



## MORGAN HILL-GILROY COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP MEETING SUMMARY NOVEMBER 7, 2018

### SUMMARY

#### High-Speed Rail Program Updates

Boris Lipkin, Northern California Regional Director, provided an update on the statewide program, including an overview of the 2018 Business Plan and the Connecting Communities Strategy.

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

#### *Caltrain Electrification*

- A member asked if Caltrain electrification is under construction in San Francisco.
  - Staff confirmed that yes, Caltrain electrification is currently underway between San Francisco and San Jose.
- A member asked if Caltrain has started to plan electrification between San Jose and Gilroy.
  - Staff responded that this is something being looked at as part of our Business Plan and being incorporated into the Caltrain Business Plan effort regarding Caltrain service.
- A member asked what will happen to the extension of Caltrain electrification to Gilroy if the Authority cannot reach a deal with Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR).
  - Staff responded that Caltrain electrification to Gilroy depends on California High-Speed Rail reaching an agreement with UPRR.
- A member asked if Caltrain electrification to Gilroy would be possible if a dedicated alternative is selected.
  - Staff responded that extension of Caltrain electrification south of San Jose would be up to other agencies if the Authority selected a dedicated alternative.
- A member asked if the electrification of Caltrain from San Jose to Morgan Hill would preempt the identification of a preferred alternative.
  - Staff responded that the Authority is currently studying a range of alternatives. The blended at-grade alternative offers the opportunity for electrified Caltrain. The Authority will identify a Preferred Alternative in September 2019.

#### *Other*

- A member asked what is involved in the testing and certification phase.
  - Staff responded that this phase involves several steps, including static testing on infrastructure, integrating different systems (e.g. connecting signaling to switches), then adding the trains on top. The final year of testing will focus on operations.
- A member expressed concern that Morgan Hill residents have not had a chance to voice their concerns about the blended alternative.

#### San Jose to Merced Project Section

Lipkin provided an overview of alignment options in the San Jose to Merced project section, with a focus on introducing Alternative 4 to Working Group members. John Litzinger, Design Manager, described the typical sections for each of the alternatives and reviewed the environmental milestones for the project section.

The following questions, comments and responses were recorded following these presentations.

#### *Alignment Alternatives*

- A member asked why high-speed rail runs to the west of UPRR in the blended at-grade option but runs to the east of UPRR in the embankment option.

- Staff responded that the main reason is to provide easier access to UPRR’s existing customers, most of which are on the east side of the current corridor. Additionally, as UPRR goes north of San Jose, they have a track that goes to the East Bay so this configuration allows for a simpler connection to that track.
- A member asked if keeping the existing station is an option for the dedicated downtown Gilroy alternatives.
  - Staff responded that the two dedicated alternatives for downtown Gilroy sit in the same footprint as the blended-at grade station, but at a higher elevation.
- A member asked why the information in the alignment comparison table for San Martin was different than what was presented at the recent San Martin Neighborhood Alliance meeting.
  - Staff responded that they found a couple of errors in the San Martin Neighborhood Alliance presentation that were corrected for today’s meeting.
- A member commented that the Authority should rename Alternative 3 to be the “Gilroy and San Martin” alternative because Alternative 3 has significant impacts to San Martin as well as Gilroy.
- A member asked if there will be a high-speed rail station in Morgan Hill.
  - Staff responded that there will not.
- A member commented that many neighborhoods will be significantly impacted by the viaduct option.

#### *Pedestrian Crossings*

- A member asked why pedestrian crossings are different at each station. For instance, Morgan Hill Caltrain Station has a pedestrian underpass assumed, San Martin Caltrain Station has an overpass, and Gilroy Station does not show any pedestrian crossing.
  - Staff responded that obtaining environmental clearance for an overcrossing, which has a larger footprint, allows for either option in the future. At the Morgan Hill station, there is only space to accommodate an undercrossing in the space established by the city. Station designs for Gilroy are still under development and will include overhead access to the platforms and a pedestrian overcrossing at 7<sup>th</sup> Street.
- A member asked which type of pedestrian crossing is best.
  - Staff responded that from a user perspective, underpasses require less effort to cross because they require less vertical distance compared to overpasses. There are tradeoffs. Undercrossings need to be safe. Openings can be configured to allow for law enforcement to do a drive-by scan, which helps improve safety. As Caltrain is adding pedestrian crossings to their stations, more communities are opting for undercrossings than overcrossings, but community input is key.

#### **Community Outreach and Next Steps**

Leah Robinson-Leach, San Jose to Merced Project Section Outreach Manager, provided an update of the Authority’s planned outreach and how it relates to the environmental milestone schedule.

The following questions, comments and responses were recorded following Robinson-Leach’s presentation.

#### *Process Improvements*

- A member asked for at least two weeks’ notice for future Community Working Group (CWG) meetings.

#### **Working Group Input on Community Resources**

CWG members participated in a small group mapping activity to identify community resources. Each small group self-reported their key discussion points (see Key Themes document attached for a summary of these points).

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- A member of the public commented that Caltrain electrification is possible without high-speed rail. Additionally, they requested that the stations and platforms in Morgan Hill and San Martin be

designed differently than in Gilroy. They suggested that in Gilroy there should be two island platforms with high-speed rail on one side and Caltrain on the other.

- A member asked for an update on the negotiations with UPRR and for clarification on what happens if an agreement cannot be reached.
  - Staff responded that the blended at-grade alternative is dependent on an agreement with UPRR and there will be more information on this as the Authority gets closer to reaching an agreement.
- A member asked if there is a deadline for reaching an agreement.
  - Staff responded that the goal is to have an agreement by the time the Board identifies a Preferred Alternative.

## ATTENDANCE

CWG Members		
Affiliation	Representative or Alternate	Present
Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission	Eldon Chappell	
Casa de Fruta	Gene Zanger	
Committee for Green Foothills	Julie Hutcheson	X
Economic Development Corporation	Greg Sellers	
Gilroy Chamber of Commerce	Mark Turner	
Gilroy Downtown Business Association	Steve Ashford	
Gilroy Downtown Business Association	Nancy Maciel	
Gilroy Historic Heritage Committee	Steve Seebart	X
Gilroy Historical Society	Connie Rogers	
Gilroy Planning Commission	Tom Fischer	X
Greenbelt Alliance	Kiyomi Yamamoto	
Morgan Hill Chamber of Commerce	John Horner	
Morgan Hill Downtown Association	Rosy Bergin	
Morgan Hill Downtown Property Owner/Developer, Weston Miles Architects	Leslie Miles	
Morgan Hill Economic Blueprint Thought Leader	Karl Bjarke, Ed Tewes	X
Morgan Hill General Plan Advisory Committee	Dick Oliver	X
Morgan Hill Planning Commission	Wayne Tanda	
Morgan Hill Property Owner	John Kent	
Planning Commission & Tourism Alliance/Morgan Hill Downtown Association	John McKay	
San Benito County Farm Bureau	Richard Bianchi	
San Martin Neighborhood Alliance	Trina Hineser	
San Martin Neighborhood Alliance	John Sanders	X
Santa Clara County Farm Bureau	Jess Brown	
Santa Clara Valley Water District	John Varela	

**Authority Staff:** Boris Lipkin, Leah Robinson-Leach, John Litzinger, Zach Barr (Kearns & West), Mary Beth Day (Kearns & West), Nora De Cuir (Kearns & West), Cathy Paskin (Kearns & West)

**Elected Officials:** Vanessa Gonzalez, Office of Assemblymember Anna Caballero

**City/Agency Staff:** Kraig Tambornini (City of Gilroy), Jim Unites (Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority), Regina Valentine (San Benito County Local Transportation Authority)

## **ACTION ITEMS AND NEXT STEPS**

- The Authority will upload the PowerPoint presentation to the high-speed rail website [here](#).
- The Authority will continue to conduct Environmental Justice outreach, including hosting information tables and making presentations at community events and meetings.
- A meeting summary will be developed and distributed to CWG members.