

SAN MATEO COUNTY COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP MEETING SUMMARY MAY 20, 2019

SUMMARY

Introductions & Agenda Review

Boris Lipkin, Northern California Regional Director, thanked members for participating and indicated that the Project Update Report was released on May 1, 2019 and included a letter from the new Authority Board Chairman, Lenny Mendonca, appointed by Governor Gavin Newsom. The Project Update Report is 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

The following questions, comments, and responses were recorded following the introduction. The comments and questions are grouped by topic and do not reflect the order of conversation.

High-Speed Rail Operations

- A member asked if the Early Train Operator (ETO) considered Amtrak trains operating on the high-speed rail track in their analysis.
 - Authority staff responded that the ETO were asked to evaluate how best to maximize opportunity for existing diesel operations by providing connections with high-speed rail services as part of a statewide integrated rail system with a transfer and connections at Merced.
- A member asked what the requirements are for a high-speed rail test track.
 - Authority staff responded that the test track section is planned to cover the current construction area in the Central Valley this would facilitate the level of testing and provide the length of f straight track sections required to attain the maximum operating speeds up to 220mph.

Union Pacific Railroad Negotiations

- A member asked for an update on the status of the negotiations with Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR).
- Authority staff replied that the Authority continues to advance the negotiations at the highest levels within the Authority, the UPRR and with the California State Transportation Agency. A member asked what was being negotiated with UPRR.
 - Authority staff replied that ownership of the corridor, number of electrified tracks, and the ultimate configuration of the tracks along the San Jose to Gilroy corridor is currently being negotiated in the context of a statewide agreement.
- A member asked whether the Authority or Caltrain will own the electrified tracks south of Tamien Station should a blended, at-grade alternative be pursued.
 - Authority staff responded that ownership is undecided. Agreements on responsibilities relating to maintenance is a more important factor for high-speed rail.

Funding

- A member asked if funds can be reallocated from current construction efforts to constructing the Northern or Southern California project sections due to the Federal Railroad Administration's attempt to revoke funds.
 - Authority staff responded that the stipulations of the federal funding the Authority has received obligates the agency to construct 119 miles in the Central Valley and complete the environmental documents for the remaining project sections in Northern and Southern California, even though the Federal Railroad Administration attempted to revoke part of those funds.

Safety and Security Characteristics of High-Speed Rail

Simon Whitehorn, Deputy Director, Operations and Maintenance, discussed the scope of safety and security characteristics for typical and planned high-speed rail operations.

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

- A member asked where and how frequently wildlife underpasses are being constructed.
 - Authority staff replied that location and number of the underpasses was being developed in close cooperation with wildlife advocacy groups and the relevant state and federal agencies to identify the optimal locations to introduce these underpasses and preserve sensitive species migration and mobility. Underpasses have been incorporated into the design in each alternative.
- A member asked how the interchange between a blended track and high-speed rail dedicated track impacts the choice of safety systems.
 - Authority staff responded that on existing corridors, where the train operates on blended tracks, trains will carry transponders that may communicate with each unique system. The Authority is coordinating with Caltrain on the selection of safety systems for operations along the blended track.
- A member asked if there are any grade crossings outside of the Caltrain corridor and metropolitan areas in Southern California.
 - Authority staff replied that there are no grade crossings on the dedicated portions of the high-speed rail corridor.
- A member commented that current intrusion systems for at-grade crossings are not adequate to sense what is on the track without having gates deployed constantly.
 - Authority staff responded that the system will be developed over time with the latest technology and in coordination with Caltrain.

Preferred Alternative Engagement Update

James Tung, San Francisco to San Jose Project Section Project Manager, gave a presentation updating members about the PA selection criteria and engagement process.

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

- A member asked if the environmental impact of the tunnels in the Pacheco Pass will be analyzed.
 - Authority staff replied that the Pacheco Pass tunnels analysis will be included in the San Jose to Merced Project Section Environmental Impact Report/Statement (EIR/S).

Opportunities for Input

- A member commented that they are concerned that there is not enough time for the public to provide input on the Staff-Recommended State's Preferred Alternative.
 - Authority staff replied that the public will have numerous opportunities to provide input on the Staff-Recommended State's Preferred Alternative. The public may provide input through Community Working Group meetings in July, open houses in August, and the September Board meeting, which will be held in the region. Additionally, members of the public can provide comments on the Staff-Recommended State's Preferred Alternative through the project section email (san.francisco_san.jose@hsr.ca.gov) or info line (1-800-435-8670).
- A member asked what kind of feedback the Authority is seeking from the members on the Staff-Recommended State's Preferred Alternative.
 - Authority staff responded that, in general, they are seeking comments and feedback from community working group members on the staff recommendation for the State's Preferred Alternative, including geographic-specific considerations as applicable.
- A member commented that San Mateo County Public Works has had success in communicating complicated projects in the North Fair Oaks community by presenting content and project updates in easily digestible and simple formats.
- A member commented that the metric for Caltrain service does not capture the complexity of potential impacts from different operating scenarios.
 - Authority staff replied that the metric is intended to capture operational impacts and present it in a way that is easy to understand.

Preferred Alternative Discussion

Comments were provided during the discussion session on how CWG members would like to carry out the discussion during the summer meeting on the staff-recommended State's Preferred Alternative:

- A member indicated a preference for straw polling.
- A member requested more lead time to review the analyses associated with the staff-recommended State's Preferred Alternative and discuss with members of their community prior to providing comments.
- A member would like additional tools to prepare and inform their community to combat misinformation on the high-speed rail project.
- A member indicated that communities are dealing with issues such as grade separations for other projects in their area and that the Authority should understand their perspective on those issues.

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.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- A member of the public commented that the ETO reports referenced in the Authority’s 2019 Project Update Report were not accessible on the Authority’s website and expressed concern about the ridership forecast along the Peninsula used in the ETO’s analysis. The member of the public also commented that Passive Train Controls in France and UK are typically different for blended and high-speed only tracks.

ATTENDANCE

Affiliation	Name	Present
Atherton Rail Committee	Paul Jones	Yes
Beresford Hillsdale Neighborhood Association	Robert Sellers	No
Burlingame Community Leader	Ross Bruce	Yes
Burlingame Resident	Joe Baylock	No
Caltrain Accessibility Advisory Committee	Fernanda Castello	No
Clean Coalition	Craig Lewis	No
Friends of Caltrain	Adrian Brandt	Yes
Greater East San Carlos Neighborhood	Dimitri Vandellos	No
Homeowners Assoc. of North Central San Mateo	Ben Toy	No
Housing Leadership Council of San Mateo	Evelyn Stivers	No
Housing Leadership Council of San Mateo	Leora Tanjuatco Ross	No
Legal Aid Society of San Mateo County	Stacey Hawver	No
Menlo Park Chamber of Commerce	Fran Dehn	No
Millbrae Chamber of Commerce	Lorianne Richardson	No
North Fair Oaks Community	Rafael Avendaño	No
North Fair Oaks Community	Ever Rodriguez	Yes
Peninsula Freight Rail Users Group (PFRUG)	Greg Greenway	No
Peninsula Freight Rail Users Group (PFRUG)	Clem Molony (alternate)	Yes
Redwood City Chamber of Commerce	Amy Buckmaster	No
Redwood City Forward	Anthony Lazarus	No
Samaritan House	Laura Bent	No

San Francisco International Airport	Roger Hooson	No
San Francisco International Airport	Nile Ledbetter	No
San Mateo Area Chamber of Commerce	Matthew Jacobs	No
San Mateo County Central Labor Council	Richard Hedges	No
San Mateo County Economic Development Association	Rikki Hawkins	Yes
San Mateo County Economic Development Association/ Peninsula Mobility Group	Don Cecil	No
San Mateo County Health System	Brian Oh	No
Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition	Emma Shlaes	No
South San Francisco School Board/Samtrans Citizens Advisory Committee	John Baker	No
Sustainable San Mateo County	Christine Kohl-Zaugg	No
Sustainable San Mateo County	Bill Schulte	No

Authority Staff: Boris Lipkin, James Tung, Simon Whitehorn, Morgan Galli, Yosef Yip, Joey Goldman, Matt Marvin, Zach Barr

Guest presenters: Brent Tietjen (Caltrain)

ACTION ITEMS AND NEXT STEPS

- The Authority will upload the PowerPoint presentation to the Authority website at the following link: https://www.hsr.ca.gov/communication/info_center/events.aspx
- The Authority will post the visualizations shared at the meeting online.
 - Pacheco Pass Visualization, available here: <https://vimeo.com/309808886/40686db369>
 - San Mateo Quad Gate Grade Crossing, available here: <https://vimeo.com/332315271/de9f81a974>
- A meeting summary will be developed and distributed to CWG members.
- The Authority will confirm access to the ETO reports links on the Authority website.