

Comment Letter AL073

Sacramento Area Council of Governments

1415 L Street, Suite 300 Sacramento, CA 95814

tel: 916.321.9000 fax: 916.321.9551 tdd: 916.321.9550 www.sacog.org

AL073



Mr. Joseph E. Petrillo Page 2 August 30, 2004

August 30, 2004

Mr. Joseph E. Petrillo, Chair California High Speed Rail Authority 925 L Street, Suite 1425 Sacramento, CA 95814



Re: Comments by the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) on the Draft Program EIR/EIS for the Proposed California High-Speed Train System (January 2004)

Dear Chair Petrillo:

- Auburn Citrus Heights Colfax Davis El Dorado County Elk Grove Folsom Galt Isleton Lincoln Live Oak Loomis Marysville Placer County Placerville Rancho Cordova Rocklin Roseville Sacramento Sacramento County Sutter County West Sacramento Wheatland Winters Woodland Yolo County Yuba City Yuba County

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project which is exciting in both its purpose and magnitude. The following comments are submitted by the SACOG Board regarding the Draft Program EIR/EIS for the proposed high-speed train system.

AL073-1

General Comments:

The SACOG Board strongly supports the concept contained in the document that calls for the elimination of unnecessary stations and for choosing alignments which allow for the quickest possible running times between Northern and Southern California, consistent with financial and environmental constraints.

The SACOG Board joins those asking for a re-evaluation of the Altamont corridor because of its potential benefit of creating a quick and direct connection between the Sacramento and Bay Areas. The Altamont corridor would reduce Sacramento to San Francisco travel by 21 minutes compared to the Diablo Range Direct corridor and by 41 minutes compared to the Pacheco Pass corridor. We believe that the ridership potential in the Sacramento area may have been underestimated by CHRSA's consultants and the Board would urge that the ridership projections be re-evaluated.

AL073-2

Upon further study, if the Altamont option is unfeasible, the SACOG Board would urge adoption of the Diablo Range Direct alternative. This option adds only three minutes to the trip from Sacramento to San Jose and 21 minutes to San Francisco. The gain in ridership from the Sacramento area would more than offset the loss in ridership in the Gilroy area associated with the Pacheco Pass alternative.

Lastly, if neither the Altamont nor the Diablo Range Direct options prove feasible, it is imperative that significant improvements be made to the Capital Corridor to provide faster, more frequent and more reliable service between the Bay Area and the Sacramento Area, which is projected to double in population to 3.8 million by 2050. Improvements such as those identified in the document for the Lossan corridor between Los Angeles and San Diego would seem appropriate.

There is significant potential, under current land use practices, of significant growth inducement and land consumption in the Central Valley, including the Sacramento area. The document assumes the project will result in an increase in population and jobs; it further assumes this will be done within a smaller urban footprint. The concern of the SACOG Board is that under current land use practices, the system could create a much larger footprint and foster sprawl on a large scale.

AL073-3

Since CHSRA does not have land use authority, the SACOG Board asks that the EIR/EIS evaluate a sub-alternative of the High-Speed Rail Alternative that assumes that additional growth consumes land as it does under current land use trends. The SACOG Board would further recommend that CHSRA provide recommendations for addressing the decentralized growth the system will almost certainly create. Along these lines, SACOG suggests that CHRSA make use of the PLACE'S software, which can estimate the effects of alternatives on travel demands.

The cost of the high speed system is \$33 billion to \$37 billion for full build out. It is important that decision makers be crystal clear on the costs and benefits of such a system. While it is understood that the project would be funded with private, State bond, and Federal "demonstration" dollars, it seems apparent that traditional State and Federal fund sources also will be tapped. The SACOG Board asks that the Program EIR/EIS carefully examine the extent to which this will occur and the tradeoffs involved in diverting existing State and Federal program dollars from their current uses.

AL073-4

Specific:

The SACOG Board strongly supports the Sacramento Valley Station/Railyards site as the location for the rail terminal for the SACOG region. Whether the Caltrans line or the UP line is selected, the Board endorses the downtown site over the Power Inn location.

AL073-5

The Board also wishes to indicate its preference for the Union Pacific (UP) alignment in the vicinity of Elk Grove and for the Caltrans alignment in the vicinity of Galt. The issue in both cities is noise and there appears to be sufficient spacing between the two locations to make the transition from one alignment to the other. Based on a review of current mapping, it looks feasible to utilize the Caltrans alignment from Stockton to north of Galt and then to turn northwest to connect with the U.P. alignment south of Elk Grove.

AL073-6

The SACOG Board further wishes to endorse the California High Speed Rail Authority's decision, reflected in the document, to grade separate all high-speed crossings. This is particularly important in the South Sacramento area, where development patterns lend themselves to the potential of unexpected vehicle and train conflicts, particularly in foggy, nighttime conditions.

AL073-7

The SACOG Board appreciates the opportunity to submit these comments and looks forward to working with CHSRA in its evaluation of a high speed train system for California.

Sincerely,

CHRISTOPHER CABALDON Chair

CC:MT:OW:ts



U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Railroad Administration

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**Response to Comments of Christopher Cabaldon, Chair, Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG), August 31, 2004 (Letter AL073)**

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**AL073-1**

Acknowledged.

**AL073-2**

Please see standard response 6.3.1 in regards to the HST mountain crossing between the Central Valley and the Bay Area. Please also see standard response 2.16.1 in regards to the Capitol rail corridor. Conventional improvements to the existing Capitol Corridor are not the responsibility of the Authority and are beyond the scope of this program EIR/EIS process.

**AL073-3**

Acknowledged. The discussion of population, jobs and urban growth patterns in the Draft Program EIR/EIS is based on economic analysis, current planning, and appropriate modeling. Please see standard response 5.2.1 for additional information.

The "sub-alternative" suggested by the commenter is actually encapsulated in the analysis of the HST Alternative in the Draft Program EIR/EIS; therefore, additional evaluation is not needed. Please see standard response 5.2.1 for discussion of "addressing decentralized growth". The Authority thanks the commenter for the suggestion regarding the PLACE3S software. Use of this software will be considered for subsequent project-level analysis.

**AL073-4**

A financing plan is beyond the scope of this program EIR/EIS process. Please see the Authority's June 2000 Business Plan for the Authority's cost/benefit analysis done as part of previous feasibility studies. Decisions about the allocation of state funds to various programs will be made in the future by the Governor and the Legislature.

**AL073-5**

Acknowledged. The Authority has identified the Downtown Sacramento station site as the preferred location for a potential HST station to serve Sacramento.

**AL073-6**

Acknowledged. Please see standard response 6.12.1. Should the HST proposal move forward additional efforts to minimize impacts on Galt (including alignment options) would be part of future project specific studies.

**AL073-7**

Acknowledged.

Comment Letter AL074

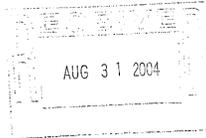
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P. 2



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO  
COUNCILMAN  
SCOTT H. PETERS

FIRST DISTRICT  
August 30, 2004



VIA FACSIMILE AND US MAIL

Attn: California High-Speed Train  
Draft Program EIR/EIS Comments  
925 L Street, Suite 1425  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Draft Environmental Impact Report for Proposed High-Speed Train System

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Report ("DEIR") for the proposed High-Speed Train System. I would like to specifically comment on the Los Angeles to San Diego section of the proposed project, known as the "LOSSAN Corridor." This section of the project is not a part of the high-speed train section, but is instead a CALTRANS project that will focus on non-electric diesel powered trains along the coastline.

**LOSSAN Corridor For Additional Diesel Trains Not Electric High Speed Trains**

The stated purpose of the project is to relieve capacity constraints of the existing transportation system in a manner sensitive to and protective of California's unique and natural resources. The report should make clear that, in the LOSSAN corridor, there is no plan for a High-Speed Train ("HST") system, but only non-electric diesel powered trains. This is not clearly explained in the DEIR, which raises confusion as to what kinds of trains are being proposed along the LOSSAN corridor along the coast.

The project would fail in its stated objective to relieve the existing transportation systems in a manner sensitive to and protective of California's natural resources. The LOSSAN corridor proposed double tracking would increase the amount of diesel train traffic along the Southern California coastline. The proposed alternatives that the DEIR prefers (Chapter 6 in DEIR) call for double tracking through two of San Diego's precious natural lagoons. The Camino Del Mar Tunnel Options require extensive tunneling under the City of Del Mar and placing additional rail lines through both the Los Peñasquitos Lagoon and the San Dieguito Lagoon.

AL074-1



202 C STREET, MS 10A • SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92101  
(619) 238-6611 • FAX: (619) 238-6993 • email: scott@cityofsd.org

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**Insufficient Environmental Analysis of Increased Train Traffic's Environmental Affects On The Lagoon**

These options would lead to a large tunnel opening into the Los Peñasquitos Lagoon and increased train traffic through coastal estuaries. This increase in train traffic would conflict with the City of San Diego's goals and initiatives in protecting the Lagoon. The past couple of years have seen an active effort by the City of San Diego and its residents to scale back traffic and congestion in the Los Peñasquitos Lagoon. The City has closed Sorrento Valley Road from all vehicle traffic along the edge of the Los Peñasquitos Lagoon. The City, working in conjunction with citizen groups, has re-designed Carmel Valley Road to enhance the community character and protect the Lagoon from excessive run-off, while removing invasive plant species.

The DEIR's Biological Resources and Wetlands Chapter's cursory review of potential impacts to the sensitive biological resources is inadequate. Prior to a choice of any one routing alternative, the DEIR needs to have a more detailed and scientific analysis of how increased diesel train traffic through coastal lagoons could affect the sensitive biological diversity of the lagoons. Currently the extent of the DEIR's biological resources and wetlands impact analysis focuses only the structures the trains will run on and not on what impacts additional quantities of train traffic may have.

AL074-1  
cont.

*"The Camino del Mar tunnel would not result in new impacts and the new bridge would follow the existing bridge over the Los Peñasquitos Lagoon and San Dieguito lagoons. Overall, the Camino del Mar tunnel would likely have fewer potential impacts on biological resources associated with the lagoons, because it would not introduce new structures to the southern edge of the San Dieguito Lagoon." Page 3.15-30*

The environmental analysis above is insufficient in its analysis of routing diesel trains through coastal estuaries with sensitive biological resources.

These alternatives will also increase noise and air pollution, as well as increase vibrations throughout the region. The DEIR on page 3.4-23 is completely devoid of any discussion of how the increased noise and vibrations could affect the lagoons and their inhabitants. These lagoons are ecologically sensitive and the additional train traffic from two rail lines through them is neither sensitive nor protective to the environment.

**Insufficient Routing Alternatives**

The DEIR is lacking in analyzing alternative alignments and routing options for the Oceanside to San Diego portion of the LOSSAN corridor. The DEIR alleges to use existing right of ways, yet there is no routing option using the I-5 corridor. This multi-lane existing concrete structure should be examined as an alternative routing for the diesel trains, either on top of or underneath the I-5. I understand the concern about investments already made in tracks and stations north of San Diego along the proposed



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**Comment Letter AL074 Continued**

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routing. But choosing a routing alternative based on these factors alone is negligent and poor planning. The current routing options fail to recognize and account for the uniqueness and preciousness of the few remaining Southern California Coastal Estuaries that these tracks are slated to travel through. Loss of any acreage of any of our remaining coastal lagoons or increased traffic through them should be avoided at all costs. CALTRANS should be taking proactive steps to avoid any future degradation to these coastal lagoons and also use this opportunity to remove current track encroachments.

AL074-1  
cont.

***Incomplete Analysis of Future Modal Transportation Alternatives In The LOSSAN Corridor***

The DEIR is also limited in its discussion of the Modal Alternatives outlined on page S-3. The DEIR modal alternatives are designed around the premise that increasing highway capacity for cars is the only future freeway use to transport passengers. There is a failure in the DEIR to recognize alternative means for transporting passengers throughout the LOSSAN corridor, which would not require intensifying the use of passenger trains within the corridor. An example of future means of transportation is Bus Rapid Transit ("BRT"), approved locally by SANDAG and nationally by the Federal Department of Transportation. (See <http://knowledge.fhwa.dot.gov/fta/brt.nsf/home>.) There is nothing speculative or infeasible about analyzing BRT, which will be a regional alternative means of transportation that could serve as a feeder to the HST system outside of the LOSSAN corridor. In order to sufficiently examine future routing needs, a complete examination of additional modal possibilities in the LOSSAN corridor should be completed. The project engineers must recognize that HST and additional rail lines are many years off. When discussing possible modal alternatives to transport passengers some 15 plus years into the future, advancements in modal technologies must be addressed, or the environmental analysis will be unreliable at the time of implementation. The DEIR's analysis of modal alternative potential effects on the biological resources of the lagoon (page 3.15-29) is insufficient in that it is based on current modal technologies. This section fails to account for new modal options and relies unjustifiably on increased private automobile traffic as the only future modal alternative.

AL074-2

Sincerely,  
  
Scott H. Peters

SHP:rg



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**Federal Railroad  
Administration**

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**Response to Comments of Scott H. Peters, Councilman, First District, City of San Diego, August 31, 2004  
(Letter AL074)**

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**AL074-1**

Please see standard response 6.42.1. Please also see standard response 2.30.1.

**AL074-2**

The focus of the HST system is on serving intercity passenger trips between regions. The Modal Alternative development focused on potential improvements of existing modes of intercity travel. Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is under consideration for local and regional services primarily within regions. The co-lead agencies are not aware of efforts or proposals for use of (BRT) as a solution for intercity transportation needs.

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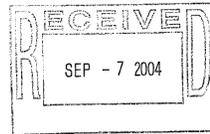


Transbay Joint Powers Authority  
201 Mission Street • Suite 1960 • San Francisco, CA • 94105-1858

Maria Ayerdi, Executive Director

August 31, 2004

Mehdi Morshed  
Executive Director  
California High Speed Rail Authority  
925 L Street, Suite 1425  
Sacramento, CA 95814



RE: CHSRA DRAFT EIR/EIS Comments

Dear Mr. Morshed:

The Transbay Joint Powers Authority strongly supports the California High Speed Rail Authority's (CHSRA) plan to build a California High-Speed Train System (CHSTS) capable of reaching speeds of 220 miles per hour. The projected High-Speed Train travel time from downtown San Francisco to downtown Los Angeles is 2 hours and 30 minutes or less. This system will have a significant positive economic and environmental impact on the State of California. We thank you for the opportunity to comment on your document. Please find our comments attached.

The Transbay Joint Powers Authority has been working diligently to advance the plans and implementation of the San Francisco terminus, the new San Francisco Transbay Terminal. The Transbay Terminal/Caltrain Downtown Extension/Redevelopment Project Final Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report was signed by the Federal Transit Administration on March 12, 2004, and certified by the three co-lead agencies on April 22, 2004. The Transbay Terminal will provide a multi-modal facility designed to serve numerous bus passenger service providers as well as regional commuter rail and California High-Speed Rail.

In furthering our plans, we hired Parsons Brinckerhoff to conduct a simulation analysis to determine the feasibility of the conceptual plans for the terminal to meet the California High Speed Rail Authority's proposed operating plans. The study assumed a goal of 98 percent on-time performance with "zero minute" tolerances for on-time arrivals and departures at the San Francisco Terminal as described in the CHSRA Business Plan. The final draft was completed this month and concludes, "The feasibility of achieving this goal was supported through the dynamic simulation...". It is our intent to design and construct the Transbay Terminal and rail extension to meet the anticipated demand for both high-speed and commuter rail service into downtown San Francisco.

We look forward to working with you in partnership in this important infrastructure program. Success will require our continued dialogue as both projects proceed and the operating plans for the San Francisco Transbay Terminal, Caltrain and the California High Speed Rail Authority are further developed.

Sincerely,

Maria Ayerdi  
Executive Director

AL075

AL075-1

DRAFT PROGRAM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT  
REPORT/ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (EIR/EIS) FOR THE  
PROPOSED CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED TRAIN SYSTEM (CHSTS)

Comments Regarding California High Speed Rail and  
the San Francisco Transbay Terminal

Review of the Draft Program EIR/EIS identified limited mention of the San Francisco Transbay Terminal (SF TBT) in the document:

1. A bulleted sentence on p. 2-52 that identifies TBT and its function, and
2. A three-paragraph discussion on p. 6-17, which mentions a "conceptual operating plan that...proposed 66 trains (per day per direction - 132 total)" which could be served at SF TBT "assuming dedicated use of four tracks and two island platforms" but that with the six tracks and three platforms planned for SF TBT, "overall capacity available to accommodate HST and Caltrain service would need subsequent cooperative operations planning analysis to determine the most efficient mix and scheduling of services..."

Analysis of San Francisco Transbay Terminal

In August 2004 the Transbay Joint Powers Authority completed its Final Draft of the Transbay Terminal Station Evaluation conducted by Parsons Brinckerhoff, which evaluated the operational capacity of the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). The analysis assumed a peak one-hour service level of a maximum total of twelve trains per hour (six in and six out) each for CHSTS and Caltrain regional service. The analysis was based on the results of a terminal simulation model using the Berkeley Simulation Software - Rail Traffic Controller simulation model, the same simulation software system used to develop the system-wide model for the CHSTS.

A "generic" train set based upon the specifications and performance characteristics of a 400 meter Siemens type EMU high speed train was used to simulate high speed train movements. A consist composed of 6 coaches (including one cab car) and one MP-36 locomotive was used to simulate the Caltrain train movements.

The results of this analysis indicate it is feasible to achieve a goal of 98 percent on-time performance with "zero minute" tolerances for on-time arrivals and departures at the San Francisco Terminal. This conclusion was supported through the dynamic simulation of trains operating over the network and indicated that a system-wide on-time performance of 98 percent could be maintained for the 132 trains described in the California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) Business Plan.

Additional Comments Regarding CHSTS Terminal Operations

1. As part of the "subsequent cooperative operations planning" suggested in the EIR/EIS (p. 6-17), careful and detailed analysis of 2020 terminal operations is needed. This includes not just the utilization of platforms at the SF TBT, but also:

AL075-2

AL075-3

**Comment Letter AL075 Continued**

- Sequencing and timing of affected CHSTS and Caltrain consists into, at rest and out of the tail tracks
- Sequencing, timing and track assignments of CHSTS and Caltrain consists over the SF TBT approach trackage, between the SF TBT and the existing line at 4<sup>th</sup>/Townsend, as well as beyond that point to and from any remote storage and servicing yard that more detailed operations planning indicates may be needed
- Detailed design of all SF TBT terminal trackage—station tracks, tail tracks, approach tracks and associated special trackwork—to accommodate the operating requirements of both CHSTS and Caltrain

We look forward to working with the CHSRA to develop operational plans that will address these and other related issues.

2. We are concerned about the suggestion that there could or should be more than one westbay terminal. The Transbay Terminal is ideally located and positioned to serve this function, and has been configured to accommodate it. Additional analysis and discussion of the feasibility of creating a CHSTS station at Fourth and King Streets needs to be provided and needs to address current plans for the Transbay Terminal/Caltrain Downtown Extension, which will reconstruct this facility.
3. Reference Table 2-H-4a: Bay Area to Merced—High Speed Train Alignment: Under “Intermodal Conditions”, please add Golden Gate Transit and Samtrans to the list of regional carriers that would access the Transbay Terminal Station. Also, please indicate that with the proposed subsurface connection between the Terminal and Market Street, BART and MUNI Metro would be similarly served.
4. Operations Report Figure 2, a string chart, is defined as “illustrating” the weekday service plan between San Diego and San Francisco from 4:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. However, Figure 2 appears to contradict the Schedule shown in the CHSRA Business Plan, which shows all trains terminating in San Francisco. This discrepancy should be clarified and corrected.

AL075-3  
cont.

AL075-4

AL075-5

AL075-6



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**Response to Comments of Maria Ayerdi, Executive Director, Transbay Joint Powers Authority, August 31, 2004  
(Letter AL075)**

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**AL075-1**

Acknowledged.

**AL075-2**

Acknowledged.

**AL075-3**

Acknowledged. The Authority and the FRA look forward to continuing to work in cooperation with the Transbay Joint Powers Board.

**AL075-4**

The Authority has identified the Transbay Terminal as the preferred location for a potential HST terminus station to serve San Francisco. Please refer to Chapter 6A of the Final Program EIR/EIS.

**AL075-5**

Acknowledged. In the Final Program EIR/EIS Table 2-H-4a in Appendix 2-H has been revised to reflect the additional connections.

**AL075-6**

Acknowledged. The figure is illustrative only, and was not used in the Draft Program EIR/EIS. It has no explicit influence on the information presented on the conceptual service plan in the Program EIR/EIS. The technical reports will not be revised as part of preparing the Final Program EIR/EIS.

Comment Letter AL076

AL076



Community Development Department

August 31, 2004

California High Speed Rail Authority
California High-Speed Train
Draft Program EIR/EIS Comments
925 L Street, Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF DRAFT EIR/EIS FOR CALIFORNIA HIGH SPEED TRAIN SYSTEM

Dear Sir or Madam:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Draft Program Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (Program EIR/EIS) for a proposed high-speed train system extending from Sacramento and the San Francisco Bay Area to San Diego.

The City of Tustin has expressed its opposition to high speed rail through Tustin in letters to the High Speed Rail Authority dated June 1, July 1, and July 19, 1999, and September 24, 2001. The City of Tustin remains concerned that the proposed High Speed Train (HST) system will have significant and unavoidable adverse noise, vibration, safety, aesthetic and traffic impacts on adjacent properties within the City of Tustin. The burden of these impacts on existing residential areas of our community outweighs any potential benefits to our community.

We continue to support the inland Interstate 15 corridor in lieu of the Orange County route to Irvine, as recommended in the California High-Speed Rail Commission's Summary Report and Action Plan dated December 1996. As stated in the 1996 report, the LOSSAN corridor appears to be best suited for incremental improvements to existing conventional rail service.

The City of Tustin has identified the following concerns and issues regarding the Draft Program EIR/EIS:

- 1. The document indicates that the grade separations to be constructed with the project will benefit communities by nearly eliminating all noise due to horn blowing. It also states that the grade separations will enhance traffic safety by reducing traffic conflicts. However, the HST project will not be operational until the year 2020. Since the City of Tustin is already pursuing a grade separation of the railroad crossing at Red Hill Avenue, the City of Tustin may be able to achieve the noise and traffic safety benefits prior to implementation of the HST project. Therefore, the grade separation at Red Hill Avenue should only be listed as a benefit if it is constructed in conjunction with the HST.
2. The EIR/EIS states that the HST will generate noise levels that exceed those generated by conventional trains. Any increase in noise levels is a significant concern to the City of Tustin because sensitive residential neighborhoods are located adjacent to the LOSSAN Corridor.

City of Tustin

300 Centennial Way
Tustin, CA 92780
714.573.3100

High Speed Rail Authority
Draft Program EIR/EIS Comments
August 31, 2004
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- 3. The issue of vibration is not adequately addressed in the report. Concerns remain regarding the potential for vibration impacts on adjacent structures. Based on the information in the report, at this time it is not possible to determine the extent of potential vibration impacts.
4. The "Traffic and Circulation" analyses contained in the document are too cursory and not meaningful. There are anticipated changes to the surrounding road system that need to be addressed in the evaluations. More detail regarding the assumptions and methodologies used in the traffic analyses is required so that the City of Tustin will be able to review this document. For example, the EIR/EIS indicates growth factors were applied to existing traffic counts, but since the study area is adjacent to the developing Tustin Legacy project, standard growth rates are not likely to be applicable. Therefore, the analyses may be inaccurate.

AL076-4

AL076-5

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide comments on the Draft Program EIR/EIS. The City of Tustin would appreciate receiving notification of the Final EIR documents with the responses to our comments when they become available.

If you have any questions regarding the City's comments, please call me at (714) 573-3016 or Doug Anderson, Senior Project Manager - Transportation, at (714) 573-3172.

Sincerely,

Scott Reekstin

Scott Reekstin
Senior Planner

cc: Dana Kasdan
Doug Anderson
Terry Lutz

SR/Rail/High Speed Train DEIR-EIS Aug 2004 Letter.doc

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AL076-2

AL076-3

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U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

**Response to Comments of Scott Reekstin, Senior Planner, City of Tustin, Community Development Department, August 31, 2004 (Letter AL076)****AL076-1**

The commentor's concerns are acknowledged. The Authority has identified a preferred HST system that includes direct service to Irvine in Orange County along the LOSSAN corridor option between Los Angeles and Orange County. This option assumes shared operations with other passenger services and separation from freight with 4 total tracks (2 for passenger rail services and 2 for freight) between Los Angeles and Fullerton. South of Fullerton the alignment would be two tracks with additional passing tracks at intermediate stations. The electrified HST would need to share tracks (at reduced speeds) with non-electric Metrolink commuter rail, Surfliner intercity service and occasional freight trains (there are fewer freight operations south of Fullerton). Shared use improvements to the LOSSAN corridor would be considerably less costly (about \$2.25 billion less) and would have considerably fewer environmental impacts than a new dedicated alignment along the UPRR Santa Ana line.

This alignment would increase connectivity and accessibility to Orange County, California's second most populated county, and the transportation hubs of Anaheim and Irvine. Improvements to the LOSSAN corridor would provide a safer, more reliable, energy efficient intercity mode to serve Orange County and Southern Los Angeles County while improving the safety, reliability, and performance of the "Metrolink" regional commuter, and "Surfliner" intercity service because of the fully grade separated tracks, separation from freight, and a state-of-the-art signaling and communications system. The HST service would greatly increase the capacity for intercity and commuter travel and reduce automobile traffic. Environmental impacts would be minimized since this alignment utilizes the existing LOSSAN right-of-way. Noise impacts from existing operations could be reduced due to the elimination of horn noise and gate noise from existing rail services as a result of adding grade separations at existing grade crossings.

Further analysis at the project level could indicate somewhat greater infrastructure requirements with potentially increased costs and environmental impacts. However, the cost and potential for environmental impact associated with the LOSSAN corridor option are expected to still be considerably less than those associated with the UPRR Santa Ana option. The Authority identification of the LOSSAN rail alignment is based on the assumption that the capacity and compatibility issues associated with the shared operations with existing non-electric service (Surfliners, Metrolink, and freight) can be resolved. If the HST proposal moves forward, the Authority will continue to work with communities to minimize potential impacts.

**AL076-2**

Acknowledged. The Final Program EIR/EIS states the benefit of grade separations along the existing LOSSAN corridor in general and does not single out the grade crossing at Red Hill Avenue. To the extent that the grade separation at Red Hill Avenue, or at any other location, is completed by others prior to the implementation of the proposed HST system, the potential noise and traffic safety benefits would not be attributed to the HST system.

**AL076-3**

Acknowledged.

**AL076-4**

Vibration levels associated with HST are relatively lower than the levels associated with conventional passenger and freight trains due to the lighter weight of HST equipment and the high standard of track construction and maintenance required for high-speed operations. Vibration impacts are highly site-specific in nature. These issues will be addressed further during subsequent project level environmental review, based on more precise information regarding location and design of the facilities proposed (e.g., specific

alignment, track and trackbed construction, soil types, type and design of proximate structures, etc.). The more detailed engineering associated with the project level environmental analysis will allow the Authority to further investigate ways to avoid, minimize and mitigate potential impacts.

**AL076-5**

The Program EIR/EIS traffic analysis was completed at a regional level of detail based on regional modeling data. Should the HST program move forward site-specific intersection traffic analysis will be required as part of subsequent project level studies. Should the HST proposal move forward, the Authority would work closely with the City of Tustin and others to ensure use of appropriate information and methodologies in analyzing potential traffic impacts and to ensure consideration of appropriate access improvements to minimize and mitigate potential traffic impacts.

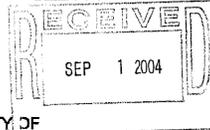


Comment Letter AL077

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TRANSPORTATION

AL077 PAGE 02



RESOLUTION NO. 2004-298

A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FRESNO, CALIFORNIA, SUPPORTING THE HIGH SPEED RAIL PROJECT IN THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

WHEREAS, on January 28, 2004, the California High Speed Rail Authority (Authority) and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) unveiled the Draft EIR/EIS proposing a high-speed train system for intercity travel in California as the preferred alternative to meet California's travel demands; and

WHEREAS, the study shows a proposed 700-mile high-speed train system could carry up to 68 million passengers by 2020 linking major metropolitan centers of San Francisco and Sacramento in the north, through the Central Valley (including a stop in the City of Fresno), to Los Angeles and San Diego in the south; and

WHEREAS, California's burgeoning population will reach 50 million by 2030, 11 million new residents in the next 15 years, and existing transportation systems can't meet demand. Expansion of existing infrastructure requiring 3000 new miles of highway lanes and nearly 60 new gates and five new runways would still be insufficient for future travel projections and demands; and

WHEREAS, Since 1998 the Authority has thoroughly studied, analyzed, reviewed and evaluated dozens of potential routes and corridors throughout California on the basis of capital, operating and maintenance costs, travel time; and engineering, operational and environmental constraints. Corridors were evaluated on regional basis before selecting the alternatives for further study for servicing the Bay Area; and

WHEREAS, the development of intercity high-speed trains will increase efficiency and fully integrate and coordinate with other modes of local transit connecting with existing

Adopted \_\_\_\_\_
Approved \_\_\_\_\_
Effective \_\_\_\_\_

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airports and transit terminals, easing growing demand on congested highways and airports providing passengers with a new, safe choice for travel and offer better access to underserved areas around the state; and

WHEREAS, high-speed rail offers significant environmental benefits such as reducing energy use and dependence on petroleum, less land use and access than needed for highway and airport expansion, reducing air pollutant emissions therefore improving air quality, and lessened impacts on sensitive habitats, wetlands helping to protect California's environment for future generations; and

WHEREAS, building a high-speed rail system will create local and statewide jobs and strengthen California's economy by creating 450,000 new jobs by constructing permanent rail lines and multi-modal train stations which will create economic engines for local economies and is two to three times cheaper than expanding highways and airports; and

WHEREAS, California's infrastructure must be improved to meet current and future needs; and

WHEREAS, statistics show a 2:1 return on investment to build the system serving San Francisco as a jobs, commerce, and travel center.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Fresno as follows:

- 1. The high-speed rail is technically, environmentally, and economically feasible as outlined in the studies and EIR/EIS and once constructed would be operationally self-sufficient; and
2. The Authority is commended for their work involving the statewide public hearing process to finalize the EIR/EIS process and high speed rail proposal.

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**Comment Letter AL077 Continued**

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STATE OF CALIFORNIA )  
COUNTY OF FRESNO ) ss.  
CITY OF FRESNO )

I, REBECCA E. KLISCH, City Clerk of the City of Fresno, certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted by the Council of the City of Fresno, at a regular meeting held on the 31st day of August, 2004.

AYES : Boyajian, Calhoun, Dages, Perea, Sterling, Castillo  
NOES : None  
ABSENT : Duncan  
ABSTAIN : None

Mayor Approval:           N/A          , 2004

Mayor Approval/No Return:           N/A          , 2004

Mayor Veto:           N/A          , 2004

Council Override Vote:           N/A          , 2004

REBECCA E. KLISCH  
City Clerk

BY:           Rebecca Klisch            
Deputy

APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

BY:           James C. Sanchez            
James C. Sanchez  
Chief Assistant City Attorney

JCS:pm [31357pm/reso] 08-26-04



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**Response to Comments of Rebecca E. Klisch, City Clerk and James C. Sanchez, Chief Assistant City Attorney, City of Fresno (Resolution No. 2004-298), September 1, 2004 (Letter AL077)**

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**AL077**

Acknowledged.