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June 30, 2020

Scott Haggerty

Chair, Metropolitan Transportation Commission, and

Therese McMillan

Executive Director, Metropolitan Transportation Commission and Association of Bay Area Governments

Bay Area Metro Center

375 Beale Street, Suite 800

San Francisco, CA 94105-2066

Subject: Inclusion of the Caltrain Enhanced Growth Project and the Caltrain Downtown Rail Extension (DTX) Period 1 of Plan Bay Area 2050

Dear Chair Haggerty and Executive Director McMillan:

Caltrain is pleased that the Plan Bay Area 2050 (PBA 2050) process continues to advance toward final completion and adoption by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC). PBA 2050 will help ensure that the entire Bay Area has a future land use and transportation network that is equitably, environmentally, and economically sustainable. As a region, we can achieve this goal by continually encouraging travel to shift away from motor vehicles to transit. Passenger rail will continue to be the most effective mode of transit, moving the most people efficiently in the smallest amount of space.

I am writing to request that the Caltrain Enhanced Growth Project be included in Period 1 of PBA 2050, and to also express our support for including the Caltrain Downtown Rail Extension (DTX) in Period 1 of PBA 2050. Development of both projects as early as possible is consistent with Caltrain's 2040 Long Range Service Vision, the Transbay Joint Powers Authority's project schedule, and the California High Speed Rail Authority's (CHSRA) 2020 Draft Business Plan. These projects are essential to the development of a robust regional rail network in the Bay Area.

Request for Inclusion of the Caltrain Enhanced Growth Project in Period 1

As the seventh-largest commuter rail service in the United States, Caltrain is in the midst of the most significant change to transit that the Peninsula has ever experienced. The Peninsula Corridor Electrification Project (PCEP), currently underway, will drastically re-make transit service on the Peninsula and will facilitate a change from a peak-hour focused traditional

commuter rail service to an urban regional rail system with shorter headways, greater frequency, and more capacity. This new service will continue to attract riders, generating significant demand as forecasted through the Caltrain Business Plan development process.

Accommodating this forecasted demand will require additional capital investments that build on and leverage the foundational infrastructure created by PCEP, including the full electrification and expansion of the fleet as well as key upgrades to rail and systems infrastructure. These investments will facilitate tighter running of trains and more responsive service patterns to meet more markets, enabling Caltrain to serve a growing and broader cross-section of riders than have used the system in the past.

Therefore, **it is imperative that the Caltrain Enhanced Growth Project be included in Period 1 (2021-2035) of PBA 2050** for two primary reasons—both of which are directly related to growth in our services over the next decade.

Growing Ridership and Diversifying our Customer Base

Caltrain's ridership projections (developed as part of the Caltrain Business Plan process) show that the demand for rail service on the Peninsula will begin to push against the limits of our system by the end of the decade. The infrastructure improvements identified as part of the Caltrain Enhanced Growth Project will allow us to add capacity to the system, meet expanded service expectations, and expand frequent, transit-level service to more communities (including Communities of Concern) along the corridor.

This projection is further supported by Caltrain's upcoming Equity, Connectivity, Recovery and Growth Framework (to be presented to the JPB in draft on July 9). This policy document has been developed through the Business Plan process and will formally establish Caltrain's commitment to attract and accommodate new riders from underserved markets across the Peninsula. With improvements such as a revised timetable that promotes more seamless transfers between modes such as BART and bus, 50% discounts for low income riders through the Clipper START program, and improved access to Communities of Concern throughout the corridor, Caltrain is confident that our ridership will diversify and grow throughout the decade. The PCEP project will begin Caltrain's transformation to a true, regional rail service but the frequencies and capacity made possible through the Enhanced Growth Project will truly bring this level of transformative rail access and service to all communities on the Peninsula.

Value for Money Opportunity to Acquire More Electric Multiple Unit Vehicles (EMUs)

In addition to the imperative to grow ridership and expand our customer base, Caltrain has a time-sensitive option to purchase additional EMUs that will allow us to fulfill the service requirements described above. These new EMUs will be critical to reduce potential for crowding, facilitate more frequent and flexible service, and provide a clean, uniform 100% electrified fleet.

Notably, we understand that a key consideration for placement in Period 1 is funding availability. As recently noted, June 2020 polling across San Francisco, San Mateo, and Santa Clara Counties demonstrates that Caltrain's proposed 1/8 cent sales tax (Senate Bill 797) has a strong chance of voter approval in November 2020. This will provide Caltrain with its first-ever source of on-going revenue, independent of fares and annual contributions from our member counties. To maximize the effectiveness of the passage of SB797 as a more reliable source of funding (including potentially local match funds) for time-sensitive investments in the Peninsula's rail network, we reiterate that **it is critical that the Caltrain Enhanced Growth Project be included in Period 1 of Plan Bay Area 2050**, from 2021-2035.

Support for Inclusion of the Downtown Extension Project in Period 1

As noted in the Caltrain Business Plan and the 2018 California State Rail Plan, the DTX project is a critical missing link within the Bay Area's rail network. As a major Bay Area connector, DTX will fully realize Caltrain's investments in PCEP and the Enhanced Growth Project and will reinforce the region's prior commitments to the Salesforce Transit Center and BART/Muni corridor by delivering commuter and future high-speed rail service to downtown San Francisco from the Peninsula and Los Angeles, respectively. The DTX is also positioned to serve as the potential first leg of a new Transbay Rail Crossing to the East Bay.

Once DTX is completed, the Salesforce Transit Center will realize its fullest potential by bringing an impressive number of regional and state transit systems under one roof, linking Caltrain and high-speed rail with nine other transit operators: AC Transit, BART, Golden Gate Transit, SFMTA Muni, SamTrans, WestCAT Lynx, Amtrak, Greyhound, as well as local paratransit service. The project will close a major gap in the Bay Area's transportation system with accessibility benefits for up to 90,000 new and existing Caltrain and high-speed rail passengers in addition to new and existing bus riders by 2040. It will relieve gridlock on US101/I-80, one of the most congested corridors in the Bay Area, and anchor growth in one of the region's most robust and diverse Priority Development Areas, the Downtown SF/South of Market/Mission Bay area. Bringing rail to the Transit Center also leverages the region's prior investment in the Transit Center, maximizes its current investment in Caltrain's electrification, and is key to the long-term financial stability of the Transit Center, providing much needed relief to MTC and local transit operators who heavily subsidize transit center operations presently.

The Caltrain system stands to benefit tremendously from the completion of DTX, particularly when this investment is paired with the full electrification and expansion of fleet as proposed in the Caltrain Enhanced Growth Project. We thus believe it **is also critical that DTX be included in Period 1 of Plan Bay Area 2050**, from 2021-2035.

Scott Haggerty
Therese McMillan
June 30, 2020
Page 4 of 4

Thank you for your consideration of these requests. We look forward to collaborating to improve connectivity for current and future transit riders across the Bay Area region, Northern California mega-region, and throughout the state.

Sincerely,



Jim Hartnett
Executive Director