



## In This Issue:

On the Topic.....page 2

Capitol Corridor Plans to Introduce Business Class.....page 3

South Bay Tax Drop Puts Caltrain Projects in Peril.....page 4

Q&A on High Speed Rail.....page 4

Membership Form.....page 5

Calendar of Events.....page 6

## Bay Crossing Study Supports Dumbarton Rail

After two years, the details of the Bay Crossing Study conducted by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) were released on April 3, 2002. The study provided cost estimates of various transit and highway alternatives across San Francisco Bay. The study included two conventional rail projects (potential extensions of Caltrain, Amtrak, and/or ACE). It identified one of these, Dumbarton rail, as the least costly option. However, it also found another proposed conventional rail crossing, a new underwater tube between San Francisco and Oakland, to be the most expensive option.

With a pricetag of \$286 million, conventional rail service over the reconstructed Dumbarton rail bridge would extend Caltrain from the Peninsula to Newark, Fremont, Union City—and potentially to continue via the ACE line to Pleasanton, Livermore, and San Joaquin County.

Estimated to cost up to \$11.8 billion, a new rail tube between downtown San Francisco and downtown Oakland is the most expensive option examined, according to the study. Additional options included a mid-bay freeway bridge just north of SF Airport (\$8.2 billion), widening of the San Mateo Bridge (\$2 billion), a new BART tube between downtown San Francisco and  
[See **Dumbarton**, page 4]

## Economic Slump Impacts Transit: Higher Fares and Service Cuts

The poor economic situation since last year has caught up with various transit agencies all over the Bay Area.

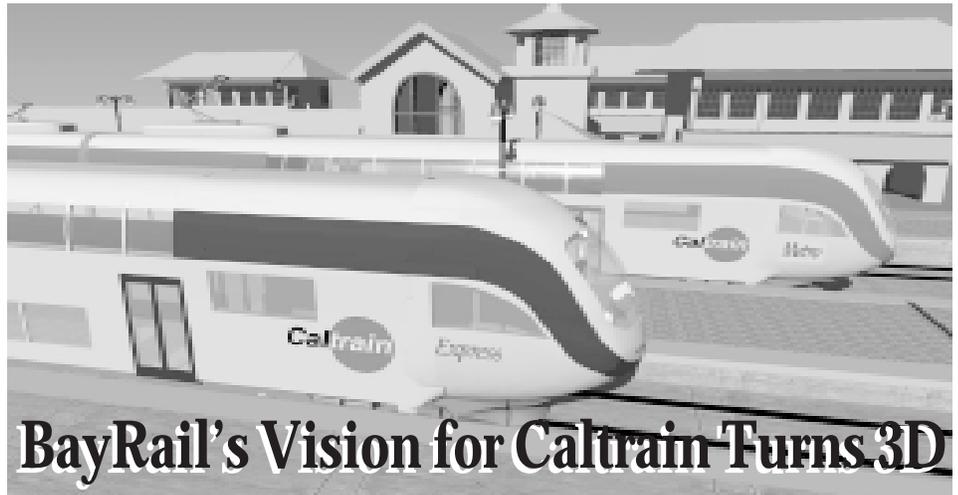
For a number of Bay Area transit carriers, the drop in fares and tax revenue sources is forcing cutbacks. In San Mateo County, SamTrans recently approved a fare increase to cover the agency's deficit. BART directors are looking at various cost-saving measures and are considering implementing parking fees to reduce an operating shortfall of about \$60 million in the 2002-2003 fiscal year.

In Santa Clara County, the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) has suffered a significant drop in sales tax revenue. VTA

relies on this revenue to cover 80% of its bus and light rail operating costs. The downturn prompted VTA to propose a 15% fare increase and 5% reduction on transit services. As part of the service reduction plan, VTA proposed eliminating a number of routes that connect with Caltrain. In addition, VTA plans to layoff about 300 employees to reduce operating expenditures.

San Francisco Muni has made minor cuts in bus frequency on a few routes, and AC Transit was about to consider a fare increase as this newsletter was going to press.

The sudden drop in sales tax revenue  
[See **Higher fares**, page 2]



A major goal of BayRail Alliance has been to convince government officials and the public that Caltrain is the future of rail transit on the Peninsula. For San Mateo County officials and business leaders, BayRail Alliance debuted a series of three-dimensional images and animations depicting a potential future Caltrain system. BayRail presented these at the Transportation Summit hosted by Samceda, the San Mateo County Economic Development Association, on April 12. The Samceda Summit featured a panel discussion on "BART, Caltrain, Or Both."

One of the 3D images presented by BayRail depicted an electrified, aerodynamic express train bypassing a local train at a four-

track Caltrain station. An animated map depicted the movement of express and local trains along the Peninsula, "Some people looked at the images and were amazed of how sleek and modern Caltrain looks in our vision," said BayRail board member Dan Krause.

The 3D renderings are a component of BayRail's campaign to promote a vision for Bay Area conventional rail. As a part of that vision, BayRail is advocating a vastly upgraded local train service named Caltrain Metro, which features frequent trains at least once every 15 minutes all day, level boarding, new electrified multiple-unit (self propelled)  
[See **3D**, page 2]

## ON THE TOPIC... From the Executive Director

by Margaret Okuzumi

Feedback from our members and friends is always helpful to us. I hope that sharing the following email exchange between me and BayRail member Robert Clark will help clarify for our readers how BayRail Alliance arrived at certain policy decisions.

### Robert Clark wrote:

*Margaret, Thanks for keeping me informed about what's happening with Caltrain. I live in Hollister and commute by train from Gilroy to Hillsdale on a daily basis. Living in San Benito County, I don't often write the people you suggest but occasionally some issues are important enough that I do anyway.*

### Margaret Okuzumi replied:

Thanks! Wow, I don't envy your commute. You're especially affected by VTA's reluctance to devote any resources to extending Caltrain to Salinas, for which the Governor had budgeted a small amount of money (relatively speaking as far as these capital projects go), \$5 million.

*RC: Reading about fare increases and Gilroy service cutback reminds me of what happened in Seattle in the 1960's. I was going to college (UW) then and my summer job was driving a bus for Seattle Transit. Over the years ridership was dropping off so the Transit system was having a hard time meeting their budget. So they kept raising fares and cutting back on service. That resulted in lower ridership, and the cycle continued. Then, someone had the bright*

*idea of decreasing fares and improving service. And, voila, ridership increased again. (And I was able to complete college.) I say, provide something that people want and they will buy it.*

*I can appreciate the need to increase fares to keep up with inflation. After all, operating expense does go up too. However, instead of cutting back on Gilroy service, increase it. How about a later train heading north and an earlier train returning? Maybe shoppers would use it.*

**MO:** Could be. Probably more cost-effective and easily achievable (since you wouldn't have to negotiate with UP over trackage rights) would be for VTA to provide a super express bus instead of just the slow local #68 bus for such mid-day travel. I've been asking VTA for that for some time, but they need to hear more from folks who actually live south of San Jose.

**RC:** *I also agree about California Avenue improvements. And how about Santa Clara and Atherton? Santa Clara has become very busy since the ACE train stops there. Additional parking for Sunnyvale is nice, but how about helping the people who ride the trains!*

**MO:** Yes, Santa Clara and Atherton also need to be improved. We keep hitting on California Avenue because it's heavily used, it epitomizes all the problems, and because we know that VTA won't consider doing much at Santa Clara. For Santa Clara, despite the great need, VTA is holding off improvements until they complete their design for the BART extension, which by act of sheer will, they declared BART would go to Santa Clara from San Jose (even though there isn't really room for it).

## Caltrain Weekend Construction Delayed

Caltrain has postponed the start of the "CTX" construction and the weekend shutdown until early July. Weekend regular and special trains will continue to operate until that time. The contractor was unable to line up needed construction crews and equipment, resulting in the delay. During the weekend shutdown, Caltrain will provide substitute buses between San Francisco and San Jose, stopping only at Hillsdale and Palo Alto stations. BayRail asked for this replacement bus service to accommodate weekend travelers affected by the shutdown.

The CTX project will install express tracks and centralized train control necessary to operate Caltrain Express. This new service will make only four stops between San Francisco and San Jose, and cut travel times between the two cities to just over half that of current local service. Caltrain plans to launch its new express service by the end of 2003.

## Higher Fares

[Higher fares, from page 1]

has impacted Caltrain as well. SamTrans, San Francisco, and VTA jointly fund the operation of Caltrain. In April, members of the Caltrain Joint Powers Board approved a general fare increase of about 10%, as well as the elimination of the off-peak discount. Mike Scanlon, Executive Director of Caltrain and SamTrans, announced that the agency also was considering cutting four weekday trains to reduce expenditures.

BayRail Alliance has recognized the financial difficulty that Caltrain is facing—despite the the impact it would have on Caltrain riders. The last time Caltrain fares were increased was in 1998," BayRail's Executive Director Margaret Okuzumi said. "We at BayRail feel that this increase is inevitable. BayRail is not opposing the Caltrain fare increases outright."

blended these elements into photo-realistic surroundings. "We are extremely pleased with

## 3D Images Envision Caltrain Metro & Express

[3D, from page 1]

rail cars, and grade separation of every road crossing on the Caltrain line. In addition, BayRail is promoting further improvement of the planned Caltrain Express (a.k.a. Baby Bullet). These trains would have all the same characteristics of Caltrain Metro, but with a top speed of over 100 mph on their own dedicated track along most of the corridor.

The complex job of turning BayRail's proposal into 3D images belonged to David Vasquez, a professional computer artist. His previous work included images for proposed Muni Metro extensions to San Francisco's Chinatown and to the Richmond District, as well as of proposed dedicated bus lanes along Van Ness Avenue. In the renderings, Vasquez portrayed transit vehicles, stations, and trees, and



the images," said John Tseng, President of BayRail Alliance.

In the near future, BayRail plans to develop a full-scale presentation and add more 3D images of Caltrain Metro and Express, to show how these services will integrate with the proposed Dumbarton rail and California High Speed Rail. "We hope to present our vision to various community and business groups as well as to public officials. We are going on tour to help inform the entire community of the great resource we already have—Caltrain," Said Krause.

# Capitol Corridor Plans to Introduce Business Class

After celebrating its 10th anniversary in December, the Amtrak Capitol Corridor plans to expand service and position itself as the preferred way to travel between Sacramento and the Bay Area.

In its moves to enhance service, Gene Skoropowski, the managing director of Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority (CCJPA), announced the agency's plans to introduce Business Class sometime this summer. "Business Class will work much like the differences in classes of service on a plane or ship, or on most trains in the rest of the world." Skoropowski wrote in a recent message to the EastBay train email list.

According to the CCJPA, one car on each train would be designated as a Business Class car, and a d v a n c e reservations would be required for passengers. In return for the higher fare, Business Class



passengers would receive free newspapers and coffee. Skoropowski said the idea of Business Class came from passengers, many of whom said they would be willing to pay a higher fare for reserved seating on the trains. The Capitol Corridor also recently designated one car per train as the quiet car, based on the success of such a program on the Boston-Washington corridor.

Besides introducing Business Class and quiet cars, the agency also has focused on improving speed and reliability, as well as increasing frequency. Currently the CCJPA is working with Caltrain and Union Pacific to add a fourth track between Santa Clara and San Jose. They plan to extend three more round trips to the Silicon Valley from Sacramento and the East Bay.

At the same time, the Capitol Corridor plans to raise the prices of monthly passes by 10% and 10-ride tickets by 5% on May 14. "Capitol Corridor monthlies are, I believe, the most heavily discounted monthlies in the country," wrote Skoropowski. He stated that higher fares were necessary to expand train service.

# High Speed Rail Bond May Go Before Voters

Senate Bill 1856, introduced by State Senator Jim Costa (D-Fresno), would place on the November 2002 statewide ballot a bond issue to fund High Speed Rail between Northern and Southern California. If the legislature and then the voters approve the plan, the state will start issuing bonds to finance right-of-way acquisition, engineering, and construction. Also the state will begin the process of seeking federal and local funds to supplement state funding.

While the details have yet to be decided as of this writing, the initial plan for the bill is to partially fund a high speed rail line between San Jose and Los Angeles. The bond issue may raise \$6 billion for this purpose. The remaining portions of the proposed 700-mile HSR system serving Sacramento, San Francisco, and San Diego would be built in future phases.

Concerns have been raised by the cities and areas not served by the "phase one" HSR system, such as San Francisco. Supporters of the bill argue that, due to the economic downturn, costs must be kept to a minimum. At the same time, they see an opportunity in the current political climate:

voters who desire new travel alternatives, especially after 9/11.

Past HSR planning studies have found that if the HSR line from Southern California terminated in downtown San Francisco, it would attract significantly more riders than if it terminated in San Jose or Oakland. Nevertheless, some HSR proponents believe that Los Angeles to San Jose service is likely to generate an operating profit, and that would help pay for constructing the rest of the system. In this way, the starter line would also provide the momentum needed for building the complete system.

At present, various upgrades are underway to enable HSR passengers from San Jose to reach San Francisco via the Caltrain line. Passengers could transfer to Caltrain's new express service (slated to begin in late 2003). Also, Caltrain is anticipated to be electrified by the time HSR reaches San Jose from the south, and thus could allow HSR trains to continue to San Francisco at slower speeds.

These and other issues are likely to be raised when the Senate Transportation Committee debates SB 1856, scheduled for May 7.

To BayRail Alliance members and friends:

## Board of Directors Election: BayRail Seeks Candidates

BayRail Alliance will be holding its annual election for Board of Directors at the July 8 general meeting.

If you are interested in being a candidate for the BayRail Board of Directors, please notify election chair Dan Krause of your intention to run, by phone or e-mail (see below), as soon as you can. To be a candidate, you must be a currently paid BayRail Alliance member, and submit a statement of 200 words or less on your qualifications and desire to serve on the board, along with the signatures of five currently paid BayRail Alliance members by Monday, June 10. You may request names of current members for this purpose. With your statement, please include your city of residence, occupation, and employer. Please send these to the following address (e-mail preferred):

BayRail board election, c/o Dan Krause  
 415 Paul Avenue  
 San Francisco, CA 94124  
 (415) 656-0999  
 dan@bayvillagebuilders.com

A ballot will be mailed to all BayRail voting members in mid-June. If this newsletter was mailed to you, your BayRail membership expiration date is on the attached address label. If your expiration date is before July 8, 2002, then you must renew your membership in order to be a candidate or vote in this election.



# South Bay Tax Drop Puts Caltrain Projects in Peril

Due to further decline in sales tax revenue, Santa Clara County and VTA have proposed to eliminate some Caltrain improvement projects. These projects were earmarked for funding from the Measure A/B sales tax passed by voters in 1996. The newest estimate projected a revenue shortfall of \$205 million, up from the \$114 million projected last December.

To address this deficit, VTA staff presented an "Issue Paper" to the Board of Supervisors on April 30. In the document, they gave recommendations for reducing expenditures. These included preserving funding for projects that are already well into design or under construction. However, they proposed cutting the Measure B Caltrain budget by \$20 million, a reduction of almost 25%. Besides Caltrain, the county also has

considered cutting projects along Highways 17 and 85.

The impacts to Caltrain projects would be significant because most of the individual projects along the rail line have yet to reach the design and construction phase. "Caltrain is going to take a big hit, except for certain parking projects that are well into design," said BayRail executive director Margaret Okuzumi. Okuzumi also serves on the Measure A/B Citizen Watchdog Committee.

To offset some of the revenue reduction, state funding that was allocated in 2000 by the Governor would replace sales tax funding for Caltrain projects south of San Jose.

Despite the budget woes, BayRail believes that some Caltrain safety improvements, which also would speed up service, need to be funded. These include

outside boarding platforms and pedestrian undercrossings at California Avenue and Santa Clara stations. These stations currently present a safety hazard with narrow center platforms. They also delay service because only one train can enter the station at a time. "Our highest priority is station improvements which enhance safety, train speed and reliability." Okuzumi said, "With help of letters and phone calls from our members and friends, BayRail sent a clear message and we are still hopeful that VTA and the county will use any remaining funds to improve unsafe stations."

## Study Favors Dumbarton Rail

[Dumbarton, from page 1]

Oakland (\$10.3 billion), expanded connector roads to the Dumbarton Bridge (\$760 million), and operational improvements plus express bus expansions on all bridges (\$820 million).

BayRail has been a strong advocate for Dumbarton Rail and a future conventional rail crossing between San Francisco and Oakland. In early 2001 in response to BayRail and others, the Caltrain Joint Powers Board voted to become the future operator of Dumbarton Rail. Plans for the Caltrain extension to downtown San Francisco also include tail tracks to connect to a future transbay crossing.

The much lower cost of Dumbarton Rail presented by the Bay Crossing Study should further reinforce political support for the train service. Moreover, local sales tax programs in San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Alameda Counties contain earmarks for the service. Many public officials who support Dumbarton Rail have voiced concerns about the increased traffic on existing roadways, especially Highway 101 near SF Airport, if a new highway bridge were built.

Because of the expected high cost for a conventional rail crossing between San Francisco and Oakland, transbay buses (and to a lesser extent, ferries) will be the focus for expanded transit between Oakland and San Francisco in the near term. The Caltrain downtown extension is part of a larger project for an improved and expanded Transbay Terminal to serve additional buses from the East Bay. Transbay buses, which would greatly benefit from additional reserved lanes, are able to serve many cities and neighborhoods in the East Bay that are not well served by BART.

## Q and A High Speed Rail

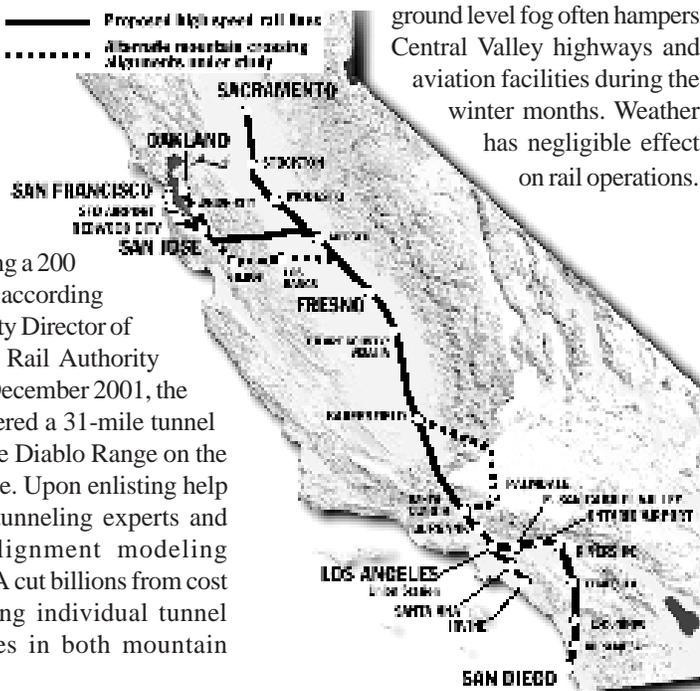
**How would High Speed Rail cross the mountain ranges between the Bay Area, the Central Valley, and the Los Angeles area?**

Consultants have drawn up detailed engineering studies showing how HSR would cross the Diablo Range southeast of San Jose, and the Tehachapi Mountains south of Bakersfield. Mountain routing options include extensive tunnels and bridges, so that grades do not exceed 3.5%.

(By comparison, 6% is the steepest grade found on freeways over the mountains.) Even while climbing a 3.5% grade, high speed trains are capable of maintaining a 200 mph or faster speed, according to Dan Leavitt, Deputy Director of the CA High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA). Prior to December 2001, the CHSRA had considered a 31-mile tunnel all the way across the Diablo Range on the San Jose-Merced line. Upon enlisting help from international tunneling experts and state-of-the-art alignment modeling software, the CHSRA cut billions from cost estimates by limiting individual tunnel lengths to six miles in both mountain crossings.

**Why have HSR planners selected the Highway 99 corridor through the Central Valley? Why not route HSR along I-5, or via 101 along the coast?**

The Highway 99 route makes the most sense for serving the greatest number of people on one line, and for linking Southern California with both Sacramento and the Bay Area via a single line for most of the distance. A large proportion of HSR ridership is projected to come from the Central Valley, from cities such as Stockton, Modesto, Fresno and Bakersfield. Airlines serve these cities poorly, and ground level fog often hampers Central Valley highways and aviation facilities during the winter months. Weather has negligible effect on rail operations.



Gallery of Advanced Trains

German S-Bahn: a Model for Caltrain to Follow By Michael Kiesling, www.arch21.org

Coming in the future? Imagine a Caltrain with express trains sprinting from San Jose to San Francisco in 45 minutes. Silicon Valley to SFO in half an hour! No traffic!

Alongside the express trains, Caltrain will need new trains for its local service. Since they'll serve all the towns that Caltrain serves today, they should be able to get people on and off quickly, and run on a much speedier schedule. A similar service serves most cities in Germany, called the S-Bahn, for "suburban" trains. Much like a fusion of BART service on Caltrain tracks, the German S-Bahn runs short, quick trains on a very frequent schedule.

In Munich, they're deploying the second generation of S-Bahn train, model ET 423, built by Bombardier. The four-car trains are articulated together into one long unit, allowing people to move from one end of the train to the other without opening one door. For boarding, the train is built low enough that there are no steps needed. Also, many doors let people quickly

move on and off the train, even with bikes. Wheelchair users can activate a small ramp which automatically extends from any door.

On the train, there are many flip-up seats to make room for bikes and wheelchairs. The automated announcements are in German and English, and electronic signs in the cars display the name of the next station. A glass wall is all that separates the passengers from the driver, allowing people to see the tracks ahead.

The trains are also swift, with very quick acceleration, and a top speed of about 90mph. They're very energy efficient at the same time, even recycling their own heat to warm the passengers. And because they're electrically powered, with small motors distributed the

entire length of the train, they are very quiet, inside and out. They serve their passengers well, and are good neighbors to the people along the railway.

With forward thinking and continual passenger advocacy, we can look forward to the day when Caltrain carries its passengers on pleasant and modern equipment like that running throughout Germany today.



Staying on Track

SOT2002-2

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: \_\_\_\_\_
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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 at: (650) 417-2571

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**BayRail Alliance General Meeting**

May 13 - 6:30pm: Topic: Revamping Caltrain's fare system  
 June 10 - 6:30pm: Topic: Caltrain long-term service plan

**Caltrain Joint Powers Board Meeting** June 6 - 10:00am  
**Caltrain Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting** May 15, June 19 - 6:00pm

<b>Location for BayRail Alliance General Meetings:</b>	<b>Location for Caltrain JPB and CAC meetings:</b>
Round Table Pizza, 1225 El Camino Real, Menlo Park, near the Menlo Park Caltrain station	SamTrans administrative office, 1250 San Carlos Avenue, San Carlos, one block west from San Carlos Caltrain station

**Other events:**

May 15: 10:00am California High Speed Rail Authority meeting  
 Location: Oakland City Hall,  
 City Council Chambers  
 One Frank H. Ogawa Plaza, Oakland

May 15: 5:30pm-7:30pm Bay Area Transportation and Land Use Coalition (BATLUC)  
 Regional meeting  
 Location: Sierra Club, 3rd floor, 85 2nd Street, San Francisco

May 16: Bike to Work Day  
 May 23: 6:00pm-8:30pm Meeting of GoHSR, a high speed rail advocacy group  
 Location: Sierra Club, 3rd floor, 85 2nd Street, San Francisco

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

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Executive Editor: Andy Chow

Copy Editor: Russell Reagan

—Margaret Okuzumi

## BayRail Alliance

### May General Meeting Topic: Revamping Caltrain's fare system

Caltrain is currently undergoing a major fare system study. Everything related to fares or fare collection is under consideration to be changed: the "zone" structure, car parking charges, potential charges for bikes on board, etc. Caltrain's consultant is soliciting input from the public and is scheduled to produce a set of recommendations by this fall.

BayRail invites you to participate in a discussion about Caltrain's fare system. We have an unprecedented opportunity to influence a major part of the Caltrain experience, so we hope that you can join us for this discussion. If you were "starting from scratch", what kind of fare system would you develop? What problems would you seek to avoid in developing a system? We don't expect to develop a set of recommendations in just one meeting, but we'll be doing lots of brainstorming to collect our thoughts on this matter.

**BayRail Alliance Board of Directors:**

John Tseng (President)  
 Andy Chow (Vice president)  
 Sylvia Gregory  
 Daniel Krause (Treasurer)  
 Russell Reagan (Secretary)  
 Paul Wendt

**Executive Director:**

Margaret Okuzumi



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<http://www.bayrailalliance.org>

forwarding and address correction requested



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 Bay Area region.

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.