and excellent customer service, which is paramount to Caltrain service.
- The JPB as a signatory to Federal Labor Protections has 13c labor protections that require an incoming contractor to provide employment opportunities for every single labor represented employee at Caltrain. There must also be wage and benefit rates comparable to what Amtrak provided.
- There were no protests received from the three competing bidders.
- Staff is involved in an intensive transition and planning process and Amtrak has pledged full cooperation.

2. Performance statistics:

- Staff and Amtrak crews are working hard with on-time performance to mitigate, to the degree possible, the one, two and three-minute delays that are being caused by additional passengers from every rider group.
- August 2011 total monthly ridership was a record in excess of 1.2 million. This translates into 45,000 average weekday riders, a 10.4 percent increase over August 2010. Year-to-date fiscal year ridership is 44,000, an increase of 9.4 percent from 2010.
- Caltrain has five trains per peak hour and is trying to balance the competing interests of providing service to every single station along the right of way as well as providing robust service at stations where ridership is robust and providing Baby Bullet service, local service and in between service. The five train peak hour schedule has pretty much maxed out capacity of the signal system and staff is looking at creative ways to mitigate that.
- For the first time in its history, Caltrain has eclipsed the \$5 million fare revenue number per month with revenue of \$5.3 million in August, an increase of 29.6 percent over August 2010.
- Baseball ridership increased from last year, which was a World Series year.
- Baby Bullets are serving double duty filling slots where Caltrain would have extra trains for Giants service and attracting a different type of market who demands faster travel time on weekends. All markets are being monitored to see where Caltrain can exploit them to try and grow the ridership in places it can grow.

Cat Tucker asked if current Amtrak pensions would continue with TASI. Ms. Bouchard said they would receive railroad retirement and Federal Employers Liability Act insurance.

Paul Bendix asked what would account for the 10 percent jump in average weekday ridership. Ms. Bouchard said it's supported by employment numbers in Silicon Valley and on the Peninsula and speaks to tangible recovery of the local economy.

Brian Wilfley said Caltrain's success is a result of being boring – it just runs and it's reliable. He asked if it would be possible to run six cars on Baby Bullet trains. Ms. Bouchard said there is the question of platform length with a six-car train; is there room as you are reconfiguring the fleet at the Centralized Equipment Maintenance and Operations Facility to do proper maintenance; the train will slow down if you add more weight, and adding cars would affect issues with protection sets available at either end of the line.

Mr. Wilfley said it is remarkable the transition from Amtrak to TASI has not been done under any cloud and it seems to be a very sensible and beneficial process to all parties.

Chair Jenkins asked if there could be an additional Baby Bullet on the weekends in view of its success. Ms. Bouchard said this would have to be considered in the context of the budget and Caltrain does all its construction work on the weekends.

### **Presentation: Caltrain Capacity Analysis Update**

Government Affairs Manager, Seamus Murphy presented the following on preliminary findings of the capacity analysis, which is ongoing.

- Caltrain is working closely with the CHSRA but conducting this analysis independently to determine whether a blended system will work operationally for the corridor.
- Findings were announced a month ago and staff has done outreach at various public venues with stakeholder groups.
- The Peninsula Rail Program (PRP) was the joint organization between Caltrain and CHSRA responsible for implementing the HSR project on the Caltrain corridor from planning, design and engineering from a funding and construction standpoint. Issues about project costs and community impacts needed to be addressed. The Caltrain Modernization Program (Program) replaces the PRP and is an effort to look independently at some unique approaches and proposals that might address some of these issues. Program focus areas are electrification, advanced signal upgrade and coordinated planning with CHSRA and stakeholders.
- The CHSRA is working on the EIR in the Central Valley for the initial construction segment. They have funding deadlines associated with the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.
- Design and engineering for the Caltrain corridor segment was put on hold in May 2011 because the JPB wanted to make sure alternatives being considered and work being done were consistent with a call from Peninsula lawmakers for the consideration of a blended system. Caltrain and CHSRA would be sharing tracks for the most part between San Francisco and San Jose. The project would go from San Jose to the Transbay Terminal utilizing existing right of way with the goal to minimize impacts on the local communities and lower project costs. Another point the lawmakers made was that the system should not be elevated in communities opposed to elevated structures and there should not be a subsequent phase as part of the EIR.

- The analysis asked if the blended system was operationally feasible looking at infrastructure, cost, ridership, Proposition (Prop) 1A requirements and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).
- LTK Engineering Services built a simulation model and the first set of model runs is completed. A draft analysis will be ready in October.
- Assumptions within the model assume an electrified Caltrain corridor, an advanced signal system, Electric Multiple Unit (EMU) trains for Caltrain and high-speed trains for HSR.
- Track assumptions were tracks from Diridon to 4<sup>th</sup> and King, with completion of the San Bruno grade separation and South Terminal Project with HSR stations at 4<sup>th</sup> and King, Millbrae Intermodal and Diridon stations.
- The model includes various scenarios for a four-track section of passing tracks.
- Preliminary findings indicate the blended system concept has merit with a potential up to 10 trains per hour per direction: six trains per hour for Caltrain, and HSR capacity would result from primarily using the existing track configuration that would be two trains an hour in each direction or double that capacity with the potential for passing tracks in the mid-line area of the corridor.
- Service characteristics include travel speeds of 70 miles per hour (mph) and testing up to 110 mph for Caltrain and 79-110 mph for HSR. There is a big difference between the minimum and maximum peak hour headways for Caltrain because there would have to be a service window for HSR to operate. Caltrain headways would vary between 5-20 minutes at 13-14 stations and HSR headways would depend on whether there are one, two three or four trains per hour with three station stops.
- Conceptual development includes additional simulations, review of passing track location, grade crossing upgrades/separations/closures, system upgrades and cost estimates.
- If it is determined there is a viable way to proceed legally within CEQA requirements, the scenario would be included in the HSR Business Plan and become an alternative within their EIR and HSR would be able to restart the design and engineering process for the Caltrain section.

Ms. Tucker said she was surprised to hear there would be no electrification of the rails from San Jose to Gilroy. Mr. Murphy said the electrification document is just for Caltrain.

Ms. Tucker asked if the EIR from San Jose to Merced is a different program. Mr. Murphy said it's a different EIR for HSR and Caltrain is not part of that document.

Mr. Wilfley said he was struck by the fact that Caltrain could operate as many as eight trains per hour without much modification to the railroad except for signaling and electrification. He asked how Caltrain could add two additional HSR trains in and how Caltrain could go from five to six per hour. Mr. Murphy said the increased capacity is attributed to the benefit of electrification and the advanced signaling system. The signaling system allows Caltrain to operate trains more closely. The combination of that with the operation of EMUs, which can start and stop and have performance enhancements associated with those, is the reason for the increased capacity.

Mr. Bendix asked about scheduling. Mr. Murphy said the schedule looked at so far is a skip-stop scenario that has all the stations and every Caltrain train would be stopping at between 13-14 of those stations, but every station would receive service. Future simulations are going to look at

applying a Baby Bullet-type service or more of an express type service to the system and determine what impacts and tradeoffs are associated with the operation of that type of service. Additional simulations will also look at the downtown extension to Transbay Terminal and add that to the analysis to make sure the assumptions made about capacity will apply even with the extension to the Transbay Terminal.

Ms. Bouchard said the question asked was why Caltrain chose this to test initially. The end-to-end run times of each one of these Caltrain trains is very close to a Baby Bullet-type time so it's about 61 minutes. There was some attempt to try and keep the benefit of that benchmark service and still deliver the combined blended design.

Mr. Murphy said the scheduled concept is available on the Caltrain website.

Mr. Hronowski asked if the plan was to have HSR stop only at the Millbrae Intermodal station. Mr. Murphy said it would stop at each end of the line and include service to the Transbay Terminal and the only intermediate station assumed for a stop is at Millbrae for this particular model. The CHSRA is still technically looking at a potential mid-Peninsula station.

Mr. Klemmer asked if a simulation run could be included that has a mid-Peninsula station. Mr. Murphy said staff can ask LTK what would be involved in incorporating that into the model.

Mr. Klemmer said this seems like a golden opportunity to try and remove as many grade crossings as possible. Mr. Murphy said this is one of the benefits associated with the whole modernization of the corridor. There are tradeoffs associated with grade separations with each community and staff intends to have a very thorough dialogue about those tradeoffs.

Chair Bendix asked if this would include Positive Train Control (PTC). Mr. Murphy said the signaling system would include full PTC as a component, which is a Federally mandated safety improvement that all passenger railroads have to install by 2015.

Mr. Wilfley asked if this study has any visibility at the Federal level. Mr. Murphy said staff has presented this to Caltrain's delegation at the Federal level and will be presenting it to the Federal Railroad Administration staff. They are obviously interested in alternatives that will help control costs and minimize community opposition because those are two major issues they have run into everywhere they are planning to construct HSR.

#### Public Comment

Jeff Carter, Burlingame, asked if staff could look at more than six Caltrain trains per hour regardless of CHSRA because there may be a future need to have more than six, especially with record ridership. He said Caltrain needs to move with as many grade separations as possible and be done in a way to minimize impacts on a community. He said 14 stops would be comparable to the current Baby Bullet running time and there is also a psychological element running fewer stops even though the time would be the same.

Mr. Wilfley asked if you essentially get six-car capacity running EMUs. Ms. Bouchard said EMUs have significantly less capacity versus a single double decker Gallery car, which is why Caltrain is looking at double decker EMUs. She thinks a six-car train would be equivalent and somewhat surpassing existing capacity.

#### Public Comment

Andy Chow, Redwood City, said it is a good idea to eventually grade-separate but the issue CHSRA had problems with is the requirement to grade-separate everything. Many cities are not ready for grade separations; give them five years and they will come up with a solution similar to the City of San Bruno. He said it is a good thing Caltrain has increased ridership despite fare increases. The challenge is how to get a dedicated funding source for Caltrain's future.

#### **Committee Comments**

Ms. Tucker asked for an update of long-term Caltrain funding plans with the Silicon Valley Leadership Group. Ms. Bouchard said this would be addressed at the next meeting.

Mr. Bendix said political opposition has been a major factor and it would be helpful to get a sense of what it might be from other committee members. He said it is difficult to get local support in the Menlo Park/Atherton areas even for a blended system.

#### **Date, Time, and Location of Next Meeting:**

Wednesday, October 19, 2011, 5:40 p.m., San Mateo County Transit District Administrative Building, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Bacciocco Auditorium, 1250 San Carlos Avenue, San Carlos, CA.

The meeting was adjourned 6:43 p.m.