



## Muni Metro Core Capacity Study Community Working Group

Wednesday, November 11th, 2024, 6:30 p.m.

Microsoft Teams meeting

CWG Members	Project Staff	Other
Aaron Leifer Adrienne Leifer Alice Duesdieker Cyrus Hall Dylan Fabris Mark Sawchuk Rick Laubscher Lian Chang Tammy Chan	Liz Brisson (SFMTA) Mariana Maguire (SFMTA) David Sindel (SFMTA) Erin McMillan (SFMTA) Michael Randolph (SFMTA) Chester Fung (HNTB)	Dan Tischler (SFCTA-Study funder) Tyler Brown (Caltrans – Study funder) Stephen Conteh (Caltrans – Study funder) Kathy Seitan (Observer) Peter Strauss (Observer) Paula Katz (Observer) Karen Kennard (Observer)

### Q & A and Discussion

Themes for discussion were the relationship to the citywide transit vision, future growth uncertainty, route restructuring, and street width prioritization “ceilings” and “floors”

- CWG Member noted that visionary projects in the past were used to cut lines during the Great Recession. They fear that if this project recommends route restructuring, routes could be cut in the future as a cost saving measure, without any of the mitigation discussed.
  - Staff responded that this was not their intention, and that they would like to mitigate that fear/build trust. Another Staff member responded that they can’t guarantee how future staff will interpret recommendations, but if future staff them responsibly, they will know that mitigation factors need to be there.
  - CWG Member noted that they are against any cuts, but if/when they happen it is because Muni is required to run a balanced budget.
- CWG Member enjoyed the conversation about street width in the last meeting; she is glad we are considering it by neighborhood, rather than corridor. There may be places where it is more acceptable to remove parking than others.
- CWG Member responded to the citywide transit vision; They are interested in the interaction between expansion projects and how their delivery may impact the Study’s recommendations. For example, for the Geary/19<sup>th</sup> Subway; How does a future transformative project change Muni Metro’s capacity needs? Is there less capacity needed to be achieved via Muni Modernization if we also have a Geary/19<sup>th</sup> Subway?
- CWG Member appreciated what was said about transfers in other countries, where transfers are common. CWG Member sees the benefits of frequency and physical accessibility, and transfers can expand the ways that a transit system works. CWG Member is curious in what is involved in improving transfers. CWG Member pointed to the example of Vancouver transfers, where you only have to walk a few feet.
  - Staff responded that the team’s ideas to mitigate the downsides of transfers should any route restructuring concepts be needed in the future include:

- Planned frequencies that indicate typical transfer times across all hours of service
  - Operational changes to increase odds of seamless transfers outside of peak hours (e.g. policies to hold trains for up to X mins at relevant transfer locations such as potentially Stonestown, West Portal, or Church St)
  - Upgraded station transfer facilities at Stonestown, SF State, West Portal and/or Church St (e.g. new platforms, new stairs and/or elevators).
- Another CWG Member replied that this is a good point about transfers; they point to the K to N-Judah inbound as a good transfer, staying on the exact same platform within the Market Street subway, while catching the T from the K was a bad transfer. For them, a good transfer means you pay once, and you stay inside a station.
- Staff asked about examples of transfers from around the world
  - CWG member replied that the main reason San Francisco residents don't like transfers is that the majority of them occur outside on lines that are in mixed street traffic. The resistance has to do with the nature of the Muni system. There are very few cities of San Francisco's size and density, with transit systems that have so little grade separation.
  - CWG Member added that this discussion was difficult for them because some people view this Study as a zero-sum game, and not an opportunity to come up with solutions that will work for many people. These conversations could be more productive if we stop seeing this as winners v. losers.
    - Staff asked if there was something more we could do as staff, CWG member replied they would think more on giving an answer.
- Staff asked that as a project team, we do not see it as a "zero sum game" and we want to encourage dialogue from a variety of perspectives. What would it look like if it could work?
- CWG member said that she appreciated what staff has done to open up the conversation. It may help to step back further to think of questions on how laypeople use the system, the CWG has knowledge expertise as riders; How does the system work for us? What transfers we like/don't like? Asking technical questions will feel more zero sum.
  - Staff responded that what makes the conversation challenging is that technical recommendations will need to be made in the future, and those recommendations will have rider-specific impacts. There is a need to show our work on the technical side of route restructuring. Staff will think about how we can bring it back to rider-oriented feedback, but we don't want to skip over the reasoning for technical decisions that have rider-specific impacts.
- CWG member asked about process – What is the difference between this Study and the Study on the Inner Sunset segment of the N-Judah line that the SFCTA is doing?
  - Staff responded that the Muni Metro Capacity Study takes a long range look at the entire system. That shouldn't prevent nearer term efforts from studying improving individual segments of the system in parallel. We will look to harmonize this Study with any recommendations coming out of the SFCTA's study.
- CWG member likes what another CWG member had said regarding CWG members knowledge expertise as riders; she asked if there have been studies on strollers, walkers and carts and how that data could help determine whether we invest in high floor or low floor platforms.
  - Staff replied it is likely we have data on this and can share it with the group.

## Observer Comment

- Observer 1
  - Observer 1 discussed concerns with the selection criteria for the CWG that favors M and N riders and was additionally concerned that SFMTA leadership has suggested taking the J out of the subway in the past. They mentioned coupling and other alternatives.
- Observer 2
  - Observer 2 opposes any recommendations that create new Muni Metro transfers, and discussed how a single ride to downtown is a core service of Muni. Observer 2 also discussed how their organization applied to the group and was not chosen, and they want to be a part of the CWG.
- Observer 3
  - Observer 3 discussed a survey that supported keeping the J in the subway. According to Observer 3, transfers work best when a rider steps across a platform from one train to the next, they are indoors, behind a fare gate, with no changes in level. They additionally do not want a transfer at the intersection of Church and Market.

## Highlights from Chat

- CWG Member: A friend takes the N using a stroller, and it is a real struggle
- CWG Member: When BART's timed transfers work, they work well (Antioch -> Richmond). Good example from right across the Bay
- CWG Member: There are three J-Church riders in this meeting alone.
- Staff: I am genuinely curious if anyone here transfers at any point in time when using transit or are all riders 1 seat?
  - CWG Member: I transfer from a streetcar to a bus (or vice versa) all the time
  - CWG Member: Yes, I used to have to transfer when the J was pulled out of the subway. I was disabled at the time and it was extremely difficult.
    - I've had to transfer from J to N or T on occasion. I usually do it at a shared station or at Powell
  - CWG Member: I often have to transfer twice: 37 -> KLM -> some other route, or in reverse
  - CWG Member: I transfer between buses all the time, but rarely between trains (any Muni Metro line gets me home)
  - CWG Member: The Muni network does depend on transfers- between radial and intersecting crosstown lines. Interrupting trips in the same general direction is disruptive.
  - CWG Member: The only rides that are one seat for me are going downtown, everything else involves transfers.
  - CWG Member: I transfer very often from the 38/R to the 49 or from the 38 to the 15 or T