

MORGAN HILL-GILROY COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP MEETING SUMMARY APRIL 22, 2019

SUMMARY

Introductions & Agenda Review

Boris Lipkin, Northern California Regional Director, informed Community Working Group (CWG) members (members) that the Project Update Report would be released on May 1, 2019 and will be available on the Authority's website at the following link:

http://www.hsr.ca.gov/docs/about/legislative_affairs/SB1029_Project_Update_Report_050119.pdf.

Nora De Cuir, facilitator, asked members whether they had any comments on the March 5 Morgan Hill – Gilroy Meeting Summary.

The following comments and responses were recorded following De Cuir's remarks.

- A member commented that Caltrain cannot proceed with electrification plans until the Authority put in its own tracks, and requested a comment and response recorded in the March 5 meeting summary be modified as follows:
 - A member stated that they thought the Authority needed their own tracks before any electrification between San Jose and Gilroy could begin.
 - Staff replied yes, and that the extension of Caltrain electrification to Gilroy was a feature of the blended at-grade alternative, however the Authority has not identified a PA yet. This alternative requires an agreement with Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) and negotiations between the Authority and UPRR are ongoing.
 - Staff responded that extension of Caltrain electrification would depend on the Preferred Alternative (PA), that for electrification there would need to be three tracks in place, and that the question of how that happens remained open.
- A member commented that it was important to clearly identify issues and concerns and document them in a publicly available document

Safety and Security Characteristics of High-Speed Rail

Simon Whitehorn, Deputy Director, Operations and Maintenance, gave a presentation on the safety characteristics of the high-speed rail system.

The following questions, comments, and responses were recorded following the presentation:

- A member asked whether wildlife crossings would go both over and under the project corridor.
 - Staff responded that wildlife crossings would go under the corridor.
- A member asked how high and extensive the security fence would be, and whether it would be a chain link fence.
 - Staff responded that the fence will generally be eight feet tall and will match the design standard required for the system, which is similar to a chain-link but stronger and more difficult to get through.

- A member asked whether the rail line will have redundant power systems, and whether the rail will have Automatic Train Control.
 - Staff responded that yes, there will be backup power systems that will allow the train to continue to operate if normal power is unachievable, though it will likely run at lower speed. The rail will have an in-cab signaling system with capacity for Automatic Train Control.
- A member commented that slides depicting grade crossings seemed to contradict each other with respect to grade separations and asked for clarification.
 - Staff responded that the images were meant to be independent of each other, and the approach to grade crossings depends on operating speeds and on which alternatives are ultimately selected.
- The member followed up by asking if the grade-crossing features depicted in Slide 8 of the presentation showed high-speed rail and Union Pacific tracks at the same grade and with pedestrians crossing at the same elevation.
 - Staff responded that there will be different solutions for crossings between alternatives. These slides are generic representations intended to give an idea of the overall system design.
- A member commented that a key concern for Morgan Hill, San Martin, and Gilroy is how crossings will be handled through these areas. More detail on crossings is needed and this has been an ongoing concern for members. For most of the existing Union Pacific tracks there is no fencing and pedestrians cross where and when they want to cross, which will be a safety concern for the blended alternative.
 - Staff responded that there are planned additional barriers for pedestrian crossing not shown in the slide depictions for the blended alternative.
- A member asked how the quad barriers will activate at crossings, and asked for clarity on whether the barriers would be strong enough to stop oncoming traffic or whether they would be designed as a warning not meant to withstand impact.
 - Staff responded that the barriers will operate as arms that raise and lower in a way similar to those familiar to the general public today. They will be designed to break away under certain impact. The final design for the quad barriers may also include skirts beneath the barrier to prevent crossing under the barrier.
- A member asked for clarity on whether the barrier arm and skirt were depicted on Slide 8 of the presentation, and what material the skirt would be made of.
 - Staff responded that the skirt was not depicted and would be made of metal if ultimately included.
- A member asked how the skirt would retract when the barrier is raised.
 - Staff responded that as the barriers raise and fold, the skirts will raise and fold with them.
- A member commented that he thought a skirt attached to the barrier was already a set part of the design.
 - Staff responded that the final design was not yet set.
- A member commented that they would like to see renderings of the intersections within their community.
- A member asked how much control the train driver will have in the event of a malfunction.
 - Staff responded that this will depend on the type of malfunction. The driver will monitor what happens to the train through its communications systems. If communication is lost or an issue arises the train will come to a stop automatically. As an example of this

process, staff cited the 2011 earthquake in Japan, during which all trains stopped before the earthquake hit thanks to their earthquake early warning system.

- A member asked for clarity on how closely the signaling system will match the European Train Control System (ETCS).
 - Staff responded that the system will be designed based on a series of outputs the contractor is expected to provide and will be specified to equivalent parameters to the ETCS.
- A member asked whether there are existing case studies with data to compare a blended system with more isolated alternatives.
 - Staff responded that the best comparison is the Acela system in the Northeast United States. While that corridor has had incidents at crossings, the goal of the Authority is to make the likelihood of such events as low as possible in any blended sections of infrastructure.
- The member followed up by commenting that the risks associated with crossings for the blended alternative should be considered in the PA decision.
- A member asked why grade separations were not being considered for the blended alternative.
 - Staff responded that the Authority is focused on the infrastructure necessary for high-speed rail operations, that grade separations were not necessary for the blended alternative based on the operating speeds but that there has been discussion around a regional approach to grade separations coming out of the Caltrain Business Plan.
- The member followed up by asking whether cities were responsible for grade separations included in their own rails.
 - Casey Fromson, Caltrain Director of Government and Community Affairs, responded that funding for rail improvements come from a variety of sources. Nearly all of the 20 projects along the Caltrain corridor include some form of local funding.

Preferred Alternative Engagement Update

Rebecca Kohlstrand, Northern California Director of Projects, gave a presentation updating members about the criteria that will be part of the identification of the State's Preferred Alternative and the engagement process planned for the summer.

The following questions, comments, and responses were recorded following Kohlstrand's presentation.

- A member commented that he was surprised risk management was not considered in the PA selection criteria.
 - Staff responded that risk management and safety are taken into account in the environmental document but are not used to compare project alternatives as they are incorporated into all system designs.
- The member followed up by commenting that the alternatives have different risk profiles, so safety should be one of the explicitly considered factors used to compare alternatives.
- A member commented that the quality of graphics presented were poor and not what she would expect from a state agency. She added that she was not convinced by the safety measures presented.
 - Staff thanked the member and responded that more specific feedback is welcome for future graphics refinement.

In follow up to CWG member requests at the March 5, 2019 meeting, De Cuir introduced a discussion on CWG feedback on the staff-recommended State's Preferred Alternative. De Cuir opened the discussion

by asking members to discuss how the Working Group would like to provide their feedback on the PA during their summer 2019 meeting.

The following questions, comments, and responses were recorded during the discussion.

- A member commented that there were apparent contradictions in the Roles and Responsibilities document and the Draft Concept document, and asked what the process was by which staff consider ideas given by the CWG.
 - A member added that they would like a better understanding of how comments by members were weighed by the Authority.
 - Staff responded that the goal of the CWG discussion was to help staff collect feedback on the Staff Recommendation to present to the Authority Board. The staff report will include a summary of the feedback received during the outreach process.
- A member asked whether there was any evaluation of CWG input.
 - Staff responded that Authority staff will do their best to summarize feedback received and present that to the Board as they make their PA decision.
- A member asked whether input captured from the CWGs will only include the most frequently heard comments.
 - Staff responded that what will be presented to the Board is not finalized, and said that Authority staff is considering including the full detailed summary of each CWG meeting for the Board to consider.
- A member asked whether a consensus in Gilroy opposed to the PA would have any impact on the final outcome.
 - Staff responded that the Board will weigh the staff recommendation as well as both support and opposition to the PA, adding that the PA would be identified for the entire project segment and not for each area individually. Authority staff will do their best to provide the Board with an honest representation of all feedback received.
- A member asked whether there will be opportunity to give public comment at the PA presentation to the Board in September, and whether written comments were encouraged and what the process was for written comments.
 - Staff responded that the Board meeting will include public comment and members are encouraged to attend. Written feedback that is received in the timeframe shown on the environmental milestone slide (in the presentation) will be included in the Staff Report. Staff added that they are preparing a Staff Report and will follow that with a Memo that captures public response following this summer's outreach.
- A member commented that materials shared two to three days in advance of the meeting did not allow enough time for review. Two to three weeks would be desired instead.
 - Staff thanked the member for that feedback.
- A member asked when the Staff Report will be released.
 - Staff responded that the goal will be to have the Staff Report attached to the Board Memo and posted with the agenda and other materials five to 10 days ahead of the Board meeting. Staff added that they will present to the CWGs on the staff recommendation and other documents related to the PA process. Staff also said that they hear concern from members about the timeline and will do what they can to address these concerns.
- A member asked whether there will be more opportunities to give feedback.
 - Staff responded that the summer CWG meeting will be the next opportunity to give feedback. This will be followed by the Open Houses in August and the Board meeting in

September. Finally, there will be a 45-day comment period following the publication of the draft environmental document.

- A member commented that the alternatives rubric should not use number of structures as the measure for construction impacts on commercial buildings, but should use square feet instead. The member added that agricultural displacement should be measured as acres of prime farmland rather than number of structures.
 - Staff agreed that this should be the case and would address this.
- A member commented that construction impacts should be considered in the environmental report, adding that an alternative through downtown Morgan Hill will have a huge impact during construction and will divide the community in half.
 - Staff responded that they conduct a full assessment of construction impacts in the environmental documents.
- A member suggested staff sit at a separate table in future meetings, which would allow members to sit closer together. The member added that a criterion for evaluating outreach should be whether the final report was impacted by feedback received, and asked whether those impacts were tracked.
- A member agreed that the CWG should be in a more intimate setting and members should be provided with all necessary tools, maps, and other materials.
- A member commented that additional microphones and staff to pass them around would improve conversation flow.
- A member commented that clear documentation and accurate data were important for members, that she appreciates the high-level of information provided, but that better and accurate data would be necessary to articulate concerns regarding the PA decision.
- A member asked about noise evaluation and whether there was a breakdown of type of sensitive receptors.
 - Staff responded that it is broken down by type and will be included in the environmental document based on the type of sensitive receptor.
- Members discussed their level of comfort with feedback capture methods, suggesting using their own scribe or having notes projected onto a screen during the meeting so that members can view them and make modifications as they are taken.
- A member suggested polling members to find a day for the summer meeting that would work for most people.
- A member asked whether she could send an alternate to the July meeting.
 - Staff responded that yes, members were allowed to name an alternate who can attend in their place.

Partner Updates

Brent Tietjen, Caltrain, updated Working Group members on the status of the Caltrain Electrification Project by describing its features and benefits and outlining what is covered in the Caltrain Business Plan.

The following questions, comments, and responses were recorded following the presentation:

- A member asked how many electrification poles have been installed.
 - Caltrain Staff replied that around 300 poles have been installed and 600-650 foundations have been laid.
- A member asked if Caltrain will use a test track.

- Caltrain Staff responded that there is a maintenance track being repurposed in San Jose for testing. Additional offsite testing is being conducted in Colorado.
- A member asked the timeline for electrification to Gilroy in the Caltrain Business Plan
 - Caltrain staff responded that the out year for the Business Plan was 2040 but that improvements would be phased over time.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- A member of the public asked whether Caltrain and high-speed rail platform heights were compatible with each other, why funds were being spent on visualizations, what the meeting that Fromson referred to was, and additional questions about mechanical independence and train control systems.
- A member of the public commented that terrorist activities were a safety concern and asked whether hacking threats were being considered in project development. They added that safety was a top priority and that at-grade crossings did not make sense for trains travelling at such high-speeds. Finally, they commented that the east side of Gilroy would benefit from a well-connected transit hub, with trains from San Jose and other areas.

ATTENDANCE

Affiliation	Name	Present
Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission	Eldon Chappell	No
Casa de Fruta	Gene Zanger	No
Committee for Green Foothills	Julie Hutcheson	Yes
Economic Blueprint Thought Leader	Ed Tewes	Yes
Economic Development Corporation	Greg Sellers	No
General Plan Advisory Committee	Dick Oliver	No
Gilroy Chamber of Commerce	Mark Turner	No
Gilroy Downtown Business Association	Steve Ashford	No
Gilroy Downtown Business Association	Nancy Maciel	No
Gilroy Historic Heritage Committee	Steve Seebart	Yes
Gilroy Historical Society, Gilroy Growing Smarter	Connie Rogers	Yes
Gilroy Planning Commission	Amanda Rudeen	Yes
Greenbelt Alliance	Kiyomi Yamamoto	No
Morgan Hill Chamber of Commerce	John Horner	Yes
Morgan Hill Downtown Association	Rosy Bergin	No
Morgan Hill Downtown Property Owner/Developer, Weston Miles Architects	Lesley Miles	Yes
Morgan Hill Economic Blueprint Thought Leader	Karl Bjarke	No
Morgan Hill Planning Commission	Wayne Tanda	No

Affiliation	Name	Present
Morgan Hill Property Owner	John Kent	No
Morgan Hill Rotary Club	Randy Toch	No
Planning Commission & Tourism Alliance/Morgan Hill Downtown Association	John McKay	No
San Benito County Farm Bureau	Richard Bianchi	No
San Martin Neighborhood Alliance	Trina Hineser	No
San Martin Neighborhood Alliance	John Sanders	Yes
Santa Clara County Farm Bureau	Jess Brown	No
Santa Clara Valley Water District	John Varela	No
Visit Gilroy	Jane Howard	No

Authority Staff: Julian Bratina, Dan Galvin, Rebecca Kohlstrand, Boris Lipkin, Elizabeth Scott, Simon Whitehorn, Nora De Cuir, Joey Goldman, Cooper Tamayo

City/Agency Staff: Casey Fromson (Caltrain), Gary Heap (City of Gilroy), Todd Kennedy (City of San Juan Bautista)

Electeds: Roland Velasco (Mayor, City of Gilroy)

ACTION ITEMS AND NEXT STEPS

- The Authority will upload the PowerPoint presentation to the high-speed rail website at the following link: https://www.hsr.ca.gov/communication/info_center/events.aspx.
- A meeting summary will be developed and distributed to CWG members.
- Authority Staff will consider CWG input in designing summer outreach.
- Authority Staff will address requested changes to the Alternatives Evaluation table.
- Authority staff will poll CWG members to find a suitable date for the July CWG meeting.