



San Francisco Community Working Group

October 24, 2018, Meeting Summary

SPUR

2nd Floor, 654 Mission Street, San Francisco, CA 94105

6:30 PM – 8:30 PM

Attendance:

CWG Members

Bruce Agid (Transbay Joint Powers Authority Citizens Advisory Committee), Paul Bendix, Tammy Chan (University of California, San Francisco), Linda Klein (Urban Land Institute), Janice Li (San Francisco Bicycle Coalition), Josh Karlin-Resnick (San Francisco Giants), Ted Olson, Bob Planthold (Caltrain Accessibility Advisory Committee), Keziah Platter (YIMBY Action), Andrew Sullivan (Friends of Caltrain), Corrine Woods (Mission Bay Citizens Advisory Committee)

Members of the Public

Roland Lebrun (Santa Teresa Bernal Neighborhood Association), Jeremy Shaw (San Francisco Planning Department), Tony Ta

California High-Speed Rail Authority Staff and Partners

Boris Lipkin, Bruce Fukuji, Morgan Galli, James Tung, Yosef Yip, Matt Marvin, Kelsey Rugani

1. Introductions

Kelsey Rugani, Facilitator, introduced California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) staff. South Peninsula Community Working Group (CWG) members and members of the public also introduced themselves. Gettleman reviewed the agenda and described the purpose of the CWG, noting it consists of a voluntary group of community members representing a broad range of local interests and is intended to deepen community input into the high-speed rail planning process. He then discussed the reorganization of the previous Santa Clara County CWG into the current South Peninsula CWG. This change reflects stakeholder feedback to focus on communities within Santa Clara County, but north of San Jose and includes the cities of Palo Alto, Sunnyvale, Mountain View, and Santa Clara. The San Jose and Morgan Hill-Gilroy CWG will continue to focus their discussions on planning efforts in the southern portion of the county.

2. California High-Speed Rail Program Updates and Background

Boris Lipkin, Northern California Regional Director, provided an update on the statewide program. He began by noting leadership changes within the Executive Leadership and Northern California teams. In addition to Lipkin's appointment to Northern California Regional Director, changes in leadership include:

- Brian Kelly, Chief Executive Officer
- Joseph Hedges, Chief Operating Officer

- Pamela Mizukami, Chief Deputy Officer
- Rebecca Kohlstrand, Northern California Director of Projects
- James Tung, San Francisco to San Jose Project Section Manager

Lipkin continued by noting the Executive Leadership's initial actions to position the program for success in 2018. The first action was the development of the 2018 Business Plan, which was adopted by the Authority's Board of Directors on May 15, 2018. The second step was the approval of a Program Baseline, which identifies the specific scope, schedule, and budget associated with the vision outlined in the 2018 Business Plan. The third step is a revision to the Program Management Plan, which establishes the organizational structure needed to accomplish the targets and goals of Business Plan and Program Baseline.

Lipkin then described the principles and goals for the 2018 Business Plan, which include initiating service as soon as possible; pursuing strategic and concurrent investments that are linked over time and provide mobility, economic and environmental benefits; and positioning the program to initiate the construction of project segments as funding becomes available. The Business Plan outlines the following schedule for delivery of service:

- 2026-2027: Potential early service and operations within the Central Valley and between San Francisco to Gilroy that is currently under review
- 2029: Completing Valley to Valley Service, which connects the Central Valley to Silicon Valley and the Bay Area and will require the completion of tunnels in the Pacheco Pass, which the Authority is currently completing geotechnical analyses and identifying financing packages for

Lipkin discussed the relationship between high-speed rail and the larger picture of other transportation projects in the Bay Area, such as the Diridon Integrated Station Concept (DISC) and the Salesforce Transit Center, among others. Additionally, Caltrain is working on a Business Plan that will outline Caltrain's vision for the Peninsula rail corridor in 2040.

Connecting Communities Strategy

Bruce Fukuji, Northern California Planning Manager, discussed the Connecting Communities Strategy. This process began in 2016 in which CWG members identified community values as they pertain to factors like the economy, mobility, and livability. CWG members also participated in a mapping exercise that identified communities of concern, community resources, and potential areas for development. This information informs the ongoing environmental and engineering analyses. In 2017, the Authority brought the results of the 2016 exercise back to CWG members to validate and allow clarifications or additions to previously stated priorities. Since then, the Authority has gathered additional information on projects from local jurisdictions and organized them into the following categories:

- *Integration*: incorporation of feedback into the Authority's planning efforts, such as the inclusion of a CWG-suggested short viaduct alternative in the approach to Diridon Station in the Authority's environmental document

- *Collaboration*: coordinated efforts between the Authority and local jurisdictions to advance projects of mutual interest, such as improving bicycle and pedestrian access at 4th and King Station
- *Local projects*: projects that fall outside of the parameters for high-speed but that the Authority can assist local jurisdictions secure financing for

By going through this process, the Authority has become a conduit for local jurisdictions to secure financing for projects through a variety of state funding programs. The Authority is one of several state agencies funded by California's Cap and Trade Program that provides investments in natural resources, energy, and transportation projects at a local level. However, it is the only one that has a statewide outreach program that has collected and categorized planned projects being proposed and developed at a local level. As such, the Authority has been able to inform other state agencies as to what is being planned locally and, in turn, can provide local jurisdictions guidance on what grant programs are available for completing their projects.

CWG Members' Questions and Comments

The following questions, comments and responses were recorded following Lipkin and Fukuji's presentations (Q= question, R= response, C= comment):

- Q: Are there any areas where Caltrain and the Authority are not in sync? If Caltrain is not able to complete components of their Business Plan, such as capital equipment improvement, does that impact the Authority's timeline for operations?
 - R: The Authority has and will continue to coordinate with Caltrain to ensure alignment of the two systems and to establish agreements for blended service. Their business plan assumes high-speed rail is operational and part of the blended system.
- Q: Can the results of the Connecting Communities Strategy (CCS) exercise be shared again with the CWG prior to the next meeting?
 - R: Yes, we would be happy to send in advance of the next meeting.
- Q: With respect to the CCS, is there a memorandum of understanding (MOU) in place that guarantees cooperation between the Authority and various other state agencies as it relates to coordinating efforts for climate change investments? Or could the new governor pull the plug on which agencies are participating?
 - R: Funding for these investments were allotted to state agencies by the State Legislature, so a new governor would not be revoking them. While there is not a formal MOU, the Authority has and will continue to serve as conduits between communities and state agencies.
- Q: Does existing legislation allowing BART to build affordable housing apply to high-speed rail?
 - R: That legislation is strictly for BART. The Authority does not have land use authority.
- Q: Are there any possibilities for generating power from high-speed rail, such as capturing wind produced by trains, or installing solar along the right of way?

- R: The Authority has not looked into capturing energy from trains. At stations, we are proposing net zero energy, photovoltaic solar, and sustainable station designs.

3. San Francisco to San Jose Project Section Overview

James Tung, San Francisco to San Jose Project Section Manager, provided an overview of the range of alternatives under consideration for the San Francisco to San Jose Project Section. There are two alternatives for the project section, which are described below:

- Alternative A
 - East side option light maintenance facility in Brisbane
 - No additional passing tracks
 - At-grade (or on existing facilities) throughout the project section
- Alternative B
 - West side option light maintenance facility in Brisbane
 - Six miles of additional passing tracks between San Mateo and Redwood City
 - Short or long viaduct in the approach to Diridon Station
 - Short viaduct: 1.5 miles between Interstate-880 and Diridon Station
 - Long Viaduct: 3.9 miles between Scott Boulevard and Diridon Station

Common features amongst the two alternatives include initial operations (two trains per direction per peak hour running at 79mph) and ongoing operations (four trains per direction per peak hour running at 110mph). Additionally, the Authority will be installing a suite of safety modifications throughout the corridor, including quad gates at all 38 at-grade crossings, channelization of vehicular traffic, and perimeter fencing along the right of way.

Authority staff met with local jurisdictions to review the preliminary engineering designs. The Authority hosted a round of meetings in summer 2018 with cities and counties along the corridor to discuss these designs. Key themes raised by city/county staff include safety, noise, radio tower locations, traffic, and at-grade crossings.

The Authority is currently completing its project definition in order to initiate the technical analysis of the proposed design as it pertains to noise, traffic, and other factors. After the completion of this analysis, a staff recommended Preferred Alternative (PA) will be released in December 2019. A Draft Environmental Impact Report/Statement (EIR/S) will be released in March 2020 and a 45-day comment period will commence upon its release. A Final EIR/S and Record of Decision (ROD) will be reached in March of 2021.

CWG Members' Questions and Comments

The following questions, comments and responses were recorded following Tung's presentation (Q= question, R= response, C= comment):

- Q: Outside of electrification, what modifications are necessary for operating at 110mph?
 - R: Curve straightening and safety modifications.
- Q: What would the additional passing tracks look like?

- R: It would entail installing one track on each side of existing track and building a retained fill structure at the extent of the existing berm to stay within the right of way. Caltrain would use the outside tracks, and high-speed rail would run down the middle.
- C: Please specify that Alternative B is a combination of at-grade and elevated features in maps presented at future meetings.
- Q: What is the benefit of having the long viaduct rather than the short viaduct?
 - The inclusion of both viaducts shows the evolution of considered alignment alternatives. The long viaduct is very disruptive through the Newhall area. CWG members proposed evaluating a short viaduct as it will have fewer noise and visual impacts. The Authority is including both viaduct alternatives in the EIR/S for comparison purposes.
- Q: How do Brisbane's plans for the Baylands development influence the Authority's decision on a light maintenance facility (LMF)?
 - R: Brisbane has a General Plan amendment on the November 6 ballot that includes transit-oriented development (TOD) and mixed use development on the Baylands. The Authority has and will continue to work closely with the developer and the city to determine the feasibility of accommodating their planned development and the need for a LMF in Brisbane. A LMF in Brisbane is critical for achieving Valley to Valley service.
- Q: Is there the potential for Caltrain and high-speed rail to share a LMF in Brisbane?
 - R: Caltrain previously declined to co-locate facilities. However, that conversation will likely be restarted given the City of San Francisco's desire to relocate the Caltrain yard at 4th and King.
- Q: Is there any possibility to accommodate housing above or near the LMF?
 - R: The Authority has had initial discussions around the "decking" of housing over the LMF though the feasibility of it is still to be determined.
- C: The San Francisco Mass Transit Authority (SFMTA) is considering what it would take to allow for housing along the Potrero Hill trolley line including soundproofing measures. The Authority should speak with SFMTA to see if it can glean some best practices.
- C: The concept of channelization brings to mind the original plans for high-speed rail in San Francisco, particularly as it relates to the at-grade crossings at 7th and 16th Avenues and the confinement of pedestrian and vehicular traffic. This is not acceptable for Mission Bay residents. The community is very concerned about the division of the neighborhood and pedestrians and cars becoming second class transportation modes. This again reflects my community's sentiment that our concerns are not being heard by the Authority. We stated that explicitly during the CWG last meeting. Trains need to go underground – it is unacceptable otherwise.
 - R: The environmental clearance the Authority is seeking is that which pertains to adding high-speed rail operations along the corridor. In San Francisco, this would entail basic improvements to existing infrastructure. Channelization is intended to improve vehicular safety as it will keep cars from going in to opposite lane. We

are collaborating with San Francisco and other partners on the Rail Alignment and Benefits (RAB) study that proposed to build a tunnel at 7th and 16th Avenues.

- C: Adding in-language terms for safety features is needed throughout the Peninsula.
- C: Adding dot spots horizontally across advance limit line could be beneficial for improving safety. There is a surplus of them available in the Bay Area.
- Q: Are there projects the Authority will provide funding for that would be completed before a record of decision (ROD)?
 - R: The Authority has heard a lot about projects cities and counties are planning, including grade separations. We cannot start constructing project design elements until the ROD but there have been some partnerships for projects cleared by others.
- Q: How is the Authority ensuring its EIR/S is compliant with state and federal requirements?
 - R: Permitting agencies are regularly updated and we will have secured permits from them by the time we get to the ROD. The Authority's goal is to complete permitting work in parallel with environmental work. The Authority has a MOU in place with the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to streamline the permitting process.
- C/Q: The Bay Area is already prone to King Tides and El Nino events and will experience sea-level rise in the coming decades. Has the Authority or Caltrain looked at pumping solutions to alleviate flooding of stations and tracks?
 - The Authority is conducting climate risk assessments that would look at vulnerable locations and strategies to address climate change concerns.
- Q: Is the Pennsylvania Avenue extension part of the Authority's EIR?
 - R: No, that is part of a separate process in the RAB study.
- Q: Are cities and counties showing a greater interest in pursuing grade separation projects as the timeline for high-speed rail operations becomes clearer?
 - R: Yes, cities and counties are taking the lead on roughly 18 grade separation projects at various stages of development along the Peninsula. Additionally, Caltrain is considering the need for a regional plan in implementing grade separation projects in a manner that does not affect rail operations.

4. Stakeholder Engagement and Outreach

Morgan Galli, San Francisco to San Jose Outreach Manager, provided an update of the Authority's planned outreach and how it relates to the environmental milestone schedule. The Authority will be hosting a series of Open Houses in fall 2019 prior to the release of the PA. Community feedback received will be included when the PA is presented to the Authority's Board of Directors in winter 2019. An additional round of Open Houses as well as a Public Hearing will be held in spring 2020 during the 45-day comment period following the release of the Draft EIR/S in March 2020. Feedback received during the comment period will be incorporated into the Final EIR/S prior to it being presented to the Authority's Board of Directors in March 2021. This Board Meeting will be open to the public to provide comments on the Final EIR/S.

Additionally, the Authority will be hosting three rounds of CWG meetings in 2019 in advance of the release of the PA. One more round of meetings will be held prior to the 45-day comment period for the Draft EIR/S. The Authority will continue to conduct a variety of stakeholder and community outreach activities throughout the environmental milestone schedule and welcomed CWG members' suggestions on organizations and communities that the Authority meet with.

Galli then discussed the outreach the Authority has conducted since 2016. This includes:

- 6 Scoping Meetings and Open Houses with over 400 attendees
- 4 rounds of CWG meetings (12 total meetings) with 70+ organizations participating
- Over 350 stakeholder meetings and outreach events utilizing a multi-faceted, multi-language, and multi-community approach

Galli reviewed proposed topics for future CWG meetings. These include:

- Winter 2019: Early Train Operations, NEPA/CEQA 101, Project Elements, Connecting Communities Strategy
- Spring 2019: Safety, Noise, Project Elements
- Summer 2019: Preferred Alternative, Mitigation, Project Elements
- Winter 2020: Draft Environmental Impact/Report Statement

Galli concluded by opening a discussion with CWG members for their suggestions on future CWG meeting topics. This discussion is summarized below (Q= question, R= response, C= comment):

- C: I would like to suggest you provide a general timeframe for each CWG meeting so we can adjust our schedules accordingly.
- C: The level and type of coordination between the Authority and Caltrain would be a beneficial topic. This could include co-locating maintenance facilities, responsibilities relating to maintenance, construction at 4th & King, and status of grade separation projects.
- C: It would be valuable to have Caltrain staff attend each CWG meeting, or at least their Citizens' Advisory Committee. It is hard to speak to high-speed rail as it is only part of the blended system.
- C: Housing, land use, capacity modeling, changes in transit options, and broader coordination in the context of regional planning now and in 2030 are all important subjects.
- C: What early service means for the corridor and the benefits to region would be informative. Early service would go a long way in expanding public and political support for the project.
- Q/C: What is the current level of opposition and support for high-speed rail at a legislative level? Important to know the will of the state at large.
- Q: Is there an opportunity to demonstrate service along Peninsula once electrification is completed?

- R: Possibly, it would depend on the timeline of the delivery of high-speed rail trains. We will have the early train operator present at a future meeting.

5. Conclusions

Rugani thanked attendees for their time and invited them to reach out to Authority staff with any questions.

6. Public Comment

- C: San Jose has been producing hundreds of low-income units adjacent to the Blossom Hill Caltrain Station. Similar efforts should be undertaken with the stations high-speed rail will stop at.
- C: I am concerned about the issues of safety at Caltrain stations with an island platform design, especially trains begin to operate at 110mph.
- C: High-speed rail trains and freight share right-of-way in Europe. This should be pursued to the greatest extent possible in California to avoid community impacts and property takes.

Action Items and Next Steps

- Bob Planthold to share resources on MTA's Potrero Plans and on MTC/ABAG's Diridon design.
- Bruce Fukuji to connect with Ted Olsson on renewable energy/design.
- The Authority will circulate the PowerPoint presentation from this meeting to San Francisco CWG members (completed). The PowerPoint presentation can also be found on 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.
- The Authority will distribute the CWG roster and list of outreach activities/meetings since 2016 to CWG members.
 - CWG members to review and provide suggestions on additional groups, organizations and individuals to connect with and/or invite to join a CWG.
- A meeting summary will be developed and distributed to CWG members.