



Caltrain's future in limbo after Santa Clara County defers tax measure

By Luke Johnson, San Jose Spotlight, July 22, 2020

“The Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors unanimously voted to defer the decision for a Caltrain ballot measure to a special meeting on August 6 — the last day to approve measures for the November ballot.

“County lawmakers considered a proposed ballot measure for a one-eighth cent sales tax to prevent Caltrain from potentially shutting down.

“In order to keep Caltrain running, sales tax measures need to be approved in the three counties it operates — San Francisco, San Mateo, and Santa Clara. Last week, San Francisco County supervisors [decided not to support](#) a sales tax measure — putting Caltrain's future in limbo.

“The proposed tax measure was supported by a [coalition of local leaders](#) — such as San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo and San Francisco Mayor London Breed.” Santa Clara County Supervisor Joe Simitian argued that a ballot measure would likely be defeated by voters.

“Another challenge is determining which agency will manage Caltrain and potential new tax revenue sources. It's currently run by SamTrans in San Mateo County and some officials say that agency has mismanaged funds and lacks accountability in its governance.

“A new plan unveiled Tuesday would direct revenue from the proposed tax measure into an escrow account controlled by the three-county Joint Powers Board that manages the Peninsula rail system, according to the San Francisco Chronicle.

“In a [Medium post](#), Liccardo said Santa Clara and San Francisco counties provide the majority of annual funding to Caltrain, but SamTrans officials have no accountability to those taxpayers.”

Read the full article [here](#).