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VTA plans 21% transit cut

In November 2002, VTA (Santa Clara County's bus and light rail system) revealed to the public its grave financial situation. VTA then formed an ad-hoc advisory committee to examine its options to avoid bankruptcy. The committee consisted of several VTA board members, and representatives from business, labor, and other groups. It hired three consultants who drafted recommendations. The committee met weekly to review the recommendations.

One of the consultants recommended measures for increasing the farebox recovery rate from the current 10% to about 20% by increasing fares. In April the VTA board proposed a new fare increase. Monthly passes for seniors and the disabled would increase by over 80% under this latest proposal.

Even with a series of fare increases, VTA would face a huge deficit. VTA reduced its deficit in 2002 by obtaining one-time revenues, including sales of land. Despite its recent announcement of a 21% transit service cut in October, VTA is facing a long-term deficit of \$60 million per year. Financial consultants to VTA warned of a possible 25% service cut next year, even while VTA still plans to open new light rail extensions to East San Jose and Campbell.

The ad-hoc committee reviewed options to raise revenue through new fees or taxes, including sales and payroll taxes.

One of the consultants estimated a 1% payroll tax would generate about \$600 million
[See **VTA**, page 5]

Caltrain unveils the Baby Bullet locomotive



The red and gray Caltrain Baby Bullet locomotive #923 parks at the Burlingame station for the dedication ceremony (Photo: Margaret Okuzumi)

By Bruce Shelton

On Friday, April 4th, the commuter rail community was introduced to the new kid on the block. At an early afternoon ceremony at the Burlingame train station, Caltrain's new "Baby Bullet" was formally dedicated and, as befits any christening, was launched with a bottle of champagne.

Although the Baby Bullet service will not commence operations until early 2004, the ceremony gave the JPB the opportunity

to keep the concept alive in the minds of the public and provide photo ops for continuing promotion. As BayRail Alliance members know, our local Baby Bullets are not to be confused with the Shinkansen of the Japanese National Railways. Indeed, speeds will not be significantly faster than the present commute fleet, currently averaging 45-70 mph with a top speed of 75 mph in the Sunnyvale area. However, these express

[See **Baby Bullet**, page 3]

Perata proposes bridge toll increase for transit

State Senator Don Perata (D-Alameda/Oakland) recently introduced SB 916, a bill to increase bridge tolls to \$3. The extra dollar to be charged on seven Caltrans-operated toll bridges (excluding the Golden Gate) would provide much needed funding, \$125 million per year, for the Caltrain extension to downtown San Francisco (DTX), Dumbarton rail, and a wide range of other transit improvements. The list of projects specified by SB 916 strongly favors cost effective transit -- a victory for transit advocates.

This milestone for transit advocacy largely lives up to principles articulated by the BayRail Alliance board of directors last

August. In a letter to the advisory committee convened by Senator Perata, BayRail supported using all of the new toll revenue on transit and related projects, with the Caltrain DTX/Transbay Terminal, Dumbarton rail, and new express bus service as high priorities. BayRail also endorsed the recommendation that funding allocations be based on 1) the potential for projects to attract the most new transit riders in each bridge corridor, and 2) present levels of traffic and tolls collected at each Bay crossing.

Perata's advisory committee on the toll
[See **Perata**, page 3]

Caltrain To Change Fare Structure, Procedures

At the Caltrain Joint Powers Board meeting on April 3, the board unanimously approved a new fare policy for Caltrain, effective in September. The new policy will implement the Proof-of-Payment (POP) system as well as adjust fares for all passengers. POP, which uses random inspections and fines assessed to fare evaders, already is standard procedure on light rail systems. Because it requires much less labor, BayRail Alliance has supported this change for many years.

Caltrain staff, citing fare inequities, crafted the new policy. In addition to implementing POP, the policy reduces the number of fare zones from nine to six. "The reduction of zones seems to us as a step backwards in making the fare scheme more equitable for passengers," said John Tseng, president of BayRail.

Besides having fewer zones, the new scheme will increase the base fare and the increment for crossing a zone boundary. For

some passengers, the fares will go down by as much as 30%, while the fares for some others will go up by about 30%. For riders between Gilroy and Tamien, fares will go up. These changes are intended to maintain the same average fare under the new zone structure.

BayRail Alliance devoted its March membership meeting to this issue. Many in attendance expressed concerns over the changes in the zone structure. Most attendees favored a distance-based, station-to-station fare structure. This scheme bases the underlying fare calculation on exact distance between any two stations. Under Caltrain's new fare zones, as well as under the existing arrangement, passengers riding short distances across zone boundaries are charged significantly more than passengers riding long distances within a zone. The new zone arrangement exaggerates this penalty. The fare structure preferred by the meeting attendees is somewhat similar to

BART, which uses a station-to-station scheme but calculates its fares based on a complex formula with many discounts and surcharges.

"We met with the Caltrain staff, who cited difficulties in administering the station-to-station fares. We responded with concrete proposals from our members on how to reprogram ticket vending machines (TVMs) to make station-to-station tickets easy to buy, as well as how to implement the distance-based fare scheme immediately for station agents," said Tseng.

As a part of the action to adopt the new fare policy in April, the Caltrain JPB also approved the goal of implementing a station-to-station fare scheme in the future. BayRail plans to work cooperatively with Caltrain staff to resolve the issues in the implementation of the latter. This will require continued monitoring and perseverance to ensure that Caltrain follows through on adopting a more equitable and user-friendly system.

From the Editor's Desk

By Andy Chow

SFO AirTrain

The AirTrain at SFO Airport is the newest rail system in the Bay Area. Its automated trains serve the airport terminals, rental car center, and the BART station which will open on June 22.

AirTrain, which charges no fare, was intended to replace the shuttle buses between the terminals and the satellite locations, and to encourage airport workers and travelers to take public transit to SFO. However, the system has certain deficiencies.

First, the AirTrain stations at domestic terminals are located across the roadway from the front of the terminals. To access stations from the terminal buildings, passengers may have to change levels three times: first from the main terminal to the pedestrian walkway (overhead or underground), then after crossing the roadway to the parking garage, another level change from the walkway to the concourse of the AirTrain station, and finally from the concourse to the platform. For travelers carrying luggage, this could mean three elevator rides, adding significant time penalty.

The second shortcoming is the lack of connection with Caltrain. Just west of the terminals, the AirTrain line passes as close as 1/4 mile to the Caltrain line across the freeway. Passengers transferring between AirTrain and Caltrain must take a one-station ride on BART to make the connection at Millbrae, which requires the purchase of a \$1.50 BART ticket. No special fare arrangement is currently planned for making this connection. (BayRail Alliance, under its former name Peninsula Rail 2000, campaigned unsuccessfully with other groups during the 1990s for a direct connection between AirTrain and Caltrain.)

While the idea that passengers can get to SFO via rail has obvious appeal, it will require multiple level changes and additional waiting for connections and to buy tickets. The current SFO-Caltrain shuttle bus is free, serves all terminals, and does not require as many level changes to reach one's destination.

A successful rail system requires good design. Time will tell how much of a difference AirTrain makes in peoples' travel choices between SFO and local destinations.

San Mateo County transportation sales tax

San Mateo County plans to place on next year's ballot a renewal of its 20-year half-cent sales tax for transportation projects. Recently a new committee was formed to plan and advocate for the renewal measure. The committee consisted of members of various segments of the community, as well as Jerry Hill and Mike Nevin of the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors. The committee hired a consultant and plans to conduct a poll of San Mateo County voters on what transportation projects they would vote for.

The upcoming measure also once again raises the Caltrain vs. BART question. Although BART could win the popularity contest, it fails miserably in the fiscal reality contest. Due to the BART extension from Fremont to San Jose, we are already seeing a huge financial crisis in Santa Clara County at VTA. Given the smaller tax base in San Mateo County, BART could be extended at best a few miles even if half or all of the new tax measure were devoted to it. Caltrain, on the other hand, has less costly upgrade projects now underway to run faster than BART. Caltrain also has new funding

[See **Editor**, page 7]

Caltrain formally dedicates its newest locomotive

[Baby Bullet, from page 1]

trains are expected to shorten the travel time between San Jose and San Francisco to under an hour, competitive with car travel.

The expedited service of Caltrain's "bullets" will be the result of three long passing sidings (located at Bayshore, just south of Redwood City and at Lawrence) and the implementation of Centralized Traffic Control. CTC, as it is known, is a state of the art, system wide, computerized program that permits all switches and signals to be centrally controlled remotely from the Amtrak/Caltrain dispatcher's office, known as San Jose Control. Presently, CTC exists only between the San Francisco terminal and the Bayshore station, and between Santa Clara and Tamien (and southward to Gilroy and beyond). The passing sidings, CTC and upgraded signal systems will permit speeds of up to 79 mph and, most importantly, the ability to route express trains around the slower locals.

The Baby Bullet equipment consists of 17 Bombardier cars and six new MP36PH-3C locomotives. The Bombardier cars, which were purchased from Seattle's commuter railroad (the Sounder), are on the property in Caltrain's red and gray livery and are currently in revenue service as three separate 5 car train sets. The first of the new MP36PH-

3C locomotives (#923 and, unlike Caltrain's other 22 locomotives, with no apparent plans to name it) was accepted on the property in March and is now in revenue service. The remaining five locomotives will be arriving individually over the next six months. The new engines are 70 feet long and are rated at 3600 HP. (Caltrain's current fleet of F40PH-2 locomotives are 56 feet and 3000 HP.) The added power, electrical generating capacity and electronics will make this a welcome addition to Caltrain's inventory. Metra, Chicago's commuter rail system, is the only other railroad presently utilizing this new engine.

Present at the April 4th dedication were State Senator Jackie Speier (who authored the enabling legislation for the Baby Bullets), JPB Chairman John McLemore, JPB Executive Director Mike Scanlon, Amtrak General Manager George Erickson, County Supervisor Mike Nevin, County Manager John Maltbie, Burlingame Mayor Mike Coffey, numerous other elected officials, members of the JPB and MTC staff. Following speeches, all in attendance were invited to ride the train. The significance of this occasion was the message it sends: Caltrain has its eyes on the future. All aboard!

Caltrain Baby Bullet locomotive and cars (Photo: Margaret Okuzumi)



State Senator Jackie Speier speaks to the press (Photo: Margaret Okuzumi)

Bridge toll plan to fund transit

[Perata, from page 1]

increase proposal included the Transportation and Land Use Coalition (TALC), of which BayRail is a member organization. TALC took the lead in advocating and prioritizing transit projects.

A partial list of the projects to receive funding:

- Caltrain DTX/Transbay Terminal: \$150 million
- Dumbarton rail infrastructure: \$135 million (47% to 75% of the total project cost)
- Express bus infrastructure and service improvements: \$517 million
- Seismic strengthening of BART's Transbay Tube: \$143 million
- Ferry Service Enhancements: \$107 million
- Safe Routes to Transit (See related article "Safe Routes: sensible solutions to

increase transit use"): \$20 million

- Transit operating costs: \$48 million annually, or 38% of the new toll revenue
- Sonoma Marin Commuter Rail Transit (SMART) extension from San Rafael to ferry connection at Larkspur: \$35 million
- "Regional Rail Master Plan": \$3 million
- Study of High Speed Rail Altamont Pass alternative and a new rail bridge parallel to the Dumbarton rail bridge: \$2 million
- Widening and new ramps for the 80/680/12 interchanges in Solano County: \$100 million

Although the list includes \$45 million for BART's Warm Springs extension (less than 10% of its total cost), major BART extensions are noticeably absent. \$96 million and \$65 million, respectively, would go to express bus or possibly rail in the Dublin-

Livermore I-580 corridor, and the proposed eBART diesel light rail connector in East Contra Costa County. Also absent: the Caldecott Tunnel "fourth bore" widening.

Transit advocates applaud the dedication of 38% of funds to transit operations costs, a need often neglected from transportation funding plans.

Once passed by the legislature, the package would require approval in March 2004 by voters in seven Bay Area counties (including Santa Clara, but not including Napa and Sonoma). Polling results predict that voters will pass the tax, and it enjoys support of leading politicians, MTC, and environmental and business organizations. However, it will be "competing" with other transportation funding measures on the ballot during the same year. These include the statewide High Speed Rail bond and transportation sales tax measures in some counties.

Capitol Corridor continues to impress

By Margaret Okuzumi

Under the capable leadership of Eugene Skoropowski, the Capitol Corridor continues to accomplish amazing things despite the recession. It achieved an all-time ridership high of 285,420 passengers during the first three months in 2003. Here's a report on other recent accomplishments and improvements in the works.

Same Budget. More Trains!

The Capitol Corridor has 24 weekday trains and 18 weekend trains that run between Sacramento and Oakland. Of those, 8 trains continue south to San Jose on weekdays and two trains extend east from Sacramento to Auburn. In addition, dedicated buses link San Jose and Auburn with other Capitol Corridor trains in Oakland and Sacramento.

The addition of two new trains on April 28 between Oakland and Sacramento is a striking example of the Capitol Corridor's determination to provide more service despite the state's severe financial crisis. The management team at the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority (CCJPA) found ways to add service without any additional state subsidy by working cooperatively with Amtrak on improving efficiency and cutting costs in other areas. In fact, the current 24-train service plan was implemented on what was originally a 16-train budget. Reporting to the Secretary of Business, Transportation and Housing, CCJPA staff run the trains like a business, and in a thoughtful manner. For example, check out their "business plan update" at www.amtrakcapitols.com/ccjpa/

The highest ridership on the Capitols is between Richmond and Emeryville. The top origin/destination pairs are 1) Sacramento/Emeryville, 2) Davis/Emeryville, 3) Martinez/Sacramento, and 4) Richmond/Sacramento. In 2001 improvements were completed at the Richmond station, currently the only direct connection with BART.

The CCJPA has representatives from six county transportation agencies along its route. Since 1998 BART has provided staffing (including Skoropowski and his

predecessor Bill Fleischer) for the CCJPA. The CCJPA's contract with BART was renewed in October 2001 for three years. Like Caltrain, the trains are operated and maintained by Amtrak. The trains run on Union Pacific tracks, except for a portion in Santa Clara and San Jose where they run on Caltrain tracks. The state covers operating costs, while local communities fund and control the stations.

Outstanding Customer Focus and Commitment

What's refreshing about the Capitol Corridor leadership is their thorough and intimate understanding of riders' needs. This requires managers who not only are dedicated to the riders, but who also frequently ride and continually evaluate their own service from an informed rider's perspective. The CCJPA

even has held public meetings on board the trains themselves, making it easy for riders to participate and to give feedback! (Note, however, that the average trip length on the Capitols is nearly 70 miles, compared to about 20 on Caltrain).

Skoropowski is very conscientious about communicating with passengers, especially concerning service disruptions or delays (and there have been many, often due to issues with Union Pacific which owns the tracks). Skoropowski, when apologizing for problems in his communications, outlines their causes with refreshing honesty. Sometimes he has offered discounts by way of apology. And most importantly, Skoropowski communicates the steps management is taking to avoid recurrences of the problem.

Through the Capitol Corridor website and in his emails, Skoropowski invites feedback from riders, and he often responds in an impressively thoughtful and analytical manner that reflects an intimate understanding of every aspect of the service and how it operates. For example, see www.amtrakcapitols.com/riding/message_to_riders.shtml. The Capitols also have sponsored a number of "Rider Appreciation Events". Despite episodes of

severe on-time performance problems, Skoropowski has managed to retain and grow a loyal following for his trains.

The Capitol Corridor offers riders free transfers to local transit in Sacramento, Martinez, Davis as well as AC Transit buses. Also available on board are discounted BART tickets and free copies of the Sacramento Bee. On a monthly basis, massages for \$1/minute are available.

To market the train service, the CCJPA has used newspaper ads and billboards along parallel freeways. They have offered promotions to attract leisure-oriented travelers to fill available seating capacity, including a "Kids ride free on weekends" program, and other discounts for group and solo travelers. Despite the discounts, farebox recovery for the Capitols has continued to increase from about 29% in 1999 to about 40% now. The CCJPA has been asked by the state to achieve a 50% farebox recovery by 2005.

Improvements on the Way

To meet its fare recovery targets, the Capitol Corridor plans to improve its reliability and performance. Improvement projects now underway include:

- * Electronic signs displaying real-time train status. The CCJPA recently installed electronic sign boards and loudspeakers at stations, as well as a GPS/transponder tracking system. The latter will enable riders to check real-time train status on the phone or via the web. This project is one month behind schedule and testing is underway. The system is expected to work by mid-year.
- The Yolo Causeway 2nd track is due to be completed at the end of 2003. This should significantly improve service reliability between Sacramento and Davis.
- Newark-Albrae track improvements/double tracking. Unfortunately this double tracking project has been shortened somewhat due to difficulty and delay in obtaining environmental permits. The CCJPA decided to move ahead with a scaled back project. If the weather is cooperative, the work should be completed within the next 18 months. This project will shorten another troublesome bottleneck and allow as many as 11 trains each way to/from San Jose.
- Newhall/CP Coast to Santa Clara track improvements. This double-track project

[See **Capitol Corridor**, page 5]



Capitol Corridor: customer service first

[Capitol Corridor, from page 4]

being pursued along with Caltrain and should be completed in the fall of 2004. It will allow the Capitols to stop at the downtown Santa Clara Caltrain station.

- San Jose 4th track project now is in the planning phase. Eventually it will allow 16 daily round trips to run directly to San Jose.
- Service to Reno: A Talgo-type tilting train is being contemplated for service to Reno that is currently under study. Tilt trains would be able to travel faster than conventional trains around the many curves over the mountains.
- Shorter-distance Commuter service. Locally funded studies for Auburn-Roseville-Sacramento-Davis-Solano County, and Solano-Contra Costa County commuter rail via the Capitol Corridor, are evaluating

options for integrating planned commuter service with the existing intercity service.

Unfortunately, due to state's budget constraints, platform and track improvement projects at Sacramento and Emeryville stations have been shelved. The rehabilitation of the Sacramento station continues to experience severe delays.

Despite some unavoidable problems, the Capitol Corridor is a true success story—a model for other agencies and the rest of the Amtrak system to emulate. The CCJPA's motto is "Innovation and Efficiency = Continued Success." Thanks to the dedication of staff, the future is bright for "high quality, safe, fast, frequent and reliable intercity rail transportation" in the Sacramento-San Jose corridor.

Hollister rail link postponed

The Council of San Benito County Governments (COG) voted to postpone a feasibility study for bringing commuter rail service from Gilroy (Caltrain) to Hollister. Several COG directors cited unresolved questions over whether a local property owner has rights to use the track. The decision means that COG will delay applying to the Federal Transit Administration for nearly \$1 million needed for the project. The project needs an additional \$240,000 in local matching funds. If approved, these would cover costs of preliminary engineering and environmental studies of options, such as the number and size of station stops and bridge crossings, needed to run the trains.

No agreement on financial solution for VTA

[VTA, from page 1]

annually, just enough to cover VTA's deficit. Tom Springer, the mayor of Gilroy and member of the ad-hoc committee, supported this option, arguing that it would provide a more stable revenue. However, the Silicon Valley Manufacturing Group (SVMG) strongly opposed the payroll tax. They argued that such a tax would cause businesses to relocate away from the valley.

Supporters of the tax noted that San Francisco levies a 1.5% payroll tax to fund public transportation.

The consultants also reviewed raising sales taxes. Although an additional sales tax could provide sufficient funding for VTA, sales tax opponents raised concerns that VTA could not attain financial stability with more sales taxes. In the last few years, VTA's revenue through sales taxes dropped by more than 25%.

VTA's financial stability committee held its final meeting on May 7. The committee members largely have been unable to agree on revenue options except for one, increasing gas taxes. However a countywide gas tax at one cent per gallon would generate about \$9.1 million annually.

In order to save transit services from drastic cuts, the Transportation and Land Use Coalition (TALC) is proposing that VTA temporarily bond against 2000 Measure A,

or take other steps to advance 2000 Measure A monies. These begin being collected in 2006. TALC proposes this to cover operation expenses for paratransit, new light rail extensions and existing bus service. This would sustain VTA services on a temporary basis until the economy recovers or a new funding source is found.

Measure A, approved by voters in November 2000, stated it would provide funds for a BART extension from Fremont to San Jose, Caltrain electrification, additional light rail extensions, and bus operation up to a fleet of 750 buses.

Transportation Defense and Education Fund (TRANSDEF) has produced a legal opinion supporting TALC's proposal. TRANSDEF's attorney states that VTA has a wide discretion over the expenditures of Measure A funds.

VTA management produced a legal opinion against the TALC approach. VTA's legal counsel claims that Measure A specifies it can fund only bus service that represents an increase above year 2000 levels. They argue that due to cuts in bus service since November 2000, no Measure A monies can be used for current bus operations or to help restore service to 2000 levels. Some members of the ad-hoc committee also have argued that BART, not bus service, was the reason why voters approved Measure A.

However, VTA legal counsel determined that the monies can be advanced for paratransit, because the level of paratransit service now provided is higher than that of November 2000.

Transit advocates are now pressuring VTA to obtain a court decision on whether 2000 Measure A monies can be used to preserve bus service. Some VTA board members, such as Francis LaPoll of Los Altos, support the effort to obtain a court ruling on the legality of the TALC approach.

Time is running out for VTA. "From first-hand observation, I can tell you that no permanent solutions are close at hand other than bankruptcy or massive VTA service cuts and fare increases," said Margaret Okuzumi, executive director of BayRail Alliance. BayRail is encouraging transit riders in Santa Clara County to contact VTA board members to urge them to advance 2000 Measure A funds to save transit service. "Our best near term hope is to get VTA to tap into 2000 Measure A funds, until a more permanent and stable new revenue source is developed. VTA needs a long-term solution as well," said Okuzumi.

Take action:

1. Attend a rally and VTA meeting on June 5, see back page for details.
2. Write or call the VTA board. Visit www.vtaridersunion.org for contact info.

Safe Routes: sensible solutions to increase transit use

By Robert Raburn and Russell Reagan

Most would agree that new and expanded rail and ferry routes are what Bay Area needs. But how to serve all workplaces and neighborhoods, not just those adjacent to major transit stations? Bus systems, which serve as feeders to stations, are strapped for cash and cutting back. Many BART station parking lots fill up early on weekday mornings, even where BART's rails have additional capacity.

These parking facilities are very expensive as well, with some multilevel structures costing over \$100 million. As Caltrain introduces the Baby Bullet service and moves toward rapid transit frequencies, access to stations poses a daunting challenge.

Or is it so daunting? "Safe Routes To Transit" (SR2T), a proposal of the East Bay Bicycle Coalition and the Transportation and Land Use Coalition, suggests eminently sensible bicycle and pedestrian projects to bring more riders to transit stations.

Aimed at securing a share of the \$1 bridge toll increase (see related article, "Perata proposes bridge toll increase for transit", page 1), SR2T is a new idea in the US that borrows from successful programs in Japan, Germany and the Netherlands. Each of these countries routinely links walking and bicycling with transit operations. As a result, the bicycle feeder mode has blossomed and continues to rise. Bicyclists in busy Tokyo account for over 36% all trips. Such shifts have occurred as a result in policy changes and investments. For example, the Bicycle Law issued and implemented by the Japanese government in 1980 encourages local governments to provide bicycle lanes and bicycle parking facilities near the metro stations.

The appeal of SR2T is that it is an incredibly cost-effective means to encourage new non-car trips and thereby reduce the demand for driving on the bridges. To be eligible for funding by the \$1 toll increase, SB 916 projects must target bridge congestion.

The SR2T proposal has three major components:

- Routine provision of safe bike/ped access to transit stations from all quadrants (i.e. no barriers to access from any side or corner of the station);
- Secure bicycle parking at all stations; and
- Removal of major barriers to walking and bicycling near transit stations.

The latter projects consist of adding bike lanes, off-street paths, safe crosswalks, or grade separated bike/ped crossings of roadways in selected locations. In other locations, intersections would be modified or redesigned to accommodate safe passage by non-motorists. Readers of this newsletter probably can think of several locations where such projects are needed.



A bike path running directly into the train station in Groningen, The Netherlands. Safe bicycle access to transit has been highly successful in the Netherlands, Germany, and Japan and serves as a model for the Bay Area.

The SR2T proposal also addresses deficiencies of bike accommodations on BART trains and transbay buses.

The following two paragraphs, excerpted from the SR2T proposal (on the web at www.ebbc.org/sr2t.pdf), address the issue of secure bicycle parking:

"A 1997 Polston Report for BART found that regular BART bicycle customers have a 50% chance of having their bikes stolen in a given year, 34 times higher than the risk of car theft. Many Bay Area cities have bicycle theft rates that are the highest in the country. Respondents to polls have identified the lack of secure, adequate storage and parking for bicycles as a major reason for not commuting by bicycle. BART has

capacity for over 40,000 parked cars, but only an estimated 2,400 bike racks. SR2T would address and correct this inequity.

"SR2T would fund large-scale attended bicycle parking at major transbay transit stations and stops for 30 years of operation. However, funding commitments should routinely be revisited, with local jurisdictions and transit agencies exploring ways to supplement revenue-generating services in order to develop sustaining BikeStation models [such as the facility at the Palo Alto Caltrain station]. Opportunities exist to shift to secure, unattended facilities. Already, large-scale automated bike parking facilities are in operation in Japan. The Bay Area has recently broken ground on a bicycle garage at El Cerrito Plaza BART station that utilizes computer-controlled locks and provides secure, on-demand bicycle access."

The SR2T proposal goes on to recommend large-scale attended bicycle parking and bag-check at major events that typically create bridge congestion.

The proposal recommended a "pared-down" SR2T project list that totaled over \$129 million. On April 17, Senator Perata held a press conference on SB 916, where funding levels for specific projects were made public. SR2T was allocated \$20 million in the lengthy list of capital expenditures from the proposed

\$1 toll increase.

Full details of the expenditure plan have yet to be determined, as only overall allocations for the eligible projects have been announced so far. Senator Perata noted that "most project applicants received only a fourth or fifth of what they requested." SR2T advocates were dismayed that Solano County would receive \$100 million (five times the amount allocated to SR2T) for the I-80/680/12 interchange.

You can help by contacting Senator Perata to let him know how important Safe Routes to Transit is for the future of Bay Area mobility. For more details, visit EBBC or TALC on the web (at www.ebbc.org, or www.transcoalition.org).

From the Editor's Desk

[Editor, from page 2]

opportunities from the proposed bridge toll increase (see "Perata" article on page 1) and the High Speed Rail (HSR) bond. If approved by voters next year, these funds would complement the new tax measure.

We have yet to see a credible, workable, close to realistic plan from the pro-BART camp. I doubt that such a plan for "Peninsula BART" will emerge. But at the same time we should continue efforts to sell Caltrain and HSR. The urgency to promote Caltrain and HSR doesn't change because a BART extension might or might not be on the ballot.

The HSR bond on the November 2004 ballot offers a great opportunity for rail in San Mateo County. A commitment from the state to help fund Caltrain as a part of HSR can provide the "shot in the arm" that the County needs to renew its sales tax and upgrade Caltrain.

What's missing from most news articles on BART-SFO is the Caltrain connection at

Millbrae. Due to unawareness of this connection, some people think that BART should continue south from Millbrae to the South Bay. That's where the political pressure is. We need to point out how a quick transfer makes it possible to reach areas served by Caltrain. We also need to bring more attention to Caltrain's upgrades. The idea of transferring from BART to Caltrain's Baby Bullet at Millbrae for a fast ride to San Jose (beginning in less than a year) is much more appealing to people than waiting 15 to 30 years for another BART extension. BART did well in publicizing that the connection with the airlines brings "BART to the world." We need to do the same to publicize the Caltrain connection that brings BART to the rest of the Peninsula and the South Bay.

We will be watching the sales tax renewal process and will also be communicating our message through our website and the media.

Visitors view both BART and Caltrain "Baby Bullet" at the Millbrae Station during an open house on May 3



Faregates separate between BART and Caltrain platforms at the Millbrae station

✂ Staying on Track

SOT2003-2

YES! I support improving Caltrain and Regional Transit!

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

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

BayRail Alliance General Meeting

June 9 - 6:40pm: Topic: San Francisco Proposition A

July 14 - 6:40pm: Topic: Caltrain strategic plan

Caltrain Joint Powers Board Meeting

June 5 - 10:00am

Caltrain Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting

June 18 - 6:00pm

Location for BayRail Alliance General Meetings:

Round Table Pizza,
1225 El Camino Real, Menlo Park,
near the Menlo Park Caltrain station

Location for Caltrain JPB and CAC meetings:

SamTrans administrative office,
1250 San Carlos Avenue, San Carlos,
one block west from San Carlos Caltrain station

Other events:

June 5: 5:00 pm **Save Transit Rally** and VTA Board meeting
Santa Clara County Building
70 W Hedding Street, Santa Clara

June 14: 9:00 am Transportation 2030: Getting from here to there
sponsored by Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC)
Palace Hotel, San Francisco
Visit www.mtc.ca.gov for conference details.

Submissions:

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

Meeting dates, topics, and locations are subject to change without notice.
For latest information: www.bayrailalliance.org.
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Inside: Caltrain unveils the Baby Bullet locomotive

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BayRail Alliance, formerly Peninsula Rail 2000, 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 from diesel 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 ACE and Amtrak Capitol Corridor; and building the proposed high speed rail line connecting the Bay Area and Southern California.