

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Peter Gertler: 510-851-1867 (cell)

August 26, 2009

Congresswoman Anna Eshoo Town Hall Features California High-Speed Rail Peninsula Rail Program Announces Key Commitments to Public Participation

MENLO PARK - Congresswoman Anna Eshoo hosted a Town Hall meeting this evening to discuss California's high-speed train project. California voters approved high-speed rail in November 2008 as a new mode of transportation in California to address California's burgeoning population and travel needs.

The presentations by Caltrain and the California High-Speed Rail Authority outlined the need for the high-speed train system to ensure critical improvements on the Caltrain corridor such as electrification and grade separations, as well as the overall economic and environmental benefits of high-speed intercity rail travel linking California's major metropolitan areas.

"The San Francisco to San Jose section is a valuable piece of the system. The ongoing environmental review and opportunity for public input are essential components of creating a system that best meets local needs and the objectives of the statewide system," said Mehdi Morshed, executive director of the Authority.

"We are looking forward to a robust, energized public process guaranteeing a hallmark transportation project for California," said Morshed.

During the Town Hall meeting the Peninsula Rail Program, consisting of the California High-Speed Rail Authority and Caltrain, announced the following commitments to collaborating with cities and communities along the corridor as the multiyear process continues:

- Establishment of an advisory Policymaker Working Group (PWG) for elected officials along the Corridor similar to the existing advisory Technical Working Group (TWG) for staff;
- Regular public updates regarding project details through use of Cable TV, e newsletters and websites;
- California High-Speed Rail Authority sponsored Design Workshops throughout the Corridor, including Alternatives Development Workshops this Fall;
- Incorporate Context Sensitive Design Principles into project planning and outreach;
- Provide outreach to community groups such as home owner associations, business, labor, civic and environmental organizations, etc; and
- Include opportunities for the community to provide input and get their questions answered through staffing community events such as farmer's markets and other public venues.

Find out more about the California High Speed Rail project by visiting our website at www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov or call the Peninsula Rail Program hotline at 510-587-8640.