

**CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL BRIEFING:**  
**JUNE 18, 2019 BOARD MEETING AGENDA ITEM #4**

**TO:** Brian P. Kelly, Chief Executive Officer

**FROM:** Boris Lipkin, Northern California Regional Director

**DATE:** June 18, 2019

**RE:** Update on San Jose Diridon Integrated Station Concept (DISC) and Upcoming Northern California Program Milestones

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**Summary**

This is an informational item to provide an update on the status of the work to date on the San Jose Diridon Integrated Station Concept (DISC) Plan. The DISC plan was initiated by the City of San Jose, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Agency (VTA), Caltrain and the California High-Speed Rail Authority (the Partner Agencies) in 2018 to develop a vision for the expansion of the Diridon Station in San Jose to integrate the rail station, its new tenants, and station area functions with the surrounding land uses, including the planned Google development. This month, three station layouts as summarized in the attached memo are being presented to the Partner Agencies along with the elements that can be mixed and matched as the design process continues to advance. Progress to date is summarized in the attached Diridon Joint Staff memorandum from the four partner agencies' staffs.

In the fall, staff will return to the Board to present the results of the evaluation of the three station concepts, including adjustments to optimize each configuration, and to describe the Draft Vision for the integrated station. Staff will also seek direction for continued engagement with the Partner Agencies on the subsequent phases of DISC to ensure the Authority's interests and facilities are accommodated. The development of the Draft Vision into a project will require substantial additional design, engineering, and planning work on many important components and details of the station layout which will continue to evolve over time.

The discussion will also address how the planned identification of the State's Preferred Alternative for the Northern California sections in September 2019 relates and interfaces with the current DISC planning process. Staff is completing the technical work to develop a recommendation for the preferred alternatives in the San Francisco to San Jose and San Jose to Merced project sections (covering the area from San Jose to the Central Valley Wye (CVY)). The staff recommendations will be released for public review and feedback in July, including the Authority's proposed improvements to accommodate high-speed rail at Diridon Station absent any potential future DISC improvements. The staff recommendation and public feedback received will be presented to the Board of Directors at the September Board Meeting.

## **Background**

In 2018, the Authority entered into a cooperative agreement with the Partner Agencies to look at an integrated and much broader vision for potential future changes to Diridon Station and the immediate surrounding area. The DISC study is focused on achieving a range of station and station area planning objectives beyond the Authority's goal of introducing statewide high-speed rail service to the Diridon Station. As a DISC partner, the Authority has focused on ensuring that the outcomes of the broad DISC plan will accommodate HSR operations and work well for future high-speed rail passengers. Since the Authority's plans and the DISC process are aiming to achieve different outcomes and are at different stages of development, they will not be the same and will need to be carefully coordinated as both processes move forward.

The Authority has been working internally, and with the Partner Agencies, to harmonize our own preliminary design and environmental process with the DISC study. Specifically:

- The Authority's San Jose to Merced project has developed specific designs for the changes needed at Diridon Station to accommodate high-speed rail service. Environmental analysis of those changes has been completed in draft and is undergoing internal review. Release of the public draft is anticipated this winter.
- The Diridon components of our San Jose to Merced project, upon completion of our environmental process and Board approval, represent what would be required for high-speed rail service to San Jose, even if the broader plans are never realized.
- The Authority supports the broad goals and long-term vision behind DISC. DISC planning envisions Diridon station as a large multi-modal hub, with robust and dense surrounding development, fully consistent with station area planning goals adopted by the Board of Directors. The Authority is an active partner in this planning process ensuring that high-speed rail requirements are included in the early stages of development as the project evolves.

As the Authority continues to advance the development and implementation of high-speed rail in Northern California, this fall will mark a substantial milestone in that process. In September 2019, the Board of Directors will be asked to identify the State's Preferred Alternative for the San Francisco to San Jose and the San Jose to the Central Valley Wye project sections of the California High-Speed Rail program. The environmental analysis is concluding for both sections and the Administrative Draft EIR/EISs are undergoing reviews prior to public review. The alternatives the Authority is studying only look at the infrastructure needed for high-speed rail operations throughout Northern California (including at Diridon Station), and not the broader vision being developed with the Partner Agencies in the DISC process.

The Northern California team will present a staff-recommended State's Preferred Alternative for each section based on an evaluation of system and operational performance measures, environmental impacts, and community considerations. The staff-recommended State's Preferred Alternative will be shared with communities along the route through community working group meetings, public open houses, public agency Board presentations, and in other venues in July and August of 2019. Following these meetings, the public input on the staff-recommended State's Preferred Alternatives will be summarized and presented to the Board in September 2019 for consideration in the identification of the State's Preferred Alternative. The Board-identified State's Preferred Alternative for each section will be included in the published Draft EIR/EIS. Identifying a State's Preferred Alternative does not constitute the adoption or approval of a preferred alternative; that action will be taken by the Board at the completion of the environmental process.

## **Prior Board Action**

There has been no prior Board action on this item.

## **Discussion**

### *Diridon Integrated Station Concept Plan*

The DISC study is a conceptual planning study looking at various components and options for how the station could expand over time to serve a broader purpose. As work on these plans advance, they will continue to change and evolve. At this stage in the process, the DISC consultant team has looked at a range of components including the placement of tracks and station facilities, heavy rail approaches from the north and south, light rail and bus connections, integration with BART, public spaces, other access modes and facilities, etc. and has created three layouts incorporating these components.

The three layouts described in the attached Diridon Joint Staff memorandum are not meant to be the basis for selection of a single alternative for advancement but are meant to show a range of options to further evaluate and consider tradeoffs of the various components. The next step in the DISC process will be to evaluate each layout based on a broad range of criteria that include both transportation and urban considerations and identify refinements to improve each layout. The refined layouts will be further evaluated against common criteria to narrow the options to a Draft Vision for the DISC study that will be presented to the Board in the fall. The Draft Vision will also identify the next steps in the planning and design phase of DISC.

From a high-speed rail perspective, staff have been primarily focused on making sure that the transportation infrastructure planned at Diridon Station would work for high-speed rail operations and provide high-speed rail passenger access to the station and connect with other modes. On many of the more urban considerations staff have generally deferred to our partners who either have land use authority or land holdings in the area.

### *Upcoming Environmental Milestone*

While work continues to advance the DISC process, next month Authority staff will start the outreach meetings on the staff recommendation for the State's Preferred Alternative for both the San Francisco to San Jose and the San Jose to Merced project sections. These are the last two sections to identify the State's Preferred Alternatives and after this action, the Authority will have identified the route for the length of the Phase 1 high-speed rail system.

The staff recommended State Preferred Alternative will be based on the results of the preliminary analysis of the alternatives for each project section that has been conducted over the last year covering topics ranging from system performance and operational characteristics, environmental factors, and community factors. In July, staff will host a round of five community working group meetings in Northern California with representatives of interested groups and organizations followed in August by six open houses geared toward the general public. These and other outreach efforts in the next two months will focus on obtaining feedback on the staff recommendation so that we can come back to the Board in September, not only with the results of the preliminary analysis, but also with a summary of public feedback, including the themes raised during the outreach effort.

As has been Authority practice, the September Board meeting is scheduled to be in the northern California region. This will facilitate communities and stakeholders along the routes to provide the Board with direct input for consideration along with the staff report and analysis of the feedback, as part of your upcoming decision.

### *Summary*

The DISC process has been a successful collaboration between the Authority and its local partners in the development of expanded transportation hub concepts for Diridon Station that envision solutions beyond what any one of our agencies would be able to create on their own. We will continue to engage in the integrated station planning efforts to ensure that high-speed rail service and passengers are accommodated in the evolving station designs. At the same time, the

Authority will continue to advance the environmental clearance and project development work in the San Jose to Merced project section, including options for the minimum modifications needed to introduce high-speed rail trains and passengers to the Diridon Station.

There is much work ahead for both of these efforts. The exact timing of Northern California high-speed rail construction and identification of projects from the DISC process is uncertain. Should the DISC process advance concurrent with the Authority's implementation, the Authority may consider modifications to its project to reduce disruption and throwaway costs for station improvements. At the same time, if the DISC process fails to advance in time with the rest of the system, it is only prudent for the Authority to be prepared to implement its adopted program, including Diridon Station, as it has been planning.

**Legal Approval**

The Chief Counsel and legal staff have reviewed this document and proposed changes and have determined that they comply with all applicable Board policies and Authority regulations, and state and federal law.

<b>REVIEWER INFORMATION</b>	<b>SIGNATURE</b>
Reviewer Name and Title: <b>Brian Annis, CFO</b>	Signature verifying budget analysis: <b>N/A</b>
Reviewer Name and Title: <b>Tom Fellenz, Chief Counsel</b>	Signature verifying legal analysis: <b>N/A</b>

**Recommendations**

This item is for information only. Staff does not recommend any Board action at this time.

**Attachments**

Diridon Joint Staff Memo (May 17, 2019)