



City Council Staff Report

Report Type: CONSENT CALENDAR

Lead Department: City Clerk

Meeting Date: February 24, 2025

Report #:2502-4135

TITLE

Approval of Use of City Facilities and Staff Time to Support Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority Palo Alto Mobility Hub Meetings and Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board/Caltrain Board of Directors Meeting; CEQA status – not a project.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the City Council approve the use of City Facilities and Staff Time to support Valley Transportation (VTA) Palo Alto Mobility Hub meetings and a Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board/Caltrain Board of Directors meeting; and allow the City Manager and the City Clerk to negotiate and execute any terms or agreements for such use, as may be necessary.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

VTA and Caltrain have requested using City Hall meeting spaces to host upcoming public meetings. Unlike other City facilities, meeting rooms in City Hall, primarily the Community Meeting Room (CMR) and City Council Chambers, do not have a policy governing use by non-City organizations. In addition, limited staff time will likely be required for the VTA project. Staff recommends the City Council consider and approve these two requests.

BACKGROUND

The Palo Alto Mobility Hub is an Ad Hoc Committee of VTA that was established in response to a VTA Board referral. Its purpose is to work collaboratively with regional partners to make improvements to the Palo Alto station for the short, medium, and long term. The Ad Hoc Committees members are Margaret Abe-Koga (County of Santa Clara Supervisor), Pat Burt (City of Palo Alto Councilmember), and Sergio Lopez (City of Campbell Mayor). VTA asked to host Ad Hoc Committee meetings in the CMR, or other similar City facility, on February 27, May 22, August 29, and November 21. The room is needed for roughly 3 ½ hours for each day, which includes set up and break down time.

The Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board owns and operates Caltrain. Its Board of Directors consists of representatives from the City and County of San Francisco, San Mateo County, and Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority. The San Mateo County Transit District asked to hold

its Joint Powers Board/Caltrain Board of Directors budget meeting in Council Chambers on April 29 or 30 for roughly four hours.

ANALYSIS

The VTA Palo Alto Mobility Hub effort is clearly of interest to the City of Palo Alto, and the City should support VTA and other agencies focusing on needs at this important community asset. The resources required from the City to support this effort are uncertain. At this point staff anticipates spending 5-10 hours per month on related activities.

Other City facilities available for outside use have policies and/or application processes in place establishing appropriate uses and impacts to staff time and resources. This includes the City's community centers, the Junior Museum and Zoo, and the Art Center.

The City historically has allowed government bodies that include a Palo Alto Councilmember appointed by the Mayor to use of Council Chambers for public meetings, for example, the San Francisquito Creek Joint Power Authority. The City does not, however, have guidelines in place for determining which other types of public (and potentially private) meetings should be allowed and with what cost recovery and other requirements. Established guidelines delineate the responsibilities and expectations of the user and the City, including use of City A/V equipment and staff time.

Staff intends to bring a draft use policy to the Policy & Services Committee this year.

FISCAL/RESOURCE IMPACT

Some staff time from the City Clerk's Office will be required to assist VTA and Caltrain to run their meetings. The VTA Ad Hoc meetings will be in-person only, using the audio-visual projection system, and not recorded or streamed. In addition, roughly 5-10 hours per month of staff time from the City Manager's Office or Office of Transportation is anticipated for the VTA effort.

VTA has requested that the City contribute roughly \$25,000 toward a planning study to support the Mobility Hub project. Staff is confirming the availability of transportation funds for this use, and expects to proceed administratively upon confirmation.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

City Clerk's Office staff coordinated with staff from VTA, SamTrans, the City Manager's Office and Office of Transportation.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Council action on this item is not a project as defined by CEQA because it is an organizational or administrative activity that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment. CEQA Guidelines section 15378(b)(5).

APPROVED BY: Mahealani Ah Yun, City Clerk