



Staff Report

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING EXPANSION OF AND SAFETY ENHANCEMENTS TO TRANSIT SERVICE

Honorable Mayor and Council Members:

Summary

At the February 13, 2007 City Council meeting, Council Member Dickenson's "item # 9" on local train service was discussed. The item was continued to this meeting so that a staff report could be written. Council Member Dickenson requests Council consideration of the attached resolution which supports expansion of and safety enhancements to transit service.

Background

Since 2000, Caltrain stops at the Belmont station have declined 24% from 68 daily stops to 52 per day as of February 2007. In San Mateo County, daily Caltrain stops has declined by 20% over this same time period. With 16 fewer daily stops in Belmont than in 2000, it has become more difficult for Belmont residents to conveniently utilize the Caltrain system. Oracle is now diverting its van pools to San Carlos and Hillsdale stations in spite of the fact that Belmont is the closest station to the Oracle campus. In 2005, Caltrain instituted a new "Baby Bullet" train express service. Since 2005, average weekday ridership on the Caltrain system has increased 13%, but service in Belmont has not benefited from the Baby Bullet schedule revisions of 2005.

Discussion

Council Member Dickenson, working with a coalition of elected officials from San Mateo County has participated in the development of the attached resolution encouraging Caltrain to seriously consider retaining an outside train scheduling consultant to develop and evaluate alternative train schedules that would provide additional local service within the County.

Caltrain staff dispute the data contained herein and have been invited to attend the City Council meeting. The source of the data contained in this report is a coalition of San Mateo County elected officials, including Council Member Bill Dickenson.

General Plan/Vision Statement

Vision Statement – We put a priority on getting out of, into, and through town efficiently.

Fiscal Impact

Approximately \$1 mil per year in City of Belmont Measure A Transportation sales tax funds are allocated to Caltrain operations. With voter approval, these funds would otherwise be available for road and street repair in Belmont.

Public Contact

- Publication and posting of City Council agenda.
- Feature articles in local newspapers.

Recommendation

It is recommended that City Council discuss and provide direction.

Alternatives

1. Take no action on the suggested resolution
2. Amend the resolution

Attachments

- A. Resolution requested by Council Member Dickenson
- B. Comparison of weekday Caltrain service between Nov 2000 and February 2007

Respectfully submitted,

Jack R. Crist
City Manager

Staff Contact:

Jack Crist, City Manager
650-595-7410
jcrist@belmont.gov

RESOLUTION _____

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL
OF THE CITY OF BELMONT
SUPPORTING EXPANSION OF AND
SAFETY ENHANCEMENTS TO TRANSIT SERVICE**

WHEREAS, Caltrain service in San Mateo County has been reduced by more than 20 percent since 2000, in contrast to the approximate 13 percent reduction in Santa Clara County and the 2% increase in San Francisco County; and

WHEREAS, the City of Belmont contributes approximately \$ 1,027,873 annually to Caltrain from Measure A funds which would otherwise be allocable to the City of Belmont for street repairs, shuttles, and many other transportation needs; and

WHEREAS, transit service receives 50 percent of the funds collected under Measure A, which represents a contribution from the cities in San Mateo County and the County of approximately \$25 million annually from funds which would otherwise be available to localities; and

WHEREAS, the City of Belmont has lost 16 daily Caltrain stops since 2000; and

WHEREAS, the reduction in Caltrain service at many stations has made it more difficult for many riders to use Caltrain; and

WHEREAS, the substantial reduction of Caltrain service has had a significant negative economic impact upon properties near Caltrain stations; and

WHEREAS, increased Caltrain service is necessary to support and encourage transit-oriented development; and

WHEREAS, the growing senior population of San Mateo County will necessitate further dependence upon mass transit; and

WHEREAS, additional connections to Caltrain by shuttles and SamTrans buses are needed to encourage transit ridership; and

WHEREAS, safety along the rail corridor is a growing concern; and

WHEREAS, the City of Belmont desires to encourage greater availability and use of mass transit to address the climate change crisis and to facilitate the needs of its citizens.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of Belmont hereby resolves:

1. That the City of Belmont urges Caltrain to retain an outside scheduling consultant to develop and evaluate alternative train schedules that would provide a better balance between local service and express train service within the County, in order to meet the needs of more passengers.
2. That, in order to better serve local needs, the cities be provided the opportunity to review and comment on the alternative schedules so developed.
3. That Caltrain complete with all due diligence the safety improvements planned within the County.

4. That Caltrain, SamTrans, and the cities work together to develop and evaluate additional and improved means of connectivity between transit services.

* * * * *

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was duly and regularly passed and adopted by the City Council of the City of Belmont at a regular meeting thereof held on March 27, 2007 by the following vote:

AYES, COUNCILMEMBERS: _____

NOES, COUNCILMEMBERS: _____

ABSTAIN, COUNCILMEMBERS: _____

ABSENT, COUNCILMEMBERS: _____

CLERK of the City of Belmont

APPROVED:

MAYOR of the City of Belmont