

# Dumbarton Rail Corridor Project

## Advisory Group Meetings Summary Report



**November 6, 2019**



*San Mateo County*  
**TRANSIT DISTRICT**

Table of Contents

<b>Table of Contents</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Project Overview</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Advisory Group Meetings</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Meeting Materials</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Project Definition Discussion Questions</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Next Steps</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Appendix</b>	
Appendix A – Meeting Attendees and Invitees	
Appendix B – Meeting Invitations	
Appendix C – Meeting Reminders and Agendas	
Appendix D – PowerPoint Presentation	



## Project Overview

Together, the San Mateo County Transit District (District) and Cross Bay Transit Partners (CBTP) are exploring new, environmentally appropriate alternatives for a high-quality, high-capacity public transit system along the Dumbarton Rail Corridor (DRC). The objective of the proposed project (Project) is to enhance regional mobility, increase connectivity between modes of travel and bring transit closer to key origins and destinations on the San Francisco Southern Peninsula and East Bay.

## Advisory Group Meetings

Two advisory group meetings and a briefing for local elected officials and staff were held on October 30, 2019 at the Silliman Aquatic and Activities Center in Newark (6800 Mowry Avenue, Newark, CA). A total of 30 individuals attended the meetings, which were held at different times throughout the day to accommodate the following three distinct groups:

<b>Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG)</b>	<b>Technical Advisory Group (TAG)</b>	<b>Elected Officials Staff</b>
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM	1:00 PM – 3:00 PM	3:30 PM – 4:30 PM

These meetings were the first gathering of said groups since the introductory round of Stakeholder and Technical Group meetings on June 3, 2019. As previously established, these groups have agreed to attend regular meetings to learn about the Project, provide input about specific topics, offer general feedback about the Project, and utilize their networks to help get the word out about the Project and the various opportunities for public input.

The SAG is composed of community leaders that work in non-governmental organizations interested in transit and multi-modal infrastructure, land use and environmental sustainability, business and economic interests, and social justice. The TAG includes technical staff from City Governments, transportation and transit agencies, and other local and regional authorities. The Elected Officials Staff represented County, State and Federal Offices. A breakdown of the organizations invited and in attendance at these meetings is available in **Appendix A** of this report.

The next date for advisory group meetings has been set for January 29, 2020.

## Meeting Materials

Advisory group members were requested to participate through a series of Evites (requesting an RSVP) through the Project email ([info@crossbaytransit.com](mailto:info@crossbaytransit.com)) and through points of contact from past efforts in the region. An example of the initial invitation can be found in **Appendix B** of this report. Two reminder evites was distributed on (October 18 and 24) to reaffirm the meeting location, times, and dates for the advisory group meetings.

The final reminder with the meeting Agenda can be found in **Appendix C** of this report. The meeting Agenda for the SAG and TAG was reviewed by the Project’s meeting facilitator before each meeting started.

A PowerPoint Presentation provided an update on the Project’s progress, preliminary Project definition and need, the technologies and routes being considered for the alignment, and agency coordination. A

significant portion of the presentation was devoted to a facilitated discussion with advisory group members about their perspectives and insight about the Project description and purpose and need, the scoping process, the range of alternatives being analyzed and the anticipated Project timeline. A meeting facilitator initiated the discussion by opening the meeting to any clarifying questions from advisory group members, followed by a list of ten questions. Project team members captured advisory group member’s feedback in this section through flip charts and notes, which were used to compile this summary report.

A copy of some of the materials presented at the advisory group meetings is available as **Appendix D** of this report.

## Project Definition Discussion Questions

SAG – 12 attendees

### Clarifying questions

#### **Q1 – Which technologies are being considered for DRC?**

A1 – Only green technologies are being considered in our studies, most likely electric, battery or other alternatively powered vehicles for mass transit, which encompass commuter rail, light rail, or other mass transit technologies. No diesel-powered or freight service is being considered for the DRC. The MTC is considering delivery of short-term operational bus improvements through a separate project called “Dumbarton Forward.”

#### **Q2 – Which routes are being considered?**

A2 – The Project team is analyzing the possibility of running a mass transit operation along the District-owned segment of the Project alignment (from Redwood City to Newark) and is also evaluating the feasibility of using the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) right-of-way east of Newark as well as alternative routes in non-UPRR rights-of-way towards other locations on the East Bay, such as Ardenwood, Fremont, and Union City. The Project team is coordinating with passenger rail operators in the project corridor and vicinity, such as Caltrain, BART, ACE, and Capitol Corridor ) for connectivity and consistency with respective development plans. The Project team is coordinating with local governments in order to be up-to-date on the latest transportation and land-use plans and policies in the region.

**Discussion**

**Q1 – A key benefit of the Project would be to connect users and relieve congestion on existing transportation infrastructure. What other key benefits are there for this project?**

- This Project can bring about an unprecedented level of transit system integration
- The Project could yield a much smaller environmental footprint when compared to gas-powered, single-occupancy vehicle travel the area is accustomed to
- This effort offers an opportunity to provide equitable access to high-quality transportation service and health and wellness benefits to local and regional riders
- This Project also presents an opportunity to use open spaces differently and support TODS and overall economic development

**Q2 – What are some current issues in this corridor that the Project can alleviate?**

- By offering an alternative to single-occupancy vehicle travel, environmental pollution and greenhouse gas emissions would be reduced, along with traffic congestion, and commute times for riders
- Its design can give a new image to public transportation services to go against the American trope of inefficient, heavy, loud, smoke-emitting machines
- Given the Project's partnerships and consideration of other transit systems in the region, the segmentation of public transportation systems would be addressed, and more people would be able to travel around the Bay through a regional, integrated network

**Q3 – Tell us how your agency/organization views opportunity with this project?**

- The Bay has a wide variety of habitats that are sensitive and will possibly be highly impacted by sea level rise and construction/transit operation activities across the Bay. This Project can be an opportunity to reinforce the preservation of said areas, especially if an elevated design is being considered.

**Q4 – How do you convey information about this Project to the communities, constituents, user groups or organizations?**

- Stanford University has a large transportation team that stays up to date with latest developments and meets regularly with local planners to talk about transportation plans in the area
- A self-established subsection of SAG members (including Friends of Caltrain, Open Space Trust, Bicycle Coalition and others) follows the Project's communication channels regularly and meets to discuss Project developments in recurring meetings. They offered to share a values statement document they crafted for the Project team's consideration
- Several meeting attendees voiced their satisfaction with the measures the Project team has taken to engage local neighborhoods and regional agencies early and often to

communicate Project developments and gather community input that has shaped the project thus far

**Q5 – What would make this Project valuable from your perspective?**

- A majority of advisory group members see this Project as a positive development with local and regional ramifications, especially in regard to economic vitality, equitable access to high-quality travel options, and environmental resiliency. As one member put it: *“this is not only an opportunity to improve infrastructure and alleviate traffic across the Bay, but it is a chance to innovate and bring something that can serve as a symbol this region can be proud of.”*
- Besides the commuting benefits, the Project can set a new bar for transportation and social justice. The stations and pathways can feature artwork from local artists, redwoods and other flora that are native to the area, spaces for family activities, and clean energy implementation as a symbol of efficiency and forward-thinking design

**Q6 – What factors should be considered in making the Project attractive to new riders?**

- The Project must continue to engage communities that may be negatively impacted by it, such as low-income residents in the immediate vicinity of the rail corridor
- Integration of existing transit systems, trail systems, and pedestrian facilities is essential to address our current traffic and environmental crisis
- The vehicle design must deliver an experience that rivals the comfort and convenience of drive-alone trips
- A working environment on wheels (WIFI, tables, charging stations, comfortable seats) would attract more commuters
- Clear and constant announcements (and real-time online and via digital signage on-board and at stations) are essential to inform riders in a timely and convenient fashion
- Pleasant and safe facilities (ADA and first responder- accessible stations, pathways, bike lockers, parking lots and other amenities) are essential for all riders
- This is an effort for the future, so the implementation of green technology (to power the mass transit system, stations and adjacent facilities) needs to be evident

**Q7 – How will the Project integrate with local plans and infrastructure investments?**

- New connectivity along the DRC can add a new dimension to bikeway and trail systems, especially with a Bay to sea trail
- This Project is a major catalyst to create truly sustainable communities

**Q8 – Is this Project a regional or local solution to transportation challenges?**

- Attraction and retention of talented workforce that has been relocating to other states due to housing and commuting conditions in the Bay Area

**Q9 – What characteristics would you want from a high-capacity mass transit service connecting each side of the Bay?**

- This should be a service not only for commuters, but everyday people who want to leave their cars and travel in alternative modes of transportation
- Reliability of the operation is essential given current and future environmental issues that might affect energy use and maintenance

**Q10 – What challenges exist that the Project should address?**

- Connectivity with other transit systems in the region would need extensive collaboration, especially given unknown changes anticipated for Capitol Corridor and the UPRR portion of the Project alignment
- Service and overall benefits to highly sensitive communities in the immediate vicinity of the Project

TAG – 15 attendees

Clarifying questions

**Q1 – What is the cost estimate for building this system?**

A1 – The cost estimates are currently under development.

**Q2 – What kinds of tracks and fleet are being considered?**

A2 – Given the geographical complexities and different types of technologies we are considering, our studies are evaluating a variety of options for track alignments, widths, buffers, suitability for other modes of transit and several other variables. Our range of options for the vehicles consist of electric/battery powered commuter rail, light rail and other mass transit technologies. We will continue our analysis to determine which alternatives are the most desirable and feasible for potential implementation and integration with the existing transportation systems in the region. It is our intention to deliver an operation that facilitates a sustainable, multimodal transportation system.

**Q3 – Is the Project going to be delivered in phases?**

A3 – It is too early in the process to determine a phasing plan, though that will be a part of our financial and technical analyses. We will share that information, as required by the CEQA/NEPA process, as we progress in our studies.

**Q4 – Can the SMCTD be the CEQA lead for Alameda County?**

A4 -The cities along the alignments will be responsible agencies as well as Alameda County

**Q5 – Will the EIR include the Project hours of operations?**

A5 – Yes.

**Discussion**

**Q1 – A key benefit of the Project would be to connect users and relieve congestion on existing transportation infrastructure. What other key benefits are there for this project?**

- Regional connection would be vastly improved by this project
- The Project could help reduce the environmental impact of commuters in the Bay
- The transit-oriented development projects in Newark and economic development as a whole would greatly benefit from a cross-bay connection
- The new connection can set a new mark for what a reliable transportation system can be, taking into account how the vehicles are powered and how the infrastructure is setup for recovery in cases of emergency
- This system could provide a more affordable mode of transportation to local and regional workers

**Q2 – What are some current issues in this corridor that the Project can alleviate?**

- The current transit systems don't connect with each other. People who live very far away need to have access and improved connectivity. This Project can do that
- The vulnerabilities of the current transit system impact local and regional traffic. This effort can bring a reliable alternative and set a new standard
- The cross-bay connection would assist not only commuters, but people who dream of an integrated trail and bikeway system
- Revitalizing the DRC could be a game changer in multimodal travel, not only promoting compatibility between mass transit travel and other modes but creating a safe design for all facilities

**Q3 – Tell us how your agency/organization views opportunity with this Project?**

- This Project could provide a relief in cut-through traffic in and around Newark
- The cross-bay connection would likely promote interconnectivity of multiple transit modes and more equitable transportation access, and improve land use opportunities, especially for TODs being planned in the region

- This new resource could humanize the commute. People using this new service could work on the move, potentially needing fewer hours at the office and being able to spend more time for leisure

**Q4 – How do you convey information about this Project to the communities, constituents, user groups or organizations?**

- Several meeting attendees voiced their excitement for this Project to become a reality, as they perceive it to be a catalyst to connect multiple Bay Area transit systems, communities, and improve quality of life in the region
- Revitalizing the rail bridge with a new commuter technology could complement the transportation goals in Southern Alameda County
- Depending on the Project amenities (such as bike storage at stations and on-board, bike lanes and bike share), the synergy with the East Bay bicycle trails (East Bay Greenway, Quarry Lakes, and more) could give people a more interconnected network of multimodal travelling options
- Some East Palo Alto constituents do not believe the Project is a real solution that will come about any time soon. However, they might show a high level of interest once a more concrete set of Project plans are shared
- Members wanted a clarification regarding the operation parameters and safety considerations for the whole system, which are currently in the studying stage and are a key pillar for the selection of any alternative

**Q5 – What would make this Project valuable from your perspective?**

- The project needs to provide reliable mobility options that make sense with all tradeoffs being considered, with a strong focus on fare integration and means of transport between stations, and creating an alternative that is more affordable than toll and parking needs across the Bay

**Q6 – What factors should be considered in making the Project attractive to new riders?**

- 1<sup>st</sup> and last mile attractiveness and convenience need to be taken into account
- Any alternative needs to have the ability to recover in the event of an emergency, especially in instances where large amounts of people are going to be transported at high speeds
- A TAG member proposed the Project team review a study conducted by the City of Los Angeles regarding the safety of women in public transit systems

**Q7 – How will the Project integrate with local plans and infrastructure investments?**

- Regional connection is vital, especially with bike integration and connections with other transit systems

- The Project can address regional issues but must also address local integration issues. It is important to make sure the people living near the corridor benefit from it, not only riders from far away

**Q8 – Is this Project a regional or local solution to transportation challenges?**

- Traffic congestion could be drastically improved, especially for CA-84 and I-880, bringing a whole new dimension to the quality-of-life for many commuters in the Bay Area

**Q9 – What characteristics would you want from a high-capacity mass transit service connecting each side of the Bay?**

- Sensitive communities need to be looked at closely. Segment each area and really understand what their issues are to yield a solution for their difficulties. People in NFO, for example, are worried about housing costs going out of control and potential relocations, other neighborhoods may be more concerned about the kind of fuel used (diesel), and others like Suburban Park, care a lot about the potential noise a train would cause. In any case, this Project needs to serve local residents as well as people who travel from other cities

**Q10 – What challenges exist that the Project should address?**

- The technology might require at-grade crossings, which could worsen local traffic flow and present a concern for noise and vibration
- The placement of certain stations in Fremont might prove especially difficult due to the strong interest in quit zones and strong opposition to development
- The complexity of the Project and the large number of diverse communities and interest groups in the Bay Area makes it difficult to deliver a final solution that will be satisfactory. It is important to engage the widest possible variety of experts and representatives, including law enforcement, to get their perspective on the feasibility of whatever alternative the studies recommend

## Next Steps

**Project-Specific:**

The Project team will move forward with pre-scoping items, such as development of conceptual alternatives, resource agency coordination, development of the Project's Purpose And Need document, and stakeholder engagement and will continue discussions with the Federal Transit Administration to serve as the lead for the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) process.

The Project team will continue to evaluate the alignments and stations for technical feasibility, in regard to engineering, operations, land use, city and agency coordination. The mass transit technologies being



*San Mateo County*  
**TRANSIT DISTRICT**

considered for the Project (light rail, commuter rail, and autonomous/other technology) will also continue to be studied. Community outreach activities will continue throughout the Project to guarantee a thorough involvement of local and regional residents and employees, sensitive municipalities and neighborhoods, resource agencies, transit authorities, and local and regional governments.

With confirmation of the federal lead agency, a Notice of Intent/Notice to Proceed will be issued, followed by public scoping meetings. The projected timeline for these meetings is currently mid February 2020 but is subject to change.

The intent is that prior to the Scoping meetings, the Project team will be meeting with the TAG/SAG members on January 29, 2020, to present a more refined set of alternatives that will be considered during the Formal scoping period.

**TAG/SAG Related:**

The PowerPoint that was presented at the advisory group meetings will be posted on the Project website: [www.crossbaytransit.com](http://www.crossbaytransit.com)

It was agreed by both the TAG and SAG that the next advisory group meetings will occur ahead of the public scoping meetings at the District's headquarters on January 29, 2020.



APPENDIX A: MEETING ATTENDEES AND INVITEES

**Dumbarton Transportation Corridor**  
Advisory Group Meetings - October 30, 2019

ATTENDEES

**Project Team**

San Mateo County Transit District  
Cross Bay Transit Partners  
Kimley-Horn  
Circlepoint  
Fehr & Peers  
HNTB  
Apex Strategies  
MC2 Bay Area Public Affairs Consulting

**Technical Advisory Group**

Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority  
SamTrans  
City of Fremont  
City of East Palo Alto  
City of Menlo Park  
City of Newark  
City of Redwood City  
City of Union City  
Metropolitan Transportation Commission  
Alameda County Transportation Commission  
San Mateo County  
Menlo Park Fire Department

**Elected Officials Staff**

Office of State Senator Hill  
Office of Assembly Member Chu  
Office of Senator Wieckowski  
Office of the County Executive, County of San Mateo

**Stakeholder Advisory Group**

Friends of Caltrain  
Eco Transport  
Stanford University  
Menlo Park Chamber of Commerce  
Sierra Club  
Menlo Spark  
Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge  
Fremont Chamber of Commerce  
East Bay Economic Development Alliance  
Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space District  
Peninsula Open Space Trust

**Invited but not in attendance**

Transform  
SPUR  
Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition  
San Mateo County Economic Development Association



APPENDIX B: MEETING INVITATION

**Dumbarton Rail Corridor**  
Please RSVP: **Technical Advisory Group Workshop**

**Project Workshop**  
Wednesday, October 30, 2019  
1:00 PM - 3:00 PM  
George M. Silliman Community Activity Center  
6800 Mowry Avenue, Newark, CA 94560

Dear Member of the Dumbarton Rail Corridor Technical Advisory Group (TAG):

Please consider this a reminder for our October 30 Technical Advisory Group meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to provide an update on coordination efforts with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and to solicit your input on the project prior to the start of the environmental review process.

This will be a working meeting during which we discuss why the project is needed for our communities and how it fits into regional transportation planning.

Kindly RSVP to [info@crossbaytransit.com](mailto:info@crossbaytransit.com) by October 21st, if you haven't already.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Winsome Bowen".

Winsome Bowen  
Cross Bay Transit Partners

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carter Mau".

Carter Mau  
San Mateo County Transit District

Together, the San Mateo County Transit District (District) and Cross Bay Transit Partners (CBTP) are exploring new, environmentally appropriate alternatives for a high-quality, high-capacity public transit system. The objective of the proposed project is to enhance regional mobility, increase connectivity between modes of travel and bring transit closer to key origins and destinations on the Peninsula and East Bay.  
2019 Cross Bay Transit Partners. All Rights Reserved.

APPENDIX C: MEETING REMINDER AND AGENDA

**Dumbarton Transportation Corridor**  
Reminder: **Stakeholder Advisory Group Meeting**

**Project Workshop**  
Wednesday, October 30, 2019  
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM  
Silliman Activity and Family Aquatic Center  
6800 Mowry Avenue, Newark, CA 94560

Dear Member of the Dumbarton Rail Corridor Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG):  
Below please find the agenda for the project workshop on Wednesday, October 30, 2019 from 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM.

We look forward to seeing you!

**AGENDA**

- I. Welcome**
- II. Introductions**
- III. Meeting Goals**
  - a. Goals
  - b. Scoping, Purpose & Need
- IV. Project Definition**
  - a. Alignment
  - b. Stations
  - c. Technologies
- V. Interactive Discussion**
- VI. Next Meeting and Adjourn**

Thank you to those who have already provided an RSVP. Kindly RSVP if you have not yet done so.

Thank you,



Winsome Bowen  
Cross Bay Transit Partners



Carter Mau  
San Mateo County Transit District

Together, the San Mateo County Transit District (District) and Cross Bay Transit Partners (CBTP) are exploring new, environmentally appropriate alternatives for a high-quality, high-capacity public transit system. The objective of the proposed project is to enhance regional mobility, increase connectivity between modes of travel and bring transit closer to key origins and destinations on the Peninsula and East Bay.  
2019 Cross Bay Transit Partners. All Rights Reserved.



*San Mateo County*  
**TRANSIT DISTRICT**

APPENDIX D: PRESENTATION MATERIALS