



Memorandum

Date: June 24, 2016

To: Local Policy Maker Group (LPMG)

From: Ben Tripousis, Northern California Director, California High-Speed Rail Authority

Re: June LPMG E-Update from High-Speed Rail

Transportation Study Update

The California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) is conducting a traffic study and analysis to assess potential impacts of blended Caltrain/High-speed rail service on the existing transportation network. The Authority notified the City/County Staff Coordinating Group (CSCG) and technical staff that a traffic study will be conducted and provided a list of intersections throughout the peninsula rail corridor. Additionally, the Authority requested that stakeholders review the list of proposed intersections in the study area and provide feedback to the project team.

Scoping Period and Outreach

In concert with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) issuance of the Notice of Intent (NOI), the Authority issued the Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the San Francisco to San Jose Project Section to solicit input on the scope of the draft environmental document on May 9. The NOI and NOP can be found at the [San Francisco to San Jose Project Section](#) webpage.

As part of the environmental process, the Authority hosted three public Scoping Meetings:

- Monday, May 23 – San Francisco (UCSF Mission Bay)
- Tuesday, May 24 – San Mateo (San Mateo Marriott)
- Wednesday, May 25 – Mountain View (SFV Lodge)

Over 160 individuals attended the Scoping Meetings, where numerous oral and written comments were submitted. Once the Scoping period ends, the Authority will produce a Scoping Report that will provide details from the Scoping Meetings and the comments submitted at the meetings and throughout the Scoping comment period. Below is a brief list of key topics participants discussed at the Scoping Meetings (this is not a comprehensive list):

- Safety modifications
- Grade separations
- Inter-city passenger service and Right-of-Way (ROW)
- Noise impacts
- Increase in traffic
- Environmental impacts of High-Speed Rail
- Union Pacific's pre-existing rights
- Potential loss of property due to eminent domain

In addition to the oral and written comments submitted at the Scoping Meetings, comments may be submitted using the following venues until **July 20, 2016**.

- Email: san.francisco_san.jose@hsr.ca.gov
- Verbal comment: 1-800-435-8670
- US Mail:
Mark A. McLoughlin
Attn: San Francisco to San Jose Project Section
California High-Speed Rail Authority
100 Paseo de San Antonio, Suite 206
San Jose, CA 95113

All comments received will be considered in the preparation of the environmental documents and become part of the administrative record.

Community Work Groups

Thank you to LPMG members for your help to identify participants for the three Community Work Groups (CWG): San Francisco, San Mateo County, and Santa Clara County. Each CWG will comprise community representatives and representatives from local interest groups engaged in transportation, environmental sustainability, and social issues in the region. CWG members will be encouraged to consider and represent the interests of their communities, participate in open communication among different interests, and help move the planning process forward.

Please forward any additional CWG member recommendations to Morgan Galli, Northern California Outreach Manager, at morgan.galli@hsr.ca.gov.

Construction Update

In June, construction highlights included work in multiple locations. Crews placed the first of 42 massive steel and concrete girders on the new Tuolumne Street Bridge in downtown Fresno. Placement of these girders signifies the midway point of construction for the bridge. Additionally, construction continues on a 1,600-foot section of the Fresno River Viaduct in Madera, and is expected to be finished in the summer of 2016. As well, drilling and concrete operations for structure foundations are taking place to build the 3,700-foot Cedar Viaduct. This bridge will allow high-speed trains to pass over State Route 99 as well as North and Cedar Avenues and is expected to be completed in two years.

In total, construction is underway on 119 miles of the system in the Central Valley from Madera to North Bakersfield. The current investment in High-Speed Rail construction is approximately \$3 billion.

For continuous updates on construction of high-speed rail visit www.BuildHSR.com.



Local Policy Makers Group (LPMG)
Summary Meeting Notes for May 26, 2016

Summary Notes

1250 San Carlos Ave., San Carlos, CA 94070 (Caltrain Offices, 2nd-floor Auditorium)

Members Present:

Table with 4 columns: City/County, Representative or Alternative, Present (Yes/No). Lists 20 cities and their representatives, with 'X' marks indicating presence.

Authority Team

Authority: K. Doyle, R. Graham, B. Tripousis

RDP/HNTB: M. Conn, M. Galli, W. Gimpel, K. Powis, K. Rugani, D. Spaethling, R. Walter

1. Introductions

Ben Tripousis, Northern California Regional Director, began the meeting by calling roll and inviting participants to join in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. Peralez, acting chair, reviewed the meeting agenda and welcomed participants.

2. Statewide Update

Tripousis provided an overview of the 2016 Business Plan, which is the foundational document for implementing the program and is a required document released every two

years by the Authority. The Plan was adopted by the Authority Board on April 28 and submitted to the State Legislature on May 1.

Construction is underway on 119 miles of the system in the Central Valley (Madera to North Bakersfield). High-speed rail is helping to create jobs for hundreds of Californians, and the Authority is committed to investing in California's small businesses by implementing a 30 percent goal of the high-speed rail work going to small businesses.

3. Project Section Scoping

- a. Will Gimpel, Regional Project Manager, provided an update of the San Francisco to San Jose Project Section. Stations currently being studied are San Francisco 4th & King (until the Downtown Extension to the Transbay Transit Center is completed), Millbrae-SFO, and San Jose Diridon.

The 51-mile alignment differs from other Project Sections because its alignment has been defined by state legislation and regional, multi-agency agreements. Gimpel noted that the Project Section will provide a blended service with Caltrain. This approach will minimize impacts on surrounding communities, reduce project cost, improve safety and expedite implementation. Gimpel also shared that the High-Speed Rail design will support a 30-minute travel time between San Francisco and San Jose.

Gimpel reviewed the following components of the San Francisco to San Jose Project Section:

- Various track improvements will be made to support higher speeds
- Up to three sets of passing tracks are being explored
- One Light Maintenance Facility in Brisbane is under consideration
- Safety features will be made including grade crossing treatments, four-quadrant gates and perimeter fencing
- HSR vehicles will travel at speeds up to 110 miles per hour, predominantly on the same tracks as Caltrain between San Francisco to San Jose
- Operations will support four High-Speed Trains per direction in the peak period per hour
- The Authority will analyze traffic impacts to existing crossings for potential grade separations
- The Authority will be working with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to develop a long-term grade-separation strategy for the peninsula corridor

LMPG Member Questions & Answers

- Q: Is the Authority looking into quiet zones?
A: In order to establish quiet zones, the local jurisdiction would have to initiate the process and work with the railroad. The Authority itself is not looking into quiet zones.
- Q: Could the Authority explain why building many grade separations at once is more disruptive than building them separately?

A: If the Authority were to address all 42 grade separations at once, it would be an enormous construction project and very disruptive. The Authority's approach would be doing approximately 5 or 6 at a time.

- Q: Will the passing tracks be operator neutral?

A: Yes.

- Q: Is the Brisbane light maintenance facility a shared facility?

A: It could be a shared facility depending on its capacity, but further analysis needs to be completed. The Authority is currently looking at getting environmental clearance for a light maintenance facility for high-speed rail alone.

- Q: Can the Authority explain why there are more projects in San Mateo compared to other cities along the peninsula?

A: The focus on San Mateo was initiated by the City of San Mateo. The City was interested in addressing connectivity and safety issues. The Authority is committed to pursuing a regional approach for at-grade crossings and grade separation projects. These projects will take significant resources, and it is important for local agencies and jurisdictions to work together on prioritizing, funding, and completing these projects.

- Q: Is the Authority saying that a 30-minute travel time can be achieved between San Francisco and San Jose without grade separations?

A: Yes.

- Q: Can the HSR travel safely at the speeds needed to achieve the 30-minute travel time?

A: Yes, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) guidelines are that grade separations are only required when the train travels 125 mph or greater. Any speeds below that don't require a grade separation.

- Q: Will the operating impact high-speed rail has on Caltrain be evaluated in the environmental document?

A: Yes.

- Q: Will level boarding be evaluated as part of the blended system? Level boarding should be evaluated as part of the project because that could potentially impact the performance and reliability of Caltrain and consequently the ability of a blended system to perform.

A: The impacts of the blended system will be evaluated. Common-level boarding at all stations will not be evaluated; that's a different proposition.

- Q: Is FRA involved in the environmental review process?

A: Yes, the Authority coordinates with the FRA on a regular basis. FRA reviews all of the EIS subjects, and will review and sign-off on the environmental document.

- Q: Many of the cities along the 16 mile stretch may not be aware that passing tracks are under consideration.

A: The potential passing tracks are in the early stages of analysis. This analysis will determine what combination or option is feasible. Public comments the Authority receives will have a direct impact on which passing track location may be feasible.

- Q: If the Authority is examining operational feasibility, it is possible that none of them are feasible and the Authority will have to analyze additional options? Is there a certain level of confidence that these will be feasible?

A: Yes. The two-mile track in San Mateo will likely be feasible. The Authority will work with Caltrain to determine sufficient passing track options, as well.

4. Environmental Process Update

- a. Rich Walter, provided an environmental process update noting that the San Francisco to San Jose Project Section is currently in the middle of Scoping. The Notice of Intent (NOI) and Notice of Preparation (NOP) were issued on May 9 beginning the state and federal environmental review process.

Three Scoping Meetings were conducted to educate the public on the project section and to elicit public comment. Public scoping meetings will be accepted until June 10 and can be submitted via:

- Email: san.francisco_san.jose@hsr.ca.gov
- Phone: (800) 435-8670
- Mail:

Mark A. McLoughlin
Attn: San Francisco to San Jose Project Section
California High-Speed Rail Authority
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San Jose, CA 95113

Walter presented a future and ongoing timeline from May 2016 until the end of 2017 regarding the environmental review process. This process starts with Scoping, then identifying preliminary preferred alternatives, releasing draft environmental document with outreach and public hearings, and finally drafting the final environmental document and a record of decision. Walter asserted that multiple alternatives will be analyzed, not just the preferred alternative.

LMPG Member Questions & Answers

- Q: Will the scoping comment period be extended by 30 days?
A: The Authority will consider the extension request with the FRA. Since the project is completing both CEQA and NEPA, both the lead state agency and the lead federal agency will consider and make a decision about extending the scoping period. Any concerned party can request an extension.
- Q: Why is scoping occurring again for the San Francisco to San Jose Project Section but not the San Jose to Merced Project Section?
A: When the San Francisco to San Jose Project Section first completed scoping in 2009, the project being proposed was a four-track, fully grade-separated system and not a blended system with Caltrain. The Authority and FRA decided that since the project was fundamentally different, scoping comments received should be within the correct project context and scoping should occur again. For the San Jose to Merced Project Section, the project is still within the originally proposed corridor and all the alternatives being considered are approximately in the same location. The other thing to consider is that under CEQA, input comes throughout the entire process and the lead agency will consider all input. All San Jose to Merced Project Section comments will be considered similarly to all of the scoping comments.

- Q: Will level of service be used as a way to look at impacts at grade crossings and not vehicle miles traveled?

A: Currently, the Authority is considering both level of service and vehicle miles traveled.

5. Transportation Study Update

- a. Grandy explained that his group has spent the last three weeks reaching out to city, county, and agency representatives as part of the transportation assessment and that has been an ongoing process. The transportation analysis is being conducted to assess potential impacts on the transportation network created by blended Caltrain/high-speed rail service. The study team, Fehr & Peers, is currently soliciting feedback on the current list of proposed intersections to study and if additional intersections should be added.

LMPG Member Questions & Answers

- Q: Does Fehr & Peers have a list of the proposed intersections?
A: Yes and that can be made available to LPMG members for inputs. Fehr & Peers has been coordinating with city staff to get their feedback on the 129 intersections as well.
- Q: Are you evaluating intersections not grade separations?
A: Intersections are being evaluated that are adjacent to existing grade separations and at-grade crossings.

6. Station Planning Efforts

- a. Tripousis discussed the current planning efforts for the San Francisco to San Jose Project Section stations. For Diridon Station, both aerial and at-grade alternatives are under consideration. For 4th & King and Diridon, the Authority is beginning to identify the footprint of each station that will be analyzed. The Authority approaches station planning by following this process: station location selection, station site planning, station final design and construction, and project delivery. During the design and planning process, the Authority works with the cities to collaborate on station area planning and implementation.

LMPG Member Questions & Answers

- Q: What's the connection between high-speed rail and the Diridon station?
A: The Authority is analyzing two station options at Diridon: at-grade and aerial. One platform option that will be reviewed in the environmental document is a separated elevated platform that extends just south of Santa Clara Street into Diridon station. The Authority is working with Caltrain to analyze the at-grade level through Diridon.

7. Outreach

- a. Morgan Galli, Regional Outreach Manager, provided an overview of current community engagement efforts. Galli thanked LPMG members for providing input on the current Community Working Group (CWG) rosters. There will be three CWG groups for the San Francisco to San Jose Project Section: San Francisco County, San Mateo County and Santa Clara County). The first set of meetings will likely occur in July. The CWGs represent a cross-section of community interests and stakeholders will be represented.

LPMG Member Comments, Questions & Answers

- C: Union Pacific's relationship to high-speed rail could impact the design of stations, the design of the fleet, and the transition plate between the vehicles and the platforms. This is part of a larger freight discussion that the LPMG should continue to explore.
- Q: Are the community working meetings intended to be closed or open?
A: They are open to the public.
- C: Regarding the CWGs, there could be value in having one, multi-stakeholder group for the entire project section. This group could discuss the key concerns for the entire corridor, including grade separations, passing tracks, etc.
A: The Authority is committed to ensuring that all stakeholders can provide input and are effectively engaged. The Authority encourages having an ongoing dialogue about how best to accomplish this.
- C: The LPMG is coordinating with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to see if there is funding available to fund a regional planning process for looking at all of the grade-separations together.

Public Comment/Questions:

- High-speed rail has to get between San Francisco to San Jose in 30 minutes, not 35 minutes. High-speed rail has to support minimal structuring. At Transbay, the speeds should be increased from 25 miles per hour to 80 miles per hour. That could shave off two minutes from 4th and King to Transbay. In the Brisbane area, the alignment could be worked on to gain more speed. In Hillsdale and Hayward, the speed could get up to 125 miles per hour once fully grade separated. In Palo Alto, there are some properties that are so close to the train tracks that you cannot possibly grade separate without demolishing entire neighborhoods. One of the alternatives they are looking at is grade separating bike and pedestrian lanes. Another 1-2 minutes could be saved if an 8-mile tunnel is built from somewhere north of Mountain View all the way south of Redwood City. Finally, in Diridon, we need to study a third alternative. If you look at what it takes to come out of Diridon at 50 miles per hour, there is absolutely no possible way we can get to Transbay in 35 minutes unless we've got high-speed tunnels through downtown San Jose.
- A question was asked whether level of service would be used in regards to assessing grade separations and the need to mitigate; however, "I'm wondering whether that would be appropriate. One of the key issues to be studied is station access and a key reason why CEQA is moving away from level of service (compared to vehicle miles traveled) is that the level of service means you study the roads, see where there is an automobile delay, and determine how to mitigate that delay. In terms of station access, would we want to consider more of the vehicle miles traveled approach to address how many people can get to a station including biking, walking, transit, and other alternate modes of transportation?"
- The Authority is finding it hard to lengthen the comment period because they are under pressure from FRA to speed up the process and spend the money. There hasn't been any mention yet of what the length will be of the three potential passing tracks to stakeholders. Some of the Right-of-Way along the 16-mile stretch option is pretty narrow and will probably require more property. What do property owners do if they want to sell their property? The question about the quiet zone, I know that Atherton has applied for

quiet zone status and that they're looking at that issue. Perhaps they can provide input to the Authority on the quiet zone process. Regarding the state-wide rights agreement between Union Pacific and high-speed rail issued two months ago, Union Pacific said that they still had exclusive use and rights of inter-city capacity service. My concern here is that high-speed rail will have to get an agreement in order to use the tracks. What will the Authority have to provide to Union Pacific? My concern here is that it may have a major fiscal impact to the corridor that everybody needs to know about.

- The problem with CWGs are that members were selected by the Authority. There was no outreach and the meetings are not public meetings. Every single one of these meetings needs to be public. What I really wanted to talk about is train electrification. I'm extremely concerned about it. Right now, we are potentially looking at a massive upheaval coming down the peninsula. Building high-speed rail on an electrified line is basically close to impossible and if it was possible, it would be extremely expensive. My recommendation is to reach out to the Authority Board members to say that there is a potential problem here. The Authority could work with a rail partner called Network Rail. They are a company from the United Kingdom and are currently completing a 2,000 mile electrification process. It is four years behind schedule. Reach out to them, ask them to review the entire project, and come to you with educated, professional advice.
- Moving forward, I think that one of your representatives should be addressing the Authority Board just like the California Energy Commission is, and basically say what has been discussed at the LPMG. In the meantime, there is nothing from stopping you from engaging in conversation with Board members to give them your input.