



SAN FRANCISCO TO SAN JOSÉ PROJECT SECTION SAN FRANCISCO COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP MEETING SUMMARY JUNE 29, 2022

SUMMARY

Welcome, Agenda Review & Introductions

Joey Goldman, facilitator, welcomed the Community Working Group (CWG) members, and thanked them for joining. He reviewed the meeting agenda, went over meeting guidelines, and introduced Boris Lipkin.

A participant list is in [Appendix B](#).

Statewide Update

Boris Lipkin, California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) Northern California Regional Director, provided a statewide update on the California High-Speed Rail program. Updates included:

- The [2022 Business Plan](#) was issued in February 2022, adopted by the Authority Board of Directors in April 2022, and submitted to the state legislature in May 2022.
- The 89-mile [San José to Merced Project Section](#) was approved by the Authority's Board of Directors in April 2022, completing the environmental clearance process.
- The California High-Speed Rail Authority and Los Angeles Metropolitan Transit Authority [reached a funding agreement](#) to modernize Los Angeles Union Station.
- Contracts have been awarded to advance design of the Merced and Bakersfield extensions and the Central Valley Stations.
- Caltrain's first electric trainset has arrived.

Questions, Comments, and Responses

- Questions (Q): A CWG member shared their excitement that high-speed rail will go from valley-to-valley and that the San José to Merced section has been approved. They asked how the Gilroy Station is being coordinated with other agency users, including Caltrain and Amtrak. They noted that the addition of high-speed rail trains could significantly increase the current train load of three trains each morning and evening.
 - Response (R): Authority staff responded that the Board approved Alternative 4 as the Preferred Alternative for the San José to Merced project section. This alternative includes a blended system in which high-speed rail trains would share tracks with Caltrain. This alternative minimizes impacts because it primarily uses the existing rail corridor between San Jose to Gilroy. At the same time, it provides benefits in that Caltrain can provide additional service that was previously restricted due to the existing trackage rights agreement with Union Pacific Railroad. As part of their 2040 Service Vision, Caltrain is looking at more frequent service to South San Jose and Southern Santa

Clara County. For Gilroy Station, the Authority is coordinating with other agencies such as Transportation Authority of Monterey County (TAMC) to accommodate future rail service expansion to Monterey County. All this work is being done in collaboration with agency partners.

- Comment (C): The CWG member noted that the Gilroy Station would be a good place [for Caltrain] to change from electric to diesel train cars. Since high-speed rail is making improvements to run electric to Gilroy station, then Caltrain could run electric trains to Gilroy then switch to diesel to go further south.
 - R: Authority staff agreed and noted that this is the understanding as outlined in the high-speed rail planning documents.

San Francisco to San José Project Section Final EIR/EIS

James Tung, Project Manager for the San Francisco to San José Project Section, provided an overview of the Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) process. The EIR/EIS is being prepared by the Authority, as the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) lead agency and designated National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) lead agency. The process started in 2016 with a Notice of Preparation. The Draft EIR/EIS was published in 2020, and a Revised/Supplemental Draft EIR/EIS in 2021. Earlier this month, the Authority published the [Final EIR/EIS](#), which Authority staff will present to the Authority Board on August 17 and 18, 2022. At that time, the Board will consider approving the Final EIR/EIS and directing the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to issue a Record of Decision (ROD).

James reviewed the Authority's community engagement activities since 2016, provided an overview of the alternatives in the Final EIR/EIS, and described the basis for identification of Alternative A as the Preferred Alternative. The following factsheets were shared via Zoom chat with CWG members and attendees:

- [Project Section factsheet](#)
- [Key Changes factsheet](#)
- [At-Grade Crossing Safety factsheet](#)
- [Northern California Light Maintenance Facility factsheet](#)

Anne Winslow, a consultant with ICF managing the EIR/EIS process, provided an overview of the Final EIR/EIS. The Final EIR/EIS is a comprehensive document that fulfills federal and state environmental review requirements, allowing the Authority to approve the project and proceed to final design and construction. The environmental document includes:

- An analysis of alternatives based on the preliminary design, including impacts/effects.
- A list of mitigations proposed to reduce negative impacts/effects.
- Public comments received on the Draft EIR/EIS and Revised/Supplemental Draft EIR/EIS and responses from the Authority.
- Revisions to the Draft EIR/EIS made in response to comments.

The presentation included background on the comments received on the Draft EIR/EIS and the Recirculated/Supplemental EIR/EIS, changes between the Draft EIR/EIS and Final EIR/EIS, and provided an overview of the locations of key materials in the document. A quick reference guide to the Final EIR/EIS is in [Appendix A](#).

Questions (Q), Comments (C), and Responses (R)

- Q: A CWG member asked the team to discuss the impacts to and/or relocation of the Bayshore Station in relation to the construction of the Light Maintenance Facility (LMF).
 - R: Authority staff explained that the station is on the north end of the proposed LMF site and will generally stay in the same location. The northbound platform will not be changed or relocated. The southbound platform will be extended to the south by approximately 600 feet and the north section will be used as a sidewalk to access parking and bus facilities. It was noted that this feature was changed between the Draft and Final EIR/EIS. In the Draft EIR/EIS the entire southbound platform was moved to the south by 600 feet, but in the Final EIR/EIS the southbound platform is extended 600 feet. The reason is due to the change in location of the LMF lead track, which affected the location of the supporting column structure and allowed the existing portion of the platform to remain.
- Q: A CWG member asked if it was possible to get a copy of the entirety of the Final EIR/EIS Volume 1, instead of having it broken up into sections.
 - R: Authority staff noted that the volumes are broken up to make it easier for downloading and storing on the web, but that they can provide the full volumes via a USB. Having the full volume makes it easier to search for key words or phrases.
- Q: A CWG member asked why the Authority preferred the alternative that does not include the six miles of passing tracks.
 - R: Authority staff responded that there had been extensive analyses that indicated that Alternative A, the alternative without the passing tracks, can fully accommodate up to six high-speed rail and four Caltrain trains per hour. Alternative B, with the passing tracks, would make only minor operational differences but would result in many more environmental impacts, especially during construction. Thus, Alternative A was determined to be the preferred alternative. Additionally, there is ongoing work through the Caltrain Business Plan and Service Vision processes that is looking at increased Caltrain service in the corridor and what infrastructure (including potential passing track locations) might be needed for that.

Next Steps

Stephen Tu, Northern California Engagement Manager, shared information about [the upcoming Authority Board of Directors meeting](#). The Board meeting will take place on August 17 and 18, 2022. Public comment will take place on August 17. At this meeting, the Board will consider whether to:

- Certify the Final EIR/EIS as CEQA Lead Agency.
- Approve the Preferred Alternative and related CEQA decision documents.
- Direct the Authority CEO to issue the ROD under the Authority's NEPA Assignment.

CWG Discussion

CWG members were invited to check in and share their thoughts, feedback, ideas and concerns. Joey facilitated the discussion and asked CWG members to share their thoughts. Comments were as follows:

- A CWG member noted that their focus is always on disruption to their community and what that would look like. They mentioned that so far that disruption has been driven by the Downtown Extension project which is primarily being handled through the Transbay Joint Powers Authority.

They also noted that their community is interested in the service plans and how they would be impacted by the passing tracks and the blended system operations. They said they hope that the Authority has done a thorough analysis and that there are no capacity constraints as costs continue to go up. So far, it seems that the EIR/EIS process has done an adequate amount of analysis. They look forward to the project moving forward.

- A CWG member said they thoroughly believe in the value of the project but find it hard to articulate and sell it to the average person. They noted that people struggle to understand it and believe it will ever be constructed, but they encourage gathering more community support and moving as fast as possible since every year it is delayed it will cost more. They noted that without a train to access, everyone has some level of disability in their mobility. They were excited to learn more and more about the project through the CWG process.
- A CWG member said their primary concern is related to the LMF because their neighborhood is right next to Brisbane and the LMF site. They noted that the LMF is a huge project – 100 acres in their backyard – so it will make a big impact. They suggested the Authority create better visuals of the LMF to help people understand, particularly since a 2D map does not accurately indicate the 3D elements, and how it will look in the real world.
- A CWG member noted that their organization is looking to collaborate with transit agencies to promote public transportation in the SF area, particularly in gathering support for a Metropolitan Transportation Commission ballot measure that would create additional revenue – up to \$100 billion for transit. They shared support for the eastside option for the LMF, as part of the Preferred Alternative. They mentioned that Bayshore Station has been separated from other transit services forever and would love to see that station be a transit hub for Muni, Caltrans, and other rail, so it would not just serve Brisbane, but other areas as well, including Visitacion Valley and Sunnydale.

Public Comment

Members of the public were invited to share their comments. Their comments are summarized below:

- A commenter asked if the Authority was coordinating with the Silicon Valley Extension to Diridon to make Diridon an integrated hub for rail including BART, etc.
 - R: Authority staff mentioned that the team is engaged in Diridon Station planning. They noted that the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority is managing the BART project and the Authority is coordinating with them

Closing Remarks

Boris wrapped up the meeting by thanking the CWG members for their contributions and dedication to the project. The input provided through the public engagement process has been invaluable and made for a better project.

APPENDIX A – Quick Guide to Final EIR/EIS

- Impact in my Community
 - Volume 1 – [Within each resource section](#), the impact analysis is provided by project subsection:
 - San Francisco to South San Francisco
 - San Bruno to San Mateo
 - San Mateo to Palo Alto
 - Mountain View to Santa Clara
 - San José Diridon Approach

- Responses to Comments
 - Volume 4, [Chapter 17](#) – Standard Responses
 - Volume 4, Chapters 18 to 21 – Responses to [Federal](#), [State](#), [Local Agency](#) and [Elected Official](#) comments
 - Volume 4, Chapters 22 to 24 – Responses to [Tribe](#), [Business and Organization](#), and [Individual](#) Comments
 - Translated copies of responses to comments are available upon request.

- Maps of Alternatives
 - **Volume 1**, [Chapter 2](#), Alternatives – General Maps
 - **Volume 2**, [Appendix 3.1-A](#) – Maps of Affected Properties
 - **Volume 3** – [Preliminary Engineering Plans](#)

- Visual Simulations of Alternatives
 - **Volume 1**, Chapter 3, [Section 3.15](#) – Aesthetics and Visual Quality

APPENDIX B – Participants

AFFILIATION	NAME	PRESENT
Bay Area Council	Gwen Litvak	No
Caltrain Accessibility Advisory Committee	Bob Planthold	No
Candlestick Cove Neighborhood Association	Jignesh Desai	No
Chinatown Community Development Center	Matthias Mormino	No
Coalition for San Francisco Neighborhoods	George Wooding	No
Disability Rights Education Defense Fund	Paul Bendix	Yes
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	Emily Abraham	No
San Francisco Giants	Josh Karlin-Resnick	No
San Francisco Labor Council	Rudy Gonzalez	No
San Francisco Tomorrow	Jerry Levine	No
San Francisco Transit Riders	Anthony Nachor	Yes
San Francisco Transit Riders	Thea Selby	No
South Beach Mission Bay Business Association	Patrick Valentino	No
South Beach, Rincon, Mission Bay Neighborhood Association	Bruce Agid	Yes
South Beach, Rincon, Mission Bay Neighborhood Association	Alice Rogers	No
SPUR	Laura Tolkoff	No
Transportation Advocate	Wilbert Din	No
UCSF	Abby Ellis	Yes
UCSF	Amiee Alden	No
UCSF	Tammy Chan	No
Unaffiliated	Ted Olsson	No
Urban Land Institute	Jay Paxton	No
Urban Land Institute	Linda Klein	No
Visitacion Valley Historic Project	Mono Simeone	No
Visitacion Valley Planning Alliance	Fran Martin	No
YIMBY	Cliff Bargar	No
YIMBY	Jack Harman	No
YIMBY	Roan Kattouw	No
YIMBY Action	Laura Foote	No

Authority Staff and Project Team in attendance: Anne Winslow, Anthony Lopez, Boris Lipkin, Bruce Fukuji, James Tung, Jennifer Vazconcelo, Joey Goldman, Josh Mahar, Minming Wu, Morgan Galli, Rebecca Tabor, Stephen Tu, Vidya Bhamidi