CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 2022
10:00 AM

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTHCARE SERVICES

THE AUDITORIUM

1500 CAPITOL AVENUE

SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95814

Reported by:
E. Hicks
APPEARANCES

BOARD MEMBERS
Tom Richards, Chair
Nancy Miller, Vice Chair
Lynn Schenk
Ernest Camacho
Henry R. Perea, Sr.
James C. Ghielmetti
Martha M. Escutia
Margaret Pena
Anthony Williams

EX OFFICIO BOARD MEMBERS
Assembly Member, Dr. Joaquin Arambula
Senator Lena A. Gonzalez (Absent.)

STAFF
Brian P. Kelly, Chief Executive Officer
Boris Lipkin, Northern California Regional Director
Serge Stanich, Director of Environmental Services
Alicia Fowler, Chief Counsel
Moe Ramadan, Acting Board Secretary
APPEARANCES (Cont.)

PRESENTERS:

Brian P. Kelly, Chief Executive Officer
Boris Lipkin, Northern California Regional Director
Serge Stanich, Director of Environmental Services
Gary Kennerley, Northern California Director of Projects
Brian Annis, Chief Financial Officer
Bruce Armistead, Director, Operations and Maintenance
Margaret Cederoth, Director, Planning and Sustainability Office
Minming Wu Morri, In-house Environmental Attorney
Jessica Tucker Mohl, California Office of the Attorney General

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Frank Quintero, Deputy City Manager, City of Merced
Daniel Leavitt, San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority, San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission
Laura Uden, High-Speed Rail Business Advisory Council
Keith Dunn, Association for California High-Speed Trains
Rod Diridon, U.S. High Speed Rail Coalition
Matthew Serratto, Mayor of Merced
Sharon Gonsalves, Renne Public Policy Group, on behalf of the City of Bakersfield
John Ellis, City of Fresno
APPEARANCES (Cont.)

PUBLIC COMMENT: (Cont.)

Jeanette Owens, Senior Executive Officer, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Sean Jeans-Gail, Vice President, Rail Passengers Association

Roland Lebrun, Self

Andy Kunz, U.S. High Speed Rail Association

Alvaro Meza, Chief Business Official, Gilroy Unified School District

Miguel Arias, Councilmember, Fresno City Council

Cathleen Galgiani, California Senator

PUBLIC COMMENT: AGENDA ITEM 2, 8, 9, 10 & 11:

Sam Liccardo, Mayor of San Jose

Andy Russell, California Alliance for Jobs

Marie Blankley, Mayor of Gilroy

Jose Manzo, Superintendent, Oak Grove School District

Rebecca Long, Director, Legislation and Public Affairs, Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Ellen Wehr, Grassland Water District, GEA stakeholder group

Adrian Bryant, Self

Noah Cristman, SPUR
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PROCEEDINGS

10:00 a.m.

PROCEEDINGS BEGIN AT 10:00 A.M.

CALIFORNIA, THURSDAY, APRIL 27, 2022

CHAIR RICHARDS: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen and welcome to the California High-Speed Rail Authority’s Board of Director’s meeting for August 27th. And as you’ve seen, also, August 28th. It’s wonderful to be back live. We thought that live meetings are so easy to put on, and we now find out that they’re not. We thought Zoom calls were massively difficult, and they seemed to be a way of life, so we did that pretty well after a year and a half or so. So, this is what we’ve all looked forward to.

We don’t have a full house here. We hope we do with people who are listening and we’ll see our participation of people who join us in each of our meetings, we hope, over the next several meetings.

So, with that I’m going to call the meeting to order and ask the Secretary, who’s usually on the screen in front of us and how is hiding in the back, Mo, would you please call the roll.

MR. RAMADAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Director Schenk?
BOARD MEMBER SCHENK: (No audible response.)

MR. RAMADAN: Chair Richards?

CHAIR RICHARDS: Here.

MR. RAMADAN: Director Camacho?

BOARD MEMBER CAMACHO: Here.

MR. RAMADAN: Vice Chair Miller?

VICE CHAIR MILLER: Here.

MR. RAMADAN: Assemblymember Arambula?

EX OFFICIO BOARD MEMBER ARAMBULA: Here.

MR. RAMADAN: Director Perea?

BOARD MEMBER PEREA: Here.

MR. RAMADAN: Director Ghielmetti?

BOARD MEMBER GHIELMETTI: Present.

MR. RAMADAN: Director Escutia?

BOARD MEMBER ESCUTIA: (No audible response.)

MR. RAMADAN: Director Williams?

BOARD MEMBER WILLIAMS: Here.

MR. RAMADAN: Director Pena?

BOARD MEMBER PENA: Here.

MR. RAMADAN: Senator Gonzalez?

EX OFFICIO BOARD MEMBER GONZALEZ: (No audible response.)

MR. RAMADAN: Mr. Chair, we have a quorum.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

And do we have a flag this morning? All right,
if you’d stand and join me, please.

(Whereupon the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.)

CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you.

So, ladies and gentlemen, the meeting over these two days will incorporate the staff presentation on the San Jose, Merced environmental documents. And in tomorrow’s hearing, the Board action on those documents, as well as other items on the agenda for today.

As you know from having watched or listened in the past, we follow a pretty strict format on environmental documents to make sure that we are abiding by the laws governing same, both federally and for the State of California.

With that, we will start with -- oh, that’s yours. What we have, we will follow this, as I mentioned, pretty carefully. You will have noticed, if you’ve looked at the agenda, there will be two opportunities for public comment. The first opportunity will be for any items on the agenda exclusive of those items dealing with the environmental hearing, as well as anything else that members of the public would like to address.

So, with that, as noted on the agenda, as is custom, we will start by taking public comment at the very beginning of the meeting. Since we are taking up the San
Jose to Merced Environmental Project section, we will also have a dedicated opportunity for the public on that project section later this morning.

Public comment at the outset of the meeting will be for all remaining agenda items and non-agenda items not related to the San Jose to Merced documents.

After the general comment period, we will then have staff present the San Jose to Merced project, including the Final EIR/EIS, and a proposed decision for the Board to consider those decisions.

After staff presentation, we will then take public comment on the San Jose to Merced Project section proposed decisions, and all related agenda items. Those are agenda items 2, 8, 9, 10, and 11. This way, members of the public will have the opportunity to listen to the staff presentation and they can incorporate any thoughts, or questions, or concerns into their comments.

Board member input will be sought after the public comment. And the Board will have an opportunity to direct staff as to any issues or questions they may wish to have addressed during Item 8, on Thursday.

We will then take a lunch break, and then reconvene and move on to the other agenda items for today.

After that, we will adjourn for the day and then reconvene tomorrow morning at 11:00 a.m. Tomorrow’s
session will be focused first on Item 8, staff responses to the issues identified by the Board. The Board will then deliberate on Items 9, 10, and 11 related to the San Jose to Merced Project section.

So, with that introduction, we will start with general comments. As a reminder, this is for all agenda and non-agenda items unrelated to the San Jose to Merced Project section. So, unrelated to the Agenda Items Numbers 2, 8, 9, 10, and 11.

After the comment period we will -- or, after the comment period will be -- excuse me, another comment period will be offered for San Jose to Merced later this morning.

With that, I’m going to ask the Board Secretary to conduct notification of who’s going to be speaking to us. And I had not gotten any cards, so I don’t know if we have any people in the -- are you going to go ahead and hang on to them? That’s fine, sure. Okay.

Okay, Mo, you’re on.

MR. RAMADAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good morning all. Before we begin public comment on all agenda items unrelated to Agenda Item 2, 8, 9, 10, and 11, I would like to go over some important information.

For members of the public who have joined us in person and wish to provide comment, you’ll be called in the order that we have received your card. We are also
allowing members of the public to provide comment remotely by telephone, after the in-person public comment.

We will start with Frank Quintero. Frank Quintero.

MR. QUINTERO: Good morning Chairman Richards, Board members, and what an awesome opportunity to be in front of you today. It’s been a while, so thank you and thank you to the staff.

My name’s Frank Quintero, I’m the Deputy City Manager for the City of Merced, and I have two items to speak about.

First of all, we encourage you to issue the RFQ for the Central Valley design. We have four communities eager to move forward with this program, and plan our futures out with you. So, again, we’re excited for this opportunity and encourage you to approve issuing the RFQ.

Next, we encourage you to approve the 2022 Business Plan. We continue to strongly support all the efforts of the Governor and the High-Speed Rail Project, both those that are in progress and that are planned.

We look forward to continuing to work with the High-Speed Rail Authority, and we look forward to great things happening in California, as well as the Central Valley. And thank you very much.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you, Mr. Quintero.
MR. RAMADAN: Next up we have Dan Leavitt. Dan
Leavitt.

CHAIR RICHARDS: And I might introduce him as a
long time ago the head environmental staff member and
Director for the California High-Speed Rail Authority.

MR. LEAVITT: Thank you.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Welcome Dan.

MR. LEAVITT: Good morning Chair Richards and the
rest of Board, CEO Kelly. It is really, truly great to see
you here this morning. And as noted, I’m Dan Leavitt,
representing the San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority and the
San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission.

I did already provide comments at your last Board
meeting March 17th, but we did want to be here in person to
reiterate our support for the OR 2022 Business Plan and
your efforts to implement high-speed rail in California.

You have our commitment to partner with you, and
local, and regional agencies to ensure that the Merced,
Bakersfield High-Speed Rail Interim Service will be well
connected with our services and to other transit throughout
the valley, and will be a transformational investment in
the San Joaquin Valley that will help the state meet its
sustainability goals.

The success of interim high-speed rail service is
essential towards implementing the ultimate high-speed rail
service between the Bay Area, Sacramento, San Joaquin Valley, and Southern California.

A key focus of my agencies is to continue to work with your staff, your early train operator CALSTA and Caltrans to make sure that both our San Joaquin’s and A services connect with high-speed rail in a multi-modal station in downtown Merced.

And lastly, we do want to reiterate our strong support for the Governor’s budget proposal to provide the remaining $4.2 billion in Prop 1-A funding to the Authority needed to implement electrified, true high-speed rail service in the San Joaquin Valley. Thank you very much.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you, Mr. Leavitt.

MR. RAMADAN: Next up we have Laura Uden. Laura Uden.

CHAIR RICHARDS: And Ms. Uden is here representing the Small Business Advisory Committee, the Professional Services Division of that, specifically. And so, I’ve had a conversation with her. And you, please, are free to take five minutes.

MS. UDEN: Thank you. Thank you, Chair Richards and Board members for your continued support of small business. We appreciate everything you’ve done so far and look forward to continuing to work with you.
I’m the owner of small, woman, disabled Veteran-owned firm, called NSI Engineering, which is struggling to stay in business. My military background taught me to try to do the right thing and help others, and make the world a better place.

I’ve driven here on a five-hour roundtrip to meet with you in person, in the hopes that I can be more impactful about the conflict of interest policy than I have been in the past. These comments will continue that discussion. Oh, please include these comments in the meeting transcript, if you would.

When I first spoke at a Board meeting about the High-Speed Rail Conflict of Interest Policy and Practices, I was speaking on behalf of other small business owners, as my firm had no conflict per the policy’s own language. However, my firm has since been given a determination of conflict, which cannot be mitigated, other than to drop all our existing contracts which are helping our firm survive.

It’s now too late for my firm and many others to participate in a PDS pursuit. The PDS teams have formed. And although we were selected to be key personnel positions by all primes pursuing the contract, last week had to ask them to remove us from their teams.
After over 20 communications back and forth with the HSR legal team and the Board, my firm has been given a determination of conflict.

I’ve spoken at recent Board meetings about issues with the High-Speed Rail Conflict of Interest Policy and its implementation. These issues have only been exacerbated over the last few months.

The five primary issues include, one; the High-Speed Rail Legal Team appears to be incorrectly interpreting their own policy. The March 8, 2022 letter from Alicia Fowler, to my company, said: The quality assurance row in the matrix is not applicable to NSI’s regional consultant work, which contemplates a direct contract between the Authority and the quality assurance consultants.

Meaning not through any prime consultants or contractor.

Yet, the language in the matrix clearly indicates otherwise. Attempts to clarify this interpretation in subsequent communications and meetings with High-Speed Rail Legal Team remain unresolved.

Two; multiple firms are receiving determinations of conflict related to scopes of work that include subject matter areas and procedures those firms do not perform. A review of three different determination letters identified
multiple inconsistencies in what the firm’s business scope actually is and what the legal team thought it was. The High-Speed Rail Legal Team does not understand the scope of work for some of these small businesses, and questions business owners’ integrity when we tell them what we do.

Our initial Conflict of Interest Determination request offered mitigations that would have protected the program, but allowed us to add value. High-Speed Rail Legal Team’s continued lack of understanding of our scope and that of others stopped them approving these mitigations.

The High-Speed Rail Legal Team has failed to engaged their own subject matter experts to assist in an understanding of scope and discussing possible mitigations. Instead, in our case they engaged our authority contract manager, who has no understanding of my firm’s scope of work. Yet, in the February 17, 2022 Board meeting and the follow-on February 23rd, High-Speed Rail Business Advisory Council meeting, the Legal Team committed to engage relevant staff to discuss mitigations as part of the determination process.

Four; currently the only understood oversight of High-Speed Rail Legal Team’s performance is provided by the Board. However, the Legal Team refused to allow the Board
members to oversee the Conflict of Interest Policy in action through meetings with small business owners. The Board should be allowed to participate in determination meetings between the Legal Team and business owners as part of conducting their required due diligence oversight of the Authority’s Conflict of Interest Determination process.

Five; the approach for collecting objective information and data through the determination process is unclear and undocumented. The Legal Team is either not taking minutes of the meetings or not sharing them with the small business owners for review and to correct any mistakes in understanding. These mistakes appear to be leading to incorrect determinations and conflicts which are likely to happen if the High-Speed Rail Legal Team misunderstood what was said or inaccurately recorded what was reported, and then used that information as a justification for determination of conflict.

In some cases, the exact same question is repeated multiple times in the same meeting, even when a clear and unambiguous answer has been given. This strategy, which may work in a courtroom to cross-examine a witness, often leaves a feeling that the High-Speed Rail Legal Team doesn’t believe or doesn’t trust business owners.
When one issue from High-Speed Rail Legal Team is addressed, suddenly new items crop up that has the potential for conflict, even though in most cases the reasoning behind this is faulty on the part of the Legal Team. Then, when the new issues are addressed other issues are brought forward.

This leaves the impression that the intent of the Legal Team is to do everything they can to find a conflict, regardless of what business owners tell them.

It appears the policy is not being implemented as written or as promised. Alicia Fowler, in the February 1, 2022 Board meeting said: Some policies start with exclusions, but we start by trying to ensure people can participate.

And you, Chair Richards, added: I encourage a conversation between those who have received letters of disqualification to work with staff to provide a pathway that allows qualification. This is not happening.

Whatever actions have been take by the Authority and Board to date based on all this input from me, and other small business owners, if any, they are not resulted in changes being felt on the front lines.

The process is definitely broken. Because of this, the extent of in-depth strategic skills and decades of experience on the High-Speed Rail Program of all of
these small businesses will not be leverage for the benefit of the program and the taxpayers of California.

The Primes are struggling to find staff with skills and experience given the very late removal of so many firms from their teams. We’re being conflicted out now, which is less than three weeks before the SFQs are due. This late removal will weaken the teams and weaken the ability of them to deliver on the PDS pursuit.

I respectfully request the Board take action to stop this madness, to stop the continued harm to small businesses. I ask you to work with us to identify and correct issues that are impacting our ability to survive. The Policy and its implementation are not only harming small businesses, but the Primes, the Program, and the taxpayers of California.

I plan to remain here for the next few hours in the hope of meeting with any members of the Board that would like to talk with me about this over lunch. I look forward to speaking with you about that. Thank you for this attention to this.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you, Ms. Uden. And I will talk with our CEO and with counsel, and we’ll confer on your comments. Thank you.

MR. RAMADAN: Mr. Chair, next up for public comment we have Keith Dunn. Keith Dunn.
CHAIR RICHARDS: Good morning, Mr. Dunn.

MR. DUNN: Thank you, Mr. Chair, CEO Kelly, Board members. Keith Dunn here on behalf of the Association for California High-Speed Trains.

I wanted to commend the Board and your staff on your Business Plan for 2020, encourage the acceptance of it. In discussions with others in support of this effort, and the Legislature, I think that there’s real progress being made. I’ve been involved in this project since its inception. I’m very pleased with the direction of the report and the Business Plan. I think that it lays out a clear path.

I think that you’ve been doing some great outreach. And the focus on jobs, and I’ll just mention specifically the recent media from a couple of iron workers. And, you know, this -- we always talk about this being a transformational project, but when you get to actually interact and hear from direct individuals that are having a life-changing experience working and building this project, it really makes a difference when we communicate that with other elected officials throughout the valley, and the state, including the L.A. Basin.

I also would like to say that another tile in the mosaic of high-speed rail that I like to discuss is the fact that the Central Valley still has some of the worst
air quality in the nation. This is a transformational project. That is, this Administration talks about the Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure. I like to remind people that this is the single-most largest project that will reduce greenhouse emission from vehicles, getting people out of their cars, out of airplanes, and into high-speed rail. It’s a transformational project on the individual level, in the communities, and for our environment.

I encourage the adoption of the 2022 Plan. I appreciate the work of your staff and this Board, and I look forward to continuing to work with you to get this built. Thank you.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you, Mr. Dunn.

MR. RAMADAN: Mr. Chairman, we only have one public comment card, but it’s for Agenda Item 2. So, I’m going to begin to pivot to over-the-phone remote public comment. Give me a moment.

AT&T OPERATOR: Ladies and gentlemen, if you wish to provide public comment today you may press 1, and then 0 at this time. Once again, if you wish to provide public comment you may press 1, and then 0.

If you’ve pressed 1 and 0 already, you have removed yourself from queue. Press 1, and then 0 one time, and you’ll be placed in queue.
For those of you who joined as a speaker, your lines are open.

MR. DIRIDON: Hello.

CHAIR RICHARDS: We can hear you. Please go ahead. And if you’d start with your name.

MR. DIRIDON: I’m not sure how this works. And I apologize, Mr. Chairman. This is Rod Diridon. And having sat in the Chair, I understand that this is an awkward time, especially with an electronic mess. So, thank you for your service, and your service, and the service in the city and county of the (indiscernible).

The U.S. High Speed Rail Coalition have been working diligently at the national level, led by Secretaries LaHood, and Foxx, and myself to obtain funding at the national level for our project.

We have a $56 billion in an infrastructure bill for intercity rail, a portion of which will go to our project, and we’re looking at $10 billion more in the climate portion of the Bring Back Better Bill, which is due to be introduced in the next couple of weeks.

Each of those sources of funds must be available to every (indiscernible) projects, which means the money has to be used immediately. And so delays are deadly.

There’s some background noise, I’m sorry. The delays are deadly. So, as you go through the day and are
considering the environmental work being done, which is very important, very, very important to hear from the public and to do the best you can in terms of mitigating environmental difficulties, remember that whatever you do, do not delay the project. Progress is necessary to set the example, both in California and for the nation.

Remember that the Berkeley just now shows that 56 percent of the public supports you. That in the Bay Area, that’s over 65 percent. In the L.A. area, that’s over 60 percent, and that’s a landslide.

So, please, please know that you have the public support to spend the $4.2 billion in the Governor’s Budget, and know that you have the public support to identify high-speed rail as the number one remedy for climate that so threatens California, and the future for our children.

Please proceed with all courage, and vigor, and know that you have support from us old folks out here, also, that know how much difficult -- how difficult it is for the project.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Chairman Emeritus Diridon, I want to convey the thanks of all the members of this Board, as well as all of the staff and management of the California High-Speed Rail Authority.

For those in the audience, we refer to him with great respect as Chairman Emeritus of this Board, one of
the founders of high-speed rail for California, and for
transportation advances in our state. And so, we thank you
very much for your comments.

And for me, personally, I can’t tell you how much
I have appreciated, at the time I first joined this Board,
both your advice and guidance. And I hold that very dear.

So, thank you again for joining us today,
Chairman.

MR. DIRIDON: Thank you for your nice comments
and for your great service.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you, sir.

Before we move on, I just want to let everybody
in the audience know that, if you have not been here
before, what we have always done is we’ve taken -- when
we’re in a public session like this, we take comments from
the public in person only. So, we’re trying to transition
back to that, but we didn’t want to somehow leave out
people who were unable to come, or perhaps felt that it was
a little bit too soon for them to feel comfortable coming
to a public session like this.

So, some of the technical glitches that you may
have heard here, and maybe a little bit of unwariness on
our part with regards to how we’re handling this is jitters
at doing something we haven’t done before.

So, anybody else? Where is our Secretary?
MR. RAMADAN: I’m over here, Mr. Chairman. Can we have next up for public comment Matthew Serratto?

MR. SERRATTO: Thank you, Mo. Thank you, Chair Richards. Matt Serratto, Mayor of the City of Merced. Thanks again for the time and the opportunity to comment today.

Just wanted to reiterate a lot of the things that our Deputy City Manager Frank Quintero said earlier, commenting on Agenda Items 4 and 5.

First Item 5, the adoption of the Business Plan. The City of Merced continues to support the Governor’s vision and plan for high-speed rail in California, particularly the important infrastructure investments in transportation in the heart of California, the Central Valley.

We continue to support the Business Plan for electrified high-speed service between Merced and Bakersfield. We think that interim service will demonstrate the incredible value of electrified high-speed rail and spur the support necessary to complete the system over time.

Further targeted investments in the Bay Area and Los Angeles will enable the system to make the next logical leap in valley-to-valley service, including opportunities for both businesses and housing.
When the North High-Speed Rail connects Merced and the Central Valley to the Bay Area we’ll have more tools to address the housing/workforce balance and opening up educational opportunities by leveraging the state’s investments in UC Merced.

Finally, most importantly as mentioned earlier, electrified high-speed rail improves air quality in the Central Valley and reduces its greenhouse gas emissions.

Second, on Agenda Item 4, approving the release of an RFQ for the design of the Central Valley Station, the City strongly urges you to approve the release of this RFQ. In order to move this project forward, we must begin this design and preliminary engineering work as possible.

As your staff notes, stations are a critical element of the high-speed rail system, enabling passenger access to it.

We acknowledge that at this time we’re only in the design phase of each station, representing the minimum necessary for a functional passenger station. But getting those stations underway is critical to moving the project forward.

In summary, the City of Merced has been and remains supportive of high-speed rail and looks forward to a continued partnership. So, thank you.
With that in mind, I urge you to approve the staff recommendations for Agenda Items 4 and 5, and get this train on its way. Thanks again.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you, Mr. Mayor, and for your support for this project, as well as that of your city.

MR. SERRATTO: Well, we appreciate you guys’ work and we stand as a willing partner. So, thanks again for everything you guys do, we know how difficult it is. Thank you.

MR. RAMADAN: Next up for public comment we have Sharon Gonsalves. Sharon.

MS. GONSALVES: Good morning, Mr. Chair and fellow Board members. My name is Sharon Gonsalves. I’m with the Renne Public Policy Group, testifying today on behalf of the City of Bakersfield.

We wanted to first reiterate that we really appreciate what the HSR planners are doing. The work that they’ve been doing with the city. We want to reiterate that the city would like to see the design, have the station in Bakersfield include a landmark station, rather than a platform, as it’s guiding our Making Downtown Bakersfield Vision Plan to establish a station that connects high-speed rail and the diverse amenities of the historic city core to the broader region, foster local
businesses, and empower the public to engage in the transportation of the city all in an effort to truly create a unique and vibrant sense of community.

Secondly, we wanted to share the concern about plans for two segments of construction south of the station, through the City of Bakersfield. We worry that a pause in construction of three or more years, in the middle of Bakersfield will result in unnecessary traffic disruptions to businesses, and already disadvantaged communities southeast, of Southeast Bakersfield, and will unnecessarily impact these neighborhoods for more than 10 years. An unfinished viaduct will induce blight in this disadvantaged neighborhood and we want the construction -- we would like to see the construction be continuous through the metropolitan area, and not in two separate phases.

And then, lastly, I just wanted to make note that the city joined with county elected officials in a letter data April 15th, to the Board, that they would like to see a stronger presence and response by the High-Speed Rail Authority in Kern County. And just wanted to make note of that letter and that the city would truly appreciate a response. And if we needed to send that letter again, please let me know and I’m happy to do so.

And again, you know, we know that the work that you’re doing is difficult and you’re getting a lot of
comments that you need to decipher. But we do stand in
solidarity and ready to see this project succeed and work,
to move it forward. Thank you.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you.

MR. RAMADAN: Next up for public comment we have
John Ellis. John Ellis.

MR. ELLIS: John Ellis, the City of Fresno’s --
I’m Governmental Affairs Manager for the City of Fresno.
On behalf of Mayor Jerry Dyer, with regard to Agenda Item
Number 4, the city encourages the Board to support the RFQ
for design of the Central Valley Station that takes into
account the appropriate, comprehensive scope of work
necessary to build the nation’s first HSR station in the
heart of downtown Fresno.

This will bring positive change to Fresno, likely
on a scale not seen since the city was founded in 1872 by
the Central Pacific Railroad Company. It will result in
economic development for our community and the state. And
the importance of properly funding and resources the design
element is critical. And it is essential that the design
is reflective of the community, brings value to our city,
and demonstrates the best practices in design.

To state it very clearly, a station is a must.
The City of Fresno is not interested in having a platform
placed in the heart of a thriving downtown. Thank you.
CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you, Mr. Ellis.

MR. RAMADAN: Next up for public comment we have Miguel Arias. Miguel Arias.

MR. ARIAS: Good morning council members.

MR. RAMADAN: Apologies, sir, it looks like he’s having some technical difficulties. I’m going to move on to the next person.

Jeanette Owens.

MS. OWENS: Good morning, Chair Richards, Directors, and Chief Executive Officer Kelly. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today.

My name is Jeanette Owens, Senior Executive Officer of Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

We are requesting your approval of Board Item Number 3, of the Project Funding Agreement for the High-Speed Rail Project in Los Angeles Union Station. Specifically, for the Link Union Station, the highest priority projects contained in the 2012 Southern California Memorandum of Understanding.

LA Metro has partnered with the California High-Speed Rail Authority for over ten years to bring high-speed rail to Los Angeles via the Link Union Station Project. The Link Union Station will transform how our commuter and intercity rail operates in Southern California, with run-
through track capability at Los Angeles Union Station, which is a required incremental step to eventually bring the full high-speed rail service to Southern California.

The transformative change of converting Los Angeles Union Station from a stub-ended track to a run-through track will provide for a rail and transit capacity that is necessary to accommodate future growth in time for the Summer 2028 Olympics.

Again, we request your approval of staff recommendation Item Number 3. Thank you very much.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you very much. And we look forward to a continuation of our relationship and partnership with the LA Metro.

MS. OWENS: Thank you, Chair.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Let’s try to see if we can call on Miguel again.

MR. RAMADAN: Miguel Arias. Miguel Arias.
Okay, it looks like still technical difficulties. Before we go on to the other phone line, I just wanted to ask is there anyone else on who wishes to provide public comment right now?

Operator, can you please open up the participant lines for public comment?
AT&T OPERATOR: Thank you. And ladies and gentlemen, once again if you wish to provide public comment, you may press 1 and then 0 at this time.

Our first comment comes from Jeans-Gail. Your line is open, please go ahead.

MR. JEANS-GAIL: Good morning, my name is Sean Jeans-Gail and I’m Vice President of the Rail Passengers Association. We’re a national organization advocating on behalf of America’s passengers.

Our organization believes it is of national importance that the State of California advanced construction on the electrified Central Valley segment. So, we encourage the Board to adopt this 2022 Business Plan and approves final EIR/EIS for the San Jose to Merced Project section.

In addition to creating thousands of jobs for Californians, an electrified intercity rail corridor is an integral part in decarbonizing the state’s transportation system, including ambitious climate goals.

It is important that the high-speed rail corridor be understood both by elected officials and the public, with the key element in the modernization of the entire state rail system with synchronized connections to regional, commuter and transit rail services. Without this high class electrical trunk, California’s rail system
cannot achieve its goal of 50 million passengers from airplanes to highways onto rail.

We encourage the Board to move forward with all due haste. And we thank you for the opportunity to comment today. Thank you.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you, sir.

AT&T OPERATOR: Our next comment comes from Roland Lebrun. Please go ahead, your line is open.

MR. LEBRUN: Good morning, Chair Richards and Board members. Thank you for the opportunity.

I’d like to follow up on the -- I’m getting some background and it’s not coming from me.

I’d like to follow up on some questions that Mr. Blair Beekman, had about alignment decisions that were made decades ago. And your advice for Mr. Beekman to look for this information on the website.

Unfortunately, all Board meeting materials prior to 2018 are no longer available on the website, and (indiscernible) --

In closing, I want to really urge you to address this issue at your first earliest convenience. Thank you.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you, Mr. Lebrun.

AT&T OPERATOR: Our next comment comes from Andy Kunz, from U.S. High Speed Rail Association. Your line is open, please go ahead.
MR. KUNZ: Hi, my name is Andy Kunz, President of the U.S. High Speed Rail Association, and I’m here today speaking on behalf of both the Association and the US High Speed Rail Coalition that Rod Diridon mentioned and is Co-Chair of.

We congratulate you all for your steady leadership on this project, which has made significant progress despite the many challenges the pandemic has brought. HSR has made significant progress in clearing hundreds of miles of the project to be ready for future funding, and can go quickly to construction.

Stakeholders around the country are taking note of the significant progress being made in California right now, including the Federal Railroad Administrative, and they’re looking to see an additional state commitment, so that they can get behind it with additional federal commitments.

Specifically, we support the ongoing project and we would like to see any way possible to speed up the delivery of this project. We support the state passing the state budget and the release of the state’s $4.2 billion to advance high-speed rail, with full electrification in the Central Valley to showcase what the true high-speed rail is all about right away. That’s what their initial intent was and that’s what you all should stick with.
We also support advancing all the station design work in the Central Valley. This will be key to connecting with regions around the state.

And we support the funding agreement and moving forward with the LA Union Station modernization, with the run-through tracks that were mentioned briefly. And also, even with additional funds to build the whole build out of the Union Station, not just the first piece.

And then, finally, we support the EIR/EIS from San Jose to Merced, so we can hurry up and get that project underway and we can push for more federal funding to accelerate that segment as well.

So, once again thank you all for your leadership and your ongoing progress on the project, and we stand behind you ready, pushing every way we can. Thank you.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you.

AT&T OPERATOR: Our next comment comes from Alvaro Meza, from Gilroy School District. Please go ahead, your line is open.

MR. MEZA: Good morning, Board of Directors, High-Speed Rail staff, and members of the public. My name is Alvaro Meza, Chief Business Official for the Gilroy Unified School District.

The Gilroy Unified School District supports bringing high-speed rail to Gilroy, as there are a number
of economic benefits to bringing a station in downtown. And obvious local economic benefits that will help revitalize our downtown, and help booster our future economic growth for the entire City of Gilroy and surrounding areas.

The School District has raised its concerns during the draft EIR/EIS comment period, objecting to the use of quad gates as proper mitigation at the specific intersection of IOF and Monterey Street in Gilroy.

The District is very pleased to see the outcome of the hard work through the efforts of the environmental justice outreach recommending bicycle, pedestrian overcrossing, and complete streets at the intersections of IOF and Monterey Street.

In summary, the District supports Alternative 4 alignment, with specific mitigations as outlined by the Environmental Justice Sections contained in Chapter 5. The High-Speed Rail Authority should be pleased with the robust engagement efforts to reach our traditionally under-represented community by informing them of the potential impacts of this project.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the stakeholder engagement process. Gilroy Unified is excited about the future of high-speed rail and the robust
opportunities it will bring to our City of Gilroy and local economy.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you, sir.

MR. RAMADAN: Mr. Chairman, before we move on to the next participants, can you please remind the participants if they’d like to provide public comment on Agenda Items 2, 8, 10 and 11, that will be done after the staff presentation.

And I believe, Chairman, before we go to the next participant I would ask if Councilmember Miguel Arias, if he’s on the line, if he could provide his comments.

AT&T OPERATOR: His line is open.

MR. ARIAS: Hello there. This is Miguel Arias from the Fresno City Council, representing the area of downtown Fresno. And my apologies for being late. I know you called on me a couple of times, but I was in an emergency meeting of the Downtown Property Improvement Assessment District, where we are voting to renew our commitment for the next ten years of downtown property owners self-assessing themselves to improve our downtown area, which aligns perfectly with the investment of high-speed rail.

As just a reminder for the public and the Board, Fresno, unfortunately, is home to the worst air quality in the country. Our residents in my district have a 20-year
life expectancy reduced than people in the same city, in
the northern part of the city, just based on the
concentrated air pollution of the southern part of the
city.

High-speed rail, for us, is an opportunity to
finally remove a lot of vehicles off the interchanges and
the freeway systems that are the leading cause of the
highest pollution in the country, and our city. It’s also
the area where the city was redlined, and we intentionally
were discriminatory for many communities that were forced
to live in this dirty air basin.

So, for us this renewal is just one part of our
long-term efforts to revitalize our city at the core of the
downtown, and to make right the historical wrongs to the
communities of color that were intentionally disadvantaged.

So, I am hopeful that high-speed rail will
continue in those efforts with the design of the downtown
station. And you should know that the city is not simply
going to stand by and just reap the benefits, we are
intentionally investing millions of dollars into our own
infrastructure in and around the station, making
significant improvements, reconfiguring traffic at a very,
you know, high cost to our local city. And we intend to
invest a significant amount of money with the Federal
Infrastructure Bill to continue to align and help the high-
speed rail system be successful in our city and across the state.

So, with that I would ask for your support in helping us right the historical wrongs in our communities, and helping us lead to the land of the promise, where we can have cleaner air than we do now, and we have for the last 30 years.

With that, those are my comments.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you, Councilmember.

MR. RAMADAN: Caroline, we can move on to the next participant.

AT&T OPERATOR: At this time we have no further comments in the queue.

MR. RAMADAN: Perfect. If I can just place you on hold until after the staff presentation, then we’ll resume the second portion of public comment.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Okay, thank you.

We’re going to have one more public comment from a member of the audience. And we couldn’t be happier to see who it is. It’s Senator Cathleen Galgiani, who has probably, I want to say, singly, but very close, if it’s not been the strongest supporter for this project over her public career. And so, we’re so happy to see you here.

Welcome.
SENATOR GALGIANI: Thank you so very much, and it’s my pleasure to be here. First of all, I’d like to thank the High-Speed Rail Authority and the Board for your completion of the EIR and EIS for the Merced to San Jose section, and for coming up with the preferred alternatives. I know that process, we went through it in my district, when I served in the Legislature. And it takes a lot of tenacity and stick-to-it-ness, and good listeners to come up with alternatives that the communities support.

I recall being so proud of when California received approval from the FRA for the first 60 miles of the high-speed rail segment from Merced to Fresno. And you have accomplished so much since that time, with construction beginning along the whole 119-mile test track.

And now, the completion of the Merced to San Jose section paves the way for providing relief for so many commuters who travel 3 to 6 hours daily over the Pacheco Pass to job centers in the Silicon Valley and the Bay Area. And as you well know, the Bay Area and Silicon Valley, the jobs/housing imbalance is the worst in the country. And in fact, a 2020 study by the Bay Area Council found that 187,000 commuters travel to those areas for work, on a daily basis, and 95 percent of those individuals rode in cars.
When I think about why the progress for Merced to San Jose is so critically important, I think about my constituents in a little community called Salida, which is north of Modesto. And a recent article in Protocol, which is a news organization for tech companies, and the articulated published was titled: Silicon Valley’s New Extreme, the 2:30 A.M. Tech Bus From Salida.

And it told the story at how at 2:30 a.m. workers in boots were boarding a tech bus in the moonlight, traveling 11 miles to Manteca, and then traveling another 55 miles to the Tesla Plant, in Fremont. And that’s because the mismatch of jobs and housing has become so extreme that even Google and Facebook have been planning on building apartment structures and condos on their campuses.

And in the meantime these companies, along with Tesla, Apple, Netflix, LinkedIn, Genentech, and others, are trying to solve the problem with long-distance buses.

But high-speed rail from the Inland Empire to L.A., or Palmdale to L.A. is critically important to Southern California for the same reasons that it’s critically important for commuters in the Central Valley.

So, by looking at the high-speed rail project through this lens, it becomes clear that the focus outlined in the 2022 High-Speed Rail Business Plan of completing the environmental work for the entire Phase 1 Section from San
Francisco to L.A. is critically important, and should continue to be a priority.

For example, in the Inland Empire, in 2006, 30 percent of San Bernardino County residents with a job commuted out of the county. And in Southern California commuters, using Metrolink, spent an hour and 50 minutes each way traveling back and forth from work in Los Angeles, from Palmdale to Los Angeles.

So, cooperation between Metrolink, that you’ve shared, could bring that commute time closer to 20 minutes from LA Union Station to Burbank and 20 minutes from Burbank to Palmdale.

So, whether we’re in the Central Valley, the Antelope Valley, or the Inland Empire, what we all have in common is our jobs/housing balance. And the availability of new federal funding presents the Legislature with a historic opportunity, like that we had in 2009 when California Legislators worked to together to secure $3.2 billion for high-speed rail and another $400 million for the Transbay Terminal.

So, inclosing I’m here to lend my support for the EIR/EIS for the San Jose to Merced segment, and as well for the Business Plan. And I want to thank you for your tenacity, for the hours and hours that you’ve poured over multiple reports, the calls that you’ve taken from
constituents and community leaders, and for your steadfast support of high-speed rail. You have so much to be thankful for and we owe you a debt of gratitude. I’m very, very proud of the work of the Authority and the Board. Thank you again.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you, Senator Galgiani.

Yeah. I don’t believe we have anybody any longer calling in on a line. Is there anybody else in the audience who would like to address the Board at this time?

All right, hearing that we’re going to stop for five minutes and take care of a technical glitch again, and we’ll be back with you in five minutes.

(Off the record at 10:54 a.m.)

(On the record at 11:10 a.m.)

CHAIR RICHARDS: All right, thank you everyone. I hopefully believe we have resolved the technical issue that we’ve been dealing with, which I understand that you were unable to hear me, which may have been a gift. But at any rate, you can now suffer.

I believe we have now completed our public comments, our first public comment session today. And we will now move forward.

I’m going to ask CEO Kelly to introduce the staff and then -- oh. Yeah, it’s on. I’ll tell you what they’re talking about we haven’t done the minutes. What we’re
going to do is we’re going to postpone -- we’re going to take them out of order and we’ll bring the minutes up this afternoon, but we’ll continue on with where we were headed right now.

So, as I was saying, I’ll ask CEO Kelly to introduce the staff who will be making the presentation on Item Number 2, the San Jose to Merced Project Section environmental documents and proposed actions.

CEO Kelly.

MR. KELLY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, members of the Board. Today, presenting on behalf of the Authority on the environmental document consideration for the Merced to San Jose Segment is our Northern California Regional Director, Boris Lipkin, our Director of Environmental Services, Serge Stanich, our Northern California Director of Projects, Gary Kennerley. And we also have counsel present to answer any questions that may come up, including our In-house Environmental Attorney, Minming Wu Morri, and Jessica Tucker Mohl from the California Office of the Attorney General.

However, before we turn it over to staff for the presentation, I want to remind the members that as has typically been our sort of modus operandi when we bring an adoption of environmental document forward, we typically try to have those hearings in those public meetings in the
area in which we are considering that environmental
document.

And so, before we turn it to the staff I do want
to turn to a video message, prerecorded message that we
have from the Mayor of San Jose, who was initially going to
host this meeting. But anyway, we do have a video recorded
message from San Jose Mayor, Sam Liccardo. And again,
unfortunately, he could not be here to join us today. But
he wanted to offer his comments specific to the importance
of the project section to that city and to his area.

So again, if we have it ready, I’d move to the
video of Sam Liccardo, thanks.

MR. LICCARDO: (Via Video) Greetings to the
Board members of the California High-Speed Rail Authority
and welcome to the City of San Jose. I’m San Jose Mayor
Sam Liccardo, and I’m sorry that I’m not able to be with
you, but only virtually here today.

I wanted you to know, though, how grateful I am,
and all of us are in the City of San Jose for the
extraordinary work that has now culminated in this
environmental document reflecting thousands of hours of
stakeholder research, enormous amount of analysis, and
particularly environmental analysis that now has given this
great milestone to us to get to the starting line for this
critically important project. A project that will expand
economic opportunity for millions of residents in the Central Valley who can now get access to Silicon Valley jobs with the completion of this Merced to San Jose segment. And provide access to affordable housing for so many in the Bay Area who are struggling mightily under the burden of high housing costs.

This is a solution that helps the state to expand economic opportunity and affordable housing, two critical goals for all of us. And you are really central in making that vision come to reality.

I wanted to also emphasize that this particular alignment, Alternative 4, is a critical one that we strongly support. We know this is the least impactful alignment in terms of the impacts on the environment. We certainly recognize that this particular project will also help to provide for the electrification of Caltrain between San Jose and Gilroy, which has been a long-standing ambition for the region. And being able to accomplish both of these goals is so critically important for us.

And, of course, most importantly certification of this segment and the environmental impact report will put the project in position, ready to secure preconstruction and construction dollars to be able to move forward.

We are an ally of yours in that effort. We want to champion high-speed rail through San Jose, all the way
up the Peninsula. I know that high-speed rail will have a longer stretch of track here in San Jose than in any other city in the State of California. And your fortunate that we just happen to be the greatest cheerleaders for high-speed rail anywhere in the State of California. So, we’re aligned. Let’s get it done together. Thank you.

CHAIR RICHARDS: We thank Mayor Liccardo for his comments, and perspective, and the support that he has given the project over the years.

With that, we are ready to start with the staff presentation, and please have Northern California Director Boris Lipkin.

MR. STANICH: Good morning, Chair Richards, Serge Stanich, Director of Environmental Services.

CHAIR RICHARDS: I’m sorry.

MR. STANICH: That’s okay. I’ll begin the program, but we’ll be handing off to our associates.

CHAIR RICHARDS: One beard only, please.

MR. STANICH: I’ve got a little bit more gray in mine, so you can tell us apart.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Yeah, all right.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: He’s a little taller.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Well, he’s a little taller, but I got waylaid by the beard. So, anyway.
MR. STANICH: Serge Stanich, Director of Environmental Services. It’s along with Boris Lipkin, a Regional Director, and Gary Kennerley, the Director of Projects from Northern California, it’s our privilege to present to you today the culmination of 13 years of work, going back to 2009, for your consideration, approval of Alternative 4, the preferred alternative for the San Jose to Merced Project Section.

I’ll test this to see if it works. So, here’s an outline for today’s presentation. I’ll present to you a few key points or themes for your consideration throughout today’s presentation. I’ll pass it on to Boris Lipkin who will give an overview of Alternative 4 and its development.

Gary Kennerley will then present the development of the various alternatives over the years and how we came to the preferred alternative.

And then, we’ll go over the environmental document, the EIR/EIS, its circulation, comments that were received, and revisions that were made based on comments received. And then, identify or go over some of the key topics of interest for the Authority and for the stakeholders.

So, for today I want to emphasize three key points or themes that you’ll brought up routinely during the presentation.
First, the Authority staff developed this project to provide electrified passenger service from San Jose to Merced, the Bay Area to the Central Valley, in a manner that is both sensitive to the communities that we pass through and serve, and also protective of the environment.

And this project section has worked closely with stakeholders to actually provide improvements to historic challenges of the existing infrastructure.

Secondly, the Authority has done an extensive outreach program since 2009 to work with stakeholders, that have provided input to the project that have benefitted the project to the Authority, and provide better service to the communities that we’ll serve.

And then, finally, this final EIR/EIS presents a thorough analysis of the project, its impacts, and incorporates mitigation measures and impact avoidance and minimization features that are memorialized in our approval documents. And represents the least impactful section or alternative with the fewest road closures, the fewest impacts on biological resources, wetlands, habitats, and service the Board and the public with a transparent decision-making document.

And with this, I will pass it on to Boris Lipkin to present.
MR. LIPKIN: Thank you, Serge. And good morning everybody. My name is Boris Lipkin. I’m the Northern California Regional Director and I am here now, Chair. And I’ll give a quick overview of the section and then we’ll keep going into the presentation.

So, this map is one that we’ve used in our Business Plan, and it really shows the transit network in the Bay Area. What this section does is it starts to really provide a critical connection from where we are in construction right now in the Central Valley to connecting to the Bay Area, and to the many transit services that will meet us does.

So, what this connection really does and what this project section’s really about is really tying the Central Valley together with Silicon Valley, reducing travel time. This creates opportunities for improved job/housing balance. I think we’ve heard that from even some of the speakers this morning, and the mayor as well. And then all of that, together, starts to really increase our ridership potential, reduce vehicle miles traveled and reduced greenhouse gas emissions across the entire state.

This section, specifically, provides service to the largest city and county in the Bay Area. So, having environmentally cleared this section, assuming the Board’s concurrent tomorrow, we will stretch all the way from our
largest city in Northern California to the largest city in the state, with Los Angeles being part of where we are already environmentally clear. And so there’s -- this is an important connection for us.

Additionally, the services that we have in the two stations, at both San Jose Diridon Station, and in Gilroy, really provide connections to a variety of key regional transit services. So, everything from Caltrain and BART, BTA, Capitol Corridor, ACE services, as well as the planned rail extension down to Monterey County. So, really, we’re tying in to both an existing and planned rail network that’s meant to cover the entire suite of Northern California destinations.

And then, finally, as we will talk more about Alternative 4, but this alternative really proposes how we can integrate with local Caltrain service, and electrify the corridor between San Jose and Gilroy which is, again, one of those key joint benefits for both us and the commuter rail service providers.

So, that’s the kind of quick snapshot of what this section is about.

Getting to a little bit more of the background and specifics, as I think the Board will know, we started the environmental process with the first tier environmental clearance back in 2005, for the programmatic environmental
document. We then went into more detail and focused on the connection between the Central Valley and the Bay Area, that ultimately culminated in the decision to use the Pacheco Pass, which this project -- this environmental document continues that effort.

We started with our Notice of Preparation in this project section in 2009, so we have been at this for 13 years. And really, kind of the key milestones on the way to today’s, you know, big one, which is that we’re here in front of you today, is we identified a preferred alternative in 2019. We issued our draft environmental document in 2020. Also in 2020, the Board had approved the Central Valley Wye Project Extent, that’s a part of this overall project section.

And then, we recirculated some of the circulation for some of the specific topics in 2021, and then we ultimately issued the final environmental document back in February of this year. It’s been out in public and on our website for a couple months, before coming to you today.

Just to give a quick snapshot of the preferred alternative. It stretches almost 90 miles, starting on Scott Boulevard up in Santa Clara, and then going down and upgrading the existing rail corridor between San Jose and Gilroy, modernizing and electrifying that stretch. This is a unique feature of this alternative relative to the
other ones and it provides substantial benefits.

Before turning east and going across the Pacheco Pass, including two tunnel sections, one a mile-and-a-half tunnel right before Casa de Fruta, and a longer tunnel as we get through Pacheco Pass and out to the Central Valley, ultimately ending at Carlucci Road in Merced County, which is where the Central Valley Wye takes over, where we have already environmentally cleared that part of the section.

For those who were on the Board in 2019, you might remember this is a slide that we used back at that time, when we were comparing the alternatives. And compared to the other alternatives, the preferred alternative, Alternative 4, has some substantial benefits. A lot of that is geared based on the fact that we’re using an existing rail corridor, so we’re not having to -- we don’t have as many impacts from having to acquire and develop a new rail line somewhere, where rail doesn’t exist today. So, we have, because of that, the fewest displacements, fewest impacts on wetlands and habitats, and parks as well. We have the lowest capital cost and, importantly, we have that joint benefit of allowing for electrified Caltrain service to South San Jose, and South Santa Clara County, which has been goals for those communities, and for Caltrain as part of their long-range service vision. So, from a policy stand point, we also
have additional benefits that we’re providing on a regional basis.

Sorry, I skipped one. Importantly, we have done extensive stakeholder outreach since the beginning of the project. We’ve had over 1,200 meetings across all sorts of topics, and with different members of the public, stakeholders, agencies, and other organizations.

We’ve held a variety of stakeholder working groups focused on specific neighborhood, business, and community, and environmental justice organizations, on wildlife stakeholders, and others as well. Focused everything from members of the communities to agencies, and other partners, on the technical working groups that we’ve had.

We’ve held 35 open houses. And, of course, we’ve had materials in the relevant languages. So, in this project section it’s been Spanish, Mandarin, and Vietnamese as the languages that we’ve generally translated our materials into.

This has been an extensive process that’s really benefitted the Authority and the project section. We’ve received valuable input that’s improved the project over time, and it’s really been part of one of those key pillars of the work that we’re bringing to you today has been the engagement with the communities up to this point.
This slide, I’m not going to try to go into every dot that’s on here, but this is just meant to show that we have had, with our agency partners, a variety of engagement across lots of different topics that have been relevant to them. And so, this has been an ongoing and exhaustive process that’s, again, really been part of the key input that we’ve sought from the local communities that this section serves, and will go through. And again, it’s been critical to getting to this point in the process.

Oh, excuse me. If I can go back. And then, finally, I just want to highlight that we have received a number of letters from various stakeholders since the release of the final environmental document back in February. We’ve -- you know, kind of the biggest message I guess I can give from the letters we’ve received, I don’t think we’ve seen any surprises from anything that’s come in.

You know, we have had some very positive letters, including from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, which wrote glowingly about some of our environmental justice, and some of our wildlife mitigations.

Other positive comments have included from the Santa Clara Valley Habitat Agency, the Peninsula Open Space Trust, Open Space Authority, and the Nature Conservancy, the San Jose Downtown Association. And even in our first
round of public comment I think you heard from the Gilroy Unified School District, and we’ve also had another one from the Los Banos School District as well.

There have been comments that have also raised questions and issues. Many of those, you know, we’ll cover in this presentation. And, of course, we can also come back tomorrow if there are additional topics that the Board would like us to get into. We’ve provided the Board with all of the letters that came in since the release of the final. I think that came to you yesterday.

And so, we’re prepared to talk to those issues. Some of them will, again, already be in our presentation, including topics related to wildlife movement, the Grasslands Ecological Area, grade separations. But, of course, we’re happy to get into others as well.

With that overview, I’m going to turn it over to Gary to talk about the process that we went through in developing the alternative and the details of the preferred alternative and alignment, as well.

MR. KENNERLEY: Thank you, Boris. Chair, Board, thank you very much for allowing me to talk today. I’m Gary Kennerley, Northern California Director of Projects. And I’ll just quickly mention that this is 15 years of culmination of work. So, I’m really glad to be able to be here today, to talk to you about the alternatives.
So, as Boris mentioned, project background really started with the approval of the program environmental document in 2005. What this did was really identify the routes the Central Valley and also in the San Francisco Peninsula. But it deferred the decision on how to connect the Central Valley to the Bay Area to a subsequent environmental document.

So, in 2008, the Bay Area to Central Valley document was presented to the Board. This document look at corridors in the shaded area shown on the exhibit here, to the south bounded by the Pacheco Pass and State Route 152, in the north the Altamont Corridor and Interstate 580.

The decision in 2008 was to approve the Pacheco Pass State Route 152 as the preferred alternative. And this was further confirmed in a partially revised environmental document for the program in 2012.

Some of the primary reasons for selecting the Pacheco Pass alignment was to maximize the use of the Caltrain corridor to minimize impacts, especially with avoiding a second crossing of the San Francisco Bay. And also, committed to mitigations to address where we cross the Grasslands Ecological Area, which is in the eastern portion of the project. And I’ll talk more later in the presentation.
In addition to the primary route, the program document also committed to looking at in-house commuter rail in the Altamont corridor which is the gold line at the top of this exhibit.

So, the project level evaluation started with a series of scoping meetings throughout the corridor, giving us a chance to talk to all the communities and stakeholders in the corridor. From those scoping meetings, the team developed a series of alternatives, with specific locations along the alignment.

And all the lines you can see on this exhibit are alternatives that were suggested as a result of interaction with the communities in the corridor. And these were evaluated in a first round of alternative analysis.

The various alignments, particularly in the San Jose to Gilroy section, really were concentrated on the two existing transportation corridors, the Union Pacific right-of-way along Monterey corridor, and also US 101 Highway.

As we moved east of Gilroy through the Pacheco Pass, alternatives in this area really dictated through the topography and the geologic characteristics of the area, and also avoiding the San Luis Reservoir.

And then, as we came into the San Joaquin Valley, as part of the program document we had actually committed to looking at alternatives both to the north and to the
south of the Grasslands Ecological Area, which is in the center of the San Joaquin Valley. And based on that analysis, the north alignment and the south alignment both had much higher impacts, especially to aquatic sensitive resources. And so, in the end we identified the central route, shown in red here, as the preferred crossing for the San Joaquin Valley.

Following that, we continued with additional stakeholder engagement. And to try and simplify the analysis that was going to be presented in the environmental document, we took all those various components and built three end-to-end alternatives from San Jose out to the Central Valley. Why? These alternatives to be dedicated, fully grade separated alternatives that allowed us to operate at speeds up to 220 miles an hour.

Some of the examples of the refinements that we included in these three end-to-end alternatives was alignment adjustments to avoid the Curdy Valley Parkway. We also worked with the City of Morgan Hill to develop a viaduct that went around the downtown area. We worked with the City of Gilroy, identifying two stations for consideration, with their associated maintenance facilities. Through the Pacheco Pass we looked at consolidating tunnels to minimize impacts in that sensitive rural area.
And then as I mentioned, as we come into the San Joaquin Valley we worked with the stakeholders to align the project Henry Miller Road in an effort to minimize introducing any additional barriers to movement within the Central Valley.

So, those three first three alternatives were dedicated alternatives. But in 2018, the Business Plan introduced a fourth alternative. This was a blended alternative that shared electrified passenger service with the freight corridor from San Jose to Gilroy.

And this achieved two major objectives that we’d heard from stakeholders. One, by being in the existing rail corridor we minimized residential and commercial displacements between San Jose and Gilroy. And in addition, as you’ve already heard, it provided the opportunity for us to provide expanded passenger rail, electrified rail service from San Jose down to Gilroy, working with Caltrain.

So, this presents the four end-to-end alternatives that have been evaluated in the final environmental document. As I mentioned, they are a result of over a decade of technical work to refine, and then analyze these alternatives.

I’ll be covering brief, shortly, the characteristics of each of the area between San Jose and
Gilroy. And then, as we get east of Gilroy, the alignments consolidate into a single alignment through the Pacheco Pass and across the San Joaquin Valley.

There have been a few design refinements that we have made. In the draft environmental document we had a hydrological mitigation measure to prevent changes in flood elevations at the Guadalupe Bridge. What we have actually done now is we have removed that measure because we have actually incorporated a revised design for the Guadalupe Bridge into the project, hence alleviated any chance or increase to a 100-year flood elevation in that area.

In addition, we have integrated both the Diridon design variant and the Pacheco tunnel design variant into the environmental document, and include the design sheets in Volume 3 of the document.

These design variants were actually analyzed in the draft document, but they were in a separate chapter, 320, and has now been incorporated through the document.

And all three of these design refinements are part of the preferred alternative.

So, as we move on to the preferred alternative, just a few of the overall design features. This corridor is almost 90 miles in length. It has a series of viaducts, over 15 miles of viaducts. These enable us to provide greater permeability through the corridor for both
wildlife, hydrology, and other movement. And there’s also
15 miles of tunnels in the Pacheco Pass area. Again, used
to minimize impacts to the sensitive area.

And between Gilroy and San Jose we will be using
the existing at-grade crossings, and be making safety
improvements to each of those crossings in the corridor.

So, as we move into the actual subsections I’ll
start in the north, up in San Jose. The first subsection
is the Diridon Station approach, and this goes from Scott
Boulevard n Santa Clara, and is predominantly at grade
within the Caltrain right of way.

North and south of Diridon Station we widened the
approaches to accommodate both high-speed rail and the
additional freight track. And in the Diridon Station area
itself, we provide raised platforms to serve the high-speed
trains, and then additional vertical passenger circulation
to enable passenger movement through the existing station.

South of Diridon, we stay predominantly again
within the existing Caltrain right of way, as we go through
the Gardener neighborhood, and also through the existing
Caltrain Tamien Station.

The benefits of the preferred alternative in this
area include the electrified corridor and it was
electrified in collaboration with Caltrain. As mentioned,
it helps to reduce both displacements and visual impacts by
staying within the existing rail corridor, and incorporates community improvements that Boris will be discussing later.

As we go south, we move into Monterey Corridor, which goes from West Alma down to Bernal Way. Again, the preferred alternative stays predominantly within the existing railroad right of way, with two tracks for electrified passenger service and one track dedicated for the freight trains.

In addition, we’ll be modifying both the Capitol and Blossom Hill Caltrain stations to platforms to allow for bidirectional passenger service. And each of the grade crossings will have safety upgrades to enable trains to travel at up to 110 miles an hour in the corridor.

Again, the benefits are electrification to corridor with the potential for increased Caltrain service, reducing both residential and commercial displacements, and visual impacts, and again incorporating community improvements along the corridor.

South of San Jose the alignment passes through the Coyote Valley, Morgan Hill, the community of San Martin, onto Gilroy. Again, from San Jose, south of San Jose to Gilroy the alignment stays predominantly within the existing right of way. And again, rebuild the Morgan Hill and Caltrain Stations.
We also include wildlife crossings and extend under both the high-speed rail, the Union Pacific, and the Monterey Road to improve wildlife movement. And these have been located in coordination with the local conservation groups and agencies.

The Downtown Gilroy Station is in the same location as the existing Caltrain Station, and this will facilitate connections between high-speed rail, Caltrain, VTA busses, and future rail extension to the Monterey County.

South of Gilroy we have a maintenance facility to serve the trains. And then, the alignment turns east, now on a dedicated facility, across a series of viaducts, across the Soap Lake Floodplain, and on to the first tunnel as we enter the Pacheco Pass.

Again, benefits in this section include the electrification of corridor to Gilroy, reducing the displacements and the visual impacts. We incorporate the community improvements.

And in addition, especially with the addition of the viaducts across the Soap Lake Floodplain, we have increased the permeability for wildlife movement along the Monterey corridor, and also the connectivity in the Soap Lake area.
We then move into Pacheco Pass. Again, this is still a fully dedicated, grade-separated corridor. There’s a single alignment and the goal here is to get through the mountains and avoid the natural resources and critical infrastructure in the area. It has sections of embankment, viaduct, and a 13-and-half-mile tunnel to achieve this.

Elements that we are trying to minimize impacts to are the Pacheco Creek, also the Pacheco Conduit Tunnel, the Cottonwood Creek Wildlife Area around the San Luis Reservoir. Also, making sure we avoid the San Luis Reservoir. Also, worked with the Romero Ranch, which is just to the east of the San Luis Reservoir. And then, crossing over major infrastructure when you come into the San Joaquin Valley, including Interstate 5, the California Aqueduct, and then Delta Mendoza Aqueduct.

Finally, in the San Joaquin Valley we have a single alignment running adjacent to the Henry Miller Road out to Carlucci Road. Again, this is a fully dedicated and grade-separated section.

Several sections of the viaduct will cross over critical water infrastructure, wildlife movement areas, and the Grasslands Ecological Area.

We also have a maintenance of way siting by Turner Island Road. This is an unstaffed facility that
allows us to position maintenance equipment for operation and maintenance of the facility in the future.

At Carlucci Road we connect to the Central Valley Wye, which the Board approved in September of 2020. And again, the benefits here, paralleling the existing infrastructure to avoid introducing additional barriers into the Central Valley, and also incorporating community improvements in the community of Volta.

That completes my overview of the project alternatives development. And I’d now like to pass it over to Serge to identify key elements of the final environmental document.

MR. STANICH: So, in 2019 staff presented to the Board consideration of the preferred alternative. And after September 2019, staff then prepared the draft Environmental Impact Report and Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act, and the National Environmental Policy Act.

As you all recall, the Authority is also the federal lead agency as part of the NEPA assignment MOU between the State of California and the FRA.

The draft EIR/EIS was published on April 24th, of 2020 for a 60-day public comment period. And during that time we received 746 individual submissions. Those are
from individuals, stakeholders, community organizations, and political agencies or public agencies.

Each of those comment letters may have multiple comments. So, the staff go through a process which we call delimiting to identify individual comments. And we identified 4,887 individual comments associated with that draft EIR/EIS.

As 2020 passed, or continued, a couple of events outside of the Authority passed, changing the status of some wildlife species. The California Fish and Game permission raised for candidate listing the Central Coast Mountain Lion. And the U.S. Fish and Wildlife service listed the monarch butterfly as a candidate species.

Those changes in status resulted in new, significant impacts for the Authority. As well as some of the public that we had, we also reconsidered some of the project’s effects on light and noise. And so, we decided to recirculate the draft EIR/EIS, and that was done in April of 2021 for a 45-day public comment period to address those resource topic areas.

And during that 45-day period we received 16 comment submissions that were delimited to 226 individual comments.
This was all brought together in the culmination of the final EIR/EIS which was published on February 25th, and before you for consideration today and tomorrow.

In response to the public comments, there was a number of substantive comments that we addressed. We included some site-specific traffic mitigation measures throughout the corridor. We incorporated the analysis with respect to mountain lion, of monarch butterfly, as well as the light and noise. We added additional mitigation measures and included a wildlife overcrossing to address cumulative effects for wildlife movement along State Route 152.

And then, we also continued our outreach with environmental justice communities along the corridor, updating our analysis and mitigations provided for with environmental justice.

Less substantive, we also included updated land use changes around the Diridon Station, updated some safety and security mitigation. We refined our air quality analysis and completed consultation with the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, resulting in an agreement letter for offsets to emissions during construction. And then, also updated our noise mitigation.

So, the EIR/EIS incorporates a number of programmatic commitments to avoid the impact before it
occurs. We refer to these as impact avoidance and minimization features. These are to lesson the severity of the effect. However, even with the incorporation of these IAMFs, we may still have some residual effects that would be considered potentially significant. So, the Authority has also included mitigation measures.

All of these IAMFs and mitigation measures are memorialized in our Mitigation, Monitoring, and Enforcement Plan. This is one of the approval documents that accompanies the Findings of Fact, and Statement of Overriding Considerations, the Board’s consideration and certification of the document, and the direction to the CEO to sign the ROD.

And the MMEP identifies the parties responsible for the mitigation, the timing, and the implementation of the procedure.

So, the EIR/EIS is a robust analysis of how the project may affect the physical and human environment. There’s these 20 resource topic areas that are considered in depth in the environmental document. We’ve bold and highlighted some that are considered residual, still have significant and unavoidable effects. These are important as part of the approval documents, includes the Findings of Fact, and Statement of Overriding Considerations where the
project benefits outweigh the unfortunate consequences of some of these significant effects.

So, I’ll go into a little bit more detail with these. Particularly key effects, and not all of these are significant and unavoidable, but their important resource topic areas for the various stakeholders, so I want to talk a little bit about each one of them.

In the Bay Area traffic is always a concern for the communities. We’ve incorporated a number of mitigation measures, including traffic signal improvements around the Diridon Station, the Monterey Road, Capital Expressway, Blossom Hill Road, and the Gilroy Station.

We also have potential effects where constructing the project may have disruption to Caltrain and freight services, so we have railway disruption control plan. We’re maintaining pedestrian and bicycle access through the area during construction. And then, providing intersection improvements with signals, signalization timing and restriping.

Air quality. While the project ultimately will have an air quality benefit, construction of this scope and magnitude will have substantial emissions. And so, we do exceed the local emissions criteria for carbon monoxide in the valley, and local criteria pollutants. We have
incorporated best-available technology procedures for near zero or zero equipment.

   We’re also working with the Bay Area Air Quality Management District on an emissions offset program to offset those to zero.
   
   With respect to noise and vibration, the introduction of the high-speed train service will result in new sources of noise and vibration for these communities. And despite the incorporation of our noise mitigation guidelines, we do anticipate in some areas that we will still have some residual noise effects. So, we are incorporating sound walls. We will be implementing our noise mitigation guidelines that can include sound insulation and other noise easements.
   
   We also will have some vibrations effects, so we’ve incorporated mitigation measures through advanced design, where we can reduce those effects as well.
   
   Hydrology and water resources. This is an area, a subject matter of concern considering we’re always in a drought in California, at least lately. The project would not have any severe adverse effects with respect to water resources.
   
   We, as Gary discussed, have designed it so as to not adversely affect flood risk in areas, and we’ve
incorporated measures to control groundwater escape during
tunneling, and other construction projects.

Now, safety and security is an issue of
particular concern. Despite some of our traffic
improvements, we will have some increases, approximately 30
seconds of additional delay with respect to emergency
vehicle response time. We’ve incorporated a number of
measures to improve the traffic impacts, but we still
anticipate that there may be some effects. And so, we’re
working with the local communities regarding improvements
to try to offset that, but we anticipate that there may
still be a residual delay.

With agricultural farmlands, the new
infrastructure will require the acquisition of important
farmland and may result in some remnant parcels that no
longer have economic viability. The Authority is then
advancing a conservation program to offset those impacts
with purchasing easement for protection and preservation
for agricultural lands.

Biological and aquatic resources. This is an
area that crosses well. Some areas are very urban and also
crosses some natural areas that are of great importance for
wildlife movement. A number of species move through this
area in the Diablo Range, and the Coast Range.
We’ve been working with the stakeholders since the first stage of this project. Local stakeholders, including the Peninsula Open Space Trust, the Santa Clara Valley Habitat Agency, the Nature Conservancy, Grasslands Water District, Ducks Unlimited, a number of stakeholders to incorporate improvements.

And so, we’ve identified wildlife crossing structures that will be incorporated into the design. Particularly on the San Jose to Gilroy section all of crossing undercrossings were sited in partnership, and even the development of the at-grade alternative was done in partnership with these wildlife organizations.

Another protection measure along the Pacheco Pass is to incorporate a wildlife overcrossing in that area. And we have measures to protect bird movement in the Central Valley.

With aesthetics and visual quality, retaining the project at-grade actually reduces a lot of the visual effects that we’ve seen in other project sections. However, some of our remote facilities will experience -- have some emergency lighting associated with them, so this introduction of new light would also be considered a potentially significant effect.

And then finally, with cultural resources, the Santa Clara County, San Jose has a number of historic
properties. Our project would modify the context and the setting for some of these elements. And so, we’ve incorporated mitigation measures to minimize the adverse effects. And we would incorporate interpretive and educational materials, and recordation and documentation of the materials to kind of preserve some of those elements. But we are anticipating some effects.

This project has been done through an extensive consultation with several Native American Tribes in this area, and we have executed an MOA with the State Historic Preservation Office regarding the treatment of historic properties and how we would implement the construction work.

The Authority, as the state and federal lead agency, is also obligated to conduct a number of consultations that are required by federal law. So, Section 7 of the U.S. Endangered Species Act requires us to consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Marine Fisheries Service. We completed those consultations in 2021, resulting in a biological opinion. These provide protection measures on how we would safeguard federally-listed species.

We have protections for 4(f). 4(f) is part of the Department of Transportation Act to protect parks, and cultural properties, and we’ve completed our 4(f)
consultation with the City of San Jose, and our own
analysis to have no constructive use.

We have completed -- we have an MOA or an MOU
with the Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Environmental
Protection Agency regarding effects to the Clean Water Act
and flood control facilities. This checkpoint MOU seeks
their concurrence on our preferred alternative, and the
effects to determine the least environmentally damaging,
practicable alternative, and no adverse effects for flood
control facilities. And we’ve completed both of those, as
well, with the MOU.

And then, let’s see, I discussed briefly the
SHPO’s consultation with the MOA. That was just executed
March 11, of 2022.

And then, the Federal Railroad Administration
retains one element with respect to federal compliance and
that is the determination of air quality effects, and
general conformity determination. So, that culminated
recently. It was completed after we completed our
consultation with the Bay Area Air Quality Management
District.

The FRA posted a draft General Conformity
Determination in the fall. And then, after we executed the
agreement with the Bay Area Air Quality Management
District, we just completed the FRA General Conformity Determination in March of 2022.

And then finally, as I touched on with the 4(f) evaluation, we completed our analysis just in March of this year.

And at this point I will pass it back to Boris to touch on some of the stakeholder topics.

MR. LIPKIN: Thank you, Serge.

And this section is really focused on some of the things that we’ve heard over the many years, and some key issues that we wanted to make sure that we cover with the Board for your consideration as we move through today’s meeting and into tomorrow.

I’ll just mention that in this section we do have a few slides that have some animations with them. So, if you’re looking at your printed copies, your probably not going to see the little bits that come over time. So, I might call your attention to when it might be a good time to look at the screen behind you, as well.

So, the topics that we wanted to cover and, of course, this isn’t exhaustive over 90 miles. There’s lots of things that have come up over time. But we want to talk a little bit about stations, you know, specifically Diridon Station and the Gilroy Station. Environmental justice is a big topic in this project section. At-grade crossings and
grade separations. The Union Pacific Railroad, which owns the rail corridor between San Jose and Gilroy. And then, finally, a couple topics focused on wildlife movement and the Grasslands Ecological Area that have been very, very important in different parts of the corridor as well.

So, this is our station site plan for Diridon Station. And what I just want to call it is what we’re proposing at Diridon Station are the modifications needed to provide high-speed rail service to the station.

So, primarily what this looks like is raising the two long blue platforms in the middle of the station to provide high-speed rail service. And then, improving access so people can get both to the station, and through the station to those platforms to get to their trains.

At the same time, we’re very cognizant that there are much bigger plans for Diridon Station. And we are a partners with Caltrain, the City of San Jose, VTA, and MTC, looking at a much bigger vision for what Diridon Station can become as an intermodal hub. And so, we’re very cognizant of those interfaces between our project and what we need for high-speed rail, as well as what’s being contemplated as part of that bigger vision.

As a partner, you know, that project is at an earlier stage, but we are working very collaboratively to
make sure that everyone is aligned and we know how all of that can move forward together.

In Gilroy, similarly this is the plan for our Gilroy Station which is another -- in the Bay Area, all of our stations are modifications to existing facilities. So, this one has just a minor station right now for Caltrain service, just a few trains a day that come here.

And so, going from the bottom to the top we’ll maintain that Caltrain platform. We’ll add two high-speed rail platforms. Those are again shown in blue. We’ll add another Caltrain platform for their northbound service, as the next one up. And then, the two pink or fuchsia tracks, those would be for the freight services, for UPRR, and for the extension of rail service to Monterey County on their own platform face, on the east side of the station.

Importantly, we’ve been -- since the preferred alternative was identified, we’ve been able to restart our work with the City of Gilroy and really looking at the land use surrounding the station, and planning for how the station can integrate with the rest of the downtown in this community. And that’s been a very collaborative process. I think we’ve, you know, established a good rhythm working with the city on kind of how all this shapes out into the future.
Turning to environmental justice, as I mentioned this is a big topic in this corridor, simply based on the geographic of where we have low-income and minority populations, and where the rail corridors and other transportation networks are. There’s a lot of overlap there. And so, we’ve done extensive outreach starting back in 2016, as we were developing the project.

And then, in 2019 as we were preparing the draft environmental document, we realized that some of our impacts were coming out that we would have some disproportionate effects where the burden would fall more heavily on environmental justice communities, than on the population broadly.

And so, when we had that realization, we started work on a multi-phase outreach process focused on community improvements that we could basically incorporate that would offset our impacts to those communities.

And so, we were doing that in parallel with the development of the environmental document. And all of that work has culminated into what’s before you in the final environmental document. So, I’ll just give a brief overview of some of that effort in these slides. And, of course, there’s a lot more in the document itself.

So, we first started with -- in December of -- in late 2019 and into early 2020, before the pandemic started,
with really identifying community improvements, developing evaluation criteria, talking to the community as identifying things that might be important to them, that we could then see if those made sense to us and how they would work with our impacts in those particular neighborhoods.

So, that was our first step.

We then refined those concepts further in the summer of 2020, working with the implementing partners, because many of these are things that we’d be working with a school district, a city, or another organization to ultimately implement. So, we wanted to get their buy-in and take on the potential improvements.

And then, we came back out with a proposed list that we sought to incorporate in December of 2021, to get additional feedback on that proposal, get additional ideas for what things that the communities might want to see, as well as their take on some of our conclusions.

So, all of that has really been a collaborative process with our communities and they’ve had input into analysis of project effects, the project benefits, the mitigations, and every part of that process has been that collaboration with the affected communities.

So, just to give a sense, across the eight different communities, environmental justice communities that we have, these is the suite of improvements that we
have incorporated into the final environmental document.
So, the ones that we had started with in September of 2021
are in the first column. Those are the ones that are more
directly tied to the impacts that we were seeing in every
given community.

So, if we had a noise impact, then we would
propose a noise treatment. And similarly, as we did our
outreach we got additional ideas and concepts that people
suggested would be equally effective or even more important
to the community. And so, we were able to incorporate a
number of those, and those are shown in the third column of
the charts across each of the communities, to really make
sure that we’re doing our best to offset and reduce our
effects in those communities.

We did, also, surveys and found generally, you
know, that the communities agreed with our assessments of
the conclusions that we were drawing for the environmental
document.

And so, this is one of the slides that has a
little bit of animation. This is sort of the wrap-up. But
we have started with the effects that were
disproportionately affecting low-income and minority
populations across the different alternatives, and across
different topics. And with the preferred alternative is
business displacements, emergency vehicle response,
operational noise and operational traffic.

After we took into consideration the direct
mitigations, the benefits of the project, and the
offsetting mitigations that we’ve incorporated we were able
to, in the preferred alternative, offset the full suite of
impacts, disproportionate impacts that we were seeing in
some of the other alternatives. We do still have a few,
especially things like aesthetics and visual quality where,
you know, we can’t hide a giant viaduct. That impact will
still be there.

But we have, I think, done a lot of work here
that’s sort of leading -- on the leading edge of how to
address disproportionate effects to low-income and minority
populations. And I think we’re very proud of the
offsetting mitigations that have been incorporated into the
final environmental document. We have had very positive
responses, I think. Again, you heard one of those from the
Gilroy Unified School District, and I think we have others
as well that have been received very, very well by the
communities.

To give just a -- zoom in on one of those
communities, and again this is another slide that has some
animations. This is the Gardner Community. And this is a
neighborhood just south of Diridon Station. And the
community basically sits above the railroad track, and in between the two freeways, I-280 and SR-97. And you can see that the community has definitely been -- felt the brunt of some previous transportation investments that have really cut -- the two freeways have really cut it off from the communities on the other side of the freeway.

And so, we’ve worked with the community for a very long time here to really assess options, evaluate what we could to reduce impacts, and mitigate them, and then ultimately offset them.

So, the first thing, this is the existing rail corridor. And as part of the Caltrain electrification project, which we’re helping to fund, we are reducing the emissions that are happening, the local air quality emissions and the noise happening from diesel trains running on that corridor by replacing those with electric trains were already significantly improving the existing condition there.

From there, we looked at alignments both through the -- using that existing rail corridor, which is the lighter blue line in the preferred alternative, as well as going over the freeways to get to Diridon Station. That’s the darker blue.

The alternatives going over the freeways of course involved major structures and substantial impacts to
the communities both north and south of here. And so, what we’ve done is worked extensively to first reduce our impacts in the community if we’re going to be using the existing rail corridor. So, you know, especially impacts to the surrounding homes, and property impacts.

We’ve also worked to minimize impacts to Fuller Park, which is a key community asset in the middle of the corridor.

And from there, you know, after we were able to reduce some of the effects, we went with first direct mitigation -- oh, excuse me, I skipped one. If I can go back. Oh, this way. There we go. It would be good if I pressed the right button.

So, first, our direct mitigation is for noise impacts that we have from the at-grade crossing. On the left side of the graphic, you can see we have the long yellow line along the rail corridor. That’s a proposed noise mitigation, noise barrier to mitigate effects of especially the horns as the trains go through here.

But as part of our offsetting mitigations, we’ve included three sets of improvements. One focused on residential noise treatments for those residences along the freeway that are affected by the existing noise from those facilities, as well as the Gardner Elementary school which faces similar noise effects.
And then, based on the input that we received and our outreach, we added additional recreational improvements in Fuller Park. As again, I mentioned that’s a key asset that we were able to improve.

So, we’ve really worked hard to both minimize our effects and then ultimately to offset them in this community, and all the other communities, of course, that we go through as well.

So, the other important topic that we’ve certainly heard about during our engagement with local jurisdictions is about the at-grade crossings. And this is an existing rail corridor that is there, and we have -- we are certainly modifying some of it.

So, the first part that I’ll mention is there are a number of streets that we’re either closing or realigning as our projects moves -- as the design progresses.

We have -- at each of the grade crossings we’re really focused on improving the safety of those crossings from what’s there today. And there’s strict requirements from both the Federal Railroad Administration and the California Public Utilities Commission focused on what it takes to operate trains at various speeds, and when grade crossings are acceptable or when grade separations are required.
We’ve incorporated, as Serge mentioned, site-specific traffic mitigation measures where we do have traffic effects that we can mitigate. And we’ve worked extensively on our measures focused on emergency vehicle response times and how that can be implemented, including opportunities for where local jurisdictions might have a grade separation project that they’re pursuing, how we can work with them on that and as part of our mitigation for emergency vehicle response.

And in light of that, we’ve entered into an MOU with the City of San Jose that will help advance some of the grade separations that they’re interested in, in their community. Of course, we’re very careful not to tie the Board’s hands in terms of the document that’s before you today, in that MOU. But we have developed a collaborative process, really mirroring how that’s being done on the rest of the Caltrain corridor.

And similarly, we’re in discussions with the City of Morgan Hill around something similar with that, as well.

So, this is a topic that will continue to be important. You know, as we work with our local jurisdictions traffic issues are going to be a constant topic. And we have, you know, the suite of mitigations that we’re proposing and improvements to what’s there today. But there will be more to go beyond that, as well,
for what local jurisdictions might want to see in their communities.

This is another slide that has an animation. And so, just focused on the safety improvements that we’re making at each of the at-grade crossings. This is a visual from another part of the Caltrain corridor, but I think it’s a good illustration of really when, as we upgrade the corridor, what we’re really focused in on is whether the train is going 50 miles an hour, or 80 miles an hour, or up to 110 miles an hour is keeping everything else off of the rail corridor as trains are going by.

And so, the suite of measures that we’ve proposed include first quad barriers at each of the crossings. So, blocking cars from entering into the train tracks as trains are passing. So, oftentimes today people might go around the barriers to try to beat the lights, or beat the train. And so, quad barriers prevent that. So, we start with that piece of it.

The next piece is channelization, so similarly focused on not letting a car dodge the barriers and get onto the tracks. Blocking off that piece of it as well, so that people aren’t using the other lanes.

Similarly, for pedestrians and bicyclists, we’re including pedestrian gates so that pedestrians and bikes similarly don’t end up on the rail corridor.
And then, finally, in this stretch of the rail corridor many parts aren’t fenced right now, and so we’re proposing fencing all along the right of way. And again, with the same idea of for the safety improvements and, again, complying with FRA and CPUC requirements is keeping everything else off of the rail corridor as trains are passing by.

And then, finally, I just wanted to talk briefly about grade separations because this is a topic that does keep coming up. Between San Francisco and Gilroy there’s almost 70 at-grade crossings in the existing rail corridor, 39 between San Francisco and San Jose, and another 29 south of there.

Many of the jurisdictions in the corridor have started planning for grade separations and those are at various stages of development. There’s over 20 -- this is a slide from Caltrain, but they’ve tracked over 20 different grade separation projects that people are working on. And so, we certainly see the importance of these projects. You know, we want to be a partner and support these efforts. We were very encouraged, you know, to see the Governor’s budget include funding for grade separations as part of the budget proposal. We think that’s a very positive step that will have a lot of support in these communities.
And similarly, with the Federal Infrastructure Package there’s some funds in there as well. There are new opportunities to move some of these projects forward.

So, we certainly want to support those efforts and work collaboratively as local jurisdictions move their grade separation projects forward.

And then the last topic that I want to cover is the Union Pacific Railroad. So, the existing rail corridor between San Jose and Gilroy, so just south of Tamien Station. And we have an abbreviated of the Caltrain corridor on the slide here.

This is owned by Union Pacific. And the Authority, and CalSTA, we’ve been in negotiations with them for use of the corridor since 2018. This has been an ongoing process. And, you know, we’ve certainly been very carefully coordinating with them about both this process, and the environmental document itself.

But, you know, that agreement is still in the works and so we will need to, ultimately, reach an agreement with Union Pacific to implement the project section between San Jose and Gilroy. But this is, of course, an important step in allowing us to be precise in what that looks like and move that forward.

So, with that I think I’ll turn it over to Serge, back to Serge to cover some wildlife movement, and
Grasslands Ecological Area topics, and wrap up the presentation.

MR. STANICH: Thank you, Boris.

MR. LIPKIN: Uh-hum.

MR. STANICH: So, Prop 1A requires the Authority to develop all our alternatives in predominantly transportation corridors. And the impetus of that is that you can largely avoid significant effects or damaging effects to the environment by establishing your corridor through established corridors.

Unfortunately, you can also see some exacerbation of existing problems. And this is what we’ve touched on a little bit with environmental justice. And wildlife movement is an area or topic of considerable concern. Particularly, as you look on the exhibit, we’re crossing the area of the Diablo Range, which is an important north/south corridor for wildlife, and connecting the Diablo Range to the Coast Range.

So, from the earliest development of the project, the Authority staff started to work with wildlife stakeholder groups in Santa Clara County to address the mountain range movement, and in the valley with the movement in the Grasslands Ecological Area. And I’ll touch on that in a little bit more detail as we move on.
So, we identified these five predominant movement corridors. Area 1 is the Coyote Valley between the Diablo Range and the Coast Range. Area 2 is the Western Pacheco, Soap Lake area, which is one of the two areas designated by Audubon as an important bird area. 3 is the Pacheco Pass. This is an area where we’re predominantly in tunnel, but has experienced a high number of mortality for wildlife due to animal strikes on the 152 corridor. 4 is Eastern Pacheco Pass. And then 5 is the Grasslands Ecological Area.

So, I will go into a little bit more detail. First, I’ll start with number 3 here. The Pacheco Pass area is an area where we’re in tunnel, but it’s been considered highly sensitive for wildlife movement for some time. There’s been a number of stakeholders that have been advancing an opportunity for a wildlife overcrossing. Pathways for Wildlife and the Santa Clara Valley Habitat Agency have initiated a process to develop a wildlife overcrossing.

And in consideration of our project’s effects during the draft stage, where we identified a potentially cumulative contribution for wildlife movement as a potentially significant effect, we identified this opportunity as a mitigation that would offset that wildlife movement. And it has been very strongly embraced and
received by the stakeholder groups. And it’s one of our kind of signature mitigation measures.

The Coyote Valley. We’ve been working with the Peninsula Open Space Trust and the Open Space Authority. This is an area where wildlife movement is critical to move from the Diablo Range to the Coast Range. This is an area where there’s really three important barriers. There’s the Highway 101, the Monterey Corridor, and the Union Pacific Corridor.

And so our work, we developed with POST, the Peninsula Open Space Trust, the Open Space Authority, and the Habitat Agency to actually implement some of their measures in their Linkages Plan to identify crossing opportunities.

And so, we have 12 designated wildlife undercrossings that are sized approximately 5-by-5 boxes and 40-by-15 foot boxes, so some robust crossings. They’re designated with the kind of large elk logo, and the smaller kind of fox location, or emoji, however you want to describe it, icon as far as the difference placings.

But we’ve been working closely, and we have a very nice letter in the record from POST, OSA, the Nature Conservancy, and the Habitat Agency, acknowledging the work that we’ve done in seeking a continued partnership.
The Grasslands Ecological Area is a highly sensitive area of about 160,000 acres of wetlands that are the largest remaining stand in California. It was designed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1979 as an important area for conservation. And then, it also, in 2005, was designated under RAMSAR, which is a UNESCO Convention, for bird conservation and wildlife conservation.

We’ve been working with the Grasslands Water District and a number of other stakeholders to incorporate protections in this area. We have included a number of wildlife crossings. And another element, on the eastern element, the guideway enclosure. This is an opaque tube of about 3 miles through the most sensitive area in the Grasslands Ecological Area. There is the Los Banos Refuge to the north, and the Mud Slough Conservation Area, a duck to the south, and so we’ve incorporated this, what we call the bird tube, to protect wildlife and bird movement in this important area.

We also have a number of undercrossings that we’ve incorporated. And further west, there is the Volta Wildlife Refuge. We’ve incorporated a 17-foot sound wall there to limit the potential effects to bird movement in this area.
This is just an animation. It will show what the proposal -- as part of our mitigations, we also have included this on a viaduct. Because this is an important ecological area for aquatic resources, the viaduct will allow the movement of water back and forth, so to protect the hydrology.

And here you see, with the train passing the catenary system, we’ve incorporated this opaque enclosure. And so, this would prevent birds from landing on the guideway or potential mortality from a bird strike during operations.

So, this largely concludes our presentation. At this point we will step aside to allow the public to comment, and allow the Board to deliberate or consider what has been presented today.

And then, staff will return tomorrow to provide detailed answers or respond to any questions that have been raised.

Counsel will then take the podium to walk the Board members through the approval documents and the Board will have an opportunity to deliberate.

I want to conclude or close with the benefits of this project. You know, it will implement the goals and objectives, the purpose and need of providing electrified passenger service. But it has so much more as
far as opportunity and benefits. It’s going to connect the
Central Valley to the Bay Area and provide those
opportunities for connecting housing and job opportunities.
It’s going to provide dramatic long-term reduction in
transportation and energy reduction use. It will stimulate
the local economies with the investments in the area and
providing incredible opportunities for the communities to
diversify.

It also will reduce annual vehicle miles
traveled. And also will work to expand the Caltrain
service, electrified service from San Jose all the way down
to Gilroy.

And then, with respect to environmental benefits,
there is the reduction in greenhouse gases, the
improvements on reduced energy use. But as we discussed in
this theme, there are a number of historic challenges and
problems from the existing infrastructure that this
investment will help to remedy. And we worked very hard to
work with the communities, including the environmental
justice offsetting mitigation, the improvements for
wildlife movement.

And there’s a number of other infrastructure
improvements, such as the Caltrain investment and
electrification there, as well as upgrades to PG&E
transmission lines. Upgrades to hydrology at Llagas Creek
and Fisher Creek, and other benefits as far as the upgrades to the utilities.

And so, this is just an incredibly important project and we are honored to present to you today. So, thank you.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you all, the entire team, Serge, Boris, all of you. A great presentation, we appreciate it.

Mr. Kelly, do you have anything you’d like to add?

MR. KELLY: Mr. Chairman, primarily I just want to spend a moment to acknowledge the work of the team on this. You heard in the testimony that this is 13 years in the making, which is an astonishing thing when you think about all the analysis, and all the work, and all the hours that are put into this.

And it’s also a moment to thank the Board because one of the things that we’ve been focused on as a management, since I got here, is trying to make sure that we, as an Authority, are being more specific, very definitional about what we are trying to do. And there’s no place than we have done that better than in the environmental document area.

When I began here in 2018, we had cleared only 119 miles, just that section that was under construction in
the Central Valley. And in the last 18 or 24 months, or so, we brought to this Board additional environmental documents, each of them multi-year, several hundred million dollars, and just a ton of work and analysis that goes into each of these segments. And so, it’s a tribute to the team, but also the Board for the work.

I was just thinking, as they were presenting, that we’ve now, you know, completed two additional Central Valley segments, two additional Southern California segments, and you now have before you the first segment into the Bay Area.

And should this be certified tomorrow, we’ll have cleared continuously the Bay Area to L.A. County in San Jose, all the way to the City of Palmdale. And we have more work to do in Southern California. We need to finish the stretch into San Francisco, into the Bay Area. But it is an astonishing accomplishment in a relatively short amount of time.

So, again, I want to recognize and appreciate the team for all the work that they’ve put into this, but also to the Board for the consideration of a lot of very heavy and detailed documentation and work, in a relatively short amount of time in terms of when these decisions come to you, and the decisions that you have to make.
So, again, it’s a real credit to the team, the staff, a ton of work, and the Board for their consideration. So, that’s all I wanted to say, Mr. Chair.

CHAIR RICHARDS: All right, thank you, Mr. Kelly. And, of course, that’s -- for all of this, this is why we signed on.

MR. KELLY: Yes.

CHAIR RICHARDS: So, thank you very much.

With that, we will now ask our Board Secretary to advise those of you who would like to address us with your comments on the San Jose to Merced environmental section. So, Mo, I don’t know where you are now. Oh, there you are.

MR. RAMADAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Okay.

MR. RAMADAN: Before we begin public comment on Agenda Item 2, 8, 9, 10, and 11, I would like to go over some important technical information.

For members of the public who have joined us in person and wish to provide public comment, you’ll be called in the order that we have received your card. If you wish to provide public comment right now, please bring your card up to the stage.
We are also allowing members of the public to provide comment remotely by telephone, after in-person public comment.

We will start with Andy Russell. Andy Russell.

MR. RUSSELL: Hello. Thank you, CEO Kelly, and Chair Richards, and the rest of the Board for your leadership and extensive work that you’ve put into this.

My name is Andy Russell. I’m from the California Alliance for Jobs. We represent five of the largest, heavy construction unions in California, as well as over a thousand of the largest heavy construction companies.

High-speed rail provides thousands of transformational jobs, and life-changing union jobs for Californians. It’s exactly the type of smart infrastructure investment that makes up the backbone of California’s long-term success, ensuring future generations have sustainable economic prosperity and quality of life.

On behalf of the California Alliance for Jobs, I want to applaud the staff for their extensive work on this EIR and EIS document, and reiterate our support for it.

I ask that you keep up the momentum that the approval of this environmental document will provide. Thank you for your time and have a great day.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you.
MR. RAMADAN: Mr. Chairman, I don’t have any comment cards right now for in person, so I’ll be pivoting to over the phone. I’m going to move to the room, over to minimize on the echo. One moment.

Participants for public comment, I want to ask if Marie Blankley is on the line? Marie Blankley.

MS. BLANKLEY: Yes, I am.

MR. RAMADAN: You can provide your public comment.

MS. BLANKLEY: Okay, thank you. I’m Gilroy Mayor Marie Blankley, and I’d like to piggyback on what Mayor Sam Liccardo said earlier in the meeting. I’m sorry I can’t be there in person, too, but I do believe that next to San Jose, Gilroy will be the next most significant transit hub on this stretch. And this is such a wonderful presentation to see.

Gilroy’s transit center is very much ready for this to happen. The space is there, the need is there, particularly connecting housing to jobs, including the additional Caltrain benefits that will come. I want to thank you for all of this.

The perspective I’d like to add is from the skeptic public that until they actually see something happening, it feels like all we hear are the dollars this is going to cost, and it doesn’t feel real. I want to tell
you it’s starting to feel real. Thank you. I’m hoping that in the next -- certainly in less than five years, in my meetings with High-Speed Rail staff, maybe as soon as two to three years we might see some actual ground being touched. And that’s what I hope will actually happen so the public can really start to believe that this is going to happen. Thank you.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you, Mayor and thank you for your participation and support.

MR. RAMADAN: Caroline, before we move on to the participants, I just want to ask if we have anybody else on the line at the moment who wishes to provide public comment, who is not on the participant line.

Caroline, can we move on to the participant line?

AT&T OPERATOR: Yes, absolutely. Thank you.

Ladies and gentlemen, if you wish to comment on today’s call, you may press 1 and then 0 at this time. Once again, if you wish to comment on today’s call, you may press 1 and then 0.

One moment, please, for the first comment. Jose Manzo, from Oak Grove School District, your line is open. Please go ahead.

MR. MANZO: Thank you. Thank you, Chair Richards and members of the Board. Thank you for the opportunity to address the Board. My name is Jose Manzo. I’m the
Superintendent of the Oak Grove School District, which is located in South San Jose.

I want to begin by thanking the High-Speed Authority staff, Cici Vu, Audrey Van, Cooper Tamaio (phonetic), and Cathy Paskin who spent a consideration amount of time over the past couple of years meeting with me, and my staff, regarding this project.

We also appreciate the Board’s commitment to provide environmental justice offsetting mitigations to communities highly impacted by this important high-speed rail project.

The high-speed rail alignment would traverse a section of our school district which is in the Monterey Highway Corridor in East San Jose, with the greatest percentage of minority populations and low-income populations in the district, as well as one of the highest in the City of San Jose.

I believe staff is recommending an improvement to one of our track and fields, with an all-weather turf, and playing surface for one of our intermediate schools, Caroline Davis Intermediate.

The proposed enhancement would benefit the community’s minority and low-income residents by providing recreational improvements to enhance community health and wellbeing. The Edenvale Roundtable community suffers from
a significant lack of access to health services, as well as after school and weekend recreational centers where it is safe for students and young adults, as well as the community members to have access to recreational activities or organized sports.

Upgrades to the all-weather field and track would provide service facilities to the community that would allow the school program activities in the after hours and weekends. This amenity will be enjoyed by students and members of our community for years to come.

Highly encourage the Board approval of the proposed mitigation, justice offsetting mitigation strategy. Thank you.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you, sir.

AT&T OPERATOR: Rebecca Long, with MTC, your line is open. Please go ahead.

MS. LONG: Good afternoon Chair Richards, Vice Chair Miller, and CEO Kelly. My name’s Rebecca Long. I’m the Director of Legislation and Public Affairs at the Metropolitan Transportation Commission.

And I just wanted to congratulate the staff and Board on reaching this huge milestone and share MTC’s support for Alternative 4 in the EIR, which really is the most beneficial from a regional stand point, that utilizes the existing rail corridor between San Jose and Gilroy.
And also allows for electrified Caltrain to be expanded further south.

So, congratulations and just urging your adoption of the EIR. Thank you.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you, Ms. Long.

AT&T OPERATOR: Ellen Wehr, from Grassland Water District, your line is open, please go ahead.

MS. WEHR: Good afternoon. This is Ellen Wehr on behalf of Grassland Water District and the GEA stakeholder group. We wanted to be there in person today to provide comments, but had pre-scheduled a trip to Washington, D.C. So, grateful for the opportunity to comment by phone.

We wanted to thank staff and consultants for continuing the long history of engagement with stakeholders in the Grassland Ecological Area. We’ve made great progress in building this progress through the largest remaining freshwater in the west, which is the Grassland Ecological Area.

This progress includes a commitment to conservation easements, a wildlife protective enclosure, and better sound and lighting standards to reduce impacts. And we believe these measure are crucial for protecting habitat and sensitive species. And we want to express our gratitude to the Authority for their hard work that it took to get to this point.
Unfortunately, we have a number of remaining concerns with the EIR/EIS, primarily the analysis of impacts in the Volta Lake area, which contains vital wetlands that support water birds and the threatened giant garter snake.

Also, the analysis of impacts on recreation and the constructive use of state wildlife areas does not acknowledge significant impacts to public trails, camping sites, hunting and bird watching sites, as well as our Grassland Environmental Education Center.

Our final concern is that many of the mitigation measures are vaguely worded and do not provide oversight or enforcement options.

But we’ve determined with your staff and leadership that the first two issues of conflict cannot be reconciled. The third issue, the implementation of mitigation is really the only remaining avenue that we have to try and resolve these conflicts cooperatively. We are making some progress on that.

So, today we’d like to ask the Board to direct staff to pursue an implementation plan with Grassland Water District and the GEA working group to try and reconcile these issues, and ensure that the project is built in an environmentally responsible way through the GEA. Thank you very much.
AT&T OPERATOR: Laura Tolkoff with SPUR, your line is open. Please go ahead.

I’m sorry, Laura, if you press 1 and then 0 again, you’ll be able to be back in queue.

We’ll on, currently, to Adrian Bryant. Your line is open, please go ahead.

MR. BRYANT: Well, thank you Directors and staff, appreciate the presentation. I am a member of the Caltrans Citizens Advisory Committee, as well as your own Community Working Group for San Mateo County. However, I’m speaking on behalf of myself only, at this time.

I wanted to give my support and urge you to also support the Alternative 4. I believe it’s clearly the best compromise between all the different competing interests. And it is, from a fiduciary point of view, the most advantageous alignment by far.

Obviously, the synergy between Caltrain and high-speed rail is critical. And I urge you, therefore, to front load -- as Rod Diridon said: Time is money. Front load the electrification to Gilroy so that Caltrain doesn’t have to worry about running both diesels down to Gilroy when their electrification is complete, or pursue alternative vehicle purchases that are dual mode. So, please do that as soon as possible in this process.
Also, for the grade crossings, I urge the staff to work diligently with the local jurisdictions of each grade crossing to serve as a clearing house and assist with the quiet zone application process. Train horn quite zones make the train horns discretionary, so it can still be sounded if needed for any safety hazard, but otherwise train horns are not used. And this is a critical mitigation measure that will have significant effects on the neighborhoods and will be greatly appreciated by all that are within earshot of those 20 plus grade crossings on the segment.

Lastly, I wanted to just remark it was a little bit surprising to me, I noticed you have four platform bases in Gilroy for high-speed rail, and only two for Caltrains. I’m not sure, but maybe that should be revered. Because going forward I know Salinas wants service and I can imagine that there would be actually need for more platform bases for Caltrains than high-speed rail at that particular station.

Otherwise, I urge you, just as Rod Diridon did earlier, to do everything in your power to accelerate this process. As everyone knows, the rest of the world has implemented high-speed rail many times over. In the time that we’ve passed Proposition 1A, countries like Morocco, and Turkey, and obviously China is the now the world-
leading high-speed rail country in the world, have kind of, 
I think, put us to shame in terms of our delivery

capability.

So, I understand this environmental process is
important, but I am duly impressed with the staff
presentation. There’s clearly a lot of care was put into
it, and so I urge your support and passage of this --
approval of this Final Environmental Impact Report at this
series of meetings. Thank you.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you.

AT&T OPERATOR: Noah Cristman, with SPUR, your
line is open. Please go ahead.

MR. CRISTMAN: Good afternoon Chair Richards and
Board members. My name is Noah Cristman and I lead public
education at SPUR. We are a public policy organization
focused on making the Bay Area more sustainable, equitable,
and prosperous. And we strongly support the continued
build out of high-speed rail.

Beginning in the ‘70s, California’s leaders began
to envision a way to connect the dense, urban coastal areas
of the Bay Area and Southern California with the San
Joaquin Valley, via high-speed rail. Fifty years later, we
now know just how important sustainable transportation,
like high-speed rail, is to our ability to live in this
warming world.
High-speed rail is fundamentally about changing how we move and grow as a state, adding a new, cleaner way to travel between cities that simply doesn’t exist today. As a result, we encourage you to certify the EIR/EIS for the San Jose to Merced section.

Additionally, SPUR cares deeply about the future of Diridon Station in San Jose, which is a critical node in the statewide and regional transit network, and can become a catalyst for growth, as well an important part of public life in that city.

And we encourage the Authority to continue working with San Jose to develop an integrated Diridon Station, and work collaboratively to make up-front investments in the station and station area.

Thank you so much for your leadership to date, and we’re excited to see this move forward.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you.

AT&T OPERATOR: There are no further comments in the queue at this time.

CHAIR RICHARDS: All right, thank you.

MR. RAMADAN: Thank you, Caroline.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Once again, there are no further public comments. And I’ll open one more time, anybody in the audience who would like to speak?
All right, thank you. The public comments are closed.

MR. RAMADAN: Caroline, you can close the conference. Thank you.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you. I’ll now ask my colleagues on the Board to identify if there are any issues raised in either the staff presentation or public comment that you would like the staff to address further.

As noted in the agenda, while we take up some other business items and break for the night, staff will consider those Board-identified questions or issues and will be prepared to offer a response tomorrow, when we start back at 11:00 a.m.

So, if you have any issues you’d like to address further or would like to have addressed further, now’s the time to identify them.

So, I’ll now ask any members of the Board -- yes, Director Perea.

BOARD MEMBER PEREA: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I had a question for Boris. And I believe I heard it in the presentation, I just want to confirm.

But about two years ago, prior to the pandemic I believe, Mr. Kelly and I went to Morgan Hill and met with those folks all about concerns and issues they had. To the extent possible, were their issues addressed in this plan.
MR. LIPKIN: Yeah, I mean I think where we are with Morgan Hill, if you’ll recall when we were there, there was still a lot of conversation around whether we should follow the 101 Freeway, or the existing rail corridor.

BOARD MEMBER PEREA: Right.

MR. LIPKIN: In the letter that we received, in the communications that we’ve received from Morgan Hill recently, they’ve definitely turned their attention to agreeing with our preferred alternative, with using the existing rail corridor.

They have continued to emphasize the issues of grade separations. As I’ve mentioned that’s been of key interest and, you know, especially around some of our proposed mitigations for emergency vehicle response they’ve kind of taken that topic.

So we’ve, as I mentioned, proposed an MOU with them to continue to work on advancing grade separations in their community. And that’s been, I think to this point, positively received. So, we have some basis for a collaborative relationship moving forward.

But if you’d like us to get into some of the specifics from their letter, for example, we could do that tomorrow if that’s a topic that you’d like to dig in some more.
BOARD MEMBER PEREA: Okay. And again, you know, we understand what their issues are, were and are. But to the extent that we can, I just want to make sure that if we haven’t addressed it to date that we continue the conversation with them, and it sounds like we are.

MR. LIPKIN: Yes, very much so.

BOARD MEMBER PEREA: Yeah, okay. The other question I have is on the Gardner neighborhood, on the slide 43. I just wanted to confirm on this map because, you know, I agree, you know, historically that neighborhood’s been cut up pretty, pretty badly by the freeways, what it is exactly we are doing to -- are we closing, finishing it, closing it off?

MR. LIPKIN: No, so there’s an --

BOARD MEMBER PEREA: Can you show me? Can you bring up that slide and --

MR. LIPKIN: Yeah, we can -- if we can -- I’m not sure if we can pull the slides back up.

BOARD MEMBER PEREA: I need to understand a little bit better where our alignment is on this map.

MR. LIPKIN: Sure. As the presentation’s being pulled up, I can talk from the graphic. So, our alignment follows the existing -- there’s an existing rail corridor that runs there, and so that was built first, and the community sprang up around it. The freeways came in later.
and really bisected it from the other parts of the neighborhood.

BOARD MEMBER PEREA: Right.

MR. LIPKIN: And so, what we’re proposing is to upgrade that existing rail corridor. So, the first thing that’s happening there is the Caltrain electrification project that’s in construction now is going to first remove a lot of the existing diesel Caltrain trains. We do need to -- and I see the slide is coming up, so I can flip back to it, probably, if I -- maybe. Well, okay, here we go.

BOARD MEMBER PEREA: My first question, which is our alignment, which line is ours?

MR. LIPKIN: So, our alignment is the light blue that runs through kind of the middle. Again, I can just click through the slides one more time. So, this is their existing rail corridor.

BOARD MEMBER PEREA: The red? The red?

MR. LIPKIN: The red. The red is the existing rail corridor.

BOARD MEMBER PEREA: Okay, Caltrain.

MR. LIPKIN: That’s being electrified right now, today. We need to add an additional track here and so in the existing rail corridor. So, we’ve worked very hard to minimize the impacts from that, especially on property impacts. So, that’s why we have -- we have just a few
places that we call out. You know, as we build a new
bridge over the freeway here, and a little bit of right of
way here as we go over this freeway, and a small station
facility item here. Those are our property impacts. We’ve
tried to really stay within the bounds of their existing
rail corridor to minimize impacts.

And then, we’ve also proposed the mitigations.
So, these are the mitigations. So, one is a noise barrier
along here this yellow long. And then, noise treatments
for -- this is our offsetting mitigations along -- for the
houses along the freeway, for the school, and then the
improvements in Fuller Park, the recreational improvements.
So, that’s kind of the suite of things that we’re proposing
here.

BOARD MEMBER PEREA: Okay, thank you.
CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you, Director Perea. Yes,
Director Pena.

BOARD MEMBER PENA: Thank you. Question about on
this slide, also, Gardner Elementary School that is going
to be completely surrounded with a noise treatment. Is
that -- that’s a wall?

MR. LIPKIN: No, I think that that’s -- we just
show the outline of the school facility. It’s not
necessarily, and maybe I’ll look to some assistance from
those who might remember the details of that better, or we can come back tomorrow with it.

BOARD MEMBER PENNA: Okay.

MR. LIPKIN: Because I’d rather not misspeak. But I think we’re proposing treatments there. It’s not a giant wall around the school, I just want to be clear.

BOARD MEMBER PENNA: Okay.

MR. LIPKIN: But we can come back tomorrow if you’d like, with that.

BOARD MEMBER PENNA: Because my question would be, I mean obviously there is a lot of greenhouse gases that are surrounding this area because of all the freeways. My concern is that the noise treatment could capture those gases and possibly keep them within the confines of the wall, or whatever the treatment is. I just want to know how that works.

MR. LIPKIN: Yeah. It’s primarily things like window treatments. So, Gary’s whispering in my ear. And if you want to provide the answer?

MR. KENNERLEY: Yeah, in this situation we’re not surrounding it by a wall. But what we are looking -- in discussions with the elementary school, we’re looking at other noise treatments. These would typically be insulation for the walls, improved windows for insulation.

BOARD MEMBER PENNA: Okay.
MR. KENNERLEY: And, you know, we’ll continue to work with them. Another option that we have as well, especially now with COVID, with the ventilation requirements. But it’s also improved ventilation so you can actually keep the windows closed. So, those would be the improvements that we’d be doing. So, it’s more of an improvement to the reduction in the noise environment inside the classrooms, not actually surrounding the school like Fort Knox or anything.

BOARD MEMBER PENA: Okay. And also improvement in their classroom ventilation systems?

MR. KENNERLEY: That’s another element we can consider, so that way they can keep windows closed, and then they are effective at reducing the noise.

BOARD MEMBER PENA: Right. Would that be throughout the school? Do they have portable classrooms? Would it include those as well.

MR. KENNERLEY: Generally, I mean we’ll need to work with the school more closely on the specific locations. But they would be targeted where it would be the benefit to the actual noise impacts from the freeways. So, more on the north side where that noise comes from the freeways.

BOARD MEMBER PENA: Okay, thank you.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you, Director Pena.
Any other questions?

BOARD MEMBER CAMACHO: One quick --

CHAIR RICHARDS: I’m sorry? Yes, Director Camacho.

BOARD MEMBER CAMACHO: Not a question, just a comment. The presentation’s probably the most comprehensive and understandable environmental document that I’ve reviewed. I thank you and your staff for all the hard work. And when it comes before us, I’d be proud and honored to vote for it.

MR. KENNERLEY: Thank you.

CHAIR RICHARDS: All right, thank you, Director Camacho.

Director Williams?

BOARD MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

So, first I want to also compliment the staff for an extraordinary undertaking in accomplishing that and bringing this before us.

So, it might seem strange that I’m going to zero in on a pretty minor -- maybe seemingly minor in the context of the whole document, but pretty significant I think for the folks who may be impacted.

Am I correct that there is an impact in terms of the farmland in the eastern part of the --
MR. STANICH: Pacheco Pass.

BOARD MEMBER WILLIAMS: -- line --

MR. STANICH: The San Joaquin Valley?

BOARD MEMBER WILLIAMS: Yes, in the San Joaquin Valley. Where there are farmland impacts that may get down to impacting a residence of one of the leaseholders on the land? And could you just -- apologize if I missed this, if this was discussed already. But what is the, you know, proposed remediation or mediation for that, and how is that being undertaken with that -- if there is, in fact, a particular residence that’s being affected, how are they -- how are we working with them to address that?

MR. STANICH: So, just let me start. And then it’s a -- you’ve asked a complicated question that touches on a few points.

BOARD MEMBER WILLIAMS: Okay.

MR. STANICH: So, with respect to farmland and agricultural resources there’s two types of impacts that we’re causing as far as the development of the project, constructing the infrastructure.

The first one is just by constructing the infrastructure we will be going through prime farmland and we will take that out of production. That’s considered a significant impact.
As we go through there are farmers, ranchers, and other businesses that are making their business out of those parcels, and we may clip a parcel to make a portion of what we call remnant parcel no longer economically viable. And so, that’s the other significant impact.

We have mitigation measures, then, to work with the owners and minimize that impact as far as the economic viability. I believe you’re probably referring to some of the specific comment letters that we’ve received where acquiring these properties will also result in some displacements. Along with other residential or business displacements, we have provisions in our socioeconomic section to incorporate protections along the Uniform Relocation Act, where we work with them to provide alternate housing or business opportunities.

I’ll pass it over to Gary who can give a little bit more detail regarding one of the specific letters that we received in the last few days.

BOARD MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank you.

MR. KENNERLEY: Director Williams, I believe you may be referring to the Vierra property, since you mentioned just on the east for the San Joaquin.

Happy to maybe tomorrow, we can come in with the maps for this particular property. We’ve been engaged, talking to the property owners from the beginning of the
project. The alignment does go through their property. They have both their own residence and I think it’s three residences for tenant farmers on their property. We’ve been working with them. As Serge mentioned, we do have specific mitigation measures to address any necessary relocations.

And we did actually also do a study of what would happen if we could move the alignment. In that study we identified we’d have greater impacts if we moved the alignment to the north. To the south, we really couldn’t move because we needed to avoid the solar farm and the San Luis Reservoir.

But happy to come back tomorrow and I can show you the maps that we actually prepared to look at those impacts.

BOARD MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank you.
CHAIR RICHARDS: Any other -- yes, Vice Chair Miller.
VICE CHAIR MILLER: Just along that, can you also talk a little bit about the farmworker housing in that area as well? And then, in the Gardner neighborhood you’re clipping that, and just kind of maybe talk a little bit about your process there, about whether that’s residential impact or not.
And then, I just wanted to add on the Grasslands comment. I’m assuming we would be consulting with them in the future on implementation of mitigation measures.

MR. STANICH: Absolutely. We have been working with them. I have to credit the Grassland staff -- I’m sorry, I have to credit the Grassland staff. It was actually their suggestion that a bird tube enclosure is a recommendation that was given to the Authority by the Grassland staff. And they’ve been a very good partner in working with the Authority to identify opportunities to improve the project.

We have actually included, as part of the resolutions, commitments so that the Board can direct staff to continue working on advancing these partners. And specifically noted Grasslands Water District, along with the other stakeholders and partners that we’ve been working with.

VICE CHAIR MILLER: Thank you. And I didn’t say before, but you did a great job. Appreciate that.

MR. STANICH: Thank you so much.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you, Vice Chair Miller.

Any other comments? Yes, Director Pena.

BOARD MEMBER PENA: Thank you. Can we go back to that elementary school side again.

MR. LIPKIN: Sure.
BOARD MEMBER PENA: And my question has to do with the -- the grassy area. Is there -- somebody else mentioned, one of the people that phoned in talked about a turf, upgrading a turf area at a high school. Is there anything that can be done with the grassy area that, I don’t know, addresses potential, you know, greenhouse gas effects on that.

MR. LIPKIN: So, the commenter I think was talking about one of our proposed mitigations in South San Jose, so it’s a different school that they were referring to.

BOARD MEMBER PENA: Right, uh-hum.

MR. LIPKIN: You know here, when we were talking with the community, and the impacts that we have here are specifically those -- you know, our impacts are noise and there’s noise issues from the existing freeways. That’s why I think we’ve had that particular focus. So, I don’t know that we’ve -- you know, anything came in -- again, this has been a collaborative process of the communities really suggesting what are important things to them. And so, I don’t think we had anything specifically about sort of the other green space at the school there.

BOARD MEMBER PENA: Uh-hum.

MR. LIPKIN: What we did have is something focused on Fuller Park, which is another kind of -- it’s a
park space in the community. And so, that is one that we have incorporated. But at least in our conversations with the community and the school district there wasn’t -- we didn’t have any discussions around anything in the lawn area for the school.

BOARD MEMBER PENA: I mean do they now that it’s available or there’s alternatives?

MR. LIPKIN: I mean, I guess what I would say is all of these ideas and concepts that generally came from the communities, and what they see as their needs. And so, with the other school district, again, that was an idea that again -- it wasn’t our proposal. It really came from the outreach to us. And so, I think we definitely started with sort of the broad sweep of things.

BOARD MEMBER PENA: Right.

MR. LIPKIN: Of, you know, tell us what’s important to you and --

BOARD MEMBER PENA: Right.

MR. LIPKIN: -- where the kind of key issues are for the community and so --

BOARD MEMBER PENA: And that was a high school, correct?

MR. LIPKIN: Right, that was a high school, year.

BOARD MEMBER PENA: And this is an elementary school.
MR. LIPKIN: This is elementary, yeah.

BOARD MEMBER PENA: So, they don’t necessarily have the type of sports, right, that a high school would have.

MR. LIPKIN: Right. I mean, again, from the engagement that we’ve had that wasn’t a topic that came up. I guess I’ll just say that way.

BOARD MEMBER PENA: Okay. I’m just concerned about, obviously, their location inside of all those freeways, and rail, and --

MR. LIPKIN: Sure.

BOARD MEMBER PENA: Thank you.

MR. LIPKIN: Yeah, understand that.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you, Director Pena.

CEO Kelly?

MR. KELLY: Boris, I just wanted to ask, can you -- maybe it’s valuable to have you specifically talk about what the request from the community was relative to Fuller Park and what we’re doing in Fuller Park.

MR. LIPKIN: Yeah, so I think the Fuller Park improvement was -- that was the suggestion that we heard from the community when we went back out in September. It was also what we heard from the local councilmember who represents the area. And in our evaluation this was the
number improvement from kind of -- as we look at those
criteria that would be beneficial to the community.

And so, what we’ve proposed is essentially
equipment to -- you know, right now the park, I think has
some Bocce ball courts, and a few other things, but that
would basically make it more useful to the community.

And so, that’s what -- that was developed with
the City of San Jose, with the local kind of entities here
and, you know, it’s something that has gone through
vetting. And again, we were able to agree with the
community when they said that that was really important to
them, and we’ve added it in as part of the final
environmental document.

CHAIR RICHARDS: All right, thank you, Boris.

MR. LIPKIN: Sure.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Any other questions or comments?

Seeing none, Gary, Boris, Serge, great job.

Thank you.

Ladies and gentlemen, we will now adjourn for one
hour, and we will gavel the beginning at 1:55. Thank you.

(Off the record at 12:55 p.m.)

(On the record at 2:09 p.m.)

CHAIR RICHARDS: Good afternoon, ladies and
gentlemen. We are running late, as you can tell, so thank
you for your patience.
We’re going to go ahead and continue with the meeting that we adjourned a little over an hour ago. And we’re going to start off, now, with our agenda that is not -- that has nothing to do with the San Jose to Merced environmental documents.

So, starting Board colleagues, on Item Number 1, the approval of the minutes of March 15 of ’22.

BOARD MEMBER CAMACHO: So moved.

VICE CHAIR MILLER: Second.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Okay, a motion and a second.

Do you need names on that motion and second or are you okay? Yeah. Yes, uh-uh. Miller. Okay, thank you.

Yeah. Yeah, I am. And can we have the Secretary please call the roll.

MR. RAMADAN: Director Chair Richards?

CHAIR RICHARDS: Yes.

MR. RAMADAN: Director Camacho?

BOARD MEMBER CAMACHO: Yes.

MR. RAMADAN: Vice Chair Miller?

VICE CHAIR MILLER: Yes.

MR. RAMADAN: Director Perea?

BOARD MEMBER PEREA: Yes.

MR. RAMADAN: Director Ghielmetti?

BOARD MEMBER GHIELMETTI: Yes.
MR. RAMADAN:  Director Williams?

BOARD MEMBER WILLIAMS:  (No audible answer.)

MR. RAMADAN:  Director Pena?

BOARD MEMBER PENA:  Yes.

MR. RAMADAN:  Mr. Chair, the motion carries.

CHAIR RICHARDS:  Thank you. And thank you, colleagues.

Item Number 3 is to consider approving the Project Management and Funding Agreement for the Los Angeles Union Station. And this is one that I think that we all can share a common huge smile.

MR. KELLY:  Mr. Chairman, presenting on this item for us today is our Chief Financial Officer, Brian Annis. And along with him is Bruce Armistead, who is -- the two of them, really, with our counsel’s office, took the lead on negotiations on this. And they’re both here to present the details of the agreement with the LA Metro.

So, gentlemen.

MR. ANNIS:  Good afternoon Mr. Chair and Board members. This is an action item. We’re asking the Board to adopt the Project Management and Funding Agreement for LA Union Station. And I’m going to --

BOARD MEMBER CAMACHO:  I move approval.

VICE CHAIR MILLER:  I second.
MR. ANNIS: We have some nice pictures we can show you.

BOARD MEMBER CAMACHO: That’s a long time in coming.

MR. ANNIS: There you go. Well, I also wanted -- Brian noted some Authority staff. You also heard earlier today in public comments from Jeanette Owens. So, I want to thank the LA Metro team as well for their collaboration on this important agreement.

So, I am going to -- let’s see, could I get the next slide.

VICE CHAIR MILLER: I was serious on my motion. And my second, weren’t you. No, seriously, we’re so happy about this but --

MR. ANNIS: I think we all are.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Then, we would like to take that seriously, then.

VICE CHAIR MILLER: Do we need -- do we need the staff --

CHAIR RICHARDS: So, we do have a motion and a second. And any discussion of the motion and the second?

VICE CHAIR MILLER: Way to go, Brian.

MR. ANNIS: All right. I don’t want to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory here so, I’ll take yes for an answer.
CHAIR RICHARDS: Yeah, we couldn’t be happier for this.

So, we have a motion and a second. Secretary, please call the roll.

MR. RAMADAN: Director Camacho?
BOARD MEMBER CAMACHO: Yes.

MR. RAMADAN: Vice Chair Miller?
VICE CHAIR MILLER: Yes.

MR. RAMADAN: Director Perea?
BOARD MEMBER PEREA: Yes.

MR. RAMADAN: Director Ghielmetti?
BOARD MEMBER GHIelmetti: Yes.

MR. RAMADAN: Director Williams? (No audible response.)

MR. RAMADAN: Director Pena?
BOARD MEMBER PENA: Yes.

MR. RAMADAN: Mr. Chairman, the motion carries.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you. And thank you very much, colleagues. Thank you very much Brian.

BOARD MEMBER CAMACHO: That was a very persuasive presentation.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Yeah.

Item Number 4 on the agenda is to consider providing approval to release a request for qualifications for design services for the Central Valley stations.
Do you want to introduce Meg?

MR. KELLY: Yeah, I’m happy to make an introduction here. And let me also say for the record that --

CHAIR RICHARDS: How did I lose the -- how did it no longer be my right and ability to introduce --

MR. KELLY: Oh, please. I thought you just asked me if --

CHAIR RICHARDS: No, go ahead. I’m just kidding.

MR. KELLY: Would you like to make the introduction Mr. Chair?

CHAIR RICHARDS: I’d like to introduce you.

MR. KELLY: Okay. Okay, as I make this introduction I do want to just state for the record that the Board members have PowerPoint presentations and the background issue memos in their binder for all of these issues, and they’ve all been briefed on these issues as well.

So with that said, as we get into Agenda Item Number 4, this presentation is by Meg Cederoth, who is no stranger to this Board. Meg is the Director of our Planning and Sustainability Office. And she works with all of the communities on our station development work up and down the state.
So with that, Meg, you’re on. Thanks for being here.

MS. CEDEROTH: Of course. So, good afternoon. I think it’s wonderful to see the Board back in real time, in a real place. So, Chair Richards, Vice Chair Miller, and Directors of the Board thank you for your attention today. I will do a presentation that summarizes the proposed Architecture and Engineering Services Contract for Design Services for the Central Valley Stations.

Functional passenger stations that are scaled to meet the ridership demand of the high-speed rail’s Merced to Bakersfield initial operating segment must be designed, constructed, commissioned, and made ready for customer service.

The Authority is recommending that the Board approve the issuance of a request for qualifications for design services for Central Valley stations.

If approved, staff will issue an architecture and engineering procurement, seeking to contract for comprehensive design services to progress the four Central Valley stations to facilities that are ready for operation. The RFQ process will qualify an offer who can perform the entire scope of work for a design, bid, build delivery.

The four high-speed rail stations on the initial operating segment are Merced, Fresno, Kings/Tulare, and
Bakersfield. Each of these stations has been included in the Business Model for the high-speed rail system since its inception. And stations are, of course, the access point for customers to the system.

Each station has been environmentally cleared through both CEQA and NEPA, as shown on these next few slides that illustrate the current boundaries, and the station context. Given some of those decisions or environmental actions were earlier in the project delivery process, sometimes a decade ago, in the intervening years changes in the local context or resolution of agreements with local jurisdictions require additional refinement in the siting of some access facilities. Work that will be carried out by the selected designer.

Procuring a design consultant is a key part of station delivery. The selected designer’s work is crucial to answering core questions about the extent and the design details of the station facilities, and the station site layout.

The Authority has structured the delivery method for the Central Valley Station design, bid, build to conform to the stage delivery process governing all projects within the HHS program.

As shown in this diagram, the design, bid, build delivery maintains the same series of milestones, technical
analyses, and deliverables that provide the Authority with critical information at each stage of delivery.

The RFQ process will quality firms for comprehensive design services, that is all the critical services necessary to delivery functioning facilities through design, bid, build. The activities that the selected contractor will perform are a logical set of industry design services, including contract administration, predesign and planning services, including preliminary design concepts and associated cost estimate and schedule, design services broken down into increasingly detailed stages that will be managed through task orders by each station, bid support, construction administration support, and commissioning support.

While the firms will be qualified for the entire set of services, which maintains flexibility for the Authority, the contract will be delivered in two separately-funded notices to proceed.

The first notice to proceed, NTP1, will not exceed $35.3 million, and advances the design of the four stations to configuration footprint in alignment with Board funding in December of 2021.

The configuration footprint of course defines the physical extent of the station footprint to serve as a
baseline for any right-of-way acquisition beyond the broad footprint, as well as utility requirements.

It comprises the selection and the refinement of materials for station components. And it constitutes a minimum of 30 percent design on all station facilities, as well as additional work that is on select components of the station and the station site.

NTP1 includes important deliverables and tasks in addition to configuration footprint, such as cost estimate updates, value engineering, building information modeling, and asset management, sustainability and climate analyses, facilities programming, update project risk assessments and schedules, and site investigation survey and analysis.

At the completion of NTP1, the Authority will have the sole discretion to progress the design to final design and all that is necessary to make the building ready for customer service.

NTP2 comprises that remaining work, including final design, bid support, construction support, and commissioning support, so that the station facilities at each station are ready for customers. The estimated amount for NTP2 is $36 million.

Prior to exercising this option, Authority staff will request and obtain Board approval.
Finally, the timeline of the two NTPs and station delivery is currently synched with the planned start of customer service at the end of the decade.

So, scope of work, as you know, refers to the physical extent of what will be designed. The selected consultant will complete design work on all the physical components necessary for functional passenger rail service on day one of the initial operating segment.

While the Authority has environmentally cleared passenger facilities that can handle the ridership for phase one of the system, that’s the full extent of the system between San Francisco and Los Angeles, the Central Valley stations will be built as building blocks. Station building blocks are scaled to the system phases, the IOS, Valley to Valley, and Phase one, and comprise the physical scope required for safe, comfortable passenger facilities in a given station to accommodate that operating phase.

Building block one includes those elements required for the IOS, both land side and track side. The selected designer will advance design for building block one for all four stations.

Some elements will be constructed to a size that accommodates future ridership, so that they do not have to be reconstructed during revenue service. That means the selected designer will advance design through configuration
footprint on items such as a station head house, and additional access facilities for future-proofing our final design for building block one. The objective is to avoid rework, throwaway costs, and to further refine cost estimates.

This building block approach for the stations is in keeping with our building block approach for the entire system.

So, this slide gives you a little bit of a picture of all of those building block elements for day one service. These include things that are behind the fare barrier. These include elements behind the fare barrier, or fare-controlled area, the track side elements. Things such as a platform, a canopy, as well as vertical circulation and concourses, as well as things that you can’t see in this picture such as functional areas, and crew spaces.

Building block one also includes landside components. Those are the physical elements on the wider station site that provide for logical, organized, and user-friendly access to the station.

This includes things such as intersections, and rural grade improvements that allow access to the site. Site parking that is ADA compliant, as well as parking for cyclists, and other automobiles, transit facilities such as
bus stops, as well as pick up and drop off which includes spaces for transportation network companies, or TNCs, such as Lyft, and Uber, or whomever their successor will be.

So, the Board is well aware of all of the work underway to progress the IOF. And using task orders with each NTP, we will manage the timing of the components of this design contract so that they are conforming to other pieces of work.

For example, in Merced this designer will begin detailed work on the station site once we’ve completed a study of a co-located facility with the San Joaquin JPA and ACE.

This designer will also coordinate very closely with the selected designer of the LGA extension in order to integrate station facilities into the viaduct in Bakersfield. And this designer will work very closely with the track and systems contractor to confirm the location of platforms and station tracks, as well as do construction sequencing.

Finally, this designer will receive work from existing construction packages, such as CP1 in Fresno, and CP2-3 at the Kings/Tulare Station.

The selected designer will also take on and advance some key parts of the Authority’s existing design
vocabulary, specifically the canopy design concept that was completed in 2019.

So, the Board may recall that the Authority’s Grant Agreement with the FRA specifies that the Authority should treat the stations as a new city gateway, and that their form and spaces should be considered, as well as their place making effects, their iconic and readily-identifiable design.

So, the Authority’s canopy design concept was developed to accommodate our specific and varied needs. It’s something that is easily recognizable as high-speed rail. It’s something that can easily be maintained. It can be adjusted to different conditions. It is adaptable over time, incorporating functional station elements into it, such as signage, lighting, speakers, cameras and sensors, climate control, and seating.

And from a structural perspective, it is a design that can be self-supporting, while also handling the loads of photovoltaics necessary for station energy.

Through this new station design contract, the existing canopy design will be refined in terms of materials and extent, and it will be resolved in terms of engineering detail to suit each of the specific conditions.

This slide illustrates conceptually the range of ways that the canopy must be configured to fit in the local
context, while also providing an envelope for our passengers and back-of-house facilities.

I will conclude, now, with a brief explanation of the RFQ process and evaluation. So, this is a qualifications-based procurement. The actual contract amount will be negotiated with the most qualified offer.

Firms will submit statements of qualifications to the Authority and the selection is based on a detailed evaluation of those submitted qualifications. The RFQ process will be managed by Authority staff.

The SOQs submitted by offerers will be reviewed to ensure that all the technical requisite qualifications and RFQ requirements are met. The SOQs will first be evaluated on some pass/fail elements contained in the RFQ, among which, as you know, is the pass/fail element relative to ESG or environmental, social and governance issues.

And that can include things like the environmental sustainable policies, socioeconomic equity policies, and governance policies, as well as reports that conform to sustainability frameworks identified in the RFQ.

This contract also includes a small business requirement, disadvantaged business enterprise, and disabled Veteran’s business enterprise utilization goals, in tune with the other RFPs we’ve issued earlier this spring.
This is the schedule for the procurement. With Board approval, the release date is currently slated for April 29th, or shortly thereafter. A pre-bid conference and small business workshop is currently scheduled for May 12th. We then have SOQs due on July 19th, which provides over two months of time for the development of SOQs.

And then, the anticipated Notice of Proposed Award is expected in August, with a return to the Board for consideration of approval to award the contract currently scheduled for October, with NTP1 and contract execution scheduled thereafter.

That concludes my presentation and I’m more than happy to take questions.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you, Ms. Cederoth.

Questions from my colleagues? Yes, Director Perea.

BOARD MEMBER PEREA: Yes, thank you for your presentation, this is exciting. I just have a few, just maybe three or four questions.

First, you indicated there are going to be workshops. Where will these workshops be held? And are these for the proposed bidders?

MS. CEDEROTH: Yes. The pre-bid conference and the small business workshop is currently scheduled for May 12th. It will be virtual. And we’ve successfully had
virtual pre-bid conferences for the PDS contract, as well as the two design extension contracts. And we’ve had some very good feedback on the quality and the robustness of those interactions.

BOARD MEMBER PEREA: Okay. And the canopy concept, does it allow for structures within it? For example --

MS. CEDEROTH: Yes.

BOARD MEMBER PEREA: -- restaurants, businesses, et cetera, to create that kind of synergy in the station, or is more of a drop off?

MS. CEDEROTH: No, actually, the canopy envelope is fairly -- it’s fairly flexible and it’s done with intention so that we, as the Authority, can decide how much space is held underneath it.

And so, there are some spaces that -- there is some allowance for spaces that are flexible for things like coffee shops, and bathrooms, and other facilities for the passengers. But then the rest of the station site, as well, offers opportunities for broader facilities that you’re referencing.

And the exploration of that is a key task of this designer.

BOARD MEMBER PEREA: Okay. And in Fresno who do you -- who have you been meeting with, who’s the team?
MS. CEDEROOTH: Fresno has been an excellent partner to work with. We have been meeting with city staff. Before he left the city, Dan Zack we met with fairly frequently to talk through specific planning issues, and the interface of the city with station streets. Staff from FACs, as well as staff from the Economic Development Office, as well. I think Lupe Perez, if you’ve worked with her.

BOARD MEMBER PEREA: Okay. I’d really suggest and ask that you may want to include Councilmember Arias --

MS. CEDEROOTH: Of course, yeah.

BOARD MEMBER PEREA: -- the councilmember for the district in all those discussions.

MS. CEDEROOTH: Yeah.

BOARD MEMBER PEREA: Because it will be important that be aware of what’s happening there.

MS. CEDEROOTH: He’s a key stakeholder, yeah.

BOARD MEMBER PEREA: Great. And the last thing, I’d just like to get a briefing on it myself, you know, when you get a chance. I can come up here or we can talk on the phone, just about where we’re at.

MS. CEDEROOTH: Of course. Or, we can always walk around the site.

BOARD MEMBER PEREA: And the last thing I’ll just say is I appreciate your schedule. And, you know, one
thing, you know, our Board is very sensitive and in tune to is putting out schedules that we can meet.

MS. CEDEROTH: Okay.

BOARD MEMBER PEREA: So, you know, I don’t think that we’d anticipate any slippage in this type of schedule. It seems pretty straight forward in terms of process.

MS. CEDEROTH: Yes. We have a very well-seasoned procurement group who looked at the schedules very closely.

BOARD MEMBER PEREA: So, we’ll see this in October for our approval.

MS. CEDEROTH: Yes.

BOARD MEMBER PEREA: Thank you. Okay.

CHAIR RICHARDS: And Director Ghielmetti.

BOARD MEMBER GHIELMETTI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and that great presentation. And this is very thorough, okay.

MS. CEDEROTH: Okay.

BOARD MEMBER GHIELMETTI: But I do have some questions with regard to scope of work. I am very pleased to see that we’re doing a design, bid, build for a change. And I think my colleague Ernie, over here, is in full agreement.

Under the NTP1, are we going to do value engineering under that, at that time, or are we going to wait until we get to NTP2 to do value engineering?
MS. CEDEROTH: Under NTP1 they’re be developing three concepts and then advancing design on one of those concepts. There will be a moderate amount, I’d say, of value engineering exercises that take place then. And again, this is a consultant working on our behalf, so that work takes place according to our requirements.

But all of this is with the intention of meeting specific budgets for us and on our behalf. And I think a more robust value engineering exercise will happen more at the 50 percent design time frame.

BOARD MEMBER GHIELMETTI: Okay. And then I see on NTP1 you’re estimating three years, and then NTP2 you’re estimating five years. If I add those together, you’re past 2028.

MS. CEDEROTH: Yes. So, some of those overlap somewhat slightly. We do anticipate some of the stations moving a little bit quicker through NTP1 just because some of the information is a little more certain in places.

So, for those stations, we will probably have a shorter schedule, with a little bit of overlap with NTP2. But that kind of NTP2 time frame is very much sequences with, and in alignment with and will adjust as we move forward in construction of all of the segments. So, the extension to Merced and the extension to Bakersfield.
BOARD MEMBER GHIELMETTI: Are we allowing the submitters to prepare a schedule or are we telling them what the schedule is?

MS. CEDEROTH: They will provide us with a schedule as their first deliverable, under the first task. But the schedule that they are meeting is very much tied to our delivery of the infrastructure in which the stations align.

So, it is both their duty to carry out a schedule to meet our time frame and to inform us as to the progress of work. And then it’s, of course, our responsibility the.

BOARD MEMBER GHIELMETTI: Well, during the workshops can we suggest that they try to speed up the schedule a little bit.

MS. CEDEROTH: That would be fantastic, yeah.

BOARD MEMBER GHIELMETTI: All right, thank you.

MS. CEDEROTH: Of course.

BOARD MEMBER CAMACHO: Yes, I have a couple of questions on -- Mr. Chairman -- the constructability review and the value engineering. Are we also going to have an independent body look at that, as opposed to the designer?

MS. CEDEROTH: Yes. Actually, there’s both internal authority staff, I know CEO Kelly has done a good job of making us conform form to function, so we’ve got
much more staff in place around our engineering services to do review of design work.

But then as well, the PDS contract contains stipulations for value engineering work. So they will and can operate for us, on our behalf to kind of third-party review any value engineering suggestions from this designer. But this designer is working on our behalf to make sure the --

BOARD MEMBER CAMACHO: Yes.

MS. CEDEROTH: -- value engineering meets our cost and schedule.

BOARD MEMBER CAMACHO: It’s not that we don’t trust, but we just like to verify.

MS. CEDEROTH: Oh, of course, yes.

BOARD MEMBER CAMACHO: More of a question for Alicia. Alicia, do we have the issues on the conflict published already or --

MS. FOWLER: The RFQ itself will lay out for anyone how to reach out to the legal office on any conflict questions.

BOARD MEMBER CAMACHO: I know that we spend --

MS. FOWLER: And the legal office will also be at the pre-bid conference to help.

BOARD MEMBER CAMACHO: Yeah, we spent so much time on the last several months on that issue, timing has
always been everything. So, if we could get ahead of that
game, that would be probably the best thing for us.

MS. FOWLER: Absolutely.

BOARD MEMBER CAMACHO: Thank you.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you, it was a very good
presentation.

MS. CEDEROTH: Thank you.

CHAIR RICHARDS: And very thorough.

MS. CEDEROTH: Thank you.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Director or Vice Chair Miller?

VICE CHAIR MILLER: Well, I was -- thank you,
Director Camacho, because I was going to bring up the
conflict. We added some measures the last time we did this
about conflicts, to be at the workshop, to reach out to
people about contacting you ahead of time if there were
questions, just to be more transparent and open about
making sure that process is understood by our potential,
particularly the bidders that are much smaller, right, the
ones that might need some assistance.

But the second thing was also what Director
Ghielmetti, which is the time of this. Is it -- I mean how
did we get to three and five years to -- you know, can’t we
make that two and three years? I mean, I’m just curious.

MS. CEDEROTH: We definitely --

VICE CHAIR MILLER: Because I don’t like --
MS. CEDEROTH: Oh, of course, and staff is a hundred percent with you. We wanted to allow -- as kind of a term of the contract, we wanted to have three years because not each of these stations is going to go as quickly as the others.

Fresno, to be candid I think Fresno may move a little bit faster than -- we know Merced, for example, we’re doing a little bit of study on that location. So, that will wait just a little bit.

And so, the term of the contract is to make sure we have kind of a good envelope in that timing. But the actual progress of the work may happen much faster.

VICE CHAIR MILLER: But the term of the contract is -- I mean, I guess what I’m trying to say is in our larger scheme of things, when are we -- how are we making 2030, if we have an eight-year design contract?

MS. CEDEROTH: Yes. So, this is where we did try to make sure that the term of the contract could be flexible enough so that we wouldn’t have to amend it for time, if something was moving longer. But we do anticipate the actual design work to happen much more quickly.

VICE CHAIR MILLER: Can you do something in the RFP? Because I’ve seen this in contracts where you have options to extend.

MS. CEDEROTH: Yes.
VICE CHAIR MILLER: Or is that a problem, like that you didn’t want to do that? In other words, or is it structured? Because I just didn’t see that, that the design services were to be completed within 24 months. If it was needed to be extended, then we would do something.

MS. CEDEROTH: Another extension.

VICE CHAIR MILLER: I just am wondering why the engineers thought, our engineers think five years and three years is the time. And if it’s not the time needed, then what is the -- you know what I mean, what is the time really needed. Because you could design it.

MS. CEDEROTH: Much more quickly.

VICE CHAIR MILLER: Maybe -- go ahead, Chair.

MS. CEDEROTH: Please.

CHAIR RICHARDS: I mean, why don’t -- you know, you just mentioned that Fresno’s a little further along in what you’re doing with them versus Merced. So, why don’t we have them submit a schedule for each of the stations?

MS. CEDEROTH: Yes. Actually, that is --

CHAIR RICHARDS: Okay.

MS. CEDEROTH: -- that is deliverable one.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Yeah, all right.

MS. CEDEROTH: Uh-hum, okay.
VICE CHAIR MILLER: And maybe in that say that, you know, you’re looking for -- maybe not -- but you’re looking for speed here, right.

MS. CEDEROTH: Uh-hum.

VICE CHAIR MILLER: We’re just really trying to get the construction out as soon as we can, get the bids out.

MS. CEDEROTH: Yes. Yes. And I think one of the advantages of how we’ve structured this work is that as design advances for each station, it can kind of start to move independently.

I think one thing that I’m glad the Board is having this discussion because you may see me again very quickly asking for funds for NTP2, so that we can move further in design phases.

VICE CHAIR MILLER: Right. Well, just make sue that we have the ability to make them move quicker --

MS. CEDEROTH: Quickly, yeah.

VICE CHAIR MILLER: -- and that the term of the contract doesn’t seem to -- because I know as a contractor, I get a contract and I’m like, okay, that’s a sprint.

MS. CEDEROTH: Right.

VICE CHAIR MILLER: Where we have a five-year contract.

MS. CEDEROTH: Right.
VICE CHAIR MILLER: Which is not really what we want, I don’t think.

MS. CEDEROTH: No, we really want something to happen much more quickly, but we did want to make sure there was flexibility.

VICE CHAIR MILLER: Go ahead, Chair.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Can the Board members sit in on these workshops?

MS. CEDEROTH: The small business workshop? I’m sure, yeah.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Well, you’re going to have the people who are going to submit an RFQ, they’re going to have a workshop for them, right?

MS. CEDEROTH: We will have a pre-bid workshop, and discussion, and presentation. And so, one of the takeaways I have from today is to A, discuss the term of the contract and how we phrase it in the RFQ, but be very clear in our presentation in the pre-bid conference to say we expect design to go much more quickly than the term of the contract. But we’ve allowed the term of the NTP1 contract flexibility, in case it is necessary.

VICE CHAIR MILLER: Yeah, I guess what I’m getting at, Meg, is I don’t want to say we expect it.

MS. CEDEROTH: Okay.

VICE CHAIR MILLER: I would rather say we --
MS. CEDEROTH: Okay we insist.

VICE CHAIR MILLER: You know, it’s a contract.

MS. CEDEROTH: Okay.

VICE CHAIR MILLER: We expect it by this date.

Unless I’m missing something, because the overall project is we have time --

MS. CEDEROTH: Good point, right.

VICE CHAIR MILLER: Sorry,

MS. CEDEROTH: My very wise CEO has just reminded me that one of the aspects of the second NTP is that it’s through commissioning and delivery of the facility. So, the five-year contract is through construction.

VICE CHAIR MILLER: It is, it includes construction.

MS. CEDEROTH: Yes. And testing and sort of the punch list of the final items. And then, customers enter the front door of the station.

VICE CHAIR MILLER: Okay. And the first one, the three-year one?

MS. CEDEROTH: That’s just NTP1 to get us to that configured footprint.

BOARD MEMBER CAMACHO: Since we’re fighting time, is there a way to apply a performance-driven provision in this contract to incentify them to get this work done quicker?
MS. CEDEROTH: I mean it’s -- as a design contract, I mean --

BOARD MEMBER CAMACHO: I know it’s different than -- we can do that in construction.

MS. CEDEROTH: Right.

BOARD MEMBER CAMACHO: Or other types. But I’m wondering whether or not it’s ever been used for design?

MS. CEDEROTH: I would have to come back to you with an answer for that. I would say it is really up to us to set the schedule, and we can do that in a way that is much more structured than the term of the contract. We can be very clear that we anticipate the milestones for design to happen much more quickly than three years.

VICE CHAIR MILLER: Okay, that’s all I’m -- that’s a contractual term that design is expected to reach 60 percent by this date, 80 percent this date, 100 percent this date, and it’s not a full three years.

MS. CEDEROTH: Right.

VICE CHAIR MILLER: Right.

MS. CEDEROTH: Right.

VICE CHAIR MILLER: Okay, thank you.

MR. KELLY: Hi, I just want to comment on one thing that Director Ghielmetti asked, and it’s kind of a word of caution. And that is as we go into these public workshops, on these specific procurements, I just want to
remind the Board that we have to come back to you to approve the award.

And so, you may want to be a little careful on how far you’re involved in the process, before we come back to you to approve that award. So, I just want to remind you that there’s some distance that might be useful. Because again, we’re going to come back and tell you what we’ve done, and where it is, and what the award looks like. And you may want to just be aware of that as you are inquiring about getting involved in the process part. But again, it’s got to come back to you for your judgment.

BOARD MEMBER PEREA: I understood --
CHAIR RICHARDS: I think that --
BOARD MEMBER PEREA: Mr. Chairman?
CHAIR RICHARDS: I’m sorry.

BOARD MEMBER PEREA: No, I was just going to ask if I could make a motion to approve this item with the -- based on the conversation. As Member Ghielmetti said, that we have a specific design schedule for each station that’s being considered, and then blend in the comments made by Member Miller, in terms of, you know, all the criteria and making sure that it just gets done sooner, rather than later.

BOARD MEMBER CAMACHO: All right --
VICE CHAIR MILLER: Second.
BOARD MEMBER CAMACHO: -- I’ll second.
CHAIR RICHARDS: Is that by you, Ernie?
BOARD MEMBER CAMACHO: Yes.
VICE CHAIR MILLER: Yes.
MS. CEDEROTH: Okay.
CHAIR RICHARDS: Okay, so there’s a motion and second. Any discussion?

The only thing that concerns me about that is you’ll go ahead and you’ll have the go ahead if the Board moves in this direction with this motion. I think that what you’re hearing a lot of is that those who are in and around real estate, or construction and development, and design, design is very important, obviously, but it goes pretty quickly.

MS. CEDEROTH: It does.
CHAIR RICHARDS: And so, I think that that’s the initial kind of -- it’s not a push back, but it’s a concern because -- and I did read it and I thought I had -- at first I thought exactly what Directors Ghielmetti and Camacho were saying. And then, I thought that I recognized that it was the entire period of time to the completion and construction. So, I think that’s more meaningful.

But you really -- design does not have to be a long, protracted process.

MS. CEDEROTH: Yeah.
CHAIR RICHARDS: And I’m concerned about only if what you come up with isn’t designed and protracted --

MS. CEDEROTH: Yes.

CHAIR RICHARDS: -- but rather, what you’re going -- if you get the go ahead, we really tie that down. It’s not necessary, though -- oh, I don’t remember who said it. Yeah, did you say that about you have a contract for five years and that’s what a contract is.

MS. CEDEROTH: Yes.

CHAIR RICHARDS: So, we don’t need to do any of that sort of thing. And it should be one of the easier, if not the easiest part of the entire development process.

MS. CEDEROTH: Yes.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Okay.

MS. CEDEROTH: Yes, thank you.

CHAIR RICHARDS: So, we have a motion and a second. Can we call the roll, please.

MR. RAMADAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chair Richards?

CHAIR RICHARDS: Yes.

MR. RAMADAN: Director Camacho?

BOARD MEMBER CAMACHO: Yes.

MR. RAMADAN: Vice Chair Miller?

VICE CHAIR MILLER: Yes.

MR. RAMADAN: Director Perea?
BOARD MEMBER PEREA: Yes.

MR. RAMADAN: Director Ghielmetti?

BOARD MEMBER GHIelmetti: Yes.

MR. RAMADAN: Director Williams?

BOARD MEMBER WILLIAMS: Aye.

MR. RAMADAN: Director Pena?

BOARD MEMBER PENA: Yes.

MR. RAMADAN: Mr. Chairman, the motion carries with the amendments.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you. And Meg, we’d only also reemphasize dealing with the local communities is absolutely critical.

Thank you very much.

MS. CEDEROTH: Thank you.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Okay. Director Kelly, Item Number 5, the Consideration of the 2022 Business Plan.

MR. KELLY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I’m just making sure I have this in some working order.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Okay.

MR. KELLY: Hang on one second here. Brian, how did you do it? There we go. Okay. Okay, thank you Mr. Chairman and members.

BOARD MEMBER CAMACHO: I’ll move approval of the Business Plan.

BOARD MEMBER WILLIAMS: Second.
CHAIR RICHARDS: We have a motion and a second. Any discussion?

BOARD MEMBER PEREA: I do have just a couple comments.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Go ahead, yeah.

VICE CHAIR MILLER: Go ahead in the dark.

BOARD MEMBER PEREA: Yeah, in the dark.

No, first I just wanted to -- on a broader sense I wanted to thank staff, you know, over the years and of course the current staff for all the hard work that you all have participating in, in advancing the project from where it was just three years ago to where it is today. I think it’s great.

You know, Brian and I, you know, have had a chance to talk a lot about this Business Plan and there’s no question we all not only want to complete the initial 119 miles, but we want to move forward with extending the length of the project. And I’m in full support of that.

I just want to underscore and reiterate, I know some of the problems or challenges we’ve had in the past is when we’ve put out dates that we couldn’t live with. And I think that’s when folks in the public, and maybe folks at the state legislative level, you know, starting having some concerns about our ability to get the project done.
But I think that overshadows the fact that we’ve gotten so much of it done. And just as today we’ve talked about all the environmental work that we’ve done and cleared. We really laid some good groundwork.

So, as Brian and I have talked, and I know a lot of us share the same thought, you know, we just -- we know that staff now is not putting out dates that they can’t live with and that’s great. Because I think as one Board member, and I think all of us would share it, you know, we all want to be held accountable to getting this project done in the times, the timelines that we say we will.

So, I know Brian will be providing more information to us by late July, August, give or take, on an assessment staff is currently doing on getting this project done. No question CP1, the first 119 miles is critical to be done and we don’t have that date firm yet, and that’s fine. Staff is doing the due diligence to get us those numbers. But please get them to us sooner, rather than later, and let’s all just live by the dates.

But Brian, we thank you for the work you’ve done on this Business Plan and all the balls here moving in the air with the federal government and state government, and of course us. But I think we’re all committed to making this happen.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you, Director Perea.
Any other discussions? Yes, Director Pena.

BOARD MEMBER PENA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Brian, I’d like to also commend you on the work that you’ve done on the Business Plan and with the high-speed rail project in its entirety, of just you and your ream have done a wonderful job.

MR. ANNIS: Thank you.

BOARD MEMBER PENA: I will not be supporting the 2020-22 Business Plan today. Primarily because it defers so many fiscal action updates until 2023, particularly the $4.2 billion Prop 1A appropriation that was supposed to be decided last year was deferred until this year, and it’s still not decided. And I know that on the Assembly side that they are looking for some specific -- specific ways to spend those dollars on connectivity and other things.

And I know that the federal funds are also uncertain at this time and lack specificity. And so, for these reasons I cannot support the Business Plan today. Thank you.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you, Director Cederoth -- I’m sorry. Where’s Meg, get up here. Director Pena, I apologize. She’s still on my mind.

Any other discussion?

MR. Secretary, please call the roll.

MR. RAMADAN: Yes, Mr. Chairman.
Chair Richards?

CHAIR RICHARDS: Yes.

MR. RAMADAN: Director Camacho?

BOARD MEMBER CAMACHO: Yes.

MR. RAMADAN: Vice Chair Miller?

VICE CHAIR MILLER: Yes.

MR. RAMADAN: Director Perea?

BOARD MEMBER Perea: Yes.

MR. RAMADAN: Director Ghielmetti?

BOARD MEMBER GHIELMETTI: Yes.

MR. RAMADAN: Director Williams?

BOARD MEMBER WILLIAMS: Aye.

MR. RAMADAN: Director Pena?

BOARD MEMBER PENA: No.

MR. RAMADAN: Mr. Chairman, the motion carries.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you. Thank you, colleagues. And don’t run away. CEO Kelly.

MR. KELLY: Right.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Item Number 6 on agenda is the CEO Report.

MR. KELLY: Right. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Again, members, each business -- or sorry, each public meeting I present a CEO Report to the Board. Today’s CEO Report is going to cover three areas. One a program update.
And just to piggyback on something that Director Perea mentioned a moment ago, we’ve talked to the Board before, both in closed sessions and in public sessions about commercial settlements that we are working through. We’ve also updated our change order process.

Part of that update is I bring to this Board and report to you all commercial settlement and change orders above $25 million that we’ve settled. Part of getting to certainty on all of the things that we’re doing is to get all of the scope changes from the past into the contract, get those settled, so that we are certain about schedule, cost, and everything else when we talk about this project going forward.

We’ve achieved that on CP4. And we are close in getting to the end of achieving that on CPs 1, and 2-3.

And so, part of the CEO Report is to provide the program update. I’m going to tell you a little bit about a recent poll that was done about the project that I think is worth talking about. And then, I will conclude with a suggestion on summer schedule for the Board’s consideration. And then with that, I’ll conclude all of my remarks.

Again, these are the issues that I’ll be covering in this plan.
So, first, on some of the issues that we have recently settled, commercial issues, one is we work with what’s called a provisional sums account, which is an account of funding that we put dollars in to make sure we can move all of the utility work on our project, and for CP -- Construction Package 1, we have upped the provisional sums amount by $31 million to assure that we can complete all known utility work on CP1.

This change is needed to make sure that the work is completed. And the estimate is for all known utility work for the remainder of the project on CP1. And so, that’s a change that we made.

McKinley Avenue is a modification that was requested by the City of Fresno and Caltrans for project modifications between 2015 and 2018 to align the new northbound 99 onramp and allow for utility relocations. These relocations are a major component of the high-speed rail footprint in the area of McKinley Avenue. And the executed settlement allows that work to be completed. That cost is $78.6 million. And we’ve concluded that settlement as well.

I’ve talked to the Board about this in the past. We’ve actually discussed this in both open and closed sessions. Only because this is part of the Board commercial settlement issues on Construction Package 2-3.
I’ll remind the Board that we identified four issues we are in negotiations on, on 2-3, and settling each of those one by one. The intrusion protection barrier is one of the largest we had to solve and that is now resolved on CP 2-3. And so, we’ve concluded that negotiation. This action avoids further delays and resolves the IPP dispute with the contractor.

The trick about this one is the intrusion protection barrier is a dividing wall, if you will, between high-speed rail trains and freight railroads. And it’s unique because our trains go at such high speeds. It’s a requirement of the freight railroads. It was a safety requirement of the FRA. And the design of it was not known until after the contract were let.

And so, we had to finalize design, work through the cost differences, and we’ve settled that one as well. It’s a big number, but you see that that is now resolved on CP 2-3.

We also extended our construction management contract relative to the PCM here for -- I’m losing which PCM this is. But it’s a budget amendment and contract extension to the end of December, or the end of 2022. We’ve done this for each of the CPs. And this was, I believe, the last one we had to do. I think this is Arcata Zone 2-3. Cost is $27.8. It’s a rough estimate of about
$3 million a month that is the cost to do this. But again, this is something that we have to do to extend the work, and manage the construction through the end of the year.

As we bring on the PDS provider, we’ll evaluate further the work of the PCMs and whether or not the PDS provider can take on some of this role. So again, this is something that we want to extend through the year and then evaluate where we are, as we’re later in the year on the PDS helper, and then we’ll decide how to move forward on construction management contracts at that time.

We had a time impact resolution. This is one of the last issues -- this is the last major issue that we have to solve on CP4. CP4 is now in a very steady state. As I have testified to this Board before, we have just finalized the last delay claim relative to the CP4 contract. This is really tied to past right-of-way acquisition issues, and the lack of an agreement with the Semitropic Water District. That agreement is now in place. We are now operating under a use -- an agreement with Semitropic water. There is a lot of their equipment that we are moving in that construction. And we now have an agreement for how we will work together to move forward.

So, this is now in place. We are now working constructively with Semitropic on the project. But we did have to finalize the last delay claims from the building on
this. That was $21 million and that is now settled. So, all of those issues are now resolved. And again, this is part of us resolving these issues one by one so we can move forward with the construction in the valley.

I did want to talk a little about -- did I go too far? Hang on one second.

Let me jump to this first. This is a conversation about our upcoming Board meetings. We typically, as I have said at the outset of this meeting, we try to have Board meetings in locations where we are taking on the environmental document, or we’re making a decision about an environmental document. So, we want to try to have that conversation in the community that’s affected.

And so, this is just a schedule that’s going to lay out some of this. The first is our next scheduled Board meeting is in May and we are proposing to have that here, in Sacramento, in this very same complex for the May Board meeting.

In June, staff is contemplating and want the Board to consider an opportunity to have that meeting in Fresno. And what we can do at that time is set up some site visits for Board members to see construction in the field. And we think that might be a good meeting to do that at, so we’re looking at a location in Fresno. We have not gotten a specific, but again for the Board’s
consideration an opportunity to get out and see the construction that is underway and has been completed to date.

And then in July, for that Board meeting we are proposing to cancel that Board meeting for July. I know that the summer months often involve a lot of various travel opportunities by Board members. It is not unusual for us to cancel one of the summer meetings.

We choose July here because in August we intend to bring back to this Board the environmental document for San Jose to San Francisco. That would be a consideration at a two-day Board meeting in August. And our suggestion here is that we would have that Board meeting in the Bay Area. Somewhere in that Peninsula, the San Francisco to San Jose area. And again, the specific site is to be determined.

But I wanted to at least lay out the schedule ahead. And you see the estimated -- or the dates here for these meetings. May 19th for May, June 19th for June, and then in August that two-day Board hearing because of the environmental document, on August 17th and 18th.

MS. FOWLER: And Brian, I think we have a typo on June. It should be June 16th would be the Thursday.

MR. KELLY: Oh, sorry.

MS. FOWLER: The 19th is a Sunday.
MR. KELLY: Okay. Okay, May 19th, June 16th. And then again, the idea is to skip July and meet in the Bay Area in August.

Okay, now I want to move to the third and final item, which is a poll that recently came out about the project and support for the project. And for us, this was a bit of an encouraging poll. And I just want to briefly touch on why. Not only were the numbers relatively good in the poll for the concept of moving high-speed rail forward, but I particularly appreciated the question in the poll. Because it is the first time I think that voters were presented with a question, at least that I’ve seen a poll recently, that really described how we’re reframed the project and exactly our stepping stones for the project, our building blocks if you will, for how we want to move this project forward.

And so, the question to the voters was this, which is both thorough, but if you’ll indulge me for one moment, it also frames the issue currently.

And that is in 2008 California voters approved bonds to begin designing and building a high-speed rail system. The original plan called for service to run from San Diego, through the Central Valley, and up to Sacramento as soon as 2030.
Cost estimates for the project have risen since 2008 and officials are now working under a longer timeline, and trains operating only from Bakersfield to Merced in the Central Valley by 2030, then extending service to the San Francisco Bay Area.

Do you favor or oppose the state continuing to build the High-Speed Rail Project under that framework? That is the most current, again, framework question I’ve seen in a poll.

The numbers showed that, you know, statewide for registered voters, by a 5 to 3 margin, 56 to 35 percent, California voters continue to support building high-speed rail.

Demographically -- or geographically, 59 percent approval in LA County, 65 percent in the Bay Area, 48 percent in the Central Valley.

Future riders, that is the younger set of voters, were very high on the project, overwhelmingly support high-speed rail, 65 percent of voters aged 18 to 40 supportive of the projects.

And then, voters see a high-speed rail -- see that high-speed rail or how high-speed rail can create more equitable mobility for all Californians, 63 percent of those making less than $20,000 support the project’s progress.
I think each member has a summary of the poll, as well as the high level cross-tabs. If you take a moment to look at those you’ll see, at least on the income area, I thought it was interesting that both at the lower end and the higher end of the income spectrum the support levels are roughly the same.

And then, I think there may be one more. Yeah, also just more demographically high-speed rail support was very strong amongst historically disadvantaged demographics, 70 percent support among black voters, 63 percent among Latino voters. And in terms of gender lines, men and women share a similar amount of support for the project, 54 percent of male voters are supportive, 57 percent of female voters are supportive.

So again, you have that poll summary and the cross-tabs are in there as well if you want to look in more detail.

Just to remind the Board members, the bond bill itself, back in 2008, passed with about 53 percent of voter approval. And so, this shows us taking a little bit north of that but, again, a generally positive polling out of the Government Studies Institute at UC Berkeley.

So, I just want to remind the members of this poll and again share it from all of you. It got quite a bit of press coverage when it first came out.
And with that, Mr. Chairman, I conclude by CEO Report.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Thank you, Brian. Any questions for CEO?

MR. KELLY: Thank you.

CHAIR RICHARDS: And the final item on today’s agenda, ladies and gentlemen, is the update from the Finance and Audit Committee meeting, and there was no committee meeting today. So --

MR. KELLY: It will be brief.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Yeah. So, that’s Number 7. We are free. So, with that we will reconvene tomorrow at 11:00 a.m. here, to look at and get a report from staff of its response to the questions raised, and both by the public and by --

MR. KELLY: It’s 11:00 a.m. tomorrow.

CHAIR RICHARDS: That’s what I said, isn’t it.

MR. KELLY: Oh, you did.

CHAIR RICHARDS: Yeah. So until then, thank you all for being here and we will see you tomorrow morning at 11:00 a.m.

(The California High-Speed Rail Authority Monthly Board of Directors meeting adjourned until April 28, 2022, 11:00 a.m.)

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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

I do hereby certify that the testimony in the foregoing hearing was taken at the time and place therein stated; that the testimony of said witnesses were reported by me, a certified electronic court reporter and a disinterested person, and was under my supervision thereafter transcribed into typewriting.

And I further certify that I am not of counsel or attorney for either or any of the parties to said hearing nor in any way interested in the outcome of the cause named in said caption.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 6th day of May, 2022.

ELISE HICKS, IAPRT CERT**2176
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I do hereby certify that the testimony in the foregoing hearing was taken at the time and place therein stated; that the testimony of said witnesses were transcribed by me, a certified transcriber.

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IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 6th day of May, 2022.

Barbara Little
Certified Transcriber
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