



SAN JOSE COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP MEETING SUMMARY MAY 2, 2019

SUMMARY

Introductions & Agenda Review

Boris Lipkin, Northern California Regional Director, thanked members for participating and indicated that the Project Update Report was released on May 1, 2019 and included a letter summarizing the program's priorities from Lenny Mendonca, the new Authority Board Chairman appointed by Governor Gavin Newsom. The Project Update Report is available on the Authority's website at the following link: http://www.hsr.ca.gov/docs/about/legislative_affairs/SB1029_Project_Update_Report_050119.pdf.

The following questions, comments, and responses were recorded following the introduction.

Project funding

- A member asked if the High-Speed Rail extension into Merced will increase ridership of the ACE train.
 - Authority staff responded that the project is designed with the intention of serving and creating a unified passenger railroad system that would combine HSR service with ACE and the San Joaquin services in Merced.
- A member asked if diesel trains will ever be used on the High-Speed Rail tracks in the Central Valley.
 - Staff replied that operating diesel trains on the Central Valley HSR tracks is no longer under consideration. In the past, when funds for electrification had not yet been secured, options for interim use of HSR tracks included the possibility of diesel-powered train operations. However, sufficient capital funds are available to complete HSR infrastructure for electric train operations.

Safety and Security Characteristics of High-Speed Rail

Simon Whitehorn, Deputy Director, Operations & Maintenance, discussed the safety and security characteristics of a high-speed rail system. This includes systemwide elements focused on both the design of the guideway and its components, the train control systems used to run the trains, and the trains themselves.

The following questions, comments and responses were recorded following the presentation:

- A member asked how the Authority will address the fact that the tracks going through Coyote Valley could disturb a particularly sensitive wildlife corridor.
 - Authority staff replied that the HSR design includes passages underneath the roadway and corridor that connect animals to their habitat on either side of the tracks to minimize movement barriers in that area. The Authority has been working with wildlife

advocacy groups to identify the optimal places to introduce these crossings and preserve sensitive species habitat.

- A member advocated for the trains not to go through the center of the Gardner neighborhood and avoid the intersection at West Virginia St., where there have been two deaths in the last decade. They want to make sure that the alignment is safe and asked if there are examples of high-speed rail going through dense urban centers at great speeds.
 - Authority staff replied that they were aware of many corridors in the world that have grade crossings. For this reason, they are very carefully designing the system to make grade crossing safe for pedestrians and vehicles, where HSR trains would operate at lower speeds through urban centers.
- A member asked if high winds could potentially affect the stability of the train.
 - Authority staff replied that the train is designed aerodynamically to cut through air. Only an extremely severe wind event could prevent the train from being operated. Staff added that, when necessary, trains will operate at slower speeds to prevent accidents.
- A member indicated there is a problem with current fencing because it takes a long time to get fencing fixed when it is cut. They asked about the Authority's plan for monitoring and maintaining the fences and rights-of-way.
 - Authority staff replied that the intention is to keep the integrity of the right-of-way secure at all times. Tracking systems will monitor the integrity of fencing and the fence will be consistently maintained.
- A member indicated that cars also pose a risk to humans at crossings and thus it is very important to properly design grade crossings so that people feel safe to walk.
- A member asked if the Authority follows international standards for signaling systems and how much of the design is specific to California.
 - Authority staff replied that they are using European norms, which are widely used as a standard across the world. In addition, the Authority will be making sure to use the most updated technology, especially for the tracking systems which will have to meet Federal Railroad Administration requirements.
- A member asked what the Authority will do to monitor tunnels to make sure humans do not enter them. They expressed a concern about potential terrorists using tunnels as a place to detonate bombs.
 - Authority staff replied that there will be monitoring equipment and intrusion detection, as well as regular inspections.
- A member asked if there are drivers on the trains.
 - Authority staff replied that there are drivers that monitor the system. In case of an emergency, the ATC system will apply breaks automatically when needed. This is to ensure maximum safety.
- A member asked if excessive heat might impact operations – cause the tracks to buckle – especially in the Central Valley.
 - Staff replied that the train will have a system to monitor the track and send information back to the dispatch center. This will be analyzed on a constant basis. In addition, there will be special maintenance vehicles that run at night and employ high-definition cameras to ensure the tracks are in good condition. If any issues are ever detected, a temporary speed restriction would be imposed until the track is repaired.
- A member indicated they would like to have more time to discuss the alternatives before the Preferred Alternative is identified in September. They would also like more detailed information,

and more time to discuss as a community before naming their preference. The member also indicated a preference for having grade separations in the Monterey corridor.

- Members asked if they could take a vote on the four alternatives.
 - Authority staff replied that a vote could happen in the next round of CWGs.
- A member asked how the quad gates will differ from the RTD system in Denver, which has recently malfunctioned.
 - Authority staff ensured members that the system will be thoroughly tested to make sure there is no interference that can inhibit the quad gates' ability to function properly and that Caltrain recently developed a technical solution as part of their Electrification Project to address this issue.
- A member asked if the Authority believes operating trains outside of neighborhoods, on the perimeter, is safer than trains going through neighborhoods. They asked this specifically in reference to Gardner.
 - Authority staff replied that regardless of where the alignment goes, it will be as safe as possible. They added that there are systems all over the world that operate through dense neighborhoods and that the same safety standards will be applied.

Preferred Alternative Engagement Update

Dave Shpak, Deputy Project Manager, updated members of the group on recent and upcoming outreach activities, particularly related to the release of the Staff-Recommended State's Preferred Alternative and the September Authority Board meeting. This was followed by a preview of the criteria for evaluating all high-speed rail alternatives. Additionally, members were asked how they would like to provide input on the State's Preferred Alternative during the next round of meetings. The presentation concluded by showing aerial and street-level visualizations of the Monterey Corridor subsection of the project.

The following questions, comments and responses were recorded following the presentation:

Project Timeline

- A member asked why the San Francisco-San Jose and San Jose-Merced sections are on different outreach schedules.
 - Authority staff replied that the San Jose-Merced section has always been 3 months ahead, except for the Preferred Alternative milestone, which will be done together.
- A member asked when the CWG will have an opportunity to make comments about grade separation in order to ensure comments are considered in the final planning determination.
 - Authority staff replied that the summer meetings will be the next opportunity for direct input. In addition, there will be another opportunity to provide formal input during the public review of the Draft EIR/EIS.
- A member asked if there is still time to change project parameters after the Draft EIR.
 - Authority staff replied that changes are possible before the State approves the project.
- A member asked if it is too late to consider an alternative that goes around the Gardner neighborhood.
 - Authority replied that there is a range of alternatives under study, including options that go around Gardner. All four alternatives are being evaluated at equal levels of detail and that the identification of the State's Preferred Alternative in September is only designed to draw attention to where the State is leaning. The final selection will only be made at the end of the environmental review process.

- A member asked if the final EIR includes construction impacts and mitigation measures associated with those impacts.
 - Authority staff replied that they consider temporary and permanent effects, including construction and train operations and maintenance and the mitigations needed for them.

Opportunities for Input

- A member asked why open houses will take place in the middle of summer and only provide members with a few days of advance notice to review the Staff-Recommended State Preferred Alternative. They would like to have 7-10 days to comment.
 - Authority staff acknowledged the preference for more time for notice and comment. The open house timing is driven by the Authority's requirements to provide timely input to the Board when it will identify the State's Preferred Alternative. Staff mentioned more opportunities to provide comments in the future.
- A member asked when CWG members will be able to see what the system looks like and indicated that they cannot form an opinion on it until they can visualize it. Additionally, they requested more information before providing proper input.
 - Authority staff described the next round of CWG meetings that will present the differentiating factors among alternatives. If requested, staff also offered to arrange a separate time to show design materials of specific portions of the alignment(s). The open houses in August present another opportunity for broader conversation with a larger audience. These events typically have several tables with design materials and experts to explain details in the designs.
- A member requested that members of the CWG are automatically notified of upcoming opportunities to provide input.
 - Authority staff replied that in addition to sending out emails, they are considering other forms of media in order to notify communities who do not have access to broadband internet service.

Preferred Alternative Criteria

- A member asked if the Authority is evaluating the real traffic impacts and stated that even with a limited number of trains, the current grade crossings create a lot of traffic.
 - Authority staff replied that they are working with Caltrain to analyze — and ultimately optimize — the frequency of gate downtime, which is a central issue.
- A member commented that they would like the Authority to prioritize safety over money.
- A member asked why “input from CWG” is not on the criteria being considered.
 - Authority staff explained that, while not explicitly stated as a criterion, input provided by the CWG and members of the public has influenced the selection of the criteria. For example, environmental justice was initially identified by stakeholders along the corridor and is now a key criterion being considered in this stage of the process. Additionally, the feedback received from the CWGs and Open Houses will be summarized for the Board's consideration.
- A member expressed concern that the criteria do not mention the Diridon Integrated Station Concept (DISC) process, which could result in a plan that clashes with the High-Speed Rail proposal, causing the Authority to publish an unbuildable project.
 - Authority staff replied the Authority is working on a collaborative effort with VTA, Caltrain, and the City of San Jose to create an intermodal hub at Diridon Station, within

the context of a new urban center through the DISC process. At the same time, the Authority is evaluating the infrastructure that would be needed for HSR operations at Diridon Station, which is a much narrower scope, within the environmental clearance process. The Authority and its partners are aware of these two efforts and will continue to evaluate how both move forward and how to manage any interfaces or conflicts.

- A member indicated that there seems to be nothing about safety in the criteria.
 - Authority staff replied that the approach to implementing High-Speed Rail is that all alternatives must meet applicable safety standards. Since all alternative must achieve equivalent safety levels, they cannot be differentiated based on safety.
- A member asked if members will be provided with capital costs of all alternatives.
 - Authority staff indicated that the EIR will present capital costs as well as costs to operate and maintain the alternatives.
- A member asked if the Environmental Justice report will include how the alternatives impact low-income residents and communities of color.
 - Authority staff replied that Environmental Justice information will be included in the environmental documents.
- A member indicated there is a discrepancy in a document on bookend projects which states the Authority will spend \$826 million. However, when adding the 18 projects listed, the cost adds up to \$917 million. They asked for a clarification.
 - Authority staff clarified that this list is from when Prop 1a came out and included \$950 million in improvements and connecting lines to be allocated to bookend projects and agencies. Authority staff will investigate the discrepancy.

Visualizations

- A member asked if there will be property takes on the four corners of the Monterey Ave./Branham Rd. intersection in Alternative 2.
 - Authority staff clarified that there will be some property impacts but people will still have access to driveways along Monterey in that alternative.
- A member asked if the visualizations will be made available.
 - Authority staff replied that they will share them with CWG members following the meeting.
- A member commented that the pedestrian overpass might be a big inconvenience for people with disabilities. If it is up to a quarter of a mile long, there will be a lot of people who can no longer cross the street.

Preferred Alternative Discussion

Comments were provided during the discussion session on how CWG members would like to carry out the discussion during the summer meeting on the Preferred Alternative recommendation:

- A member would like small group discussions, for example using small round tables.
- A member requested more lead time to review the information before the meeting.
- A member would like an increase in meetings in the area in order to spread more information on the project. The member does not believe they have enough information for the summer meetings.
- A member requested that technical staff be present to provide reasoning behind certain features.
- A member indicated that small discussion groups are helpful, especially if the full group gets to regroup at the end so everyone can be on the same page.

- A member said that since the next meeting is in the summer, which is not a great time for a lot of the CWG members, they would like to be given a lot of lead time in order to prepare.

Partner Updates

Lori Low, Caltrain, updated working group members on the status of the Caltrain Electrification Project by describing its features and benefits and outlining what is being studied through the Caltrain Business Plan.

Lori Severino, City of San Jose, provided an overview of the Diridon Integrated Station Concept Plan and indicated upcoming outreach initiatives.

The following questions, comments and responses were recorded following the presentation:

- A member asked if the station is being designed so that a line between Tamien and Diridon stations can be included in the future.
 - City of San Jose Staff replied that they will have to consult with technical team and get back with an accurate response.
- A member asked which side of the tracks the Caltrain electrification will be on.
 - Authority Staff replied that north of Diridon station electrification will be on both sides. In Alternative 4, the alignment south of Diridon will be in a shared corridor along with a freight line. The freight will be on the east side (north side in Gardner).

Nicole Soultanov, SPUR, briefly presented on the benefits of Diridon Integrated Station Concept plan to urban development.

One question was recorded following the presentation:

- A member asked if Google will fund all the housing they are building.
 - City of San Jose Staff replied that they have not settled on whether Google should be a developer for housing around the station. They have been advocating for priority commercial development within a half mile around that station.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- A member of the public who is a resident of Willow Glen provided comments on the high design standard for the rail bed, safety, and grade crossings. She asked if the HSR safety sensors along the track would maintain their integrity even if the foundation of the train moves due to tectonic activity. She also indicated that her neighborhood is close to Amtrak, ACE, and VTA and as a result there is a lot of traffic in the region. She concluded by asking if the Authority will compensate people, especially in the case that emergency vehicles cannot get to people in time due to traffic.
- A member of the public who is a resident of North Willow Glen stated that the preferred alternative decision should not be made solely based on cost and should consider impacts to low-income communities. Additionally, they urged the Authority to think ahead and consider what would happen in 10 years when it is decided a fourth track is necessary.
- A member of the public, in reference to the visualizations of the Monterey Corridor, asked for more realistic representations of the train, and stated that, while the one presented at the meeting was close, it did not display the accurate level of traffic. They added that the public needs visual aids such as pictures and videos in order to properly understand the project.

ATTENDANCE

Affiliation	Name	Present
Alma Neighborhood Association	Cyndy Broyles	No
Bellarmino College Preparatory	Brian Adams	Yes
California Maison Homeowners Association/Metcalf Neighborhood	Jahanzeb Baqai	No
California Maison Homeowners Association/Metcalf Neighborhood	Patricia Carlin	Yes
Committee for Green Foothills	Julie Hutcheson, Alice Kaufman	No
D10 Leadership Coalition	Steve Levin	Yes
Delmas Park Neighborhood Association	Kathy Sutherland, Bert Weaver	No
District 10 Leadership Coalition / VEP Community Association	Marilyn Rodgers	No
EGOPIC Neighborhood Association	Yazmin Rios	No
Flowers Neighborhood Association	Matthew Young	Yes
Gardner Neighborhood	Kevin L. Christman, Robert Jones	Yes
Greenbelt Alliance	Matthew Vander Sluis, Kiyomi Yamamoto	No
Guadalupe Washington Neighborhood Association	Ray Moreno	Yes
Hayes Neighborhood Association	Brendan McCarthy	No
Hayes Neighborhood Association	Manny Souza	No
Hellyer-Christopher Riverview Skyway Neighborhood Association	Stephani Rideau	No
Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Silicon Valley	Dennis King, Ron Gonzales	No
League of Women Voters in San Jose and Santa Clara	Bob Ruff	Yes
Los Paseos Neighborhood Association	Amy Georgiades	Yes
Mexican-American Political Association (M.A.P.A.)	Danny Garza	Yes
Newhall Neighborhood Association	Matt Bright, John Urban	No
North Willow Glen Neighborhood Association	Harvey Darnell	Yes
Oak Grove Neighborhood Association	James Patterson	Yes
San Jose Downtown Association	Michelle Azevedo	Yes
San Jose State University	Monica Mallon	No
Santa Clara & San Benito Counties Building & Construction Trades Council	David Bini, Jean Cohen	No
SAP Center	Jim Goddard	Yes
Senter Monterey Neighborhood Association	Jonathan Fleming	Yes
Silicon Valley Leadership Group	Jason Baker	No
Silver Leaf Neighborhood Association	Nuria Root	No
SPUR San Jose	Nicole Soultanov	Yes
The Silicon Valley Organization	Matthew Mahood, Eddie Truong	No
Tulare Hill Homeowners Association	Brian Gurney	Yes
United Neighborhoods of Santa Clara County	Ed Rast	Yes

Affiliation	Name	Present
Working Partnerships USA	Jeffrey Buchanan, Asn Ndaiye	No

Authority Staff: Gary Kennerly, Boris Lipkin, Dave Shpak, Simon Whitehorn, Yosef Yip, Nora De Cuir, Joey Goldman, Jorge Kalil, Rafael Silberblatt

Guest presenters: Lori Low (Caltrain), Lori Severino (City of San Jose), Nicole Soultanov (SPUR/SAAG member)

ACTION ITEMS AND NEXT STEPS

- The Authority will upload the PowerPoint presentation to the high-speed rail website at the following link: https://www.hsr.ca.gov/communication/info_center/events.aspx.
- The Authority will post the visualizations shared at the meeting online.
 - Pacheco Pass Visualization, available here: <https://vimeo.com/309808886/40686db369>
 - Branham Ln and Monterey Rd (aerial view), available here: <https://vimeo.com/332702526/6c28e00222>
 - Branham Ln and Monterey Rd (street view), available here: <https://vimeo.com/332511635/31e0071392>
 - San Mateo Quad Gate Grade Crossing, available here: <https://vimeo.com/332315271/de9f81a974>
- A meeting summary will be developed and distributed to CWG members.
- Authority will follow up on a Prop 1A funding discrepancy brought up by a CWG member.