



# MINUTES

## **Community Advisory Committee**

Tuesday, November 20, 2024

### **1. Committee Meeting Call to Order**

Chair Siegal called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

**Present at Roll Call:** Members Sara Barz, Sean Kim, Venecia Margarita, Austin Milford-Rosales, Rachael Ortega, and Kat Siegal (6)

**Absent at Roll Call:** Member(s) Najuawanda Daniels (entered during 7), Phoebe Ford, Sharon Ng (entered during 4) (3)

### **2. Chair's Report – INFORMATION**

Chair Siegal began by sharing a piece of good news regarding Caltrain ridership. She said that ridership had significantly increased since the commencement of fully electrified service on September 21 with October ridership of 753,000 showing a 54% year-over-year increase, marking the highest ridership level since the onset of the pandemic.

Chair Siegal provided an update about a potential regional measure to address the fiscal challenges facing BART, Muni, Caltrain, AC Transit, and other transit agencies. She shared that the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) had scheduled a special meeting on this topic for December 9 at 2 p.m. During this meeting, the MTC was expected to consider taking action on language to guide authorizing legislation for a regional transportation measure, with the goal of introducing it early in the legislative session. Chair Siegal stated that she had directed staff to present an informational item on the regional measure to the CAC in January.

Chair Siegal provided an update on outreach opportunities for two Transportation Authority funded Neighborhood Transportation Program studies. She reported that the Walter U. Lum Place Public Space Study, initiated at the request of Commissioner Peskin, was in progress and had entered its second round of outreach in November. The study aimed to propose improvements to Walter U. Lum Place, creating a cohesive connection between the alleyway, the Portsmouth Square renovations, and other locations in Chinatown. Chair Siegal continued by stating that the Chinatown Community Development Center, serving as the outreach partner, had conducted engagement events with community groups and local merchants throughout November focusing on design concepts for the project. She said that an online survey had been launched to collect community feedback.

Chair Siegal reported that the Inner Sunset Transportation Study, requested by Vice Chair Melgar, began its outreach efforts this month. The project team hosted an open house community meeting where participants reviewed the results of the team's initial analysis and provided feedback on transportation barriers and issues related to traveling to, from, and around the Inner Sunset commercial core. Chair Siegal encouraged residents,



employees, and visitors of the Inner Sunset to learn more about the study and participate in an online survey and scavenger hunt.

There was no public comment.

**3. Nominations for 2025 Community Advisory Committee Chair and Vice Chair – ACTION**

Chair Siegal called for nominations for Chair for calendar year 2025.

Member Milford-Rosales nominated Chair Siegal who accepted the nomination.

There were no further nominations for Chair.

Chair Siegal called for nominations for Vice Chair.

Chair Siegal nominated Vice Chair Daniels who was not present to accept; however; Vice Chair Daniels subsequently joined the meeting and accepted the nomination during Item 11.

There were no further nominations for Vice Chair.

There was no public comment.

**Consent Agenda**

**4. Approve the Minutes of the October 23, 2024 Meeting – ACTION**

**5. Approve the 2025 Community Advisory Committee Meeting Schedule – ACTION**

**6. Internal Accounting Report, Investment Report, and Debt Expenditure Report for the Three Months Ending September 30, 2024 – INFORMATION**

There was no public comment.

Member Barz moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Member Ortega.

The minutes were approved without objection by the following vote:

Ayes: Members Barz, Kim, Margarita, Milford-Rosales, Ng, Ortega, and Siegal (7)

Absent: Members Daniels and Ford (2)

**End of Consent Agenda**

**7. Adopt a Motion of Support to Allocate \$3,300,000 and Appropriate \$350,000 in Prop L Funds, with Conditions, Allocate \$672,000 in Prop AA Funds, and Allocate \$4,929,000 in Traffic Congestion Mitigation Tax (TNC Tax) Funds, with Conditions, for Six Requests – ACTION**

Projects: Prop L: PCJPB: Maintenance of Way Track Equipment SOGR - FY25 (\$2,600,00). SFMTA: District 11 Traffic Calming and Sideshow Deterrence [NTP] (\$700,000). SFCTA: Westside Network Study (\$250,000), AV Resource Portal (\$100,000). Prop AA: SFPW: Innes Avenue Sidewalk Improvements (\$672,000). TNC Tax: SFMTA: Vision Zero Quick-Build Implementation FY25 (\$4,929,000).



Mike Pickford, Principal Transportation Planner; David Long, Senior Transportation Planner; and Anna LaForte, Deputy Director for Policy and Programming, presented the item per the staff memorandum.

During public comment, Mr. Edward Mason expressed concern about taxpayers having to foot the bill for the Autonomous Vehicle (AV) Resource Portal rather than the private AV companies. Mr. Mason also expressed concerns about sideshows in San Francisco and stated he would like to see future legislation to penalize sideshow drivers by requiring them to pay for street safety improvements.

Member Ortega asked if staff had contacted other cities with AVs to learn about their data collection practices. She asked why the Transportation Authority did not partner with cities to create a more expansive website that incorporates data from multiple cities.

Jean Paul Velez, Principal Transportation Planner, Technology Policy responded that conversations with other cities that have AV testing was ongoing. He noted that San Francisco was far ahead of most peer cities in terms of AV deployment on streets. He said that the City of Austin had a similar website, and San Francisco had an immediate need to collect and share city-specific information to assist with ongoing regulatory conversations. He commented that this would not prevent the creation of a larger website in the future with more information.

Member Ortega requested clarification regarding the cost of the project and the reasoning behind the reprogramming of funds from the AV Safety Standards and Metrics Project.

Mr. Velez, responded that there was an immediate need for the tool and data dashboard and that he anticipated that the aforementioned AV Safety project would continue with other sources of funding.

Member Barz expressed her support for the AV Resource Portal and echoed interest in expanding it to work cooperatively with other cities. She also expressed concern over the cost of the project.

Mr. Velez, responded that the \$100,000 was not solely allocated for creation of the website but also covered the research, data collection, data processing and quality control, which would require staff hours to produce. He explained that beyond the data dashboard element, the portal would also include tools for reviewing AV regulations, legislation, and research, which would be labor intensive tasks.

Member Barz asked if there was evidence that the sideshow deterrence speed bumps worked.

Damon Curtis, Traffic Calming Program Manager from the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA), responded that at locations where deterrents had been installed, they had not seen repeat sideshow activity. However, he acknowledged that the SFMTA could not be sure if the activity was just moving elsewhere.

Member Barz asked about the history of the Westside Network Study and why it was focused on mid-term investments.



Mr. Long responded that long-term that SFTP+ is San Francisco's long-term transportation plan and the vehicle to develop a long-range transportation vision and pipeline of projects. He said that our city and especially the west side does not have a great vehicle to develop projects for the mid-term, or approximately 10-15 years. This study is meant to help fill that pipeline.

Member Margarita asked about the possibility of exploring traffic calming and sideshow deterrence in districts other than District 11, as other districts have issues with street safety as well.

Mr. Pickford, responded that this project was funded through the \$700,000 Neighborhood Transportation Program that each district was allotted, which was why it was only focused on District 11.

Mr. Curtis responded that sideshows were a regional problem that could not be solved through street calming in just one district or one city and would require legislative action and cultural education.

Member Margarita asked how other districts could work on addressing sideshows when they occur in their neighborhoods.

Mr. Curtis responded that concerned neighbors should contact the SF Police Department (SFPD) to report sideshow activity. He said that SFMTA worked with SFPD to identify locations for traffic calming.

Member Margarita asked how many speed humps could be installed for \$700,000.

Mr. Pickford, stated that the project would complete traffic-calming at 10 intersections with four speed humps per intersection

Member Kim asked about the Westside Network Study and its coordination with the District 1 Multimodal Transportation Study.

Mr. Long said the two studies would be coordinated.

Member Kim asked for post-COVID travel data to be included in the Westside Network Study.

Mr. Long responded that the project team was vetting data sources to use with an emphasis on using post-COVID travel data.

Rachel Hiatt, Deputy Director of Planning, added that the plan was to use post-COVID data from the recently completed regional household travel diary survey funded in part by the Transportation Authority, pending quality assurance checks. She stated that staff would report back to the CAC on this project.

Member Milford-Rosales asked about the quick-build project on Cesar Chavez Street and the Hairball between Pennsylvania and Illinois and if there were future plans to extend it more.

Jen Wong, Transportation Planner at SFMTA, replied that there was an ongoing project called the Hairball project which would make additional improvements to wayfinding and safety improvements. She said more information could be found on SFMTA.com.



Member Milford-Rosales stated that Governor Newsom vetoed a bill that would require data reporting from AV companies and asked about the data sources for the AV Resource Portal.

Mr. Velez, responded that government agencies had already recorded some data. For example, he said that the California Public Utilities Commission and Department of Motor Vehicles reported publicly available data and said that the dashboard would collect and visualize this data.

Member Milford-Rosales expressed concerns over AV companies misreporting their data. He asked about other sources of available data such as social media accounts.

Mr. Velez, stated that part of the process for this project would be providing Quality Assurance/Quality Control of available data and they would use formally reported data from government agencies to begin with, but there would be flexibility to expand to additional sources in the future.

Chair Siegal stated that the Westside was supportive of transit investments as election results showed, and asked if there was a near-term opportunity to make transit access more robust to rebalance service planning.

Mr. Long, responded that the Westside Network Study was focusing on mid-term solutions such as capital projects and transportation demand management (TDM) improvements, but less so on near-term projects like service planning.

Chair Siegal requested an update from SFMTA on near-term transit service planning for the westside.

Member Margarita moved to approve Item 7, seconded by Member Barz.

The item was approved without objection by the following vote:

Ayes: Members Barz, Daniels, Kim, Margarita, Milford-Rosales, Ng, Ortega, and Siegal (8)

Absent: Member Ford (1)

**8. Adopt a Motion of Support to Authorize the Executive Director to Execute a Memorandum of Understanding with the Transbay Joint Powers Authority (TJPA), the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board, the California High-Speed Rail Authority, and the City and County of San Francisco to Support Implementation of The Portal Project, also known as the Downtown Rail Extension (DTX); Allocate \$9,000,000 in Prop L Funds, with Conditions, to the TJPA for The Portal Project Engineering Phase Activities; and Amend the Prop K Grants for the DTX Tunnel Engineering Options Study and DTX Project Development Activities Under Notice-to-Proceed #2B to Allow TJPA to Use the Combined Remaining Balance of \$921,395 for The Portal Project Engineering Phase Activities – ACTION**

Jesse Koehler, Rail Program Manager, presented the item per the staff memorandum.



Member Ortega asked for clarification on the funding authorization for the California Cap-and-Trade program, which is planned to provide a large amount of future funding for The Portal.

Mr. Koehler clarified that early discussions regarding the reauthorization of Cap-and-Trade had begun in Sacramento. He noted that the program did not expire until 2030, but the State had already made commitments for much of that future revenue. Mr. Koehler added that it was important that the discussion regarding reauthorization be advanced by both the administration and the legislature during the coming year. He indicated that The Portal project team was cautiously optimistic that the funding could be secured in within the next 2 to 3 years.

Member Ortega asked about the federal [Capital Investment Program] funding that had been promised and whether that funding was secured or if there was a possibility of it falling through.

Mr. Koehler responded that while staff could not know for sure, the project had successfully advanced in the federal process and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) would be looking for continued progress. He noted that the full funding grant agreement with the FTA for the Caltrain Electrification project had been signed by the first Trump administration in 2017 and that the best course of action for The Portal was to continue to meet FTA's requirements to build on the current momentum of the project.

There was no public comment.

Member Ortega moved to approve the item, seconded by Member Margarita.

The item was approved without objection by the following vote:

Ayes: Members Barz, Daniels, Kim, Margarita, Milford-Rosales, Ng, Ortega, and Siegal  
(8)

Absent: Member: Ford (1)

## **9. Better Market Street Update – INFORMATION**

Item 10 was presented before Item 9.

Flora Law, San Francisco Public Works (SFPW) Project Manager, presented the item per the staff memorandum.

During public comment, Edward Mason reflected on the evolution of the Market Street project, recalling its origins approximately 15 years ago when the Director of Public Works proposed repaving Market Street from Octavia to the Ferry Building at an estimated cost of \$115 million. He said over time, the scope expanded to include improvements to Market Street, with bicycles initially on Market Street, then redirected to Mission Street before being reintroduced to Market Street, escalating the project's cost to \$700 million. He expressed satisfaction with the decision to use pavers, noting concerns about the challenges faced during the original Market Street construction. He inquired about the current cost of the project and its future scope, specifically whether it would extend to The Embarcadero. Mr. Mason acknowledged the phased approach, highlighting the improvements from 7th Street and the enhanced crosswalk near Hyde and the library. He



commended the visible progress, describing it as money well spent, but emphasized the need to address lessons learned from past challenges. He concluded by expressing anticipation for the project's future developments.

Member Margarita inquired about the project's redesign, specifically its goal to align with available funding while minimizing construction impacts on local businesses. She noted the significant impact on small businesses, referencing closures on Market Street, and asked if there was any further information to share regarding this issue.

Ms. Law replied that her team collaborated with the Office of Economic and Workforce Development to regularly visit the corridor and check in with businesses. While some businesses opened during this period, she reported that others unfortunately closed. She stated that businesses were invited to join a committee focused on creating mitigation strategies and promoting the corridor through marketing efforts. She continued by saying that flyers and promotional materials were distributed, and businesses were encouraged to display them. Ms. Law then highlighted ongoing challenges in the complex corridor, including issues like broken glass. She noted that a fund provided support for repairs and cleaning, particularly when debris or damage occurred due to construction.

#### **10. Autonomous Vehicles Update – INFORMATION**

Jean Paul Velez, Principal Transportation Planner, Technology Policy, presented the item.

During public comment, Edward Mason stated that AVs had considerable energy consumption impacts, citing the use of diesel generators to recharge the vehicles, and called out concerns regarding the recycling of AV batteries. Mr. Mason also remarked that there were no regulatory fees to support the costs of SFMTA and Transportation Authority staff working on AV issues, asserting that the public bore such costs instead.

Member Ortega first shared a disclaimer that her partner and friend worked at Zoox. She noted that the graphs presented should clearly indicate the moment when Waymo became fully available to the public. She indicated that AVs improved north-south connectivity issues she personally experienced.

Member Kim stated he would be interested in knowing how the volume of AV travel compared to that of transportation network companies (TNCs or ride-hail) and taxis in San Francisco.

Mr. Velez responded that data was not readily available, but he had heard at a recent conference that California Public Utility Commission (CPUC) officials had stated that AVs amounted to 5% of the total VMT accrued by TNCs in San Francisco. Mr. Velez indicated that staff would research the issue further and follow up with Member Kim.

Member Margarita stated AVs represented jobs being lost by taxi and TNC drivers, and additional job losses could be on the horizon if the DMV adopted proposed regulations for freight transportation.

Member Ortega replied that AV freight was already operating successfully in California.



Mr. Velez clarified that AV freight services operate in other states, but were not currently permitted in California. He continued by noting that the DMV's proposed regulations were intended to legalize AV freight operations in California.

Member Milfred-Rosales expressed concern about conflicts between AVs and cyclists, citing the location of Waymo yards as problematic. He further mentioned his concerns regarding remote drivers not having proper licenses or not being located in California. He also requested clarification on whether AVs could be cited for moving violations, such as speeding.

Mr. Velez confirmed that there were no mechanisms for enforcing moving violations on AVs and shared that the DMV's proposed regulations, if implemented, would create new requirements for remote drivers.

Member Barz stated that she wished there had been such scrutiny applied to the innovation of the automobile at the beginning of the 20th century, saying we would be in a very different place societally if the same level of rigor that was being applied to this technology had been applied to that one. She then summarized the gist of the presentation, stating that there were a lot of levers to regulate AVs, but many of these had been effectively taken out of San Francisco's hands by the state and that the City had tried to challenge some of them through litigation, but had not been successful. She stated that San Francisco was trying to advance an incremental, performance-based approach to AV deployment by letting it happen but also trying to make it incremental and review the data as much as possible.

Mr. Velez replied that the presentation was an overview, so he was not sure if he would say that was the core message, but it was an overview of the range of activities and developments in the AV space. Specific to this notion of incremental performance basis, he explained that the story to some degree began with last year's process where both Cruise and Waymo were applying for full, unlimited, 24-hour, 7-day-a-week driverless operations in San Francisco, and they were seeing all sorts of incidents that raised concern. At that point, they had not operated in the whole city and Cruise had only operated in a very narrow portion of the city on the west side, and only at night. Mr. Velez commented that at the time, the thought that to jump to the whole city 24 hours, 7 days, seemed like a huge jump. He added that Waymo did not have a full commercial deployment permit, and it was jumping straight to the whole city. He stated that for the Transportation Authority, it seemed that what made more sense was to create a more gradual approach to deployment throughout the city and in tracking performance before opening those gates to operate in more complex areas of the city. He stated that was staff's advice to the CPUC and that advice was not taken. He stated the guidance from the Board was to actually explore fleshing out what an incremental performance-based approach would look like so that the Transportation Authority could engage and advise regulators on that vision. He added that this was the kind of research process the team had pursued this year, in parallel with all of the legislative engagement and connectivity described earlier.

Member Barz asked if Mr. Velez knew what happened to the batteries and whether there were any regulations on AV batteries.





Mr. Velez replied he did not know and did not think there were any regulations on the batteries.

Chair Siegal inquired whether there was, in fact, no positive regulatory outlook on the issue of citing AVs for moving violations.

Mr. Velez clarified that the original version of Assembly Bill 1777 included provisions for the enforcement of traffic codes on AVs. However, he said this language underwent changes during the legislative process and ultimately, the bill adopted a provision called the "Notice of Noncompliance," which allows a peace officer or traffic officer to issue a notice to an AV. Mr. Velez explained that the notice serves primarily as a monitoring tool to indicate that a violation has occurred; however, there were no enforcement measures or liability consequences attached to it. He noted that the law requires the DMV to develop regulations to further define this concept. He stated that the DMV's future regulatory drafts would provide more clarity on the matter and suggested that new bills might emerge to address any remaining gaps in the law.

Chair Siegal raised the question of whether the issue was the absence of a person to cite, noting that the vehicle code appeared to be directed at people rather than vehicles. She asked what the legal gap might be in this context.

Mr. Velez replied that a ticket could be likened to a form of arrest, as it was directly associated with a person. He mentioned that the structure of the system was designed with this concept in mind, though he was unsure if this was the root of the issue. He acknowledged some concerns but stated that he would follow up with more detailed information on the specific complaints and clarify any outstanding issues.

Chair Siegal acknowledged that any follow-up information would be helpful, noting that it was somewhat mind-boggling that the company in question could not be cited for vehicle code violations. She then raised another point, seeking clarification on the requirements for traditional TNCs (ride-hail like Lyft and Uber) stating that her understanding was that these companies were obligated to charge a fee for accessibility and that the revenue from this fee was intended to improve their accessible ride offerings. Additionally, she said she understood that TNCs were required to report requests for wheelchair-accessible vehicles, and whether or not these requests were fulfilled, to the CPUC. Chair Siegal also referenced a public comment submitted by Waymo, in which they mentioned partnering with another entity that provides wheelchair-accessible vehicles through their app. She questioned whether Waymo and its partners were subject to the same regulations as traditional TNCs.

Mr. Velez stated not on that front. He opined that it was more of a proactive matter on Waymo's behalf.

Chair Siegal asked if there was a way to determine whether people were using the service or how frequently it was being accessed. She also inquired whether the service's availability could be confirmed when individuals made requests.

Mr. Velez replied that the service available was not an AV, but rather a human-driven wheelchair accessible vehicle service.



## **Other Items**

### **11. Introduction of New Items – INFORMATION**

During this segment of the meeting, Members may make comments on items not specifically listed above or introduce or request items for future consideration.

Member Ortega requested an update on the recent article published by the *SF Chronicle* regarding the enforcement of daylighting regulations. She said the article stated that curb parking within 20 feet of an intersection would soon be ticketed. However, she expressed concern that SFMTA had clarified that they would not be marking most intersections with red paint due to resource limitations. Member Ortega expressed concern about the impact of this enforcement, especially for tourists who may not be familiar with local parking rules. She emphasized the potential for increased complaints and negative perceptions of the city, particularly as San Francisco relies on tourism revenue. Member Ortega suggested that instead of marking the entire curb, SFMTA could consider marking just a small section to indicate where parking was prohibited. She expressed a desire for more creative solutions to ensure enforcement does not lead to unnecessary complications.

Member Milford-Rosales provided a follow-up on his previous request from the last CAC meeting. He inquired about the plans for trolley buses in the city and reported that he was informed that the 14 bus line would be converted to a diesel hybrid rather than remaining a trolley bus line. He expressed concern about this decision, as the 14 line serves dense neighborhoods, and the shift to diesel would increase air pollution. Additionally, he said the 14 was a key line for commuters, and having it operate with reliable electric buses was vital for those who depend on it for work and school. Member Milford-Rosales requested further updates or email follow-ups, as he observed no consideration of alternatives during a recent SFMTA meeting. He was particularly concerned that the reasoning behind the decision was based on the eventual transition to battery buses, but with uncertain funding for future battery bus research under the new administration. He emphasized the need for clarity on the logic and reasoning behind the shift away from a reliable, environmentally friendly option.

Member Margarita followed up on Member Ortega's comment. She noted that the reduction of 14,000 parking spaces in the city was significant. This change would primarily impact low-income and no-income communities, many of whom may not be aware of the new law, especially if there were no clear markings on the streets. She expressed concern that the law, implemented earlier that week, had not been adequately advertised, leaving many people uninformed. Member Margarita acknowledged that the law was a state mandate but emphasized the need for better communication in San Francisco.

Chair Siegal requested further clarification regarding the future of the trolley bus fleet. She noted that there had been mixed signals from the agency about whether the technology was being phased out or not. In light of this, she suggested that SFMTA be invited to present on the matter and provide direct answers.

During public comment, Edward Mason stated his understanding regarding recent developments with Muni's transit plans. He noted that Muni issued a bulletin indicating the 49 Van Ness line would transition to a rapid bus, extending along Van Ness Avenue to



City College and operating as a rapid route on Mission Street. He interpreted this as a signal that the 47 line would likely revert to hybrid diesel, as having a rapid electric bus operating alongside a local electric bus would be impractical. He cited the example of the dual-operation setup on the 5 line to support this interpretation. Mr. Mason acknowledged potential confusion regarding bus line operations but emphasized that, based on his interpretation, this transition seemed to align with Muni's intentions. He mentioned that during meetings, Muni confirmed its commitment to retaining overhead trolley lines while integrating battery-electric buses. However, Mr. Mason expressed concerns about relying entirely on battery-electric buses. He highlighted that other Bay Area transit agencies were diversifying their fleets with a mix of hydrogen and battery-electric vehicles due to uncertainties about the viability and reliability of battery-electric buses. He also raised logistical concerns about the capacity to charge a large fleet of battery-electric buses and the potential strain on the electrical grid, particularly during peak hours.

## **12. Public Comment**

During public comment, Edward Mason recommended that the committee advise the Board to revive the congestion management plan [Downtown Congestion Pricing Study], specifically targeting congestion pricing in the northeastern quadrant of San Francisco. He cited New York City's implementation of a similar plan, which reduced tolls from \$14 to \$9, as an example of its potential success. Mr. Mason emphasized that funding was a critical issue, referencing a Muni meeting held at City Hall earlier that afternoon, where financial shortages were discussed. He suggested that resurrecting the Downtown Congestion Pricing Study, available online, could serve as a significant revenue source, particularly if adjusted to prioritize funding for Muni. Without such measures, he warned that residents might increasingly rely on alternative transportation services like Waymo. He strongly encouraged the committee to make a motion urging the board to act on this proposal.

## **13. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:47 p.m.