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CEMOF

Backstage at Caltrain

When people talk about Caltrain, the focus tends to be on what passengers and the public see – trains whisking commuters to and from work, or taking travelers on leisure trips. But none of that would happen without a great deal of effort behind the scenes.

And that's exactly where one of the most exciting projects in Caltrain's history is taking shape, the construction of a state-of-the-art maintenance facility on Lenzen Avenue in San Jose.

This newsletter is part of Caltrain's pledge to communicate with neighbors about CEMOF. More than a year ago, a 1,800-foot-long community wall was erected on one side of the site to shield neighbors from noise and construction impacts. Since then, a great deal of progress has been made on Caltrain's much-anticipated Centralized Equipment Maintenance and Operations Facility, due to open in mid-2007.



Vital Maintenance Facility

It's not enough to say that a decent place to maintain the fleet is overdue: With the increase in service since 2004, it's an absolute necessity. Locomotives and cars are being ridden harder and longer, making more trips back and forth between San Francisco and San Jose every day, to provide more trains and faster trips.

The \$140 million Centralized Equipment Maintenance and Operations Facility is a long-awaited solution to Caltrain's needs. CEMOF will not only allow Caltrain to consolidate maintenance work now done in San Francisco and San Jose, but also bring "in house" work now sent out-of-state.



Shielded by a community wall (left), work has been under way since 2005 at the CEMOF site in San Jose, which is bounded by Coleman, Lenzen and Stockton avenues and by West Taylor Street on the south.

Even five years ago, no one would have dreamed that Caltrain would be operating almost 100 trains a day, let alone set a new standard for on-time, express train service that has revolutionized the railroad.

In 2004, Caltrain made the commuter rail industry sit up and take notice: the Baby Bullet innovation landed Caltrain on the cover of the rail industry magazine *Trains*.

U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta made a point of visiting Caltrain in 2005 to see what the Baby Bullet was all about, hailing Caltrain's achievement in cost-effectively providing a type of service capable of getting drivers out of their cars.

Caltrain has achieved increases in service and ridership in spite of fleet maintenance conditions that are, frankly, primitive. Work is done at a small facility in San Jose and in a rail yard in San Francisco, but many repair jobs have to be shipped as far away as Arkansas and Delaware. Train-washing is done with a glorified automotive car-washer — or by hand. Mechanics have to work outdoors, rain or shine, and crawl under locomotives and cars to do repairs.

CEMOF will allow Caltrain to do a number of maintenance activities more effectively

Inspecting and servicing cars

When trains roll into CEMOF from the south side of the yard, they'll first enter an inspection track facility capable of handling two trains side by side. Crews will be able to check out the train mechanically — including walking underneath it — and fuel it up for the next day. Coach cleaners also will go through the cars, picking up trash, cleaning restrooms and other necessary "housekeeping" activities.

Repairing and replacing parts

A 58,800-square-foot maintenance shop equipped with two enormous overhead, traveling cranes and a drop table will provide the capability of performing major repairs to locomotives, as well as cars. Here, locomotive pits will allow mechanics to stand while they work on the undercarriage of cars and engines.

Train-washing

It's Caltrain's goal that every day trains will go through a train-washer as part of their normal trip through CEMOF. Trains will be driven through these jumbo car-washers, which spray the cars with water and suds. Every day, trains will get a thorough washing that they now only receive twice a year. The environmentally safe facility will even reclaim the water.

Wheel-truing

It's important for ride-quality and an extended life for train wheels that their surface be smooth. Dings and divots need to be filed down so they don't get worse and develop into serious flat spots. At CEMOF, trains will go through a machine that reprofiles or "trues" the wheels on a lathe. Riders will notice a better ride and won't hear the distinctive "thunk" from flat wheels. And Caltrain won't have to farm out this very routine maintenance task, having to send the wheels out-of-state.

Car-cleaning

Day-to-day cleaning will take place in the storage yard facilities. Tracks will be provided on the west side of CEMOF for the top-to-bottom cleaning that trains are scheduled to receive every 180 days.

Storing trains and materials

Extensive storage tracks on the west side of the maintenance facility will allow Caltrain to "park" the bulk of the fleet needed for San Jose-based operations at the end of the day. Warehouse facilities will provide a central location for needed supplies.



Progress

Work on the CEMOF project began in 2005 and is continuing with a tentative completion in early 2007. Here is a progress report at a glance.

- Relocation of fiber optic facilities and a Union Pacific railroad spur, and construction of an 1,800-foot-long community wall to shield neighbors from noise and construction impacts was completed in 2005.
 - Late in 2005 two Caltrain mainline tracks and one Union Pacific railroad track were relocated, and a 250-foot-long tunnel with lower levels of a 4,500-square-foot loading dock were constructed, allowing the building and yard work to begin.
 - A \$58 million dollar construction contract to build the maintenance facility with yard and shops commenced in the summer of 2005.
 - Approximately 65 percent of the underground pipes have been installed, the structural steel frame for the 58,800-square foot maintenance building has been erected, 75 percent of the two 800-foot service and inspection pits have been constructed, and two electrical substations have been installed.
 - Work at the trainwash facility, a 2,200-square foot storage building, a 3,000-square foot water treatment plant, and track construction is under way.
 - The final project to construct a Central Control Facility, the upper level of the loading dock, and to construct the parking facilities and modular offices will begin in April 2006.
- Once the construction is completed, rail maintenance currently done in San Francisco and San Jose will gradually be phased in at CEMOF, with full operation planned for mid-2007.



CEMOF . . . a good neighbor

Neighborhood Impacts

Caltrain works hard to reduce and mitigate impacts on residents. A community wall was built to alleviate noise and construction impacts. When the facility is operational, much of the activity will be largely invisible to neighbors, but there will be noise from time to time because of essential activities.

Noise

The noisiest activity will come from load testing the locomotive for appropriate horsepower rating during the annual scheduled inspection. This activity is normally scheduled during daytime hours and not during the night. The load testing will take place on the east side of the maintenance building behind a sound wall at the testing location. Caltrain has worked with the CEMOF Monitoring Committee to investigate complaints about screeching train wheels through the

area. The noise has been determined to come from Union Pacific Railroad trains and the complaints have been forwarded to U.P.R.R.

Traffic

Any additional traffic should be minimal, from trucks delivering supplies. These will arrive via Taylor Street on the east side of CEMOF, perhaps two or three trucks a day, and deliveries are made during daylight hours.

CEMOF Hotline

Residents have access to a toll-free, 24-hour staffed hotline for concerns regarding CEMOF. Through the hotline, concerns will be logged and responded to within 72 hours. To contact the project hotline, dial toll-free 1.877.433.0300. For all other project related inquiries and information contact Jonah Weinberg at 650.508.6238 or weinbergj@samtrans.com.

Staying in the Loop

The CEMOF Monitoring Committee has been in place since the early planning stages of the project. The committee's role is to ensure that community concerns are addressed and that Caltrain adheres to agreed-upon terms to lessen the impact of construction and operation of the facility on local residents.

The CEMOF Monitoring Committee is comprised of local residents, San Jose City officials and Caltrain and the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority board members.

The meetings are open to the public and are held on the following Wednesdays at 6 p.m. at San Jose

City Hall: **July 26 and Oct. 25.** Meetings may be added as necessary.

To receive meeting agendas, please e-mail your contact information to woodn@samtrans.com or call 650.508.6446. The information is also available at www.caltrain.com/cemof.