



October 3, 2017

To: Jim Hartnett

cc: Caltrain Joint Powers Board

To Executive Director Hartnett:

On behalf of the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition and Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition, we would like to offer our support for the stacking option for bike car storage without bike hooks as well as to share our perspective on the recent process to determine the design for the new electrified cars.

Over the past several months, we have been meeting on a regular basis with Caltrain staff to coordinate on design preferences in order to meet both the 8:1 seat-to-bike ratio that was approved by the Caltrain Joint Powers Board in 2015 and to ensure the design would work for passengers that rely on bringing a bike onboard. We appreciate the lengths that staff took to eventually meet the 8:1 ratio but have several concerns with the outreach and decision-making process as well as the final design of the electrified cars.

- 1. The outreach and decision-making process could have been more transparent.** From early on, both our organizations had been vocal about a three car bike option or bikes distributed through all cars. It was not until after decisions had been made that we were told the third bike car option would not be possible, even though a possible design emerged later. Throughout the process, it was unclear how feedback from public outreach would inform final decisions, which led to our members feeling like their input was not considered.
- 2. While the 10% seat capacity increase and an 8:1 ratio have both been met, we encourage Caltrain to pursue every avenue to substantially increase capacity further.** Given the capacity constraints of electric multiple units ("EMUs"), six-car EMUs that are expected at the 2021 launch of electrified Caltrain service will be inadequate to handle the overall demand. We urge Caltrain to seek additional funding to run longer trains to increase overall capacity along with bike space in order to reap the full benefits of electrified service.
- 3. We are concerned with the security of the bike cars.** Some passengers only feel comfortable bringing their bike onboard if they can be seated in view of their bike. The new car design does not allow for seats near the bike spaces, which is an issue we had brought up early on. Caltrain has not provided an adequate answer to this issue, and we

urge Caltrain to find a solution to ensure people who bring their bike onboard can feel like their property is secure.

- 4. We support the “stacking” option and appreciate that conflict with accessible spaces has been mitigated.** Given the constraints that only became evident much later in the outreach process, we support the “stacking” option in order to maximize bike space onboard. After highlighting this issue when it became apparent, we are relieved to see that a compromise has been reached to ensure there will be minimized conflict between bike spaces and accessible spaces (as required by ADA standards), but we are concerned that this potential conflict existed in the first place.

Both the SF Bicycle Coalition and Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition recognize the promise of electrified service and the benefits, including increased capacity per hour that come along with the Caltrain Modernization Program. Again, we ask Caltrain to seek every opportunity to increase train length for the 2021 launch of electrified service and increase bike space per trainset in order to meet growing ridership numbers.

We look forward to continuing to work regularly with your staff and hope that in the future, we can resolve concerns earlier and that processes are more transparent.

Sincerely,

Shiloh Ballard
President and Executive Director
Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition

Janice Li
Advocacy Director
San Francisco Bicycle Coalition