



Peninsula Rail Program



CALIFORNIA
HIGH-SPEED RAIL
AUTHORITY



In This Issue

[Federal Transportation Agenda](#)

[Context Sensitive Solutions](#)

[Democracy in Action](#)

[A Plan for the Future](#)

[Moving Forward Together](#)

Quick Links

[California High-Speed Rail Authority](#)

[Caltrain](#)

California's High-Speed Train Project January 2010 Update

A Look Back and A Look Ahead

2009 was a vigorous year for the California High Speed Train project. On the heels of passage of Proposition 1A in November 2008, last year was a year of expanded activities and studies to advance the environmental review and business development of the project, particularly within the corridor from San Francisco to San Jose.

Keeping the project moving in the right direction requires ingenuity, planning and participation from local communities and transit operators. The formation of the Peninsula Rail Program (PRP), a collaboration of the California High Speed Rail Authority and Caltrain, was an important step in 2009 towards integrating local and regional input to this statewide effort.

Other significant advancements occurred in 2009, including these major project milestones:

New President of the United States - Federal Transportation Agenda includes High-Speed Rail

Early in 2009, the Obama Administration announced \$8 billion dollars of federal stimulus money to build high-speed train corridors in America. California is the best-prepared state in the nation to receive and maximize the benefit of a \$4.7 billion share of \$8 billion in federal funding for high-speed train development under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). With the only authentic 200+ MPH High-Speed train project in America, California is the nation's leading contender for this Federal stimulus funding.

California is the only high-speed train project in America backed with matching state and local financial support - billions of dollars in voter-approved financing. Added attributes to our application include a decade of completed engineering and

design work, a federal partner in the Federal Railroad Administration and economic stimulus to cities on California's high-speed train line that have been among the hardest hit in America by the economic downturn. A \$4.7 billion allocation to California will best serve the prospects for high-speed train travel in America. California's high-speed rail project meets virtually every criterion for federal stimulus funding.

Context Sensitive Solutions

The Peninsula Rail Program adopted the use of Context-Sensitive Solutions (CSS) as the collaborative, multi-disciplinary approach to plan and develop the San Francisco to San Jose section of the high-speed rail system. Mr. Hal Kasso, a leading national authority on this process, led a workshop and community meeting in November 2009 at Burlingame City Hall. CSS is designed to provide an important long-range planning and information tool that considers the total context within which this transportation improvement project will exist, and works to shape the project so that it meets both functional and contextual goals. Over 100 people representing a broad cross section of civic, homeowner, business, labor, environmental, planning, education, and transportation interests along the corridor attended the workshop and meeting. The group sought training and information on this advanced process designed to reach better solutions for communities addressing complex transportation projects.

The San Francisco to San Jose section is poised to lead the state in utilizing this important collaborative tool to design and build California's environmentally friendly high-speed train system linking major metropolitan cities.

Democracy in Action

382 communities, organizations, elected officials, agency representatives and other stakeholders commented 956 times on environmental issues presented for consideration such as: air quality, noise/vibration, traffic, land use planning, biological resources, community impacts/environmental justice, construction impacts, and historic/archeological resources. All of these comments helped to shape the resulting *San Francisco to San Jose Draft Scoping Report*. This legally required document and helpful analytical tool for the alternative analysis process was published in June 2009 and updated in August 2009.

In addition, hundreds of you participated in community meetings throughout the corridor to hear about the proposed vertical alignment options, and to share your input. These meetings are ongoing and the Draft Alternatives Analysis Report is due in early 2010.

A Plan for the Future

The California High-Speed Rail Authority released its updated Business Plan on time and in accordance with the 2009 Budget Act to the Legislature. The plan delineates the hundreds of thousands of jobs that will be generated by the project throughout the state as well as illustrates its financial viability under a variety of ticket pricing scenarios.

Other key facts in the December 2009 Business Plan Report include:

The high-speed train system will generate 600,000 construction-related jobs over the life of construction (one-year, full time equivalents over approximately 8 years). Rough estimates show job creation by region/rail section to be San Francisco - San Jose: 105,000 San Jose - Merced: 112,000.

The Authority conducted an organizational assessment to guide its growth. And the Authority will begin the process in 2010 to seek a construction management team and financial partners.

The plan also addresses community outreach plans, system details, cost, financing, a working timeline, risks and threats to project completion, project development, proposed levels of service, ridership, system capacity, operational plans, staffing, and a history of expenditures and accomplishments to date. Read it here: <http://www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov/library.asp>.

Moving Forward Together

2010 promises to be an even busier year than 2009. First off, the Federal Railroad Administration is expected to announce recipients of the high-speed train federal stimulus funds in early 2010.

Three legislative hearings are scheduled to review the 2009 Business Plan. They are:

Assembly Transportation Committee

Monday, January 11 at 1:30 p.m.
State Capitol

Senate Transportation and Housing Committee

Tuesday, January 19 at 10 a.m.
State Capitol, Room 3191

State Senate Informational Hearing on High Speed Rail

Thursday, January 21 at 7:00 p.m.
Palo Alto City Hall Council Chambers, 250 Hamilton Avenue,
Palo Alto

The Draft Alternatives Analysis Report for the San Francisco to San Jose Section will be published in the first quarter, which will kick off a series of stakeholder meetings designed to gather input necessary to complete a final Alternatives Analysis Report. This final report will outline the alignment alternatives that will move forward for study in the formal environmental impact report/environmental impact study (EIR/EIS) as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

A high-speed train system offers California the promise of an environmentally friendly, economically feasible alternative to meet the transportation needs of our growing state. We thank you all for your time, commitment and interest in helping to build this historic transportation project ensuring progress for the future of California.

Email Us:

prp@caltrain.com