



SAN MATEO COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP

MEETING SUMMARY

March 23, 2020

SUMMARY

Introductions & Agenda Review

Joey Goldman, facilitator, welcomed Community Working Group (CWG) members and thanked them for joining. He reviewed the meeting agenda: overview of the Draft 2020 Business Plan, preparation for the release of the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS), and an update on outreach activities.

A participant list is in Appendix A. The presentation is available on the Authority's website:

https://www.hsr.ca.gov/docs/events/202003_San_Francisco_to_San_Jose_CWG_Presentation.pdf.

Draft 2020 Business Plan

Boris Lipkin, Northern California Regional Director, shared highlights from the Draft 2020 Business Plan. Key points included:

- To date, \$6.4 billion has been invested in the project. The range of expected costs has remained constant after accounting for inflation.
- Construction in the Central Valley is moving quickly and employing over 700 people per month.
- The Draft 2020 Business Plan highlighted the following next steps:
 - Environmental clearance for the entire Phase 1 will be complete by 2022.
 - Business case analyses by the Authority's Early Train Operator and Financial Advisor, KPMG, recommend extending construction to Bakersfield and Merced to allow for interim service.
 - Representative Jim Costa introduced federal legislation to authorize \$32 billion to support high-speed rail projects throughout the country through 2024.
 - After completion of environmental clearance in Northern California in 2021, next steps will include closing the funding gap, right-of-way acquisitions, third-party agreements to move utilities and pre-construction work, engineering review for procurement, and analysis for Pacheco Pass tunneling.

Questions, Comments, and Responses

- A member asked why the projected travel time between San Francisco and Los Angeles is three hours and eight minutes instead of two hours and 40 minutes, as required by Proposition 1A.
 - Authority staff responded that the Draft 2020 Business Plan and its supporting documents include information on travel times that vary based on based on different train schedules. The two hour and 40-minute requirement is only for non-stop trains from San Francisco to Los Angeles. Longer travel times represent trips with stops.



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- A member asked how the Authority and Virgin Trains were coordinating on connecting high-speed train services.
 - Authority staff responded that the Authority and Virgin Trains are currently examining the technical and interoperability challenges associated with whether Virgin Trains and high-speed rail trains can efficiently utilize both systems.
- A member asked if Caltrain is still facing challenges with the wire gauge being installed for the electrification process.
 - Authority staff responded that Caltrain has resolved this issue.
- A member asked for more information on Caltrain's proposed dual speed check system for reducing gate down time at at-grade crossings.
 - Authority staff responded that the dual speed check solution is being developed by Caltrain. The Authority is following the progress of this potential solution, but Caltrain would be a better source for the latest information.

Prepare for the Draft EIR/EIS

Rich Walter, Environmental Manager with ICF, presented an overview of the environmental review process. He provided a summary of the format and content of the Draft EIR/EIS, and shared ways to access and comment on the document.

- The tentative release date of the San Francisco to San Jose Project Section Draft EIR/EIS is June 26, 2020. Comments will be accepted through August 9, 2020.
- The 45-day comment period for the Draft EIR/EIS is an important time to provide feedback on the project. Outreach is underway to encourage stakeholders to comment on this document.
 - The Draft EIR/EIS is lengthy and technical. Authority staff are developing supporting materials to help stakeholders navigate and understand the document.
 - The number of times a particular comment is submitted on the Draft EIR/EIS does not elevate or diminish the importance of that comment.
 - Comments may be submitted via email, by mail, in writing at the Authority office or Open Houses, or verbally at the Public Hearing.

Questions, Comments, and Responses

- A member asked how the Authority would provide members of the public with alternate ways to access the Draft EIR/EIS, given the uncertainty around public library closures due to COVID-19.
 - Authority staff responded that the Authority is adapting as public health advisories change. The public hearings for the San Francisco to San Jose Project section are currently planned to be in person, but alternatives for interactive and remote meetings are also being considered. If libraries or other repositories are closed to the public, then the Draft EIR/EIS will still be available electronically on the Authority's website and USB flash drives with the digital files can also be distributed on request.
- A member asked whether, given the COVID-19 public health crisis, there is a possibility that the Authority will choose to expedite or extend the Draft EIR/EIS timeline.
 - Authority staff responded that Draft EIR/EIS for the San Francisco to San Jose Project Section is still on track to be released on June 26. Authority staff continue to work remotely to stay on schedule and will respond to circumstances as they evolve.



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- A member asked why no public meetings or open houses are scheduled to take place in Brisbane.
 - Authority staff responded that open houses are held throughout the corridor in order to be accessible to a range of communities. In addition to open houses in San Francisco, Redwood City, and Santa Clara, staff will be available to attend meetings in other locations when requested, as they have in the past.

Outreach Update

Yvonne Chan, Northern California Outreach Representative, provided an update on Community Working Group (CWG) outreach and upcoming opportunities for engagement. Three open houses and a public hearing will occur during the 45-day public comment period. Authority staff will also offer office hours for members of the public to ask questions about the document or provide written comments.

Questions, Comments, and Responses

- A member asked about the format of the open houses and suggested that the Authority include a brief presentation to help orient members of the public.
 - Authority staff responded that they will consider including a short presentation, but the open house format is intended for participants to drop in at their convenience.

Public Comment

Joey invited members of the public to provide oral public comment and noted that written public comments can also be submitted to san.francisco_san.jose@hsr.ca.gov.

Comments

- Ann Schneider, Vice Mayor of Millbrae, provided public comment. She requested that an Open House and Public Hearing take place in Millbrae. She stated that the residents of Millbrae are heavily impacted by the High-Speed Rail Project and should therefore have better access to public meetings. She added that the planned public meeting hours are inaccessible to many people who are still working from 4-7 p.m. She stated that the Authority's proposed surface parking lot in Millbrae and conflict with the proposed transit-oriented development (TOD) project have burdened the city and worsened the economic downturn that they are experiencing. She thanked the Northern California Regional Director for presenting at the City Council last July. She noted that the Authority should accommodate the city's needs by extending the public comment period as staff are working daily to respond to COVID-19. She added that the City of Millbrae is trying to work with the Authority and asked the Authority to work with the City so that they can raise revenue to repair potholes and sewer systems. She stated that the Authority should further engage the Cities of Brisbane and Millbrae.
- A Community Working Group member commented that the planned Open House hours are challenging for those who are commuting and asked if the webinars will be recorded.

Action Items and Next Steps

- CWG members were asked to share their feedback on the webinar meeting format.



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- Authority to develop and distribute a meeting summary to CWG members.
- Authority to consider the following suggestions:
 - Shifting open houses from 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm to a later time
 - Adding a presentation component to open houses
 - Recording future webinars
- Authority to follow up with Ann Schneider.



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Appendix A – Participants

Community Working Group Members:

Affiliation	Name	Present
Atherton Rail Committee	Paul Jones	Yes
Beresford Hillsdale Neighborhood Association	Robert Sellers	No
Burlingame Community Leader	Ross Bruce	No
Burlingame Resident	Joe Baylock	Yes
Caltrain Accessibility Advisory Committee	Fernanda Castello	No
Clean Coalition	Craig Lewis	No
Friends of Caltrain	Adrian Brandt	Yes
Greater East San Carlos Neighborhood	Dimitri Vandellos	No
Homeowners Assoc. of North Central San Mateo	Ben Toy	No
Housing Leadership Council of San Mateo	Leora Tanjuatco Ross, Evelyn Stivers (alternate)	No
Legal Aid Society of San Mateo County	Stacey Hawver	No
Menlo Park Chamber of Commerce	Fran Dehn	No
Millbrae Chamber of Commerce	Lorianne Richardson	No
Next Path Consulting	Debra Horen	Yes
North Fair Oaks Community	Ever Rodriguez, Rafael Avendaño (alternate)	No
Peninsula Freight Rail Users Group (PFRUG)	Clem Molony, Greg Greenway (alternate)	No
Redwood City Chamber of Commerce	Amy Buckmaster	No
Redwood City Forward	Anthony Lazarus	Yes
Samaritan House	Laura Bent	No
San Francisco International Airport	Nile Ledbetter	Yes
San Mateo Area Chamber of Commerce	Matthew Jacobs	No
San Mateo County Central Labor Council	Richard Hedges	No
San Mateo County Economic Development Association	Rikki Hawkins, Don Cecil (alternate)	No
San Mateo County Health System	Brian Oh	No
Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition	Emma Shlaes	No
South San Francisco School Board/Samtrans Citizens Advisory Committee	John Baker	Yes
Sustainable San Mateo County	Christine Kohl-Zaugg	No
Sustainable San Mateo County	Bill Schulte	No
Youth United for Community Action	Ofelia Bello	No

Authority Staff: Boris Lipkin, Yvonne Chan, James Tung, Rich Walter, Joey Goldman, Mary Beth Day, Sharon Hu