



SAN JOSE COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP MEETING SUMMARY FEBRUARY 21, 2019

Note: Questions and comments were grouped by category where applicable and are not necessarily presented in the order they were asked.

SUMMARY

Introductions & Agenda Review

Boris Lipkin, Northern California Regional Director, gave a brief update on Governor Newsom's comments regarding high-speed rail in his State of the State address.

The following questions, comments, and responses were recorded following Lipkin's update.

- A member asked whether stations from Merced to Bakersfield would be tied to Amtrak rather than high-speed rail.
 - Staff responded that the intention is to connect these locations with high-speed service and more information would be available in the project update report.
- A member asked when the Preferred Alternative (PA) will be presented.
 - Staff responded that the Authority Board would identify a PA in September 2019.
- A member asked which parts of the project were over budget, and whether the spending was justified in each case.
 - Staff provided an overview and committed to share relevant information from the 2018 Business Plan as a follow-up action item.
- A member commented that the threat of the federal government rescinding a grant has increased support for the high-speed rail project among community members.

Rationale for Preferred Alternative

Dave Shpak, Deputy Project Manager, San Jose to Merced Project Section, gave a presentation on the rationale and process for identifying the PA.

The following questions, comments, and responses were recorded during and following this presentation.

PA Timing and Criteria

- A member asked whether the public would know what the PA is before the decision is finalized.
 - Staff responded that the Authority would share the staff recommended PA with the public and gather feedback in July and August before presenting it to the Board in September 2019.
- A member asked about train design, particularly the criteria for reaching 200+ mph and less than five-minute headways.
 - Staff clarified that trains and rail system must meet these specifications but would not necessarily provide service at these specifications in all areas of the system.
- A member commented that it is difficult to organize communities in the summer, when the preliminary staff report will be released, and asked how much time there would be for the public to review and comment.
 - Staff responded that outreach on the PA recommendation will occur over an eight-week period, and that the public will also have an opportunity to provide comment at the September Board Meeting.

Coordination with Communities, Partners, and Agencies

- A member requested a detailed discussion of the alternatives through the Monterey Corridor.

- Staff agreed to coordinate with District 2 community leaders to arrange a presentation of alternatives in that subsection.
- A member asked whether the Authority would work with CalTrans to introduce toll lanes.
 - Staff responded that the Authority is not working with CalTrans on toll lane projects.
- A member suggested hosting a Diridon Open House.
- A member asked whether the Authority held a seat on the Diridon Joint Policy Advisory Board (JPAB), and whether the Authority was aware of a letter sent to five council members.
 - Staff responded that the Authority does hold a seat on the JPAB. It is currently vacant while Board member assignments are updated. Authority staff is aware of the letter.
- Members requested more, detailed visual simulations, including simulations in the Metcalf area.
 - Staff responded that the updated flyover video covers the entire project section, and additional visuals of the Monterey Corridor are in development, with the goal of having them ready for the next round of meetings.

Other

- A member commented that spending transportation funds on roads provides greater benefit per dollar spent than on spending for other transportation modes.

Early Train Operator

Hayden West, Lead Procurement Advisor with Deutsche Bahn (DB), gave a presentation on the role of the Early Train Operator (ETO).

The following questions, comments, and responses were recorded during and following this presentation.

Role and Expertise of the ETO

- A member asked how long DB would be involved with the project.
 - Staff responded that the pre-operation phase would take about two years, and the consulting contract is for six years. The franchise agreement would follow for an estimated five to seven years, but this could vary and be either shorter or longer than that.
- A member asked how much influence the ETO has over the planning process and the PA recommendation.
 - Staff responded that the ETO is involved with multiple system design characteristics.
- A member asked whether DB had experience with projects similar to this one in terms of length and number of stations.
 - ETO staff confirmed that DB worked on similar projects and they have been very well received in Germany.
- A member asked whether DB would funnel manufacturing of trains towards Germany.
 - Staff answered that they must comply with Authority and FRA Buy America requirements and that rolling stock would be manufactured in the US.
- A member asked whether the ETO had comments on rail plans across the state.
 - Staff responded that there are various plans among agencies to improve and expand state rail service and integration between rail services.
- A member asked how long DB had been working with the Authority.
 - ETO staff responded that DB had been working with the Authority since December 2017.
- A member asked whether DB would be involved with marketing high-speed rail.
 - ETO staff responded yes, part of the ETO's role would be in marketing and branding.

High-Speed Rail and Diridon Station

- A member commented that a viaduct to Columbus Park seemed like a better option than a land entrance to the Diridon station.
 - Staff responded that a station at Columbus Park would be isolated, while introducing high-speed rail to Diridon Station would allow for multiple transit connections.
- A member asked whether the Diridon Integrated Station Concept (DISC) process would influence the PA recommendation.

- Staff responded that that there were still many questions remaining about the DISC process and those are being considered separately from high-speed rail. The four alternatives for high-speed rail are all still being considered. The projects will continue to be coordinated as both processes move forward.
- A member asked about the relationship between DISC and high-speed rail.
 - Staff answered that this would be covered in the Outreach Update.

Other

- A member asked how many tracks ran through the Berlin Central Train Station.
 - ETO staff answered that there are six to seven tracks on the lower level, four to five on the mid-level, and six to eight on the upper-level.
- A member asked how much of Germany's rail line passes through residential neighborhoods, and what protections were in place citing an incident where a train caught fire.
 - ETO staff responded that Germany is a leader in regional planning. Some rail lines pass through residential neighborhoods. There are sound barriers and fencing through most residential areas. Regarding the fire, there were clear plans for response and evacuation in place that were well executed, and emergency services responded quickly.
- A member commented that soil in the Gardner area leads to rapid deterioration of infrastructure.
- A member commented that they sent a proposal to the Authority for a trench format for the rail. A primary concern is the safety of children crossing the tracks. The member asked ETO staff whether a trench was a viable option.
 - Staff responded that the ETO is focused primarily on the operations of the project, and less on civil design. However, staff recognized the member's concern and letter and would be following up on that..
- A member commented that the community has little faith that the design for the project will work long-term, and that there was a perception that the Authority would build the rail it could afford rather than the best design.
 - Staff responded that the Authority was spending what was necessary to meet the goal of 100-year life durability.

Outreach Update

Morgan Galli, Interim Northern California Regional Stakeholder Manager, provided an update on recent outreach efforts by the Authority.

The following questions, comments, and responses were recorded during and following this presentation.

Coordination with Communities, Partners, and Agencies

- A member recommended that the Authority contact Greg Peck with the District 2 Leadership Council to coordinate an open house on the Monterey Corridor.
- A member asked how high-speed rail will benefit the Stockton area.
 - Staff responded that there were many investments in rail throughout the state, in addition to high-speed rail. Planned ACE improvements will connect Stockton to Merced, which will connect with high-speed rail.
- A member commented that volunteers like the Community Working Group (CWG) members could benefit from meetings that focused on connecting volunteers.

Project Funding and Schedule

- A member asked if there was a point at which the project would be declared unfeasible, given the rising costs, and what would happen if that point was reached.
 - Staff responded that funding was being acquired in phases, and that this was a normal process for large infrastructure projects.
- A member asked how long it would take for the Authority to recoup its costs and start generating revenue.
 - Staff responded that the goal is not to recoup capital costs, but to cover operating and maintenance costs.

- A member commented that costs would be offset by indirect savings.
- A member asked whether delays with high-speed rail would affect Diridon Station.
 - Staff responded that the Governor is focused on completing construction within the Central Valley, completing bookend projects, and completing the environmental process for other project sections. Identifying funds to build the other project sections would occur in the future.
- A member asked how many train systems break even or make a profit when it comes to operating and maintenance costs.
 - Staff responded that HSR systems around the world operate on a commercial basis and are generally profitable on an operating basis. For some systems, the same operator also runs local or commuter rail services that require subsidies and for those it can be difficult to breakout financial results between systems.
- A member commented that most transit systems—ACE, BART, Amtrak—rely on taxpayer subsidies and expects that high-speed rail would as well. The member expressed skepticism that high-speed rail could reach its goal of a 100-year life span because no infrastructure in the state has lasted that long. Finally, the member commented that travel times had to account for individuals who do not live near stations.
 - Staff responded that the 100-year lifespan would include regular maintenance and was meant to account for long-term changes, like climate change. Staff agreed that connections to high-speed rail stations will be critical and will depend on local partners.

Other

- A member asked for visualizations to be scaled accurately.
 - Staff responded that visuals would be made to scale and that viewpoint visualizations would be included in the environmental document.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- A member of the public asked whether the Authority had considered a terminal in Fresno instead of Merced, whether high-speed rail would be compatible with Caltrain, and whether a high-speed train is capable of making a U-turn.
- A member of the public commented that the community in the Santa Teresa Foothills supported an alternative that was not being explored by the Authority. They would like a blended alternative in a trench, and for this to be considered along with other alternatives.

ATTENDANCE

CWG Members		
Affiliation	Representative or Alternate	Present
Alma Neighborhood Association	Cyndy Broyles	
Bellarmino College Preparatory	Brian Adams	
California Maison Homeowners Association/Metcalf Neighborhood	Patricia Carlin	X
Committee for Green Foothills	Alice Kaufman	X
CommUniverCity	Dayana Salazar	
Delmas Park Neighborhood Association	Andrew Tubbs	X
District 10 Leadership Coalition/VEP Community Association	Marilyn Rogers	X
EGOPIC	Rose Combs	
Flowers Neighborhood Association	Matthew Young	X
Gardner Neighborhood	Kevin Christman	X
Greenbelt Alliance	Kiyomi Yamamoto	
Guadalupe Washington Neighborhood Association	Ray Moreno	X

Hayes Neighborhood Association	Manny Souza	X
Hellyer-Christopher Riverview Skyway Neighborhood Association	Stephani Rideau	
Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Silicon Valley	Dennis King	
Hispanic Foundation of Silicon Valley	Matthew Gonzalez	
Los Paseos Neighborhood Association	Amy Georgiades	X
Mexican-American Political Association (M.A.P.A.)	Danny Garza	X
Newhall Neighborhood Association	John Urban	X
North Willow Glen Neighborhood Association	Harvey Darnell	X
Oak Grove Neighborhood Association	James Patterson	X
San Jose Downtown Association	Michelle Azevedo	X
Santa Clara & San Benito Counties Building & Construction Trades Council	David Bini	X
SAP Center	Jim Goddard	X
Senter Monterey Neighborhood Association	Jonathan Fleming	
Silicon Valley Leadership Group	Carl Guardino	
Silver Leaf Neighborhood	Shaun Lee	
SPUR San Jose	Nicole Soultanov	X
The Silicon Valley Organization	Matthew Mahood	
Tulare Hills Homeowners Association	Brian Gurney	X
United Neighborhoods of Santa Clara County	Ed Rast	X
Vietnamese Voluntary Organization	Quyen Mai	
Working Partnerships USA	Jeffrey Buchanan	X

Authority Staff: Boris Lipkin, Dave Shpak, Morgan Galli, Simon Whitehorn, Elizabeth Scott, Julian Bratina, Yosef Yip, Hayden West, Ben Gettleman, Mary Beth Day, Cooper Tamayo

Elected Officials (and staff): Alex Lee (Office of Assemblymember Evan Low), Anurag Pal (Office of Assemblymember Kansen Chu), Jonathan Perez (Office of Senator Jim Beall)

City/Agency Staff: Brent Tietjen (Caltrain), Lori Severino (City of San Jose), Brian Stanke (City of San Jose), John Ristow (City of San Jose)

ACTION ITEMS AND NEXT STEPS

- The Authority will upload the PowerPoint presentation to the high-speed rail website [here](#).
- Authority staff will share a meeting summary with CWG members.
- The Authority will share information on capital costs and funding from the 2018 Business Plan with CWG members.
- The Authority will coordinate with District 2 Leadership Team and other Monterey Corridor community members to arrange a Monterey Corridor-focused presentation.
- The Authority will provide a DISC update at the next CWG meeting.