





Memorandum

Date: 03.13.14 **RE:** Plans and Programs Committee
March 18, 2014

To: Plans and Programs Committee: Commissioners Mar (Chair), Kim (Vice Chair), Breed, Campos, Yee and Avalos (Ex Officio)

From: Elizabeth Sall – Interim Deputy Director for Planning 

Through: Tilly Chang – Executive Director 

Subject: **ACTION** – Recommend Adoption of the Caltrain Oakdale Station Ridership Study Final Report

Summary

Consistent with the voter-approved Prop K Expenditure Plan, a new infill Caltrain station is proposed at Oakdale Avenue in the Bayview to replace the closed Paul Avenue Station and provide improved regional jobs access from southeastern San Francisco neighborhoods. In 2005, the Transportation Authority completed the Bayview-Oakdale Caltrain Station Study, which determined that locating a station at Oakdale Avenue is physically feasible and developed conceptual designs with community input. The same year, through Resolution 06-13, the Transportation Authority Board appropriated \$50,000 in Prop K funds to conduct the Caltrain Oakdale Station Ridership Study in collaboration with Caltrain and the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency. The purpose of the Study is to determine whether a station at Oakdale Avenue would generate sufficient demand to warrant a new station and to answer additional questions from the community, including where riders would originate and how they would access the station. Projected ridership is strong, indicating sufficient demand for a station, with the majority of passengers expected to be residents of nearby neighborhoods traveling to Peninsula employment centers. Most riders would access the station by walking, bicycling, or transit. This memorandum also outlines next steps for the Oakdale Station should Caltrain, community members, and stakeholders continue to support moving forward. **We are seeking a recommendation to adopt the Caltrain Oakdale Station Ridership Study Final Report.**

BACKGROUND

Caltrain commuter rail service, provided by the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (PCJPB or Caltrain), provides a key link between San Francisco and the communities and employment centers along the Peninsula. Before 2005, Caltrain had four stations within San Francisco – Fourth and King, 22nd Street, Paul Avenue and Bayshore. The Paul Avenue station, which served the Bayview neighborhood, was poorly located, had very low levels of service and ridership, and consequently, was closed in 2005. The concept of replacing it with a new station at Oakdale Avenue developed from community interest in improving regional transit access in the Bayview as a means to increase employment access and support economic development.

The 2002 Bayview Hunters Point Revitalization Concept Plan identified the Oakdale site as the best place for a new station given its location midway between the 22nd Street Station to the north and the Bayshore Station to the south and near the center of the Bayview neighborhood. The location is also accessible from major planned development projects in the southeastern corner of the city, including the redevelopment of Hunters Point Shipyard. The Oakdale Station project is identified as a priority in the Prop K Expenditure Plan, and the Transportation Authority has led initial planning work to determine the feasibility of the concept in support of future Caltrain decisions on whether to add the

proposed station. In 2005, the Transportation Authority completed the Bayview-Oakdale Caltrain Station Study, which determined that locating a station at Oakdale Avenue is physically feasible and that the location is superior to alternative sites in the Bayview. That study also developed conceptual station designs with community input.

Following completion of the Station Study, the Transportation Authority Board appropriated \$50,000 in Prop K funds (Resolution 06-13), to conduct the Caltrain Oakdale Station Ridership Study in collaboration with Caltrain and the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA).

The purpose of this report is present the Ridership Study, included as Enclosure 1, and to seek a recommendation for its adoption.

DISCUSSION

The Ridership Study evaluates whether a station at Oakdale Avenue would generate sufficient demand to warrant an infill station at this location and answers additional questions from the community regarding where riders would originate and how they would access the station. Using the Transportation Authority's SF-CHAMP travel demand model, the study team analyzed expected ridership at the station in 2030, when the planned Hunters Point Shipyard and other bi-county developments are expected to be complete. Caltrain is projected to provide greater service frequency by 2030 with electrification, and additional Muni service is also planned along Palou Avenue, one block from the station site. The study team evaluated different levels of Caltrain service to an Oakdale Station in order to identify the highest-ridership scenario.

Service and Ridership: Projected ridership at a potential Oakdale Avenue Caltrain Station is strong, with approximately 4,700 boardings and alightings per day, a level similar to projected ridership at 22nd Street Station and about twice current ridership there, indicating that there is sufficient demand for a station in the area. The primary directional pattern would be riders boarding at Oakdale Station in the morning heading southbound to Peninsula employment centers and returning northbound to the station in the evening. Most riders would originate from the surrounding communities of Bayview, Hunters Point, and Silver Terrace, with additional passengers arriving from neighborhoods to the west.

System-wide ridership at existing stations is expected to increase substantially by 2030, with about 60,000 daily boardings and alightings at San Francisco's stations compared to about 25,000 today. With careful balancing of service levels between stations, an Oakdale Station could have a positive impact on overall Caltrain system ridership, potentially adding about 2,000 net riders per day. The highest-ridership scenario would provide Local and Limited service to the Oakdale Station, with the potential for several trains per hour in each direction during commute periods. Eventual service levels at all stations in the corridor are yet to be determined as Caltrain plans for a future Blended System of high-speed rail and commuter rail services.

Station Access and Parking: Riders would reach the Oakdale Station primarily by non-auto modes. Walking and transit are projected to be the most common means of reaching the station, together accounting for almost 80 percent of trips. Just 12 percent are projected to arrive by auto, including those who drive and park, carpool, and are dropped off at the station. Residents have identified the need to minimize local traffic and parking impacts as key issues with development of a new station. Additional trips could be shifted from automobile access to other modes if Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies are implemented. These include Muni passes included with residential units in new developments, bicycle sharing and access improvements, residential permit parking on nearby streets, pricing of station parking, and shuttles. Pedestrian safety and security measures, such as upgraded

lighting along key access routes, could also be implemented with the station to address Bayview residents' personal security concerns and encourage riders to walk to the station.

Next Steps: Although the Ridership Study demonstrates that an Oakdale Station would have robust ridership, we are not recommending immediately proceeding with the next steps for the Oakdale Station so that we can focus our efforts on the Quint Bridge replacement project and the related Quint-Jerrold Connector Road, which are being designed to accommodate the potential future station. Once these projects are further along in their development (with scopes and schedules more solidified), and if Caltrain, community members, and stakeholders continue to support moving forward with the Oakdale Station, next steps would include additional planning and design, funding plan development, and environmental study by both the Transportation Authority and Caltrain. Several key issues remain to be addressed, including Caltrain service planning and expansion policies; station access, parking, and demand management strategies, and project costs and funding. In addition, further planning for an Oakdale Station should be coordinated with development of a vision for the Caltrain corridor in San Francisco as a whole.

We are seeking a recommendation to adopt the Caltrain Oakdale Station Ridership Study Final Report.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Recommend adoption of the Caltrain Oakdale Station Ridership Study Final Report, as presented.
2. Recommend adoption of the Caltrain Oakdale Station Ridership Study Final Report, with modifications.
3. Defer action, pending additional information or further staff analysis.

CAC POSITION

The CAC considered this item at its February 26 meeting, and unanimously adopted a motion of support for the staff recommendation.

FINANCIAL IMPACTS

None.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommend adoption of the Caltrain Oakdale Station Ridership Study Final Report.

Enclosure:

1. Caltrain Oakdale Station Ridership Study Draft Final Report