BIKE SAN MATEO COUNTY
Grassroots Advocacy to "complete the streets" by making them pedestrian friendly and bicycle safe
www.bikesmc.org

SAN FRANCISCO BICYCLE COALITION
sfbike.org

SILICON VALLEY BICYCLE COALITION
bikesiliconvalley.org

Recommendations for Caltrain's Bikes-on-Board Service

We applaud Caltrain for its bikes-on-board service, a huge success that has become one of the most cost-effective, convenient, and environmentally friendly means of commuting on the San Francisco Peninsula. Despite onboard bicycle capacity increases in 2009 and 2011, available onboard bike spaces are again frequently being filled, resulting in many customers being denied boarding and forced to wait for a later train or use an alternative means of transportation.

Our groups, with our combined thousands of members and supporters, understand the various competing interests for space on Caltrain and the difficulty of meeting all these demands. With Caltrain's current high ridership levels and projected growth, Caltrain has the challenge to meet the demand for safe and comfortable seating, the need for bikes-on-board accommodation, and the increased demand for first- and last-mile connections to Caltrain, including auto and bike parking and bus and shuttle services. We encourage Caltrain to consider the cost of first- and last-mile connections when allocating onboard space for seating and bicycle storage. The bikes-on-board service is a proven, cost-effective method that offers thousands an alternative to driving, which alleviates crowding in parking lots, frees up seats on shuttles and buses, reduces traffic congestion, improves traffic safety, and reduces air pollution.

To help Caltrain continue as a national leader in onboard accommodation of bicycles, we recommend the following improvements:

Onboard Bicycle Capacity Improvements

- *Short term:* Mark minimum aisle width and allow bikes to stack to the aisle (implement immediately to reduce bike bumps).
- *Medium term:* Match new capacity to current ridership by configuring at least 11 of the new Bombardier cars as bike cars,[1] so that all Bombardier train sets will have three bike cars when the new Bombardier cars are put into service (expected fall 2015).
- *Long term:* Provide bike space for at least 20% of passengers to bring a bike on board electrified trains (expected 2021) to accommodate increased demand.[2]

Operational Improvements

- Allow for priority boarding for passengers with bicycles on bike cars to speed the boarding process for all passengers and to reduce congestion in bike cars.

Future Planning

- Complete a comparative study of the costs to provide different options for the first- and last-mile connections to Caltrain including automobile and bicycle parking, bus and shuttle service, bike share, pedestrian improvements and onboard bike accommodation. Use results to:
    - Set specific goals to increase sustainable mode access overall and by station with accompanying education encouragement programs, and
    - Develop a plan to meet long-term capacity needs for all passengers.

[1] According to Caltrain's 2010 survey, 13% of Caltrain passengers bring a bike onboard. To match this ridership, 13% of new capacity should be bike capacity, i.e., 16 new Bombardier cars x 130 seats per car x 0.13 bike capacity / 20 seats replaced with bike racks per bike car = 13 bike cars. However, only 11 of the new Bombardier cars need to be configured as bike cars for all Bombardier trains to have three bike cars, assuming all 16 new cars are put into service for a total of seven Bombardier train sets in the fleet.

[2] Increased demand is based on projecting ridership growth to 2021 by extrapolating the average annual increase from the last six years for weekday ridership (6.45% average annual increase) and weekday bicycle boardings (17.05% average annual increase).