



The High-Speed Rail Advocate

The newsletter of:

Californians for High-Speed Rail

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California Budget Language Victory

Thank you for all your efforts contacting state legislators and the Governor about the last-minute budget language that threatened stimulus funding for part of the state high-speed rail system. Due to your efforts and those of other high-speed rail system supporters across the state, the language was changed. It now directs the California High-Speed Rail Authority to thoroughly report on their on-going planning and studies to the legislator, without demanding the restudy of alignments already found to be infeasible.

Due to this victory over \$500 million in Caltrain upgrade projects are still eligible for Federal stimulus track 1 money.

The new State budget will require the Authority to deliver an updated business plan to the legislature. The business plan must include:

- (a) a plan for a community outreach component to cities, towns, and neighborhoods affected by this project;
- (b) additional system details, such as route selection and alternative

- alignment considerations;
- (c) a thorough discussion describing the steps being pursued to secure financing;
- (d) a working timeline with specific, achievable milestones;
- (e) strategies the authority would pursue to mitigate different risks and threats.

Californians for High Speed Rail will continue to follow the Authority's planning process and keep you informed of opportunities to move the project forward and stop threats to its progress. ■

High Speed Rail Authority Meeting Summary - August 6th 2009

At the August 3rd Authority meeting and phasing workshop, the project continued to move forward and the enormous scope of the construction ahead was made more visible than ever.

Several items were discussed at the meeting. First, a new agreement between the Authority and Caltrans will allow underutilized Caltrans engineers to provide engineering services to the Authority for grade separations involving state highways. This allows Caltrans to retain engineering staff and the Authority to tap their skills to do design work around highways, improving the coordination and communication between the two agencies.

Second, the Authority is continu-

ing to meet with railroad owners and governments across the state.

Despite the sometimes overblown descriptions in the press, the Authority and Union Pacific are meeting productively and working towards resolving their concerns. Recently the Authority provided Union Pacific with a list of critical "chokepoints" where a portion of Union Pacific's right of way would be needed. Union Pacific is reviewing the list and further meetings are planned. Meetings are also on-going with the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railroad. In Southern California both Metrolink's owner (the Southern California Regional Rail Authority) and Los Angeles County Metro are coordinating with the Authority regarding Union Station in Los Angeles and

Metrolink's rail lines. The Fresno Council of Governments and City of Fresno are likewise coordinating regarding the Fresno station design and approaches.

The application process for Federal stimulus high-speed rail funding continues to evolve. The State submitted over \$22 billion in pre-application for stimulus money last month. Over \$15 billion of that was for the California high-speed train system. The Federal Railroad Administration's evaluation process continues to evolve and change over time. While originally each state would rank all projects for that state, now the FRA is considering evaluating each project separately. The (Continued see Meeting pg. 3)

Is the San Diego Downtown High-Speed Rail Terminal Moving to the Airport? Why not Both?

At the August California High-Speed Rail Authority meeting, board member Lynn Schenk reported that the City of San Diego, led by Mayor Jerry Sanders, is continuing to develop plans for the construction of a multi-modal train station that would serve as the terminal station for high-speed rail (HSR) in San Diego. The multi-modal station would be part of an overall reconstruction of Lindbergh airport that shifts airport access, and potentially the gates, to the northern side of the airport to better connect to the San Diego Trolley, Coaster commuter train, and Interstate 5. The possibility of dropping the downtown station in favor of the airport connection brings up a host of questions.

The important issues raised by locating of San Diego's HSR station at the airport site are proximity, access, development potential, ridership, and impact on local transportation. Moving the San Diego HSR station from the downtown Santa Fe Station to Lindbergh Airport, approximately one and a half miles to the north, would take it out of walking distance of downtown destinations. The airport station would also lose direct service from the Trolley Orange Line. Two access benefits of the move would be direct access to I-5 and the ability to share parking facilities with the airport. While the airport station could serve Los Angeles area residents using Lindbergh for long distance flights, the number of passengers would likely to be small.

Downtown San Diego has shown its ability to support high density high-rise commercial and residential development. Many underdeveloped blocks are still available within a half-mile of the Santa Fe Station. The development potential of the Lindbergh station would be severely constrained by geography. The land between the airport and I-5 would be occupied by airport, port, and Marines facilities. East of I-5 is a mostly single-family residential area unlikely to be redeveloped into a high density

transit-oriented center. In summary the downtown Santa Fe Station location would have better access to downtown, more development potential, and better transit connections. The Airport site would provide direct airport access to riders from north of San Diego and better automobile access. Given the tradeoffs involved, we are skeptical that a station at the airport site would be better for San Diego and the high-speed train network. It does not have to be an either/or decision, however.

Californians for High-Speed Rail is encouraging the Authority to evaluate building both stations. Having the train stop at both stations will not impact travel times for any riders on the network except those people going to/from the downtown Santa Fe Station. It would allow potential riders to choose which station better meets their access needs. Building both stations would not require twice the cost either. Similarly, San Francisco is also considering a two-station system where service would be split to two stations. Having some trains skip each station would allow the stations to be smaller and cheaper to construct. When service starts, all trains could stop at both, but as train frequency increases more trains could stop at one station or the other, keeping either station from becoming over-crowded. Another potential for cost savings is for the high-speed train to share trackage and platforms with an upgraded Coaster commuter service, similar to what is proposed with the San Francisco - San Jose Caltrain service.

Do you live in or travel regularly to the San Diego area? What are your thoughts on the station location and the possibly of building two smaller stations instead of one big one? Write our Executive Director an email at: Brian.Stanke@ca4hsr.org and let us know. ■

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final application deadline for track 1 funds was August 24th, with the decision on funding to be announced on Oct. 1st. The deadline for track 2 funds is Oct. 2nd.

The proposed privately-funded-DesertXpress train from Las Vegas to Victorville has been in the news recently. The Authority staff indicated that they are not

considering the capacity required for through trains from Las Vegas to Los Angeles via Palmdale and additional traffic could require future upgrades to the newly build high-speed tracks. This is disappointing given that both routes are now Federally designated corridors. The state is planning a system for the next hundred years and future network expansions

and interconnection should be considered now. If anyone would like to help us prod the Authority into more proactively planning interoperability and the possibility of future through service from both Southern and Northern California please contact Executive Director Brian Stanke at: brian.stanke@ca4hsr.org, so we can coordinate our efforts. ■

High Speed Rail Authority Phasing Workshop - Aug. 6th 2009

After the meeting, the Authority held a three-hour presentation and workshop. Authority staff, board, and consultants participated. Important details from the presentation follows:

- The planning and construction timelines presented (see box at right) were based on the assumption that all funding would be available when needed.
- The system would be based on train, signaling and power standards from existing high-speed networks around the world. California will not be reinventing the wheel.
- The coordination of outreach across the state has previously been handled by consultants. Now outreach coordination will be handled by Authority staff.
- The board had an in-depth discussion regarding the location of the heavy maintenance facility in the Central Valley. They discussed having localities compete for placement on the facility.
- Finally, Program Director Tony Daniels explained that it would be very difficult and expensive to begin operating high-speed trains on the Los Angeles - Anaheim segment of the line before the entire Anaheim - San Francisco line was complete. This took several board members by surprise as they thought each section could begin limited service as it was finished.

When could high-speed service start where you live?

(Dates are the most optimistic possible, not actual projections)

Los Angeles - Anaheim	Jan. 2018
Los Angeles - Palmdale	Jun. 2019
Palmdale - Bakersfield	Jun..2019
Bakersfield - Merced	Dec. 2018
Merced - San Jose	Sep. 2019
San Jose - San Francisco	Mar. 2019
Sacramento - Merced	Mar. 2020
Los Angeles - San Diego	Mar. 2021
Altamont	Dec. 2020

The rather large and dense slide show is available from the Authority website at: http://www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov/images/chsr/20090807104757_AugustBoardMeeting.ppt

Overall the workshop was very eye-opening, as to the length of time and complexity involved in moving the project forward to completion. It was more of a presentation with question periods than an interactive workshop. ■

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