

From: VTA Board Secretary
Sent: Monday, July 8, 2019 3:35 PM
To: VTA Board Secretary <Board.Secretary@vta.org>
Subject: From VTA: July 5 and July 8, 2019 Media Clips

VTA Daily News Coverage for Fri., July 5 through Mon., July 8

1. [Grand jury report blasts VTA for inefficiencies, poor oversight \(Mountain View Voice\)](#)
2. [Opinion: Why BART ridership has declined despite booming economy \(Mercury News\)](#)
3. [High Speed Rail Authority picks SF to SJ, Silicon Valley to Central Valley route \(ABC 7 News\)](#)
4. [Radical thinking needed to solve South Bay traffic woes \(Mercury News\)](#)

[Grand jury report blasts VTA for inefficiencies, poor oversight \(Mountain View Voice\)](#)

Report: 'A case can be made for dismantling or phasing out the light rail system altogether'

The taxpayer-funded agency in charge of offering transit solutions to Santa Clara County's traffic jams is currently embroiled in a mess of its own.

The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), the multi-billion dollar agency that plans and operates the county's road and transit network, has been called out as one of the most inefficient organizations of its kind.

A new county Civil Grand Jury [report](#) released last month found that VTA is spending more and accomplishing less than nearly every other comparable transit agency in the United States.

Just over the last decade, the cost of running VTA's buses and light rail system has nearly doubled, mainly due to labor costs. Meanwhile, fewer riders appear to be using VTA transit services than they have in the last 30 years. Ridership on bus and light rail has dropped nearly 20% just over the last decade. Taken altogether, this means VTA is losing about \$9.30 per rider, according to the report.

The grand jury report lays much of the responsibility for this dysfunction on the VTA Board of Directors. The 12-member governing board consists entirely of political appointees who must be currently serving as city council members or on the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors. Often, board members face a steep learning curve, and it doesn't help that they often lack any experience in transportation, finance or management of an agency of this size, the report says.

What results is that VTA board members quickly become overwhelmed with their duties, which include reading through board packets hundreds of pages long. It becomes too difficult to

govern the transit agency in addition to the communities they were elected to serve, so VTA board members tend to focus their attention on their own communities instead of VTA. VTA reports generally go unread, and board members tend to make decisions to benefit their own constituents, that are not in the interests of the county as a whole, the report maintains.

After reading the grand jury report, Mountain View Councilman John McAlister described it as "all true, and it's long overdue." For about two years, McAlister has represented Mountain View, Palo Alto, Los Altos and Los Altos Hills on the VTA board. In that time, he says he has been disappointed by the lack of interest and engagement by some of his colleagues. There doesn't seem to be any political will to correct the problems, he said.

"Some board members are there because their mayor planted them, or they're there to pad their resume," he said. "There's no true continuity on the board, and then there's no feeling of responsibility because you have this continual change of characters."

The grand jury report echoes a common complaint from North County city leaders who say that San Jose exerts outsized influence on the VTA board. San Jose is allocated five board seats, while another five are split between the other 14 cities in the county. The county Board of Supervisors receives two seats.

In part, the report blames this dominance by San Jose political interests for the problems with the county's underperforming light rail system. The light rail line extends more than 42 miles, running from Mountain View south through much of San Jose, yet it has failed to link to many obvious destinations such as jobs centers, shopping districts or the San Jose International Airport. Taken on its own, the light rail costs taxpayers about \$11 in subsidies for each passenger who uses it, costing about three times more than bus transit.

"A case can be made for dismantling or phasing out the light rail system altogether," the grand jury report noted. "A large reduction in the taxpayer subsidy of VTA operations could be achieved by focusing future investment in transit solutions other than light rail."

However, the VTA board actually seems to favor doubling down on light rail and expanding the service. The transit agency is currently considering a pair of light rail extensions to bring it to the Eastridge shopping center in San Jose and near the Netflix headquarters in Los Gatos. The 2.4-mile Eastridge extension will cost \$453 million to complete (\$146 million has already been spent). If built, it is expected to generate a net total of 611 new riders.

At a meeting on June 6, the VTA board voted unanimously to approve the final environmental impact report for the Eastridge extension, one of the last steps before the project moves forward. San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo, who sits on the VTA board, acknowledged the project doesn't make sense unless its usage wildly exceeds its projections.

"It's not because of the ridership today, because the ridership today doesn't support this kind of investment," Liccardo said. "But what we see happening in the city in terms of opportunity is an incredibly vibrant corridor. If we can get this right, this transit system will be at the core of that."

According to the grand jury report, the case for expanding light rail is weak and is based entirely on political pressure. The authors of the report say they found "virtually no support" for the Eastridge expansion among VTA staff, and the project seemed to be happening solely to satisfy goals in Measure A on the 2000 ballot.

The best way to fix VTA administration would be to change its governance, the report concluded. Having fewer members, but giving them longer office terms would give the board more expertise and institutional knowledge. The report also recommends directly electing board members to their seats, rather than having them appointed.

The VTA board is starting to investigate this possibility. McAlister is leading a new board enhancement committee tasked with restructuring VTA governance. The committee has only convened one meeting so far, but it eventually will deliver some kind of recommendations back to the full board.

"My gut preferences would be to make VTA an independent board not made up of elected officials," McAlister said. "But I don't want to rush it. It's like the Mueller report. I want to take the time to get it right."

The VTA board has not yet commented on the findings in the civil grand jury report, but it is required by law to issue a formal response within 90 days. In a blog entry, VTA board chairwoman Teresa O'Neill, a councilwoman from Santa Clara, could only say that the report's recommendations would be investigated.

"We intend to carefully review the report provided by the Civil Grand Jury," she wrote. "The report will help to inform the work we are currently performing."

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[Opinion: Why BART ridership has declined despite booming economy \(Mercury News\)](#)

Transit system director says agency fails to invest enough in safe and clean trains and stations

A recent report by the Alameda County Civil Grand Jury shed a harsh light on BART and its failure to address the issues that continue to drive down ridership.

Crime, dirty train cars and stations, and an inability to rein in fare evaders threaten to marginalize the agency even further as commuters chose other alternatives to get to work, the Grand Jury reported.

These problems have been known at BART for some time, and are in fact at the heart of my decision to cast the lone vote against the \$2 billion agency budget for next year.

The Bay Area is blessed with a regional economy entering its 11th year of expansion. Ridership on BART should be increasing, yet the average number of daily riders has declined precipitously

over the past few years, and is expected to continue to decline below the benchmark 2013 levels.

As the Grand Jury pointed out, the reason is clear: BART has not sufficiently invested in ensuring safe and clean trains and stations. When the level of service declines, so does ridership.

Despite continuing this pattern of not adequately addressing quality-of-life issues, the new budget increases fares 5.4 percent starting in January. In total, the majority of the Board of Directors agreed to increase fares 18 percent over the next seven years.

I simply could not vote for a budget and raise fares without a multiyear plan to address the ongoing drop in ridership.

During the budget discussions, I proposed allocating resources to steam clean regional stations that have been neglected in favor of stations in San Francisco. But my efforts failed to get majority support. I was told BART couldn't afford it. Meanwhile, the agency continues to lose millions of dollars each year to fare evaders.

The Grand Jury claim that as many as 15 percent of commuters skip out on fares has been strongly denied by BART administrators, who peg the revenue loss at about 5 percent each year. But even if you accept the lower estimate, that translates into \$25 million a year in losses.

Investing in new fare gates to make it difficult if not impossible to skip the fare seems like a common sense thing to do.

A \$100 million investment in new gates — one of the proposals currently on the table — would be easily recovered in a few years given the scope of the current losses. But the majority of directors continue to drag their feet on committing the funds needed to solve the problem once and for all. Not only that, but the new stations in Warm Springs and Santa Clara County incorporate the same ineffective fare gate technology — testament to the agency's systemic failure to address its most pressing problem.

One item in the budget that was easy to support was the addition of 19 BART police officer positions, which will increase safety and improve the rider experience. BART is also piloting other innovative programs to crack down on cheaters, including stationing uniformed agency personnel at fare gates during peak hours.

While these efforts are reason for hope, it's clear not enough is being done to address declining ridership. If there is a recession, ridership will surely slip even further unless these core issues are addressed now.

The recent hiring of an inspector general to oversee BART spending and increase efficiencies is reason for optimism. BART needs a third-party expert to audit the system and point out where resources could be better allocated.

Most importantly, BART needs to work strategically and develop a multiyear schedule of improvements to reverse years of declining service and ridership.

BART Director Liz Ames represents District 6, stretching from South Hayward to Fremont.

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High Speed Rail Authority picks SF to SJ, Silicon Valley to Central Valley route **(ABC7 News)**

After almost 10 years of studying costs, community concerns and environmental impacts, the two Northern California routes of the state's high-speed rail have been picked.

Boris Lipkin is the Northern California Regional Director of the California High Speed Rail Authority.

He says there were two options for the San Francisco to San Jose line. The option they chose uses the existing Caltrain corridor, which is already being electrified.

"The real differentiating factors were the locations of a light maintenance facility for high-speed rail. Either on the east or west side of the tracks in Brisbane. As well as, whether a passing track would be a need or not in the middle of San Mateo and Redwood City," says Lipkin.

Their option is for the facility on the east side of tracks, and no passing lane.

Going from San Jose to Merced is more complicated because it's a large piece of the system with greater environmental impacts, says Lipkin.

Of the four viable options, once again, their decision incorporates using existing Caltrain, and this time, Union Pacific rail lines.

Impact on surrounding cities was also a concern, such as, "buying new land for a rail corridor, as well as noise and other things we heard from communities around issues that they care about," explains Lipkin.

Transportation analyst Dr. Karen Philbrick with the Mineta Transportation Institute, says she supports the two proposed routes. She says using existing tracks means reduced capital costs, but there could be obstacles.

"The challenges are, you have to have very close collaboration in terms of operation and maintenance, and that can sometimes prove difficult," says Dr. Philbrick.

Whether the full high-speed line is built is based on getting the billions in funding, explains

Lipkin. "From San Francisco, through the Pacheco Pass, to get to the Central Valley (will cost) about \$15 billion dollars."

But he adds, the work continues nonetheless.

The California High Speed Rail Authority will now hold a series of community meetings in July followed by several open houses in August to solicit public input.

The Board of Directors will vote in September. If approved, they move onto the environmental review.

If fully built, the high-speed system is supposed to link San Francisco to Los Angeles.

The 51-mile San Francisco to San Jose line will go from San Francisco's Transbay Transit Center to the Diridon Station in San Jose. The estimated 84-mile San Jose to Merced portion will link Silicon Valley to the Central Valley, via Gilroy.

"(Silicon Valley is) the seat of economic power and we need to connect that with other communities," says Dr. Philbrick.

High-Speed Rail August Meetings:

August 6: Adrian Wilcox High School, 3250 Monroe Street, Santa Clara

August 8: IFDES Lodge-Portuguese Hall, 250 Old Gilroy Street, Gilroy

August 12: Bay Area Metro Center, Yerba Buena Room, 375 Beale Street, San Francisco

August 15: City Hall, Council Chambers, 200 E Santa Clara Street, San Jose

August 19: Sequoia High School, 1201 Brewster Ave., Redwood City

August 21: Los Banos Community Center, 645 7th Street, Los Banos

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[Radical thinking needed to solve South Bay traffic woes](#) (Mercury News)

South Bay transportation leaders received a whipping last month.

A scathing grand jury report virtually demanded that agencies forget how they've been grappling with monstrous traffic jams and one of the worst performing transit systems for

nearly three decades and instead think of revolutionary solutions to the South Bay's mounting traffic woes.

This revolutionary enough? A tunnel to carry riders in driverless or electric cars the 3 miles from the Diridon train station to Mineta San Jose International Airport. Or an elevated roadway along Stevens Creek Boulevard to job-rich high-tech companies like Apple and Google.

There are far more questions than answers. But this month, San Jose, the Valley Transportation Authority and cities of Cupertino and Santa Clara submitted what is called an RFI or Request For Information to determine what is possible.

"We want to hear what the state-of-the-industry technologies and business models are, so we can determine if this is something we should pursue through a competitive bid process," said San Jose Department of Transportation spokesman Colin Heyne. "It could be buses on a raised viaduct, or a subway, or something we aren't imagining yet. What we do know is that it must be fast, convenient, and safe."

The RFI asks firms to discuss potential solutions that could provide grade-separated mass transit infrastructure and operations at significantly lower cost than traditional transit projects.

"Amid unprecedented growth at San Jose International Airport, and the development of a new vision for Diridon Station — set to become the largest multi-modal transit hub west of the Mississippi — San Jose sits on the brink of a new age of public transit, with a unique opportunity to explore innovative transit connections to our city's core," said San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo. "By linking the airport to the station and beyond, visitors from across the globe will be able to explore Silicon Valley's capital without entering a car."

Firms are being asked to talk about two other segments: a trio of urban villages including the Santana Row and Valley Fair shopping district; and the San Carlos-Stevens Creek Boulevard corridor that includes Main Street Cupertino, the currently-under-development Vallco site, and De Anza College.

The spark began a few years ago when traffic on Highway 85 exploded as thousands of motorists saw their traveling times double trying to get to work and back home, many leaving as early as 5:30 a.m. while others cut through city streets like Saratoga Avenue, De Anza Boulevard and Wolfe Road.

"Traffic on Saratoga Avenue has been miserable for so long," said Bill Denny of San Jose. "Red lights are ignored. Lane cutters abound."

West Valley leaders wanted the VTA to extend light rail from Highway 87 to their cities. But the VTA quashed that dream, saying ridership would be very low and costs to build that extension could run 10 times more than the \$350 million earmarked for Highway 85.

Instead, express lanes will likely be installed the entire 25 miles from 101 in South San Jose to 101 in Mountain View. Sometimes two in each direction. And plans to widen and build new

interchanges on Interstate 280 from Magdalena Avenue to Winchester Boulevard are on the wish list.

In coming years, Google is expected to build a massive campus near Diridon, bringing thousands more people, jobs and homes to downtown San Jose. And the station itself is expected to undergo an overhaul of its own, with BART eventually set to extend to downtown by 2026 and Caltrain improvements on deck.

“A high-capacity, high-speed, grade-separated transit system along the Stevens Creek Boulevard corridor would go a long way toward creating quicker travel times while building stronger connections throughout the valley,” Cupertino Councilman Darcy Paul said.

“Significantly faster transit is also a key factor, if not the most important factor, for a real and lasting fix to our housing crisis.”

This isn't the first time a quick connection from the airport to transit has been discussed. In 2000, voters approved Measure A, a 30-year half-cent sales tax aimed at transit capital improvements. Included in that measure was an airport people mover that would connect airport passengers to Caltrain and light rail.

The agencies are promoting the RFI, hoping to garner responses from national and international firms. Responses are due by Sept. 30. Interested firms can find the RFI at <http://bit.ly/sjc-diridon-stevens>.

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From: Baltao, Elaine <Elaine.Baltao@vta.org>

Sent: Tuesday, July 9, 2019 12:09 PM

To: VTA Board of Directors <VTABoardofDirectors@vta.org>; VTA Advisory Committee Members <VTAAdvisoryCommitteeMembers@vta.org>

Cc: General Manager <nuria.fernandez@vta.org>; Tran, Evelyn <Evelynn.Tran@vta.org>

Subject: Message from VTA GM/CEO Fernandez re: appointment of VTA's COO Inez Evans as IndyGo's new President/CEO

Dear VTA Board and Advisory Committee Members,

I am happy to share some more great news. The Indianapolis Public Transportation Corporation (IndyGo) Board of Directors have selected our Chief Operating Officer, Inez Evans, to be their agency's new President & CEO, effective [August 19, 2019](#).

In 2014, I hired Inez from the Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority (SORTA) to serve as my Chief of Staff. In that role she managed several departments and successfully implemented agency-wide initiatives and priorities. Her hard drive, work ethic and proven performance earned her a promotion to Chief Operating Officer responsible for light rail and bus operations and maintenance, transit planning, facility maintenance, regional transportation and Paratransit services. One of her most notable accomplishments was managing the emergency transfer of VTA's Paratransit services to a new contractor and developing the Eastridge Paratransit Dispatching Center. In addition, under her leadership the Joint Workforce Initiative (JWI), a collaboration of VTA Management and the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU), won multiple awards and earned national recognition for its apprenticeship training programs.

This appointment speaks highly of the experience she gained at VTA, the network she built throughout the industry and the support provided by the Board of Directors. Please join me in congratulating Inez on this great achievement. We will be recognizing her contributions to VTA and expressing our best wishes for her success at the [August 1, 2019](#) Board Meeting.

Sincerely,

Nuria I. Fernandez

General Manager/CEO

Santa Clara Valley Transportation



From: VTA Board Secretary <Board.Secretary@vta.org>
Sent: Wednesday, July 10, 2019 2:38 PM
To: VTA Board of Directors <VTABoardofDirectors@vta.org>
Subject: From VTA: July 10, 2019 Media Clips



VTA Daily News Coverage for Wednesday, July 10, 2019

1. [Light Rail vs. Bicyclist \(KTVU, Ch. 2\)](#)
2. [Santa Clara approves big mixed-use complex near proposed BART station \(Mercury News\)](#)

[Light Rail vs. Bicyclist \(KTVU, Ch. 2\)](#)

[\(Click on link above\)](#)

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[Santa Clara approves big mixed-use complex near proposed BART station \(Mercury News\)](#)

SANTA CLARA — With plans for a new BART extension coming to Santa Clara in coming years, city leaders are hoping a new mixed-use housing, retail and hotel complex near the site of the proposed station could transform the area into a high-density, pedestrian-friendly transit village.

The city council Tuesday unanimously approved the Gateway Crossings project, a proposal by Silicon Valley developer Hunter Storm for 1,565 residential units — 157 of them below market rate— 45,000 square feet of retail, a 225-room hotel and 2.6 acres of park space.

City leaders hope approval of the new development, next to the Santa Clara Caltrain station where the BART station is planned and near the San Jose International Airport, will spur other transit-friendly projects in the area. The project site is also directly adjacent to an existing retail and office mega-campus in San Jose, which is dubbed the Coleman Highline project and is being built by the same developer.

After months of wrangling between residents and the developer over finer points of the Gateway Crossings plan, the City Council Wednesday unanimously approved a development agreement, general plan amendment and rezoning request for the project.

“The project approved by the Planning Commission I wasn’t in favor of...[but] the project before us today is dramatically different,” Mayor Lisa Gillmor. “I think it’s a really good project, and it’s going to take that underutilized land and turn it into something very viable.”

The plan approved Tuesday reflects several changes from the one recommended by the Planning Commission in November. After receiving comments from the council at a meeting in May, the developer nearly doubled the amount of retail from 25,000 to 45,000 square feet, reduced the number of housing units from 1,600 to 1,565 and moved the location of a tower to avoid casting shade over park space.

The deal also includes a 35-year lease for the Police Activities League, a Santa Clara nonprofit that hosts sports programs for youths. The group has struggled for years to find a permanent home.

Ron Golem, director of real estate and transit-oriented development for Valley Transportation Authority, said approval of Gateway Crossings would help attract federal funding for transit projects by sending a signal that local agencies are serious about development.

“It’s one of the few opportunities we have to approve (transit-oriented development) prior to an application for funding,” Golem said. “It will help attract other projects.”

Some residents said they would like to see even more retail space at the site, but others raised concerns that additional retail would hurt efforts to revitalize downtown shops and restaurants.

“Any more retail is going to be a very big risk to the downtown,” said Mary Grizzle, a resident of the Old Quad neighborhood.

Several residents have also called for the project to include more housing.

“We’ve had incredible success as a region in producing jobs and the products of those jobs, but we’ve fallen short of providing enough housing,” said resident Robert Fitch. “This location is perfect for additional density.”

Council members lauded the developer for making several changes to the project.

“No project is perfect, and perfect is the enemy of the good,” Councilman Raj Chahal said. “I know we were thinking about something more high density on the housing, but whatever we have is good enough.”

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Holly Perez

Public Information Officer

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From: VTA Board Secretary <Board.Secretary@vta.org>
Sent: Wednesday, July 10, 2019 4:51 PM
To: VTA Board of Directors <VTABoardofDirectors@vta.org>
Subject: VTA Information: Ridership Memo for May 2019

VTA Board of Directors:

Attached is a memorandum from Chief Operating Officer Inez Evans regarding VTA ridership for May 2019.

Thank you.

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board.secretary@vta.org



TO: VTA Board of Directors

THROUGH: Nuria I. Fernandez
General Manager/CEO

FROM: Inez Evans
Chief Operating Officer

DATE: Friday, July 5, 2019

SUBJECT: VTA Ridership for May 2019

May 2019 total monthly system ridership for bus and light rail was 3,062,950, a decrease of 4.6 percent over May 2018.

Bus ridership was down 4.6 percent. Light Rail ridership was also down 4.6 percent. May 2019 total monthly ridership recorded a 3.4 percent increase compared to April 2019. Ridership change from April to May typically averages +4.8 percent.

There was one soccer game at the Levi's stadium - the US Women's National team versus South Africa - that recorded 2,460 riders who took VTA to the event. In May 2018, there were two days of Taylor Swift Reputation Stadium Tour shows at the Stadium, recording an average of 9,046 riders per event.

Ridership	May-2019	May-2018	Percent Change	Apr- 2019	Percent Change
Bus	2,351,031	2,465,022	-4.6%	2,267,906	3.7%
Light Rail	711,919	746,547	-4.6%	695,391	2.4%
System	3,062,950	3,211,569	-4.6%	2,963,297	3.4%

Forty-five of the 69 bus routes, or 65 percent, did not meet the weekday standards as defined in the Service Design Guidelines. However, 11 of the 18 core routes, or 61 percent, met the weekday standards as defined in the Service Design Guidelines.

Seven key core routes recorded an overall average weekday ridership improvement of 2.9 percent over May 2018 as shown in the table below:

Route	May-2019	May-2018	Difference	Percent Change
522	7,360	7,149	211	3.0%
71	1,994	1,884	110	5.8%
26	3,029	2,929	100	3.4%
60	1,817	1,732	85	4.9%
66	5,667	5,611	56	1.0%
62	1,506	1,455	51	3.5%
77	2,125	2,081	44	2.1%
Totals	23,498	22,841	657	2.9%

The core routes and light rail stations that had the most average weekday ridership declines are shown in the tables below:

Route	May-2019	May-2018	Difference	Percent Change
22	8,713	10,148	(1,435)	-14.1%
68	4,537	4,807	(270)	-5.6%
72	2,533	2,754	(221)	-8.0%
70	4,404	4,608	(204)	-4.4%
323	1,659	1,797	(138)	-7.7%
Totals	21,846	24,114	(2,268)	-9.4%

Station	May-2019	May-2018	Difference	Percent Change
Ohlone-Chynoweth Station	1,137	1,322	(185)	-14.0%
San Antonio Station	1,690	1,840	(150)	-8.2%
Tasman Station	1,619	1,745	(126)	-7.2%
Santa Teresa Station	899	999	(100)	-10.0%
Convention Center Station	1,036	1,121	(85)	-7.6%
Totals	6,381	7,027	(646)	-9.2%

The fiscal year-to-date total system ridership for bus and light rail recorded a 2.9% decrease.

Ridership	(Current) Jul' 18-May'19	(Prior) Jul' 17-May'18	Percent Change
Bus	24,924,981	25,860,626	-3.6%
Light Rail	7,766,171	7,807,206	-0.5%
System	32,691,152	33,667,832	-2.9%

From: VTA Board Secretary <Board.Secretary@vta.org>
Sent: Thursday, July 11, 2019 1:04 PM
To: VTA Board of Directors <VTABoardofDirectors@vta.org>
Subject: From VTA: July 11, 2019 Media Clips



VTA Daily News Coverage for Thursday, July 11, 2019

1. [VTA may scrap plans for light rail on Highway 85 \(Mountain View Voice\)](#)
2. [SF Muni board taps Tom Maguire as interim chief during search for leader \(SF Chronicle\)](#)
3. [Borenstein: On cusp of San Jose service, will BART let new auditor it didn't want do her job? \(Mercury News\)](#)

[VTA may scrap plans for light rail on Highway 85 \(Mountain View Voice\)](#)

Elected leaders throughout Santa Clara County rejected last week the idea of constructing a light rail line along Highway 85, calling it an expensive endeavor that would fail to alleviate traffic woes on the congested corridor.

The unanimous vote by city council members that make up Valley Transportation Authority's (VTA) Highway 85 advisory board on July 2 marks the end of a slow-but-sure acknowledgment that light rail is too expensive, too inflexible and too inconvenient to be an attractive alternative for commuters. VTA staff also concluded that the low-density residential suburbs adjacent to long stretches of Highway 85 are not "transit supportive" and cap the effectiveness of any future public transit option.

"I think we would make a good decision by cutting it as one of the options even though, coming in, I was an advocate to do (light rail)," said Rod Sinks, a Cupertino city councilman and advisory board member. "I've been persuaded by compelling evidence that we need a different solution that is more cost-effective for this corridor."

For the last four years, members of the advisory board have been [studying ways](#) to fix the hourslong traffic snarls that bog down Highway 85 during morning and afternoon commutes. The focus has been on the wide median of the highway, which could be converted into a transit lane or "express" lanes for high-occupancy vehicles and drivers willing to pay a toll.

The committee, made up of council members from throughout Santa Clara County, decides the scope of what transit options to study, which will come to the full VTA Board of Directors for approval.

While light rail had the support of advisory board members from the outset, the idea fizzled out as VTA staff and outside consultants pointed to a long list of practical and financial challenges that could plague a future rail system. Chief among them, building light rail could cost around \$3.8 billion to construct, and only \$350 million in funding has been earmarked for improvements on Highway 85.

A light rail system would also prevent any other uses of the median, such as private shuttles, and would have to be a straight shot up the highway without extending outside the corridor and onto city streets to reach more potential riders. An analysis found only 2% of Highway 85 commuters live and work within a short walk of the highway.

The vote to reject light rail came shortly after the release of a scathing Santa Clara County Civil Grand Jury [report](#) that slammed VTA for providing some of the most inefficient transit services in the country. Light rail in particular was criticized for high operating costs and low ridership that continues to decline, leading taxpayers to subsidize more than 92% of the cost to run the service. Members of the grand jury reported finding "virtually no support" among VTA staff for a current proposal to extend light rail to the Eastridge shopping center in San Jose.

Mountain View Councilman John McAlister, who chairs the advisory board, told the *Voicethat* the best way to cut down on the endless backup of traffic on Highway 85 is to give solo drivers a better alternative. He pointed to a recent study that found extending light rail into North Bayshore would cost between \$400 million and \$500 million per mile in construction costs, which is a high price to pay for a system used by fewer than 1% of Santa Clara County residents.

"Light rail is not efficient, it's very slow, ridership is low, and for people to transition from their car into public transportation -- that needs to be something that is fast, efficient and consistent," McAlister said. "If you are sitting on 85, the most that light rail goes is 40 mph, and it would require frequent stops."

McAlister said he remains a big advocate for flexibility. Whatever type of transit lane makes it into the median, he said, VTA needs to have a future-proof plan that can adapt to new technologies. More locally, McAlister was a proponent to study an automated transit system that could shuttle employees from Mountain View's downtown transit center to the city's jobs-heavy North Bayshore area.

Until then, he said, speedy bus services and private shuttles ought to take top priority for a transit lane in Highway 85's median.

"When I asked Google and Apple what they wanted, they said something with minimal transfers that operates at desirable times," McAlister said. "People don't want to have five or 10 stops."

Advisory board member Johnny Khamis, a San Jose council member, said the only viable option for the median is to construct express lanes, which act both as a toll lane for solo drivers and a standard carpool lane. He said committing a lane just for VTA buses would slow down traffic for the sake of infrequent public transit service, and encouraged anyone who felt otherwise to see

the "horrible slowdown" caused by bus rapid transit (BRT) along Alum Rock Avenue and Santa Clara Street in San Jose.

"I don't like the idea of BRT because we know that it doesn't work, for sure," Khamis said. "Just come to San Jose and go down Alum Rock."

Private industry is ahead of the curve in solving traffic problems compared with VTA, Khamis said, and the best option may simply be to open up another lane and "let the chips fall where they may." Public transit services can always be added later, he said.

"I would like to see the transit lane be able to be used by public buses, private buses and people who will pay to get out of your way, because it's working everywhere else," he said.

Saratoga council member Howard Miller said any use of the highway median needs to compete with the capacity of a general use lane, which is close to 33,000 daily trips through Saratoga. He pointed to the Eastridge extension as a clear example of what not to do -- killing a lane that can support 20,000 daily vehicles to make room for a light rail service that may only end up carrying 611 new riders.

"We can't put a solution out that carries a few thousand (riders) and say we did a good job," Miller said. "We can't make stupid mistakes on Highway 85 -- we get one shot at making this right."

One of the major challenges outlined in memos and staff reports is that VTA is serving large, low-density areas with transit services, which inevitably makes it harder to run efficient, high-ridership bus and rail routes. Even Mountain View, a jobs-rich area along the corridor, has about 5,700 jobs per square mile, compared with 23,400 in parts of downtown San Jose, according to one memo. And with parking both cheap and plentiful in Mountain View, many commuters are inclined to drive instead.

West Valley cities adjacent to Highway 85 were designed "with the assumption that most trips would be made by private automobile," with street layouts that are purposefully designed to discourage through-traffic and make walking to transit stations both lengthy and indirect, according to a VTA staff report.

"The urban growth decisions made over the past several decades by city planners have created an urban form adjacent to the SR 85 corridor that is automobile-dependent and not transit supportive. Those land uses are not likely to change much in the future," the report states.

The current list of alternatives to be studied for Highway 85 include building express lanes in the median as well as a transit lane running the entire length of the highway. The transit lane would be for use by "high-capacity" vehicles, which means VTA transit and private shuttles and buses. The more ambitious options that have been considered -- and later rejected -- include an elevated guideway, light rail, monorails, subways, gondolas and Hyperloop.

Highway 85 projects will be paid for, at least in part, by the Measure B sales tax passed by voters in 2016. The measure earmarks funding for transportation improvements throughout Santa Clara County, including \$350 million in funding for upgrades to Highway 85. The language of the measure specifically asked VTA to study bus rapid transit, light rail and "future transportation technologies."

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SF Muni board taps Tom Maguire as interim chief during search for leader (SF Chronicle)

San Francisco has a new interim transportation chief to oversee its multigenerational stock of Muni vehicles, its expanding skein of bike lanes, and its menagerie of two-wheeled devices, among other things.

Board directors for the Municipal Transportation Agency have picked Tom Maguire, a five-year staffer who began his career in New York, to take the reins in August. He'll head the sprawling bureaucracy while the board searches for a permanent leader to replace Ed Reiskin, who will step down when his contract expires next month.

Maguire is currently the director of SFMTA's Sustainable Streets Division, which oversees pedestrian, bicycle and parking infrastructure, as well as street-level improvements to ease the way for buses and trains. Before joining the agency in 2014 he served as assistant commissioner of New York City's Department of Transportation, where he worked closely with former Commissioner Janette Sadik-Khan, who is known for building a vast bicycle and pedestrian network across the five boroughs.

"We have great faith that he'll keep the ship steady," said the board's vice chair, Gwyneth Borden. She and her colleagues are finalizing the job description for a new agency director, and they'll seek public input at next Tuesday's board meeting.

"What we've heard so far is that there's a strong desire for the person to have transportation chops," Borden said.

Reiskin, who took the post in 2011, was a newcomer to the transit world with plenty of experience running other embattled city departments. He had helmed the Department of Public Works and the 311 call center for complaints.

An avid cyclist and Muni rider with a penchant for wearing secondhand suits, Reiskin endeared himself to many but seemed to buckle under criticism from Mayor London Breed. She sent a series of letters to the agency last year, demanding more reliable transit service, a more transparent permitting process for e-scooters, accelerated construction of bike lane infrastructure and a better internal culture at SFMTA, where some employees complained of harassment and bullying.

Reiskin announced his resignation in April, days after a 10-hour subway meltdown choked the city.

Borden and SFMTA board Chair Malcolm Heinicke praised Reiskin on Wednesday in a memo announcing Maguire's appointment.

"For many of us, his calm, humble 'leadership by example' has been the model for what it means to be 'called to public service,'" they wrote. "He has consistently demonstrated a keen sense of personal duty to build and operate a transportation system that is safe, sustainable and, perhaps above all, equitable, for all San Franciscans."

They listed several notable accomplishments the agency made during Reiskin's tenure, including the passage of a \$500 million bond measure for transportation infrastructure, the creation of a rapid bus network, and the purchase of new biodiesel-electric hybrid buses to replace aging vehicles.

Though Maguire is set to take over in August, Borden said he'll effectively start the job next week, when Reiskin heads out for vacation.

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[Borenstein: On cusp of San Jose service, will BART let new auditor it didn't want do her job? \(Mercury News\)](#)

BART's new inspector general will have a tough challenge unraveling the transit system's financial and operational dysfunction that includes declining ridership, increasing violent crime and long-term budget shortfalls.

The question is whether the district's board will let her do her job.

Harriet Richardson, former Palo Alto city auditor, will be the first inspector general of the transit agency, which began service nearly 47 years ago and is scheduled to start running trains to north San Jose late this year. She starts work Aug. 5 and will have a \$1 million annual budget.

BART officials never wanted an inspector general auditing and investigating their work. But the new position was forced on them as part of a legislative deal under which BART receives \$1.1 billion from Bay Area bridge toll increases.

Unfortunately, she's not independent. Under the deal, Richardson, who has also managed audits for Berkeley and San Francisco, was appointed by the governor from a list of three names submitted by the BART board. And she can be fired at any time by just a vote of six of the nine board members.

Her challenge will be to maintain a wall of separation so she can provide objective analysis that doesn't bend to the whim of the highly political board and district management.

District officials have repeatedly put the interests of the transit agency's labor unions ahead of those of riders and taxpayers, most notably with costly labor agreements in 2013 and 2016 that

short-changed the long-term fiscal health of the agency. As a result, the district faces operating shortfalls of \$30 million to \$60 million in each of the next seven years.

Meanwhile, a recent damning Alameda County Civil Grand Jury report highlights steadily declining ridership since 2016 despite the region's booming economy and clogged highways; plummeting rider satisfaction surveys; ongoing fare evasion that costs the district at least \$25 million a year; and violent crime that has more than doubled since 2014.

It's against that backdrop that the BART board in June voted to once again increase fares at the start of 2020 and every two years after that through 2026 — apparently oblivious to basic economic price-demand principles.

They could get away with it a decade ago, when there were fewer options, but today there are serious alternatives — including telecommuting, ride-hailing and, for some commutes, scooter rentals. Rising BART fares and dirty, crime-ridden stations and trains make Uber and Lyft look better by comparison.

And then there's the system itself. Over its first four decades, BART officials failed to set aside adequate funds for capital replacement, leading to the discovery about five years ago of a \$9.6 billion need for new equipment.

In 2016, they went to voters in Alameda County, Contra Costa and San Francisco seeking approval of a \$3.5 billion bond measure and claiming that the district would do its part by devoting \$1.8 billion from operating expenses. Once voters approved Measure RR, the district promptly reneged on its part of the bargain.

To obtain voter approval, BART officials deceived voters about how much property taxes would increase to pay off the bonds on the ballot and waged a political campaign from within the district. A bend-the-rules and win-at-any-cost mentality turned publicly funded staff members into political operatives.

It's time for change. Fortunately, General Manager Grace Crunican, who was at the helm during the labor giveaways of 2013 and 2016, and perpetuated the bond measure disinformation campaign, just retired, providing the board an opportunity to hire someone who will run the agency with a less-political and more-fiscally responsible approach.

The change at the top happens to coincide with the hiring of the new inspector general. The position was created at the insistence of state Sen. Steve Glazer, D-Orinda, who threatened to otherwise oppose Regional Measure 3, the Bay Area toll-hike plan that voters approved in 2018.

Glazer, an outspoken critic of the transit system, said this week he was encouraged that new BART Board President Bevan Dufty reached out to him during the selection of the new inspector general — and that he seems to appreciate the potential value of the position.

In that new job, Richardson has an opportunity to cast much-needed sunshine on an otherwise politically manipulative transit agency.

The strength of her backbone and the willingness of BART directors to listen to her will be key to ensuring that clean, safe trains run on time at a price riders and taxpayers can afford.

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Holly Perez

Public Information Officer

Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority
3331 North First Street, San Jose, CA 95134
Phone [408-321-5810](tel:408-321-5810)
Mobile [408-688-4213](tel:408-688-4213)



From: VTA Board Secretary <Board.Secretary@vta.org>
Sent: Friday, July 12, 2019 4:48 PM
To: VTA Board of Directors <VTABoardofDirectors@vta.org>
Subject: VTA Correspondence: Week of July 8, 2019

VTA Board of Directors:

We are forwarding you the following:

From	Topic
Member of the Public	Comment regarding July Board meeting (Caltrain) Item #10 2019 Annual Passenger Counts (with accompanying attachments)

Thank you.

Office of the Board Secretary
Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority
3331 North First Street, Building B
San Jose, CA 95134-1927
Phone [408-321-5680](tel:408-321-5680)



Conserve paper. Think before you print.

From: Roland Lebrun

Sent: Wednesday, July 10, 2019 1:47 AM

To: board@caltrain.com

Cc: VTA Board Secretary <Board.Secretary@vta.org>; clerk@sfcta.org; MTC Commission <info@mtc.ca.gov>; Caltrain CAC Secretary <cacsecretary@caltrain.com>; SFCTA CAC <cac@sfcta.org>

Subject: July Board meeting Item #10 2019 Annual Passenger Counts

Dear Chair Gillett and Board members,

Further to my email of March 6 2019 (below) and my July 2016 letter to MTC (attached) which urged MTC and the Board to terminate the Stadler EMU contract, SamTrans staff have now officially admitted (**after requesting an additional \$183M for 37 additional electric vehicles**) that the new 7-car EMUs will have approximately 200 seats (100 seats including “flip-ups”) **fewer than 760-seat 6-car trains currently operating at over 140% capacity.**

BUSIEST SB TRAINS: MAX. LOAD

- 12 trains at ≥95% seating capacity at max. load location

Southbound						
Train #	Depart SF	Leaving Station	Max Load	Train Capacity	Percent of Capacity	
b	376	5:38 PM	Millbrae	1,083	760	143%
b	366	4:38 PM	Palo Alto	948	760	125%
	258	3:34 PM	California Avenue	789	650	121%
	272	5:27 PM	San Francisco	913	760	120%
b	370	5:16 PM	San Francisco	890	760	117%
	262	4:23 PM	California Avenue	718	650	110%
g	268	4:58 PM	Palo Alto	830	760	109%
	278	5:58 PM	South San Francisco	796	760	105%
b	324	7:59 AM	Millbrae	781	760	103%
b	380	6:16 PM	Millbrae	666	650	102%
b	360	4:12 PM	Palo Alto	757	760	100%
b	330	8:35 AM	Millbrae	724	760	95%

b = Baby Bullet; g = Gilroy train; Light yellow = AM ("traditional peak"); Light blue = PM ("reverse peak")

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BUSIEST NB TRAINS: MAX. LOAD

- 10 trains at ≥95% seating capacity at max. load location

Northbound						
Train #	Depart SJ	Leaving Station	Max Load	Train Capacity	Percent of Capacity	
g	217	6:59 AM	Hillsdale	989	760	130%
b	329	8:04 AM	Sunnyvale	970	760	128%
	225	7:54 AM	San Bruno	925	760	122%
b	319	7:04 AM	Sunnyvale	908	760	119%
b	313	6:49 AM	Hillsdale	874	760	115%
b	323	7:49 AM	Hillsdale	826	760	109%
g	227	7:59 AM	Hillsdale	823	760	108%
	215	6:54 AM	San Bruno	820	760	108%
	233	8:39 AM	San Antonio	790	760	104%
	269	4:40 PM	Redwood City	766	760	101%

b = Baby Bullet; g = Gilroy train; Light yellow = AM ("traditional peak"); Light blue = PM ("reverse peak")



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Electric trains to have fewer seats

BY ALLISON LEVITSKY
Daily Post Staff Writer

The seven-car electric trains that Caltrain is preparing to deploy will have fewer seats than the current six-car diesel trains, agency officials said at a public meeting in Palo Alto last night.

Casey Fromson, Caltrain's director of government and community affairs,

Caltrain plans will run trains more frequently to make up for the loss

told an audience at the Rinconada Library that the electric trains would be smaller than the current diesel trains.

Caltrain will make up the loss in

passenger capacity with more frequent trains, Fromson said.

The agency expects to see a 20% increase in ridership after it electrifies the

tracks, which will be completed by the end of 2022.

"You may not care how many people can get on that train," Fromson said. "You want to know that there's another train in 15 minutes."

Caltrain expects to see 40% more people and 40% more jobs along the [See TRAINS, page 22]

Director Pine was quoted as follows in a front page article in this morning's Palo Alto Daily Post:

"Caltrain is very dependent on fare box revenue, with approximately 70% of its revenue coming from ticket sales, so any decrease in ridership is a concern,"

"Overcrowding is one factor that might be contributing to a decrease in midweek ridership"

"Many trains carry far more passengers than their seating capacity, and this may discourage riders,"

<https://padailypost.com/2019/07/09/caltrain-annual-ridership-numbers-fall/>

Roland Lebrun

July 5 2016

Metropolitan Transportation Commission
375 Beale Street
San Francisco
CA 94105-2066

Dear Honorable Chair Cortese and MTC Commissioners,

Further to my comments during the June Commission Meeting, the intent of this letter is to substantiate and elaborate on the concerns I expressed about the Caltrain Modernization (CalMod) project, specifically the cost and reduced capacity of the proposed Electric Multiple Unit (EMU) railcars (**550-seat trains replacing 650-seat trains operating at 158% of capacity**).

This letter concludes with a recommendation that MTC and the FTA suspend all funding and initiate an independent investigation into the Caltrain EMU procurement process.

Background

March 2012

LTK Engineering (LTK) releases a document entitled "Caltrain/California HSR Blended Operations Analysis"

<http://www.caltrain.com/Assets/Caltrain+Modernization+Program/Documents/Final-Caltrain-California+HSR+Blended+Operations+Analysis.pdf>

Section 3.3 Rolling Stock on page 28 states "Caltrain is planning to use 8 car trains to **augment the seating capacity of an existing 5 car train**".

The document additionally states (page 38). "To ensure conservative simulation results, **all trains were simulated with a full seated load of 948 passengers** (for an 8-car EMU)".

March 6th 2014

The JPB awards a total of \$42.3M in contracts to LTK, including a \$33.2M EMU Vehicle Consultant Service contract.

<http://www.caltrain.com/Assets/Agendas+and+Minutes/JPB/Board+of+Directors/Agendas/2014/3-6-14+JPB+Agenda.pdf> (item #13).

It should be noted that LTK were the sole respondent to the RFP and **there is strong circumstantial evidence suggesting that LTK were responsible for drafting this RFP.**

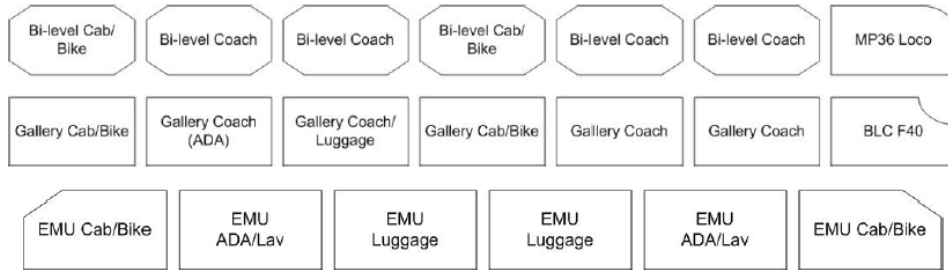
May 22 2014

Caltrain issues a Request for Information (RFI) to the EMU manufacturers

http://www.tillier.net/stuff/caltrain/EMU_RFI.pdf

Section 6.6 "EMUs must satisfy JPB's fleet management and operations service plan needs" shows a 6-car EMU configuration with capacity for 600 seats, 48 bikes and 2 ADA bathrooms.

Future Fleet (simplified - conceptual)



Parameter	Gallery Train	Bi-Level Train	EMU Train
Seated capacity	636	822	600
ADA compliance	4 cars per train	All cars	All cars
Bike capacity	80 per train	48 per train	48 per train minimum
Number in service	4 trains	6 trains	16 trains

May 20 2015

Board workshop presentation highlighting **650-seat trains operating at over 150% of capacity** during the peak summer season:

Standees: 2015 Maximum Loads

Northbound		
Depart SJ	Percent of Seated Capacity (low season)	Percent of Seated Capacity (high season)
7:03 AM	135%	158%
7:45 AM	128%	150%
8:03 AM	127%	149%
5:23 PM	122%	143%
6:57 AM	122%	142%
7:50 AM	117%	137%
6:45 AM	108%	126%
6:50 AM	106%	124%
4:39 PM	106%	124%
7:55 AM	103%	121%
8:40 AM	102%	119%
4:23 PM	96%	113%

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August 2015


Caltrain releases a Request for Proposal (RFP) to the EMU manufacturers

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/az34k161d28ah78/AACzwbjBH37v79hHRow8r2LZa?dl=0>

Volume 3 (Tech specs) APPENDIX A (page 468) states that seated capacity (AW1) is “assumed to be 550 passengers” (**100 seats less than trains operating at over 150% of capacity**).

May 5th 2016

Caltrain releases annual passenger counts showing **massive overcrowding on 762-seat bi-level and 650-seat Gallery trains**. It should be noted that Caltrain annual passenger counts are (inexplicably) collected during the low season (February).



2016 Top 10 Trains: Maximum Load

Northbound				
Train No.	Depart SJ	Max Load	Train Seating Capacity	Percent of Seated Capacity
319	7:03 AM	951	762	125%
323	7:45 AM	950	762	125%
329	8:03 AM	882	762	116%
375	5:23 PM	841	762	110%
217	6:57 AM	818	650	126%
225	7:50 AM	764	762	100%
269	4:39 PM	756	762	99%
313	6:45 AM	747	762	98%
233	8:40 AM	722	650	111%
215	6:50 AM	719	650	111%

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July 1st 2016

Caltrain announces that the only responder to the EMU RFP is Stadler Rail and that it intends to proceed with a \$551M procurement of 16 6-car KISS EMUs with 550 seats (**before removing approximately 100 seats to allow access to another set of doors**).

Issues

1) Capacity

This EMU procurement cannot possibility meet Caltrain's present let alone future capacity requirements (450 seats/train vs. 948 modeled back in March 2012).

2) Costs

This procurement is approximately \$225M (70%) above similar procurements in Europe

Client	Manufacturer/model	Year	Contract (\$M)	#units	Unit cost	Reference
SNCF Lux	Stadler KISS	2010	\$84	24	3.49	http://www.railway-technology.com/ne
Deutsche Bahn	Bombardier Twindexx	2011	\$483	137	3.53	http://www.railway-technology.com/pr
Deutsche Bahn	Bombardier Twindexx	2012	\$210	64	3.28	http://www.railway-technology.com/pr
STIF & SNCF	Bombardier Omneo	2015	\$442	168	2.63	http://www.railway-technology.com/ne
AeroExpress	Stadler KISS	2016	\$205	62	3.31	http://www.railway-technology.com/ne
SNCF	Bombardier Omneo	2016	\$38	16	2.38	http://www.railway-technology.com/ne
Caltrain	Stadler KISS	2016	\$551	96	5.74	http://www.caltrain.com/Assets/___Ag

3) Non-competitive bidding (Stadler was the only responsive bid).

This is identical to what happened at SMART and eBART.

Recommendations

- Launch an immediate investigation into the procurement process
- Suspend any funding pending the outcome of the investigation
- Reach out to the 5 manufacturers, who responded to the RFI and inquire as to the events that led them not to respond to the RFP
- Invite Stadler to provide a comparative breakdown of recent Stadler KISS procurements
- Determine if the \$225M discrepancy is related to customization for High Speed Rail and revise CHSRA's contribution to the funding package accordingly
- Initiate an independent Caltrain capacity analysis to inform on the next steps
- Consider appointing an interim entity responsible for Caltrain administration (per Section 6.B of the 1996 Peninsula Corridor Project Joint Powers Agreement)
http://www.caltrain.com/Assets/Public/JPA_Agreement_and_Amendment_10-03-1996.pdf

Respectfully submitted for your consideration

Sincerely,

Roland Lebrun

CC

SFCTA Board of Directors

VTA Board of Directors

Transbay Joint Powers Authority Board of Directors

Caltrain Board of Directors

High Speed Rail Authority Board of Directors

SFCTA CAC

Caltrain CAC

Caltrain BPAC



Rider Survey (2017)

10% (~300 people) on Limited & Bullet Trains Commented on Crowding

“Commuting everyday. It sucks that you may not actually get a seat after how much you pay to take Caltrain. Second to not having a seat, is how crowded it can get.”

“Many trains are too crowded. 50% of the time I don’t get a seat”

“Need more train cars → rush hour → no seats”

“My usual afternoon train that leaves at Cal Ave at 1630 is very crowded”

“You added a car and have a new train which gives more room, but I still have to stand because you have no seats.”



Social Media Customer Complaints Crowded Trains



Caltrain @Caltrain

#NB323 reported Standing Room Only out of Mountain View. #Caltrain

8:00 AM - 19 Jul 2017

3 Retweets 1 like

What is the actual maximum number of cars you can configure & run a consist with? That's what 323 needs.. It's nuts now, worse every week.

The #caltrain experience of standing in a one-person wide stairwell because the rest of the train is packed. #commute

Caltrain is getting crowded
I snapped this photo yesterday evening as the train approached Palo Alto station for my commute home. It's getting a little bit crowded on the train.

2,405 views 5 likes 12 comments

I hope that this information will give the Board a better sense of the impending catastrophe and why the time has come to revisit the decision to award this procurement contract to Stadler Rail.

Sincerely,

Roland Lebrun

From: Roland Lebrun

Sent: Wednesday, March 6, 2019 9:51 AM

To: board@caltrain.com

Cc: VTA Board Secretary; clerk@sfcta.org; MTC Commission; Caltrain CAC Secretary; SFCTA CAC

Subject: Caltrain 3/7 Board meeting Item #10 EMU configuration

Dear Chair Gillett,

Further to my July 2016 letter to MTC (attached), the intent of this letter is to recapitulate the timeline that led to the developing capacity crisis triggered by the selection of Stadler EMUs which cannot possibly handle Caltrain's present or future capacity requirements let alone the 240,000 passengers/day by the year 2040.

March 2012

Caltrain/California HSR Blended Operations Analysis

"Caltrain is planning to use 8-car trains to **augment the seating capacity of an existing 5 car train**".

"To ensure conservative simulation results, **all trains were simulated with a full seated load of 948 passengers** (for an 8-car EMU) ".

May 22 2014

Caltrain issues a Request for Information (RFI) to the EMU manufacturers showing a 6-car EMU configuration with capacity for **600 seats**, 48 bikes and 2 ADA bathrooms.

"EMUs must satisfy JPB's fleet management and operations service plan needs"

May 20 2015

Board workshop slide depicting "**650-seat 5-car trains operating at over 150% of capacity**"

August 2015

Caltrain releases a Request for Proposals (RFP) to the EMU manufacturers

APPENDIX A (page 468) states that **seated** capacity (AW1) is "assumed to be **550 passengers**" (**100 seats less than trains operating at over 150% of capacity**).

May 5th 2016

Caltrain releases annual passenger counts showing **massive overcrowding on 762-seat trains**

July 1st 2016

Caltrain announces that the only responder to the EMU RFP is Stadler Rail

Caltrain announces its intention to proceed with a \$551M procurement for 16x6-car KISS EMUs with 550 seats

March 2019

The San Francisco Bicycle Advisory Committee writes to the Caltrain Board as follows:

“six-car diesel trains today have an average of **741** seats per train”

“in 2021, Caltrain plans to run a mixed fleet with 33% seven-car diesel trains having **910** seats”

“Caltrain staff obfuscates the capacity loss per electrified train by focusing on one more train per peak hour in 2021”

“Caltrain electrification is a \$2 billion program that will have woefully inadequate passenger capacity in 2021”

Respectfully,

Roland Lebrun

Attachments

July 5 2016 letter to MTC

March 2019 letter to the Caltrain Board

CC

SFCTA Board of Directors

VTA Board of Directors

MTC Commissioners

Caltrain CAC

Caltrain BAC

SFCTA CAC

VTA CAC

SAN FRANCISCO BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

RESOLUTION: CALLING FOR INCREASED CAPACITY AND BETTER CAR LAYOUT ON ELECTRIFIED CALTRAIN

WHEREAS, Caltrain, the San Francisco Peninsula rail transit service, provides a vital public transportation link serving the City and County of San Francisco and has provided onboard carriage of bicycles since 1992; and

WHEREAS, Caltrain's onboard bicycle service allows passengers to reach their origin stations and their final destinations without using motorized transportation on either end of their commutes, taking the burden off heavily subsidized feeder buses and shuttles; and

WHEREAS, Caltrain's onboard bicycle service is socially and economically beneficial in eliminating reliance on the automobile, thereby effecting reductions in petroleum use, traffic congestion, pollution, and climate change; and

WHEREAS, Caltrain's plans to modernize its service with electrified trains in 2021; and

WHEREAS, Caltrain's onboard bicycle service reduces demand for expensive new parking lots or parking structures, and Caltrain predicts that a number of its parking lots will be unable to handle demand after Caltrain has been electrified; and

WHEREAS, 16% of Caltrain passengers bring their bikes on board and 1% park their bikes at the stations according to the 2014 Caltrain Onboard Passenger Survey; and

WHEREAS, 88% of bikes-on-board passengers need their bikes at both ends of their trips according to the 2016 Bike Car Intercept Survey; and

WHEREAS, Caltrain's onboard bicycle service is so popular that customers with bicycles routinely get left behind on the platform or 'bumped' due to insufficient onboard bike capacity while all walk-on passengers are allowed to board; and

WHEREAS, in 2015, the Joint Powers Board unanimously approved an increase in bike capacity on electrified trains with an onboard ratio of 8:1 seats-to-bike-spaces, overriding Caltrain staff's recommendation of 9:1 (same as today); and

WHEREAS, the difference between 9:1 and 8:1 corresponds to an 11% increase in bike capacity, or 84 bike spaces and 672 seats per train; and

WHEREAS, Caltrain staff plans only 72 bike spaces and 567 seats per six-car electrified train, technically meeting the 8:1 ratio but reducing bike capacity compared with an average of 77 bike spaces per train today; and

WHEREAS, six-car diesel trains today have an average of 741 seats per train; and

WHEREAS, in 2021, Caltrain plans to run a mixed fleet with 33% seven-car diesel trains having 910 seats and 72 bike spaces per train to cover up the inadequate seat count of electrified trains; and

WHEREAS, Caltrain staff obfuscates the capacity loss per electrified train by focusing on one more train per peak hour in 2021; and

WHEREAS, the additional train in 2021 will result in only 10.3% more seats per peak hour, while walk-on ridership is projected to be 23.9% higher based on the average annual increases over the last decade; and

WHEREAS, the additional train in 2021 will result in only 12.5% more bike spaces per peak hour, while bike boardings are projected to be 42.9% higher based on the average annual increases over the last decade; and

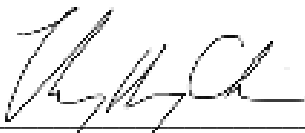
WHEREAS, Caltrain staff is planning a car layout with no dedicated seats within view of bikes – only folding seats, bike hooks to hang bikes, and wheelchair space all in the same location; and

WHEREAS, bicyclists need to sit within view of their bikes to guard against theft; and

WHEREAS, Caltrain electrification is a \$2 billion program that will have woefully inadequate passenger capacity in 2021 especially for bikes-on-board passengers, and staff is proposing an untenable car layout, and staff's plan does not meet the board's 2015 directive for more bike capacity per train;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the San Francisco Bicycle Advisory Committee urges Caltrain to launch electrified service with electrified train sets of at least seven cars and at least 84 bike spaces per train distributed among all cars to allow seats within view of bikes, no hanging bikes, and dedicated wheelchair space; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the San Francisco Bicycle Advisory Committee recommends adoption and prompt implementation of the Draft 2017 Bicycle Parking Management Plan to encourage passengers who do not need to bring their bikes on board to park their bikes at the stations.



Mary Kay Chin, Vice-chair

ADOPTED ON OCTOBER 23, 2017 BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: Brask, Chin, Deffarges, Orland, Serafini, Taliaferro, Warner, Wells

ABSENT: Brandt, Hill, Mendoza