



SAN FRANCISCO COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP MEETING SUMMARY JULY 22, 2019

SUMMARY

Introductions & Agenda Review

Ben Gettleman, facilitator, thanked members for participating and reviewed the meeting agenda and objectives. Boris Lipkin, Northern California Regional Director, gave a brief overview and status update of the project. Lipkin briefly reviewed the two alternatives that are under consideration.

Refining the Alternatives: Collaboration with Partner Agencies, Stakeholders, and Members of the Public

James Tung, San Francisco to San Jose Project Section Project Manager, presented the development of alternatives for the San Francisco to San Jose Project Section. Alternatives were developed in collaboration with Caltrain and included evaluation of passing tracks and light maintenance facility (LMF) location options.

The following question and response were recorded following the presentation.

- A member asked why the LMF and passing tracks options were grouped the way they are in each alternative.
 - Authority staff responded they could be grouped differently but had been assigned this way for purposes of evaluation in the Draft EIR/EIS. Alternatives must be considered as complete end-to-end alternatives for each project section.

Characteristics of Alternatives

James Tung presented the differentiating characteristics of Alternatives A and B for the San Francisco to San Jose Project Section.

Identifying a Preferred Alternative

James Tung explained the reasons that staff is recommending Alternative A as the State's Preferred Alternative (PA).

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

Caltrain and High-Speed Rail Service

- A member asked how Caltrain's recent Business Plan announcement would impact plans for high-speed rail.
 - Authority staff responded that the Authority and Caltrain have a history of collaboration. The projected growth scenarios in Caltrain's Business Plan are at an early stage of their development, and the Authority and Caltrain will continue working

together as both agencies move forward with their plans. The Authority is studying what's needed to run high-speed rail in the corridor on top of what Caltrain had previously environmentally cleared and is now delivering.

- A member commented that Caltrain's growth plans could have scheduling impacts, and that proceeding with high-speed rail development without considering these changes could result in a system that does not have optimal performance. The member felt the Authority should proceed with environmental clearance for Alternative B because it is more in line with Caltrain plans than the staff-recommended PA.
 - Authority staff responded that there would be tradeoffs associated with any system, and that the Authority is taking a building block approach and proceeding with a reasonable set of assumptions with respect to Caltrain's approved plans. Furthermore, the passing tracks in Alternative B were different from what Caltrain has said they will need to grow service in the future so Alternative A was recommended in part to ensure that each step of infrastructure and service growth was incremental. Proceeding with Alternative A will not preclude any future project Caltrain proposes in the future.
- A member commented that building passing tracks sooner rather than later would increase overall benefits. The member explained that the time value of money favors building sooner rather than later. It would be easier to build passing tracks when this Project Section is under construction than it would be after construction is completed.
- A member commented that adding passing tracks would create a more flexible system with respect to delays to Caltrain and high-speed rail service.
 - Authority staff responded that the evaluation has shown additional passing tracks are not necessary for a reliable system for 6 Caltrain trains per peak period and 4 high-speed rail trains per peak period,
- A member commented that Alternative A seemed to outperform Alternative B on nearly all metrics and asked why Alternative B was being considered at all.
 - Authority staff responded that Alternative B would allow high-speed rail to operate faster and allow more flexibility.
- A member asked why "Caltrain Peak Hour Average Representative Travel Time" was two minutes faster in Alternative A than Alternative B.
 - Authority staff responded that Alternative B, which includes additional passing tracks, would result in Caltrain trains being slowed down or held at station for those two extra minutes to allow high-speed trains to pass.
- A member asked whether the Authority had considered the change in average waiting time when comparing alternatives.
 - Authority staff responded that reliability of schedules was considered and evaluated as part of the development of service plans and associated infrastructure.
- A member asked how Governor Newsom's recent announcements about high-speed rail will impact this Project Section.
 - Authority staff responded by clarifying that the Governor supports building the entire high-speed rail system, but the project is proceeding in building blocks, with the potential for interim service in the Central Valley. The environmental clearance process for the San Francisco to San Jose Project Section is fully funded and will proceed while funding is sought for construction of this section.

- A member asked how incremental high-speed rail service would impact service plans for Caltrain and high-speed rail.
 - Authority staff responded that high-speed service would come online incrementally, with Valley-to-Valley service planned at two trains per hour during peak hours by 2029, and full 8-train service coming later, with the exact growth timeline dependent on funding and the success of the first services.

Brisbane Baylands Development

- A member asked how the environmental clearance process for the San Francisco to San Jose Project Section would affect the environmental clearance process for the Brisbane Baylands development project. The member wanted to know whether the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for one project would supersede the other.
 - Authority staff responded that the projects were being developed in parallel, and that the Authority is working closely with Universal Paragon, the developer for the Brisbane Baylands project. The Authority maintains a collaborative relationship with Universal Paragon and the City to look for optimal solutions for the Light Maintenance Facility and development.
- A member asked what approach had been taken to consider archaeological resources in the Brisbane Baylands.
 - Authority staff responded that cultural resource analysis has occurred all along the project corridor. Archaeologists conduct studies to identify needs in different areas, and there is already extensive information regarding historic buildings. Because much of the project corridor is in the existing right-of-way, a lot is already known about cultural and archaeological resources in the area.

Environmental Justice

- A member asked whether the environmental justice (EJ) communities considered included prospective communities in addition to existing communities.
 - Authority staff responded that analysis only considered existing communities. Staff added that the Authority identified EJ communities along the entire corridor, mapped areas of project impact, and looked for disproportionate impacts to EJ communities.
- A member asked what workforce commitments will be made for EJ populations, including short- and long-term job creation.
 - Authority staff responded that there are programs in place, including community benefits agreements and a small business policy, which help ensure engagement of disadvantaged and local individuals and businesses.

Other Differentiating Factors

- A member asked how the Authority determined key viewpoints to consider decreased visual quality.
 - Authority staff responded that cities along the route helped identify key viewpoints.
- A member commented that it is important to recognize that sea level rise is a risk and should be considered with respect to environmental factors for each alternative.

- Authority staff responded that they are working with the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) to identify and evaluate sustainability issues. This includes projecting sea level rise impacts so that the Authority can plan accordingly and ensure the system's 100-year design life.
- A member asked how the Authority was considering cumulative construction impacts from other concurrent construction projects.
 - Authority staff responded that they gathered information on future construction projects from relevant communities, but that specific construction planning would be the role of the contractor during construction. At the moment the sequencing of construction within the project section is too vague to plan a specific approach with other construction projects in local areas.

Outreach Updates

Morgan Galli, Northern California Regional Stakeholder Manager, gave a presentation on outreach and next steps for CWGs, Open Houses, and the September Board meeting.

Discussion of Staff-Recommended State's Preferred Alternative

Ben Gettleman reviewed the major differences between alternatives and asked members to fill out the discussion worksheet provided. A summary of written comments from the worksheets is included in Appendix A. Gettleman then facilitated a discussion of the alternatives to gather feedback on the staff recommendation.

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

- A member commented that the worksheet asked for feedback on specific features of the alternatives. The member asked whether the features in each alternative were bundled together.
 - Authority staff responded that when staff considers a PA, the features will be bundled, but it is helpful for this exercise to understand how members feel about specific features.
- A member commented that they were being asked to respond to a narrow set of features and asked for an explanation of the process that led to this set of alternatives.
 - Authority staff responded that they were focusing on differentiators between the alternatives, not the common features that they share. Staff added that this project section is limited by regulations to primarily using the existing corridor, which is one of the reasons it has a narrower range of alternatives in comparison to the San Jose to Merced Project Section.
- A member commented that he prefers the staff-recommended PA because the location of the LMF has a smaller impact on potential residential development. The member added that the overall impacts of the LMF were still very vague and he would like more detail about the actual facility and its impacts.
 - Two other members voiced their agreement that they preferred Alternative A but felt the LMF and its impacts were unclear.
 - A CWG member spoke about a comment they had heard earlier from a member of the public. The member of the public then shared their concern that the LMF might ultimately be used as a heavy maintenance facility (HMF).

- Authority staff responded with an explanation of the different functions of LMFs and HMFs, clarifying that the facility planned for Brisbane will be an LMF.
- A member asked whether a Universal Paragon representative had attended any of these meetings, and whether there was any public record of their position with respect to the project alternatives.
 - Authority staff responded that the Authority engages with Universal Paragon separately from these meetings. They have voiced their preference as Alternative A, the staff-recommended PA, because it would have less of an impact on the residential developed planned in their project.
- A member commented that many stakeholders seem to prefer the LMF associated with Alternative A and asked why that LMF was not linked to the passing tracks option. The member also commented that broader environmental impacts, such as removing cars from the road, would be improved with additional passing tracks.
 - Authority Staff responded that alternatives would be presented end-to-end to the Board. The Board could then give direction, which might include consideration of a hybrid alternative.
- A member asked how high-speed rail plans would change in a scenario with increased Caltrain service in 2022.
 - Authority staff responded that they would continue to work closely with Caltrain as plans develop, but that it was necessary to define project parameters, by taking into account established and approved plans for growth in Caltrain service in order to move forward on environmental clearance.
- A member suggested presenting a third alternative to the Board that paired additional passing tracks with the east LMF.
- A member commented that it was important for the Authority and Caltrain to continue working together as they are. Both should be willing to make changes to their plans. The member appreciated that they have shown such willingness to collaborate closely.
 - Staff responded in agreement and noted that the two agencies have a long history of working together.
- A member asked what would need to happen with respect to Caltrain planning for the Authority to change its planned course.
 - Authority staff responded that this would not be the result of a single milestone. Rather, Caltrain and the Authority will continue to discuss their plans and advances, with both agencies coordinating and responding to one another.
- A member commented that it was unclear how different criteria were weighed in selecting the PA and asked how the Board would be balancing tradeoffs between alternatives.
 - Authority staff responded that there were not specific numerical weights given to various criteria, but the goal was to balance tradeoffs between system performance, environmental, and community factors.
- A member commented that considering the future addition of passing tracks would change the valuation of capital costs for each alternative.

The facilitator asked which factors were the most important to members when comparing alternatives. Verbal responses differed somewhat from the selections on the discussion worksheets (see Appendix A). Various members responded that important factors are as follows:

- Community benefits
- Visual quality effects
- Residential displacement
- Construction remediation impacts
- EJ considerations
- Capacity to respond to climate change

PUBLIC COMMENT

- A member of the public commented that an EIR that only considers the alignment as far north as the 4th and King station is not complete because it does not extend to the planned final high-speed rail stop at the Transbay Terminal. They also commented that an LMF should not require 100 acres of land and encouraged members to watch their own presentation on an 8-acre LMF alternative.
- A member of the public commented that the LMF should be relabeled as an HMF and asked for the reason the LMF was moved from Gilroy to the Baylands. They commented that the proposal does not work and is out of scale. They wanted to know the locations of planned high-speed rail stops, adding that too many stops would defeat the value of “high speed.”

ATTENDANCE

Working Group Members

Affiliation	Name	Present
Bay Area Council	Gwen Litvak	No
Caltrain Accessibility Advisory Committee	Bob Planthold	No
Candlestick Cove Neighborhood Association	Jignesh Desai	Yes
Coalition of San Francisco Neighborhoods	George Wooding	No
Friends of Caltrain (San Francisco)	Andrew Sullivan	No
Friends of DTX	Brian Stokle	No
Little Hollywood Neighborhood Association	Russel Morine	Yes
On Lok, Inc.	Vickie Huynh	No
San Francisco Bicycle Coalition	Janice Li	No
San Francisco Chamber of Commerce	Mary Young	No
San Francisco Giants	Josh Karlin-Resnick	Yes
San Francisco Tomorrow	Jerry Levine	No
San Francisco Transit Riders	Thea Selby	Yes
South Beach Mission Bay Business Association	Patrick Valentino	No

Affiliation	Name	Present
South Beach, Rincon, Mission Bay Neighborhood Association	Alice Rogers	Yes
South Beach, Rincon, Mission Bay Neighborhood Association	Bruce Agid	No
SPUR	Arielle Fleisher	No
Transportation Advocate	Wilbert Din	No
University of California, San Francisco	Aimee Alden	No
University of California, San Francisco	Tammy Chan	No
Urban Land Institute	Jay Paxton	No
Urban Land Institute	Linda Klein	No
Visitation Valley Historic Project	Mono Simeone	Yes
YIMBY Action	Cliff Bargar	Yes
YIMBY Action	Jack Harman	Yes
YIMBY Action	Laura Foote	No
YIMBY Action	Roan Kattouw	Yes
Caltrain Citizens Advisory Committee	Paul Bendix	Yes
(No Affiliation)	Ted Olsson	No

Authority Staff: Boris Lipkin, James Tung, Morgan Galli, Yosef Yip, Phyllis Potter, Yvonne Chan, Ben Gettleman, Matt Marvin, Cooper Tamayo.

ACTION ITEMS AND NEXT STEPS

- A meeting summary will be developed and distributed to CWG members for their review by August 19.
 - CWG members should send comments on the July Meeting Summary to staff by August 22 for inclusion in the version that will be appended to the Board Memo.
- CWG members who did not already fill out a Discussion Worksheet may submit a completed worksheet to Authority staff by August 22.

APPENDIX A

CWG members were asked how they personally felt about Alternative A, the staff-recommended State’s Preferred Alternative, with regard to the location of the LMF (East option).

Responses	Number of CWG Members
Support East option (Alternative A)	6
Support West option (Alternative B)	2
Write-in responses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Either option would be supported • No preference 	2

CWG members were asked how the community/organization/neighbors they represent would feel about the staff-recommendation for the location of the Light Maintenance Facility.

Responses	Number of CWG Members
Support East option (Alternative A)	6
Support West option (Alternative B)	2
Write-in responses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Either option would be supported • No preference 	2

CWG members were asked how they personally felt about the staff-recommended State’s Preferred Alternative with regard to the need for additional passing tracks.

Responses	Number of CWG Members
Support no additional passing tracks (Alternative A)	3
Support additional passing tracks (Alternative B)	5
Write-in responses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neutral • No vote 	2

CWG members were asked how the community/organization/neighborhood they represent would feel about the staff-recommended State’s Preferred Alternative’s need for additional passing tracks.

Responses	Number of CWG Members
Support no additional passing tracks (Alternative A)	2
Support additional passing tracks (Alternative B)	5
Write-in responses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neutral 	3

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A • No vote 	
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CWG members were asked how well they thought the staff-recommended State’s Preferred Alternative balances tradeoffs between (1) system performance, operations, and costs, (2) community, and (3) environmental factors.

Responses	Number of CWG Members
Very poorly	2
Somewhat poorly	1
Moderately/no opinion	2
Somewhat well	2
Very well	1
Other responses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Somewhat poorly/Moderately/no opinion 	1

CWG members were asked to identify the five differentiating factors that are most important to their community.

Responses	Number of CWG Members
Caltrain service time	8
Residential displacements	8
HSR travel time	7
Capital costs	5
Commercial/industrial displacements	4
Community/public facility displacements	4
Mitigation needed to minimize emergency vehicle delays	3
Waters and wetlands	2
Impacts to butterfly habitat	2
Temporary interference with vehicle circulation	1
Pedestrian access to San Carlos Caltrain Station	1

CWG members were asked if their opinion of the PA (Alternative A) changed based on today’s discussion.

Responses	Number of CWG Members
Yes	2
No	7