

BayRail Alliance Staying on Track

<http://www.bayrailalliance.org>
No. 2004-2 September-November 2004



Battle for Transbay Terminal Caltrain Extension continues

The fight for the Transbay Terminal Project (TBTP) is by no means complete. We are still working hard to ensure that the future underground tracks for the Caltrain Downtown Extension (DTX) to the new Transbay Terminal (TBT) are not blocked by a high-rise condominium tower that a private developer, Jack Myers, plans to build on a vacant plot of land at 80 Natoma Street in San Francisco.

The Transbay Project's draft environmental impact statement and report (EIR) was approved by the Transbay Joint Powers Authority (TJPA) and San Francisco Board of Supervisors in April. The EIR is available at http://sfgov.org/site/tjpa_page.asp?id=23586.

Work at the 80 Natoma site was halted in June by the San Francisco Department of Building Inspection over new concerns that the structural integrity of neighboring buildings and sewage lines would be compromised. Myers sued the City, asking the Superior Court to lift the work ban. On August 12, the court rejected Myers' motion. The SF Building Inspection Commission will consider Myers' appeal to lift the stop work order on September 20, pending an opinion from the City Attorney's office on whether Prop H requires them to halt construction that may interfere with the Caltrain Downtown Extension.

Myers refused an offer of more than \$32 million (fair market value) by the TJPA for the vacant land as well as offers to find another suitable location to construct his building. He is demanding \$175 million for the parcel — \$143 million over fair market value! He has also refused to work with the TJPA to design his building in tandem with the DTX tunnel to ensure that it could be built without affecting the structural integrity of his building. The *SF Bay Guardian* wrote of Myers, "I saw the face of greed — real, ugly, unadulterated greed."

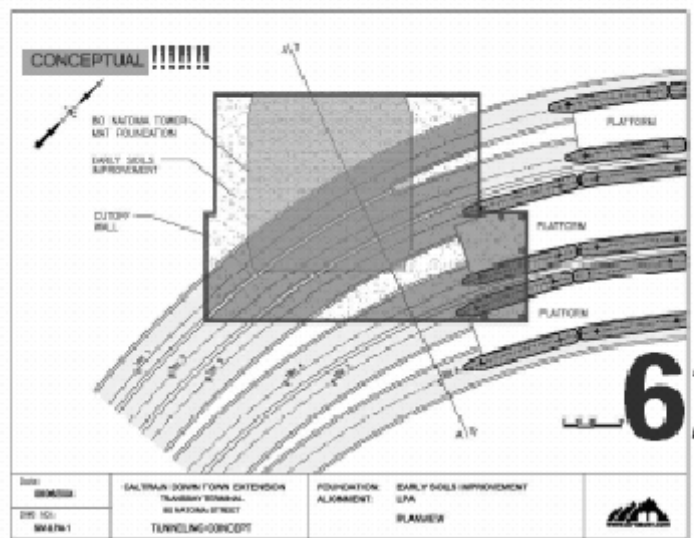
Supervisor Chris Daly introduced a resolution asking the SF Board of Supervisors to acquire the property at fair market value through eminent domain. Unfortunately the city, for whatever reasons, has taken a number of actions to delay the TBTP that have worked in Myers' favor.

On August 10, the SF Board of Supervisors received a report from the SF

Editorial: New Caltrain	
Schedule Doesn't Benefit All...	2
Speed Up Your Caltrain Trip.....	3
VTA PR Plan Won't Deliver.....	4
Board Elections.....	4
Caltrain and Bikes	4
Monterey County Rail Plans.....	5

County Transportation Authority (SFCTA) that proposed an "engineering solution" to accommodate both projects. It calls for excavating the site, installing engineered fill to replace the unstable mud fill, building the 80 Natoma tower, and then later tunneling under it removing over 80% of its foundation on one side to build Caltrain DTX. The TA claims this will save ten million over the cost of exercising eminent domain and buying the property at fair-market value. Engineering experts, including the tunneling consultant for Muni's Central Subway project, testified that the SFCTA proposal is un-

Figure 6.5.1-1: SM-LPA-1



**Would you build a 50 story high-rise and then remove over half of its foundation?
This is completely without precedent anywhere in the world, for very good reason—it's impossible.**

workable and should be rejected outright.

The purported SFCTA “solution” is a complete disaster in its geotechnical, engineering, construction, logistical, safety, insurability, legal and economic aspects. Insurance agencies are unlikely to underwrite the tunneling under the tower as its structural integrity would be at great risk. If this ridiculous proposal is enacted, it will become impossible to build the DTX. That would spell the end of the entire Transbay Terminal Project, because without DTX, the new bus facility would not be built and the massive redevelopment, including the construction of more than 3,000 affordable housing units, would not take place.

On August 13, the Transbay Joint Powers Authority (TJPA) board met to consider “Urging the San Francisco Board of Supervisors to initiate eminent domain proceedings to acquire Block 3721, Lots 045A, 046, 053, and 054, parcels

On August 17, the SF Board of Supervisors, sitting as the SFCTA, reviewed the SFCTA’s proposed “solution” to the conflict between the 80 Natoma and Caltrain DTX projects.

Unfortunately, SFCTA voted to give its staff up to \$10 million to spend during the next 30 days to further investigate a conceptual engineering “solution” These SFCTA actions are illegal. Under Proposition K, the TJPA is designated as the lead agency, not the SFCTA, which cannot appropriate funds to itself for this preposterous “solution” project. In addition, state law places jurisdiction for the Transbay Terminal Project with the TJPA, and the SFCTA action violates that law. (Adding insult to injury, SFCTA had even

called Myers to inform him of their “assessment report” on their “solution” before they bothered to inform the TJPA.)

The Supervisors also voted to delay consideration of condemnation of the property, and voted against allocating money to the TJPA to allow it to commence preliminary engineering for the TBTP. Supervisors Chris Daly, Bevan Dufty, and Tom Ammiano voted with us, except for the final vote where Ammiano joined the rest of his colleagues. All of the others, including McGoldrick, Sandoval, Gonzalez, Maxwell, Alioto, Ma, Elsbernd, and Peskin voted in a way that favored the developer, Myers. The delay in condemning the property, creates increased costs for the city and endangers the TBTP, contrary to the will of the voters and Prop H.

A letter signed by nine members of the state Assembly demands that the Board support the TJPA condemnation efforts. This letter was signed by John Burton, Don Perata, Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez, as well as Jackie Speier, Tom Torlakson, Byron Sher, Liz Figueroa, Leland Yee and John Dutra.

Action needed

We have a chance to get the board of supervisors to vote for condemnation on Sept 21 but we have to keep the pressure on. *Here’s what you can do:*

– Several of the Supervisors are up for election, including McGoldrick and Sandoval. These two were not supportive of our efforts on August 17. If your supervisor is McGoldrick, Sandoval, Gonzalez, Maxwell, Alioto, Ma, Elsbernd, or Peskin, please contact him or her and express your dismay at their votes, and urge them to support condemnation of the 80 Natoma property on Sept. 21.

– Thank Senator Burton and Assemblymember Yee for their continued support of the Terminal project.

– Especially, thank Chris Daly and Bevan Dufty for all their help. They continue to be great supporters of the TBTP.

Contact information for the supervisors: http://sfgov.org/site/bdsupvrs_index.asp

For more information, see:

<http://bayrailalliance.org/caltrain/dtx/index.html>

www.sfcta.org/TBTDraftReport.htm

<http://sfgov.org/site/uploadedfiles/tjpa/Tech-Report.pdf>

The Transbay Terminal is essential for future statewide high-speed rail and the integration of our regional public transit into a convenient downtown hub. Don’t let greedy private developers sabotage this project.

Editorial

New Caltrain schedule doesn’t benefit everyone

Since Caltrain’s new schedule with Baby Bullet service went into effect in June, my daily Caltrain commute from Foster City (via Hayward Park) to Silicon Valley (at Lawrence) takes 30 minutes longer. Fewer trains stop now at Hayward Park, and those that do — mostly locals — are at less convenient times than before June. The most convenient train in the evening from Lawrence to Hayward Park now waits there 5 minutes for a Bay Bullet to pass, and then makes one more stop than before.

cont’d p. 3

My employer has added time to the commute by providing fewer shuttles between Lawrence and its campuses, and now puts my campus at the end of the shuttle route rather than at the beginning, as before the new Caltrain schedule.

Before June 5, I could leave the house at 7:10 am, and be at my desk in an hour.

Since June 5, with the new train and shuttle schedules, it takes one-and-a-half hours.

The wait at Lawrence Expressway is annoying because of noise and exhaust from both north- and southbound trains which hold under the bridge waiting for Baby Bullets to zip through in both directions, sometimes with horns blaring. I've started using earplugs during that 16-minute wait.

Sometimes I use Hillsdale, but it takes me longer to get to and from my home

than from Hayward Park, even though Hillsdale is closer. And Hillsdale is far more crowded. Parking there can be problematic.

I've examined every possible way to take advantage of Baby Bullets but there is simply no way I can utilize them without long waits to get to Lawrence from Palo Alto, Mountain View, or back-tracking from San Jose. Doing so only makes the commute time even longer.

I hear many similar complaints from Silicon Valley folks, most of whom use Lawrence. Caltrain needs some schedule revisions to better serve non-Baby Bullet users.

Ryan Hoover, Editor

PS - I have customized the new Caltrain schedule in Excel so that all trains listed for each stop are in the correct chronological order. Contact me - Ryan Hoover - for a copy.

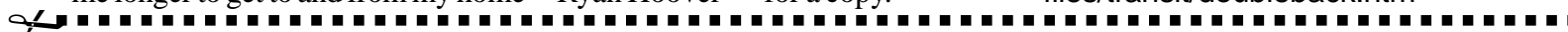
Speed Up Your Caltrain Trip

Get additional frequencies and a faster trip on Caltrain by "doubling back"

New Baby Bullet schedule got you down? Upset that your local service isn't as good as it was? Board member Andy Chow has put together a guide that may help with some of your trips.

By taking trains backwards from your destination to a higher-ridership station, passengers can receive a more frequent and sometimes faster service. Andy's customized timetables provide information on when and where to double-back to reduce your wait time and speed up your trip.

Check it out at: www.netjournal.homestead.com/files/transit/doubleback.htm



YES! I support improving Caltrain and Regional Transit!

2004-2

I support BayRail Alliance's efforts to promote a regional transit system by upgrading Caltrain and extending it to downtown San Francisco, improving connections between buses, trains, and other transit modes, and establishing a High Speed Rail system connecting the Bay Area and Southern California.

I am enclosing a contribution to help fund BayRail Alliance's programs.

___ \$35 Regular ___ \$50 Sponsor ___ \$100 Patron
___ \$250 President's Club ___ \$ _____ Other ___ \$15 Student/low income

New member
 Renewal of membership

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.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone (Day): _____ Phone (Evening): _____

Email: _____

I can help by:

Calling or writing local public officials when you tell me about important transportation issues.

Volunteering two hours a month (or more)

Mail to the address listed on the back, or contact us toll free at: (866) 267-8024

The following letter to the editor was submitted to the San Jose Mercury News. They didn't publish it, so we thought we'd publish it here.

VTA PR campaign won't deliver

Thanks to the *Mercury News* for uncovering the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority's (VTA's) plan to award public funds to politically-connected buddies (September 2, page 1A). Clearly, this contract needs more vetting. It was put on the board's consent calendar, with details kept secret. The sums are large compared to what consultants typically charge for marketing and public outreach work.

If a major goal of this PR campaign by VTA is to increase public transit ridership, why is the money going to Washington lobbyists, a polling firm, and con-

sultants connected with the financially-challenged BART project? VTA's bus service cuts and steep fare hikes save less money than what's proposed to be spent on this contract while causing VTA to lose riders.

No amount of PR can hide the fact the 2000 Measure A campaign badly misled voters. According to numbers released last month, even a *third* half cent tax won't allow VTA to deliver all Measure A promises by 2036.

A PR campaign for another tax to build projects that VTA can't afford to operate, won't restore public confidence. Instead, VTA should use existing resources to provide rapid bus with affordable fares among other simple improvements to attract riders, just as Caltrain has done with its Baby Bullet trains.

-Margaret Okuzumi

Caltrain and Bikes

Limited bike capacity of the new Baby Bullet trains has spurred many cyclists to write angry letters and petitions. While riders were forewarned about the limited capacity long ago, we're sympathetic to these concerns, and have some comments.

The speedy new trains have been very popular. The new service has saved many riders a lot of time and has boosted Caltrain's image and appeal. Significantly, the Baby Bullets have reversed a two-year trend of declining ridership, even as VTA, for example, continues to lose riders.

Three entities contribute to Caltrain operations, VTA, SamTrans, and the

city/county of San Francisco. They have contributed basically the same amount of money to Caltrain for the past four years. In order to be able to run the new Baby Bullet trains with no budget increase in these tough economic times, Caltrain squeezed savings from many places, including, unfortunately, local service. Last May, the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board approved a very tight budget that barely allowed Caltrain to run any Baby Bullet service at all, crossing their fingers that increased ridership and revenues would save the day. Fortunately, that's been the case so far.

Caltrain recently posted an FAQ about the bike capacity situation on their website, at http://www.caltrain.com/caltrain_bike_FAQs.html

BayRail Alliance Board Elections

It's that time of year again. We are seeking a few good people for our board, to serve 2-year terms. Board members set policy for the organization and are responsible for our organization's health. Because we are a volunteer-run organization, you will be expected to assist in our operations as well as governance.

We especially are seeking board members with business, financial or accounting expertise. However, potential board members need only have an interest in furthering our rail/transit advocacy and the ability to devote time and effort to their duties. If you are interested in serving on our board, please contact Margaret Okuzumi by e-mailing okuzumi@silcon.com.

As far as we see it, the way to solve the problem is to 1) improve bike storage facilities at all stations, 2) increase on-board bike capacity and 3) increase frequency of train service.

All of those things require money. We just told you that Caltrain's budget was a nail-biter. We've communicated with Caltrain staff and they're well aware that bicycle capacity is an issue.

So what to do? Caltrain staff can't tell you who to lobby, but we can. Here are our suggestions:

- Lobby VTA, SamTrans, and the city/county of San Francisco. Send letters to their board of directors (or to the SF Board of Supervisors in the case of San

cont'd p. 6

Monterey County Rail Plans

The Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC) is creating an Alternatives Analysis for the Monterey Branch Line to prepare for an application for federal New Starts funds. The Monterey Branch is a separate but related project to TAMC's plans for a Caltrain extension to Salinas. Six of the eight alternatives for the Monterey branch service assume a Caltrain extension to Salinas via Pajaro and Castroville. Three alternatives assume rail service to Salinas is a state-funded California Amtrak intercity service rather than a Caltrain extension.

In decades past, Monterey County had Southern Pacific's *Del Monte Express*, a steam-powered train that ran between San Francisco and Pacific Grove. Currently, Monterey County is served by Amtrak's *Coast Starlight* and a Monterey-Salinas Transit bus connection to Gilroy that meets Caltrain. Amtrak plans a future "Coast Daylight" train between San Francisco and Los Angeles. TAMC hopes to expand Caltrain to Salinas, as well as passenger rail service to the Monterey Peninsula.

Caltrain extension to Monterey County project

TAMC plans two roundtrips/weekday for the Caltrain extension, increasing to four roundtrips in ten years. They expect to attract 530,000 riders/year with a one-way fare of about \$4.80. TAMC plans to complete the EIR for the Caltrain extension next year and to acquire the right-of-way in 2006.

They hope to begin service in 2009. They plan new stations in Pajaro and Castroville and propose to add a train

layover facility, parking garage, and bus transit center to the Salinas station.

Monterey Peninsula proposals

For the Monterey Peninsula service project, TAMC purchased the Monterey Branch Line, extending from Castroville to Monterey, from Union Pacific Railroad in September 2003 using state Proposition 116 funds. The analysis for service on this line includes eight alternatives and a no-build option:

1. Extend Caltrain to Salinas.
2. Provide state-sponsored, limited stop Amtrak service to a station at the former Fort Ord.
3. Extend Caltrain to Salinas and provide Caltrain branch service to Marina.
4. Run a bus shuttle from Seaside, in lieu of rail, connecting to Caltrain in Castroville.
5. Run local rail or bus rapid transit service along the Monterey branch to connect with Caltrain at Castroville.
6. Extend local rail or bus rapid transit service from Monterey to Salinas via Castroville in addition to extending Caltrain to Salinas.

7. Overlay Amtrak intercity rail service to the Monterey Peninsula onto 6.
8. Add no new rail service but run bus service to points north from Fort Ord, Salinas and other communities assuming certain highway improvements are made.

Cost and funding

Total cost of the Caltrain extension is estimated to be \$70.7 million. Net annual operating cost is projected to be \$0.7 million. TAMC hopes to fund the Caltrain service with Federal New Starts and state transportation funds, "other agencies", and a local half-cent sales tax on the ballot in Monterey County in June 2005. If it passes, the tax, would provide \$17.5 million for extending Caltrain to Salinas and the Monterey Peninsula. Bus capital and operations would receive \$28 million from the tax, out of a total of \$350 million expected to be collected. A local tax on this November's ballot in Santa Cruz would provide \$6 million for the Pajaro station. The Caltrain Salinas extension also has a \$1 million earmark in Federal funds, \$3 million from Prop 116, and \$20 million from Traffic Congestion Relief Program funding. ###



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

BayRail Alliance General Meeting

Visit www.bayrailalliance.org for updates

Caltrain Joint Powers Board (JPB) Meeting 1st Thursdays at 10:00am
Caltrain Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting 3rd Wednesdays at 6:00pm

Location for BayRail Alliance General Meetings and Caltrain JPB and CAC meetings:

SamTrans administrative offices, 2nd floor auditorium
 1250 San Carlos Avenue, San Carlos,
 one block west from San Carlos Caltrain station.

Meeting dates, topics, and locations are subject to change without notice.
 For latest information: www.bayrailalliance.org.

Submissions:

We welcome submissions via email. Please include your name and phone number, and send your submissions to RyanHoov@aol.com. We especially encourage submissions that include information on what interested readers can do and any photographs or other graphics.

© 2004 BayRail Alliance, all rights reserved.

Executive Editor: Ryan Hoover
Contributors & Copy Editors: Andy Chow,
Michael Kincaid, Margaret Okuzumi,
Russell Reagan

Bikes, p. 4

Francisco). Specifically, ask them to improve the bike capacity, bike storage facilities, and frequency of Caltrain.

Complaining to these entities will ultimately be more productive than yelling at Caltrain staff.

- Contact city council members of the city that you live in. That's a more indirect way of lobbying the above agencies, but if you can get a city councilmember to be your champion on this issue, it can go a long way toward influencing what these agencies do.
- Be persistent. Change takes time. Folks who have been asking fellow riders to sign a petition have the right idea—just make sure that you're targeting the right decisionmakers also. ###

BayRail Alliance Board of Directors:

Andy Chow (Vice president)
 Michael Graff
 Sylvia Gregory
 Michael Kincaid
 Patrick Moore
 Margaret Okuzumi (Executive Director)
 Paul Wendt (Membership director)



3921 East Bayshore Rd.
Palo Alto, CA 94303

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

Forwarding and address correction requested

**Postage
Here**

BayRail Alliance is a 20-year old, all-volunteer, entirely member-supported transit group working to promote the creation of a modern rail network to serve the greater San Francisco Bay Area. BayRail is not affiliated with any rail or transit agency, contractor or vendor.

Our goals include: converting Caltrain to electric propulsion; increasing Caltrain frequency to at least once every ten minutes at peak times and every half-hour at off-peak times; extending Caltrain to downtown San Francisco and to the East Bay via the Dumbarton Rail Bridge; expanding the ACE and Amtrak Capitol Corridors; and building the proposed high speed rail line connecting the Bay Area and Southern California.