



September 13, 2010

To:

Atherton City Council
Belmont City Council
Brisbane City Council
Burlingame City Council
Menlo Park City Council
Millbrae City Council
Mountain View City Council
Palo Alto City Council
Redwood City Council
San Bruno City Council
San Carlos City Council
San Mateo City Council
Santa Clara City Council
South San Francisco City Council
Sunnyvale City Council
California High Speed Rail Authority

RE: Please join in a “Peninsula Reset” for the Planning and Implementation of the High Speed Rail Project

Dear City Council Member and CAHSR Authority:

Californians For High-Speed Rail (CA4HSR) is a grassroots group of California residents advocating for the high speed rail project approved by voters in November 2008. Additionally, Californians for High-Speed Rail is working to ensure that the development of high speed rail (HSR) in California is done in a way that best serves all citizens.

In light of new evidence of widespread public support for the HSR project along the Peninsula, CA4HSR is calling on Peninsula cities to join the "Peninsula Reset," so as to better represent these supporters of HSR that live in your cities and to work with regional partners to find win-win solutions to address any remaining concerns about the design of the project.

Polling Shows Strong Support on the Peninsula Remains

The *San Mateo County Times* recently reported on a poll, conducted in the 21st Assembly District located along the Peninsula, that shows 77 percent of Democratic and independent voters taking part in the Democratic primary still support the high speed rail project. Those voters represent 70 percent of the overall electorate in the 21st Assembly District, indicating that even if every Republican voter opposed the HSR project, a clear majority of all voters would still support it. The poll was conducted by Fairbank, Maslin, Mullin and Metz for a candidate in the 21st Assembly District primary in April 2010.

Unfortunately many of the public statements, lawsuits, and resolutions to-date seem to ignore this overwhelming support, and give far too much weight to the highly vocal, minority critics and opponents of HSR along the Peninsula.

Peninsula Reset Effort

Given the overwhelming support for HSR along the Peninsula, CA4HSR has formed a new effort called the “Peninsula Reset” and would like to see the following happen:

- a) Peninsula city officials acknowledge the high level of support that remains for the HSR project along the Peninsula and work to represent those supporters by establishing a more constructive tone and conducting more outreach to encourage supporters to participate in community meetings and decisions on the project. We are pleased that many local elected officials have taken a constructive tone. We urge that they maintain this constructive tone, particularly through the important, complicated, and sometimes difficult process of project planning. We also strongly urge elected officials who have so far taken a generally hostile and adversarial tone to “reset” this approach to be constructive, ensuring that the HSR project is built in a way that meets the needs of the people of California and is sensitive to the residents of the Peninsula.
- b) Peninsula elected officials publicly acknowledge the benefits that HSR will bring to their communities in terms of necessary upgrades such as improved pedestrian safety and traffic conditions due to grade separations.
- c) The California High Speed Rail Authority commits to better communication with Peninsula cities and to provide a new staff member that is dedicated solely to resolving all the complex issues along the Peninsula. This person should be an urban planner and urban design expert trained in sensitivity toward the needs of local communities. Additionally, this person should work to resolve compatibility issues between Caltrain, HSR, and freight so all will operate in the most efficient manner possible.
- d) CA4HSR will commit to staying engaged to help develop and facilitate win-win solutions between all parties.
- e) Participation in a Bay Area-wide effort to examine possible funding sources to support locally desired implementations of the HSR project, in order to help mitigate impacts and to implement various rail upgrades in the HSR corridor. All stakeholders would acknowledge that these funds would have to be raised anyway, even if the HSR project does not happen, as Caltrain must be grade separated in the future for the purposes of community safety and operational and financial improvements while saving money on necessary rail upgrades in the Caltrain corridor by leveraging HSR funds.
- f) Active participation in lobbying California's congressional delegation to support further federal funding for high speed rail, including the proposed \$50 billion for HSR in the reauthorization of the Surface Transportation Bill.
- g) A commitment by all stakeholders that a spirit of reasonableness and compromise is part of all discussions and solutions.

To conclude, CA4HSR urges you to either maintain a constructive approach, or reset your current approach to one that will lead to win-win solutions. This is the right thing to do to properly represent the majority of visionary citizens who understand that HSR is vital for our economy, environment, and our quality of life.

Thank you for your consideration,



Brian Stanke
Executive Director
Californians For High Speed Rail



Daniel Krause
Vice-Chair of the Board of Directors
Californians For High Speed Rail

Cc:

Speaker Nancy Pelosi
Congressmember Jackie Speier
Congressmember Anna Eshoo
Congressmember Zoe Lofgren
Congressmember Mike Honda
State Senate Transportation Committee
State Senator Mark Leno
State Senator Leland Yee
State Senator Joe Simitian
State Assemblymember Ira Ruskin
State Assemblymember Fiona Ma
State Assemblymember Tom Ammiano
State Assemblymember Jerry Hill
State Assemblymember Ira Ruskin
State Assemblymember Paul Fong
Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board
Joseph Szabo, Administrator, Federal Railroad Administration