

Peninsula Rail 2000

Staying on Track

www.rail2000.org No. 2001-1 April 2001

Santa Clara County Transportation Authority Tries to Undermine San Francisco Downtown Extension and Transbay Terminal

Word is that Santa Clara County Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) members were actively lobbying against the Transbay Terminal (TT) and associated Caltrain Downtown Extension (DTX) this month in D.C.

Although they won't come out and say it, VTA is worried about TT/DTX competing with the proposed BART to San Jose extension for federal and state dollars. TT/DTX is much further along in progress and regional support than the BART extension.

VTA representatives to the Caltrain Joint Powers Board, VTA chair Manuel Valerio and newly-elected Willow Glen representative Ken Yeager, feigned ignorance of these projects and voted against the TT/JPA last month, to the dismay of representatives from San Francisco and San Mateo Counties and Santa Clara County rep. John McLemore.

Mr. Valerio has continued his assault on the project, with letters and comments characterizing it as a project that is being "forced down VTA's throat". This despite the fact that these projects have been referred to in Caltrain planning documents for years.

Any Caltrain rider who's taken the MUNI light rail to/from Embarcadero station during commute hours knows how unreliable, aggravating and crushingly overloaded the light rail is, especially when a trainload of Caltrain riders transfers to the light rail at 4th & King. The DTX in conjunction with a rebuilt TT would shave approx. 15 minutes from the commute and entice many more motorists to take transit instead.

The Caltrain extension to TT, near Embarcadero station, would provide

- the fastest possible regional access to San Francisco downtown, SFO airport, the Peninsula, Silicon Valley, and San Jose.

- access to most of San Francisco via a single Muni bus connection;

- greatly improved access to Silicon Valley jobs for numerous young tech workers currently driving from San Francisco, eliminating a conservatively estimated 30,000 car trips each day.

- increased capacity for expansion of service for most regional transit providers including AC Transit, SamTrans, Caltrain, and future high speed and intercity rail to the East Bay, the Central Valley and Los Angeles.

In addition, DTX is essential for the planned California High Speed Rail system, which could help cut air traffic and delays at our airports and the need for more runways, by replacing inefficient short haul flights to and from the Central Valley and Southern California.

- This proposed High Speed Rail system also would use Caltrain's tracks. Bullet trains must directly serve downtown in order to be time-competitive with air travel.

- The Caltrain extension would benefit the entire region by directly connecting express rail service to Silicon Valley with all regional transit systems in one place, eliminating extra transfers that discourage tens of thousands of daily commuters to the Peninsula and Silicon Valley from using transit. Commuters from the North and East Bay, and many parts of SF cannot or refuse to use transit now due to the extra, unreliable transfer where Caltrain and their local transit system don't connect.

- BART takes a 15-minute longer route between SF and its Caltrain connection in Millbrae, with a much higher volume of local riders and no express service. Unless you live near a BART station, it requires the expense and hassle of an extra transfer.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO SUPPORT THE CALTRAIN DOWNTOWN EXTENSION AND TRANSBAY TERMINAL

In order to educate riders and build support for these projects, we need volunteer contributions and labor to develop, print and distribute flyers to Caltrain riders this month. If you live or work in Santa Clara County (including Palo Alto and cities south) we especially need your help.

- If you can help in any way, please email Margaret at okuzumi@silcon.com

- Checks to Peninsula Rail 2000 should note "TT/DTX campaign" in the memo line and be mailed to Peninsula Rail 2000 at 3921 East Bayshore Rd., Palo Alto, CA 94303

- Contact your local, state and federal representatives in support of the project.

If you live in Santa Clara County, send email or call the VTA board or your local representative.

See <http://www.vtaridersunion.org/whattodo.html>

CALTRAIN TO GILROY AND BEYOND

The latest news is that the Santa Clara County VTA, which is responsible for Caltrain south of San Jose, will need to pay Union Pacific approx. \$500 million for the right to double track the line and increase frequency of service. No word on funding yet.

VTA appears enthusiastic about a recent proposal by Monterey County to run one round trip a day to Salinas.

Transbay Terminal Milestone Reached

A significant milestone in the SF downtown Transbay Terminal project and associated Caltrain Downtown Extension was reached on Monday, April 2, when representatives from AC Transit, the City and County of San Francisco, the Caltrain Joint Powers Board signed a Joint Powers Agreement for construction of the Transbay Terminal Project.

It was a beautiful ceremony in the San Francisco City Hall rotunda, with Mayor Willie Brown presiding. A wooden mock-up area landscape, complete with a gleaming Transbay Terminal, could be seen in a glass case. Dignitaries from San Mateo County and Caltrain were also in attendance.

TRANSBAY TERMINAL/DTX PUBLIC MEETINGS

The San Francisco Transbay Terminal / Caltrain Downtown Extension Project will be holding open house meetings to allow for agency representatives and the public to discuss the proposed work scope and project options with project staff.

Wednesday, April 4, 2001
6:00 - 7:00 pm: Open House
7:00 - 8:00 pm: Presentation & Public Comment
San Francisco City Hall, Room 400
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett, Jr. Place (Polk Street)
San Francisco, California 94102

Wednesday, April 11, 2001
6:00 - 7:00 pm: Open House
7:00 - 8:00 pm: Presentation & Public Comment
Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board
2nd Floor Auditorium,
1250 San Carlos Avenue,
San Carlos, California 94070

Project staff will be available to take agency and public input regarding the scope of the environmental studies, key issues, and other suggestions. Opportunities will be offered for comments to be provided either orally or in writing. Agency representatives, interested organizations, and the general public are invited to attend.

SF Bay Crossings Study

Metropolitan Transportation Commission consultants would like input from the public on how and where you'd like to get across the Bay in the future. Thus far, the Dumbarton Rail bridge crossing has been receiving a lot of political support, especially in San Mateo County. Peninsula Rail 2000 will be considering what additional ideas we'd like to champion for this study, so send us email with your ideas to okuzumi@silcon.com in addition to giving feedback to MTC through their website.

For more information, see
http://www.mtc.ca.gov/whats_happening/hearings/crossings_scoping.htm

Peninsula Rail 2000 Meeting Rent Raised

Mary, who owns the San Carlos Depot Cafe, has informed us that she will be raising our monthly meeting place rent to \$250/month. So, we are seeking ideas from our members and friends as to fundraising ideas, alternate meeting locations, etc. for Peninsula Rail 2000.

Currently, the cost of dinner at the meetings has helped us to pay for much, but not all, of the cost of using the Depot Cafe each month.

Adjacent to the station, it's a very convenient location and central to our geographic span for attendees from San Jose to San Francisco. Mary opens the Depot Cafe especially for us monthly.

If you have suggestions for Peninsula Rail 2000 as to meeting location and fundraising ideas, please email them to okuzumi@silcon.com or leave a message for her at (650) 417-2571.

Volunteers Needed April 12

We've been invited to participate in "Re-Route Your Commute," a transit fair hosted by Juniper Networks.

Thursday, April 12, 2001
11:30 am - 1:30 pm (setup at 11:00 am)
1194 N. Mathilda Ave, Sunnyvale
(Moffett Park & 237, across from Lockheed Martin)

If this is near your workplace and you'd like to help promote Peninsula Rail 2000 while helping fellow commuters, please email Margaret at okuzumi@silcon.com

New PR2000 Board Member

Congratulations to Dan Krause, who was recently appointed to the Peninsula Rail 2000 board. A San Francisco resident, Dan brings an enthusiasm for better transit service and high speed rail for the Bay Area.

New BEE shuttles from Santa Clara Caltrain and ACE Great America stations

The City of Santa Clara is running new shuttle service from the Santa Clara Caltrain and Great America/ACE stations meeting all ACE trains and 10 Caltrains. Unfortunately the new service is not listed in the latest revised ACE shuttle literature.

The BEE, or "Breathe Easy Express" shuttle service is currently running with diesel shuttles, but is planned to be run with electric hybrid vehicles starting next month. They stop at bus stops marked with a white metal sign, usually posted above a VIA bus stop sign.

Maps & schedules are available at <http://www.siliconvalleypower.com/beemaps/>
For more info call 1.866.BEE.XPRS

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Staying on Track is a publication of Peninsula Rail 2000, a 501(c)4 non-profit group. We encourage your contributions. Articles and letters should be submitted by e-mail to okuzumi@silcon.com, or fax to (408) 732-8712.



Yes! I support improving Caltrain and Regional Transit!

I support PR2000's efforts to promote a regional transit system by upgrading Caltrain to BART-level service and extending it to downtown San Francisco, improving connections between buses, trains, and other transit modes, and establishing commuter rail between the East Bay and San Jose.

I'm enclosing a contribution to help fund PR2000's programs.

2001-1st **I can help by:**

\$35 Regular \$50 Sponsor \$100 Patron \$250 President's club \$_____ Other

\$15 Student/low income We are supported entirely by member contributions. Voting memberships start at \$15 or \$35, as applicable. As we engage in lobbying, dues are not tax-deductible at this time.

Phoning or writing local politicians when you tell me about an important transportation issue

Volunteering two hours a month (or more)

Name _____

Address _____

City/State _____ Zip _____

Phone (day) _____ (eve.) _____

E-mail _____

Mail to the address below, or call our 24-hour message/newsline for more information: 650-417-2571

**Peninsula Rail 2000
3921 East Bayshore Road
Palo Alto, CA 94303**



Contacting Caltrain Decisionmakers

The agency in charge of administering Caltrain is the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board, often abbreviated as [PC] JPB.

Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board
PO Box 30006
San Carlos, CA 94070-1306
fax # 650-508-6281

Email addressed to "Peninsula Corridor JPB" may be sent to board clerk Deanna Riding, ridingd@samtrans.com. Correspondence sent to the full JPB is copied to all board members and becomes part of the official record.

The JPB generally meets on the first Thursday of the month at 10 AM, at 1250 San Carlos Ave., 2 blocks west of the San Carlos Caltrain station.

The JPB consists of three representatives from each of the three counties.

San Francisco County reps are:

- Maria Ayerdi, appointed by SF Mayor Willie Brown
- Michael Burns, appointed by SF Public Transportation Commission
- Tony Hall, appointed by the San Francisco Transportation Authority (SF Board of Supervisors)

San Mateo County reps are:

- Mike Nevin, appointed by San Mateo County Board of Supervisors
- Stephen Schmidt, City of Menlo Park, appointed by City Selection Committee
- Arthur Lloyd, appointed by San Mateo County Transit District

Santa Clara County reps are:

- Manuel Valerio, City of Sunnyvale, appointed by Santa Clara VTA
- Ken Yeager, City of San Jose, appointed by Santa Clara VTA
- John McLemore, City of Santa Clara, appointed by Santa Clara County cities' representatives

Other people who have direct and indirect influence over Caltrain funding and policies include:

- County Transportation Authorities in San Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties.
 - in Santa Clara County, see <http://www.vta.org>
- Local senators and representatives
- Local city councilmembers

If it's a matter concerning the design of a Caltrain station, it's appropriate to contact your local city councilmember first.

For general information about Caltrain, see their website at www.caltrain.com

Caltrain to Add More Trains Thanks to PR2000

Caltrain is planning to add two more trains to the regular schedule sometime in mid-April. A new train will depart from San Francisco and also from San Jose at 7:30 p.m. In addition, Caltrain will consolidate Trains 43 and 45 into one local due to low ridership on both trains, and add a train leaving from San Jose at 6 p.m. Train 81 will depart San Jose at 6:30 p.m., 15 minutes later than the current schedule.

These changes were precipitated in part by requests from Peninsula Rail 2000 to increase certain peak and evening hour service. While it's not everything we wanted, it will provide some relief to evening riders.

Please help us to continue our advocacy for better service by joining Peninsula Rail 2000 today, using the above form. Thanks for your support. -Margaret Okuzumi

Peninsula Rail 2000 Meeting in San Carlos

Monday, April 9, 2001 6:45 PM

A New Vision for Bay Area Rail

It's been a few years since Peninsula Rail 2000 produced its white paper, "Unlocking Gridlock" and it's time for a major overhaul. And just in time, too, because transportation agencies throughout the Bay Area are about to commit to a 25-year plan for spending federal, state, and local dollars on rail transit. Come give input into our plan, and learn what the next steps are to ensure a quality rail network for our region.

Each month we feature a presentation by a transit expert or official, or we hold a discussion on our current efforts to improve rail service. Newcomers are welcome!

- ✓ Meetings are held on the second Monday of the month, at the Depot Cafe in the San Carlos Caltrain Station. Meetings begin at 6:45 PM and end at 8:30, and is timed for convenient arrival and departure via Caltrain from the north or south. An optional \$8 buffet-style soup, salad and sandwich dinner is available. A portion of the dinner fee covers the cost of the use of the room.

Peninsula Rail 2000 is an 19-year old, all-volunteer, entirely member-supported transit group working to promote the creation of a modern rail network to serve the greater Silicon Valley region.

Our goals include the conversion of Caltrain from diesel to electric propulsion to increase speed & reliability and decrease noise, pollution and costs; increasing Caltrain frequency to at least once every ten minutes at peak times and every half-

Peninsula Rail 2000

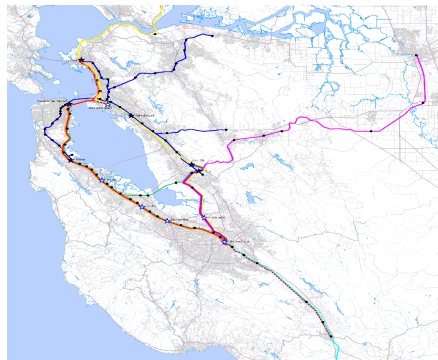
3921 East Bayshore Road

Palo Alto, CA 94303

e-mail: info@rail2000.org <http://www.rail2000.org>

forwarding and
address correction
requested

What Should A Rail Network Look Like in 2020?



hour at non-peak times; extending Caltrain to downtown San Francisco; connection of Caltrain to Dumbarton and Union City-Fremont-San Jose rail, expanding ACE and Amtrak Capitol train service in the East Bay, and building the proposed high speed rail line between the Bay Area and Southern California.

Executive Director: Margaret Okuzumi (Sunnyvale) Board of directors: Adrian Brandt, President (Redwood City); Andy Chow (Redwood City); Sylvia Gregory (San Bruno); Daniel Krause (San Francisco); Russell Reagan (San Francisco); Paul Wendt (Belmont). See www.rail2000.org for contact info.

OTHER MEETINGS

Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (Caltrain JPB)
Thursday, April 5, 10 AM

Caltrain Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting
Wednesday, April 18, 6 PM

Caltrain JPB and CAC meetings are held at:
SamTrans Administrative Offices
1250 San Carlos Ave, San Carlos
(a few blocks west of the San Carlos Caltrain station)