

# *City of Brisbane*

## *Agenda Report*

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council

FROM: Community Development Director via City Manager

SUBJECT: **Request of City of San Francisco for Brisbane staff to participate in a Technical Advisory Committee for the Bayshore Caltrain Station Location Study**

DATE: November 20, 2014

### **City Council Goals:**

To encourage community involvement and participation. (Goal #15)

### **Purpose:**

To consider a request by the City of San Francisco for Brisbane staff to participate in the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) for the Bayshore Caltrain Station Location Study undertaken by the City of San Francisco.

### **Recommendation:**

That the City Council authorize the City Manager to send the attached letter authorizing Brisbane staff to participate in the TAC, while outlining concerns with the proposed study as discussed in this staff report .

### **Background:**

In May 2014 the County/City of San Francisco issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) soliciting consultants to undertake the Bayshore Station Location Study to study alternate locations for the Bayshore Caltrain Station. Brisbane was not consulted prior to the release of the RFP. Once the city became aware of the RFP, a letter was sent from Mayor Conway to Mayor Lee raising a number of objections to the proposed study, along with a number of other unilateral efforts undertaken by San Francisco with regional transit and land use implications. When Brisbane and San Francisco staff met to discuss the concerns outlined in the letter, it was made clear that San Francisco would continue moving forward with their various studies (including the Bayshore Station Location Study) but that the City of San Francisco would make an attempt to communicate and coordinate with Brisbane moving forward.

Subsequent to this meeting, the City received the above-referenced invitation (see attached) to participate in the Bayshore Station Location TAC. The Bayshore Station Relocation Study as proposed by San Francisco will evaluate 3 potential locations for the Bayshore Caltrain station. The scope of work does not specify precise locations, but generally describes them as the current Bayshore Station location and alternate locations north and south of the station within a 1/2 mile range (generally bounded by future Geneva Avenue to the south and north end of the Schlage Lock site to the north.) The TAC as envisioned for this study includes multiple departments and agencies within the City/County of San Francisco along with Brisbane, Caltrain, and CCAG.

### **Discussion:**

Fundamentally Brisbane and San Francisco share a goal that the Bayshore Caltrain Station be transformed from one of the least utilized stations on the Caltrain corridor to a robust and vital transit hub that enables a significant shift in travel mode from auto to transit, thereby providing congestion relief and air quality and GHG reduction benefits both locally and regionally. Collectively all parties understand that land use adjacency, connectivity and station location are all critical elements in accomplishing the transformation of this station and achieving the resulting social and environmental benefits. However, Brisbane staff strongly objects to study as currently envisioned for 2 major reasons outlined below.

### ***Timing***

One of the key elements impacting station usage will be adjacent land uses, as land uses within in a ½ mile radius of the station generate much of the station activity. In this case, the land use decisions made by the City of Brisbane for the Baylands will be a critical factor. Given the current land use uncertainties regarding the Baylands, it is staff's position that performing the Bayshore Station Location Study now is premature. Rather, any such study should occur after the City's ongoing planning process for the Baylands is completed, and the study should reflect the City's land use decisions for the site. The location study as now proposed acknowledges land use uncertainty and attempts to account for it by evaluating 3 different land use scenarios (undefined as of yet). Performing the study based on hypothetical land use scenarios that may have little or no resemblance to the final Baylands land use program would appear to be neither a productive exercise nor efficient use of resources.

### ***Organization***

Inasmuch as Caltrain is the lead agency responsible for decisions pertaining to the siting and operations of Caltrain stations, Caltrain would be the appropriate agency to perform such a study, not the City of San Francisco. The City of San Francisco has a direct and material interest in the outcome of the study, and their role as the lead agency controlling the study at very least raises questions as to whether this study will be fair and unbiased.

### ***Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)***

While staff has reservations about the study as noted above, we further recognize that the study is proceeding in any case. As such the TAC process represents our opportunity to provide a broader perspective on the study that would otherwise be lacking, and to ensure that Brisbane's concerns are clearly communicated. Our participation would further support the efforts of the other non-San Francisco participants on the TAC (CCAG and Caltrain.) to ensure that that interests of the broader Caltrain system beyond San Francisco are represented. For all these reasons Brisbane participation on the TAC is important. However, it should be recognized that the composition of the TAC is skewed heavily toward San Francisco representation and the study is ultimately controlled by San Francisco.

Lastly, the information presented to date does not clearly explain the purpose of the TAC, what tasks the TAC is expected to perform, or how the TAC's input will be integrated into the study. It is recommended that this basic information be provided to Brisbane before the first TAC meeting is held.

#### **Fiscal Impact:**

City staff time required to participate in the TAC.

#### **Measure of Success:**

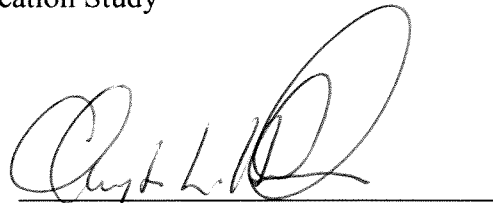
For the City to utilize the TAC process to evaluate and comment on the ongoing study and communicate the City's concerns and comments to the City of San Francisco.

#### **Attachments:**

Invitation to Participate in the Bayshore Station Location Study  
Draft Response Letter



John Swiecki, Community Development Director



Clay Holstine, City Manager

Apologies for the delay getting back to you. We've just kicked off the Bayshore Multimodal Station Location Study on October 8 with a meeting between the project management team and the technical consultant to discuss the project schedule and data needs. As we discussed in person a few months ago, your participation in the study is critical to ensure its as robust and objective as possible and so I'm hoping you're still interested in participating in this effort as a member of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). I'd also be interested in having more frequent discussions with you throughout the study to ensure we accurately incorporate your perspective. In addition to the City of Brisbane, we're inviting representatives from the following agencies (and potentially more) to form the TAC:

- San Mateo C/CAG
- Caltrain/SamTrans
- MTC
- San Francisco Mayor's Office
- San Francisco Municipal Transportation Authority (SFMTA)
- San Francisco County Transportation Authority (SFCTA)
- City of San Francisco Planning Department
- City of San Francisco Office of Community Investment and Infrastructure/former San Francisco Redevelopment Agency

We are excited to initiate this project, and TAC involvement at key milestones is an essential part of the study's approach. The project duration is between 12 and 14 months, and we expect there to be five (5) TAC meetings. The first meeting is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday December 17 at 11am at 1 Van Ness South Room 5080 Pacific and should last about 1.5 hours. Following a brief overview of the study's objectives and approach, and a review of potential TAC meeting dates, the focus of this first meeting would be to discuss the content of the first public meeting, which is tentatively scheduled for January 2015.

Best,

Ethan

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**Ethan Warsh**

Office of Community Investment & Infrastructure  
Successor to the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency  
One South Van Ness Avenue, 5th Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
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November 21, 2014

Ethan Warsh  
Office of Community Investment & Infrastructure  
City and County of San Francisco  
One South Van Ness Avenue, 5th Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94103

Re: Invitation to Join Bayshore Station Location Study Technical Advisory Committee

Dear Mr. Warsh:

The City of Brisbane has received your request for us to participate in the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) for the Bayshore Station Location Study now being undertaken by the City and County of San Francisco. While the City of Brisbane fundamentally objects to the study for the reasons stated in this letter, it is our understanding that the study will proceed in any case. On that basis we agree to participate in the TAC, assuming that we are able to receive a more clear description of the purpose and function of the TAC, and how the TAC's input will ultimately be utilized in the study prior to the first scheduled TAC meeting .

Fundamentally Brisbane agrees that the Bayshore Caltrain Station should be transformed from one of the least utilized stations in the Caltrain system to a robust and vital transit hub that enables a significant shift in travel mode from auto to transit, providing congestion relief and air quality and GHG reduction benefits both locally and regionally. We further understand that land use adjacency, transit connectivity and station location are all important elements in achieving this transformation.

However, Brisbane strongly objects to study as currently envisioned for two major reasons. Our first objection is the timing. As you know, land use in proximity to the station is a key element driving station usage and the land use decisions made by the City of Brisbane for the Brisbane Baylands will be crucial. The City of Brisbane's planning process for the Brisbane Baylands is underway, and it is our position that undertaking the station location study now is premature. Rather, any such study should be completed once the City's ongoing Baylands planning process is completed and it should reflect the City's land use decisions for the Baylands. It is unclear what benefit will result from performing a study now based on hypothetical land use scenarios that may bear little or no semblance to what is ultimately for the Baylands.

Secondly, Caltrain is the agency responsible for the siting and operation of Caltrain stations, and in our opinion Caltrain is the appropriate lead agency to undertake such a study when appropriate. In our opinion, having the study controlled by a jurisdiction with a direct and

material interest in the study outcome at the very least raises the question as to whether or not the study will be fair and unbiased.

Notwithstanding our concerns, we understand that the study is ongoing in any case and the City's participation in the TAC is important. It would be helpful if you provide additional detail as to the purpose of the TAC, what tasks it will be undertaking, and how the TAC's input will be utilized. Please provide this information prior to the first TAC meeting for our review.

Please provide the requested information to John Swiecki, Community Development Director who can be reached at [jswiecki@ci.brisbane.ca.us](mailto:jswiecki@ci.brisbane.ca.us) or 415,508.2120. Please also direct any questions or comments you have regarding this letter to Mr. Swiecki.

Sincerely,

Clay Holstine  
City Manager