



JPB Board of Directors
Meeting of October 5, 2023

Correspondence as of September 8, 2023

<u>#</u>	<u>Subject</u>
1	Re_ Casey Fromson
2	HSR response letter to the City of Millbrae
3	CLARIFICATION RE_ City of Millbrae Transit Center Letter Sent on August 31, 2023
4	Item H. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL—PENDING LITIGATION

From: [Michael Herrick](#)
To: [Jan Alexis Salandanan](#)
Cc: [Board \(@caltrain.com\)](#)
Subject: Re: Casey Fromson
Date: Tuesday, September 5, 2023 3:31:25 PM

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Dear Alexis,

Thank you for your response. Within but a week or two I did receive two very positive responses from the vantage point of both communication and safety/operations review so I was really impressed by the alacrity with which substantive communication happens when sending a pungent email to the Board.

Empowering more of the staff within customer service itself, at Caltrain, may well have achieved some of the same results, without the pungency, more than a year ago? I recall that the first time I called customer service about this issue the rep was kind, knew about the general issue itself and had, herself, been affected by it while traveling on Caltrain.

I wish you well with all of the changes and improvements coming to Caltrain in the coming years.

Michael

On Tue, Sep 5, 2023 at 11:42 AM Jan Alexis Salandanan <SalandananJ@samtrans.com> wrote:

To Michael Herrick,

Thank you for contacting Caltrain. We are sorry to see, however, that it was due to concerns you had with our Communications team. We sincerely apologize for the poor impression you were left with of our service. We at Caltrain are well aware of the importance of clear communication in public transit—at every level of our service. And we also know this can best be accomplished with a deep understanding of the Communications field, with theory guided by practical experience.

Rest assured, our goal at the San Mateo County Transit District has not changed; Caltrain is still committed in providing our community with safe and reliable transit service. Even with the challenges posed by the final stages of our Caltrain Modernization project, we are well aware it remains our responsibility to ensure our customers receive the service we have advertised and they, in turn, expect. If we fall short of this goal, know that we will work to address the issue in order to meet the professional standard we have as a public transit agency—and improve beyond it.

To that end, know that your comments on your recent experiences travelling with us, along with your concerns about our service and staff, were forwarded to the proper parties for review. Additionally, a copy of this correspondence will be sent to our Board of Directors. Thank you for taking the time to share your experiences with us and for riding Caltrain.

Kind regards,

Alexis Salandanan

San Mateo County Transit District

Customer Service Dept.

[1250 San Carlos Avenue](#)

[San Carlos, CA 94070-1306](#)

1-800-660-4287

www.smctd.com

From: Michael Herrick <michael.c.herrick@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, August 3, 2023 4:17 PM

To: Board (@caltrain.com) <board@caltrain.com>

Subject: Casey Fromson

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Dear Caltrain Board,

I understand that in good policy governance a Board does not get immediately involved in operational decisions. Caltrain's current communication situation, with its ridership, has reached such a nadir that I see no other options. If you do not implement change for the better, immediately, riders will begin to lobby the federal government to claw back funds the

electrification project has received to date due to misuse.

Riders will also leave. In my case, that means simply leaving the Bay Area. Without viable public transit, a city ceases to be a city. I suspect many other riders work from home due to this issue, thus contributing to the current economic death spiral of some SF districts. Or, they are on the roads, unlikely ever to return to a transit system that has treated them so badly.

I suspect that the root of the communication failures about track changing lies in poor and irresponsible communication by the contractors doing the electrification track work. If they are empowered to make track changes without first creating a communication handshake, including precise details as to time and stations involved, with Caltrain's central systems desk, then that is a problem which Caltrain should have been solving long ago. This problem may be entirely outside the control of the Caltrain communications office itself.

I in mid-July, however, I confirmed that Casey Fromson has not attempted to spearhead a visible effort, internal to Caltrain, to create a backup communication loop to attempt to limit damage to customers. An attendant, or conductor(?), on the 5:39 Northbound from Menlo Park confirmed that he does have the ability to communicate to the central system desk as soon as he sees that his train is switching tracks. He does not because he thinks he needs a button, personally, to effect the necessary electronic billboard changes at the station he is approaching. Current technology should be able to effect a change to affected station billboards within 2-3 minutes, total, from the time a conductor sees that his train has switched tracks. It's not the conductor's job to create this backup communication system and empower himself. Casey Fromson is positioned within Caltrain to enable this empowerment of its employees to serve the communication needs of customers.

This backup communication method would require communication teamwork within Caltrain itself. This method, a backup to the primary communication responsibility of the contractors, would be in service to the ridership—the point of Caltrain's existence and, in theory, it's primary source of funding.

Or is this, in fact, the point of Caltrain? One wonders after reviewing Casey Fromson's credentials to be Chief Communications Officer for Caltrain. She seems to have no training or credentials in communication. I respect on the job training and experience but her career experience is telling. All of her communication bona fides have to do with the political processes by which Caltrain procures public funding. Which seems to help answer the question in the negative. Caltrain's purpose may in fact have little or nothing to do with serving riders and providing a valid, self-sustainable public transit option. Perhaps this board is primarily invested in acquiring money for the local economy to support construction jobs and to secure channels of regular public funding to operate a mirage public

transit service which does not actually pay much attention to the people transiting? Certainly the fact that the construction contractor has the power and authority to suddenly divert trains without obligation to communicate this change to the fee-paying ridership is an indication of whose bread Caltrain seems to be buttering.

That would align with the bizarre historical maps I come across when transferring each morning to BART at Millbrae. That so much money has been devoted to electrifying an antiquated freight track system when there has always been the possibility to extend BART under or above El Camino Real from Millbrae to Santa Clara seems odd to put it mildly. Pouring “electrification” money into completing BART would have achieved grade separation everywhere while also bringing so many more benefits to society through the type of organic and natural economic growth which underlies the strength and vitality of megacity economies and truly civil societies.

I’m not enamored of the phrase systemic racism, but it’s difficult to see Caltrain’s existence in any other light. Knowing Stanford’s practice to keep black workers out of offices and in dining halls and residence hall service only, during the exact historical period when the communities in its orbit were busy tanking the obvious and simple method for delivering sound public transit in the Bay Area, causes one to more than wonder.

As the board overseeing Caltrain it is not your job to replace Casey Fromson. Perhaps she is amazing and should be running the whole operation, and not just communications. The disconnect between her past communication chops and Caltrain’s day-to-day communication needs is revealing of something.

I drafted this email on a day in July when I sprinted around from the Northbound Menlo Park platform to the Southbound one at 5:39 AM. That day I told the attendant enough was enough after completing my tenth Millbrae or Menlo sprint in the past year only to watch some trains blithely pull away. Perhaps my words to him had an effect. This morning in Menlo Park there were some last minute announcements communicated at 5:37 allowing two of us to traverse the tracks safely before the barriers went down. But 5 minutes later, in RWC, a whole gaggle of passengers boarded shocked, confused and exhausted. I guess they don’t ride Caltrain much. And, I suppose they may not make many forays on it in the future. Why Menlo could get the news but RWC, with 5 extra communication minutes, did not indicates something amiss.

I hope you are able to bring some good to Caltrain and the Bay Area ridership as a result of this email. I’ll drop a printout of it in snail mail for Secretary Buttigieg’s office in case they can provide you some assistance to help out riders—beyond the trickle down effect of money poured into the Bay Area economy through construction dollars provided through Eshoo’s efforts on Capitol Hill.

Sincerely

Michael Herrick

Menlo Park, CA

From: [Miller, Sherri@HSR](mailto:Miller_Sherri@HSR) on behalf of [Kelly, Brian@HSR](mailto:Kelly_Brian@HSR)
To: aschneider@ci.millbrae.ca.us; mgoodman@ci.millbrae.ca.us; afung@ci.millbrae.ca.us; acahalan@ci.millbrae.ca.us; gpapan@ci.millbrae.ca.us
Cc: Egonzalez@ci.millbrae.ca.us; TWilliams@ci.millbrae.ca.us; ETran@ci.millbrae.ca.us; amogensen@ci.millbrae.ca.us; Kevin.Fong@mail.house.gov; Josh.becker@sen.ca.gov; Nicole.Fernandez@sen.ca.gov; Assemblymember.papan@assembly.ca.gov; [Pine, Dave \[dpine@smcgov.org\]](mailto:Pine_Dave_[dpine@smcgov.org]); ncorza@smcgov.org; SupMueller@smcgov.org; wslocum@smcgov.org; [Canepa, David \[dcanepa@smcgov.org\]](mailto:Canepa_David_[dcanepa@smcgov.org]); MCallagy@smcgov.org; ceo@lifemoves.org; srobinson@bayareacouncil.org; tbannon@caanet.org; mbrownrigg@burlingame.org; operations@hiphousing.org; mailbox@hiphousing.org; estivers@hlcsmc.org; laura@samaritanhousesanmateo.org; info@spur.org; media@spur.org; Imirante@bayareacouncil.org; hello@yimbylaw.org; sfyimby@yimbyaction.org; homeforall@smcgov.org; rdegolia@ci.atherton.ca.us; [Mates, Julia \[jmates@belmont.gov\]](mailto:Mates_Julia_[jmates@belmont.gov]); madisondavis@brisbaneca.org; mbrownrigg@burlingame.org; joanne.delrosario@colma.ca.gov; raybesq@gmail.com; lqauthier@cityofepa.org; ifroomin@fostercity.org; dpenrose@hmbcity.com; ckrolik@hillsborough.net; jwolosin@menlopark.org; bigstyckt@ci.pacifica.ca.us; jaalfs@portolavalley.net; igee@redwoodcity.org; [Medina, Rico \[rmedina@sanbruno.ca.gov\]](mailto:Medina_Rico_[rmedina@sanbruno.ca.gov]); arak@cityofsancarlos.org; alee@cityofsanmateo.org; flor.nicolas@ssf.net; cshaw@woodsidgetown.org; [Board \(@caltrain.com\)](mailto:Board_([@caltrain.com])); [Romero, Carlos \[cromero@cityofepa.org\]](mailto:Romero_Carlos_[cromero@cityofepa.org]); [Beach, Emily \[ebeach@burlingame.org\]](mailto:Beach_Emily_[ebeach@burlingame.org]); [Nagales, Mark \[mark.nagales@ssf.net\]](mailto:Nagales_Mark_[mark.nagales@ssf.net])
Subject: HSR response letter to the City of Millbrae
Date: Wednesday, September 6, 2023 3:19:13 PM
Attachments: [image006.png](#)
[HSR Letter to City of Millbrae - September 6, 2023.pdf](#)

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Good afternoon,

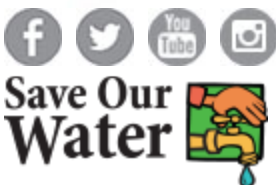
Please see the attached response to the City of Millbrae letter, dated August 30, 2023, regarding the Millbrae Station Transit Center.

Thank you,

Sherri Miller
California High-Speed Rail Authority
Executive Office
(916) 837-1376
Sherri.Miller@hsr.ca.gov
www.hsr.ca.gov



HIGH-SPEED RAIL:
CONNECTING AND
TRANSFORMING CALIFORNIA





Gavin Newsom
GOVERNOR

Brian P. Kelly
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



September 6, 2023

Mayor Ann Schneider
City of Millbrae
621 Magnolia Avenue
Millbrae, CA 94030

Vice Mayor Maurice Goodman
City of Millbrae
621 Magnolia Avenue
Millbrae, CA 94030

Councilmember Anders Fung
City of Millbrae
621 Magnolia Avenue
Millbrae, CA 94030

Councilmember Angelina Cahalan
City of Millbrae
621 Magnolia Avenue
Millbrae, CA 94030

Councilmember Gina Papan
City of Millbrae
621 Magnolia Avenue
Millbrae, CA 94030

Dear Mayor Schneider and Members of the City Council,

We were surprised and disappointed to see the letter that you circulated on August 30, 2023. As you know, we have been in active negotiations to set up a framework to ultimately resolve and settle the disagreements between the City and the California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority). As your letter was released, our teams were exchanging information that is intended to ultimately advance a station and multi-use development project that would achieve the transportation and housing objectives shared by the state, region, and city of Millbrae.

As a show of good faith in those negotiations, the Authority supported and helped the City secure a \$600,000 planning grant from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission in the hopes that the grant would bolster our collaborative work in achieving a shared vision for the station and surrounding area. That vision, which both the City and the Authority have publicly supported, includes a successful intermodal station, substantial transit-oriented development (including housing) around it, and convenient access by different modes.

The Authority is not promoting parking over housing. When our Board approved this portion of the project, the resolution directed the Authority:

To explore joint design and planning opportunities with the City of Millbrae when advancing from preliminary station design to final station design, in order to concurrently advance the two important statewide priorities of high-speed rail and transit-oriented development in the San Francisco to San Jose project section broadly and around the Millbrae station specifically.

As we have repeatedly communicated to the City, any parking needs at the Station can be accommodated as part of a larger integrated development plan that would include both the City's transit-oriented development and the Authority's station facilities. To reiterate, we firmly believe that there are available solutions in Millbrae that can support both the goals of improving the Bay Area's and California's mobility through high-speed rail and addressing critical housing needs through transit-oriented development around the station. Achieving these objectives will require two partners working in good faith toward a sound resolution. The Authority remains committed to this process and outcome.

We look forward to continuing our work—as partners—to advance a project in Millbrae that meets our shared objectives.

Respectfully,


Jim Ghielmetti
Board Member


Brian P. Kelly
Chief Executive Officer

cc: Kevin Mullin, Congressman
Josh Becker, Senator
Diane Papan, Assemblymember
Dave Pine, San Mateo County Supervisor
Noelia Corzo, San Mateo County Supervisor
Ray Mueller, San Mateo County Supervisor
Warren Slocum, San Mateo County Supervisor
David Canepa, San Mateo County Supervisor
Mike Callagy, San Mateo County Executive
Aubrey Merriman, Chief Executive Officer
Jim Wunderman, President, and CEO
Thomas K. Bannon, CEO, California Apartment Association
Michael Brownrigg, Chair, The Housing Endowment and Regional Trust
Kate Comfort Harr, Executive Director, Hip Housing
Evelyn Stivers, Executive Director, Housing Leadership Council of San Mateo County
Laura Bent, Chief Executive Officer, Samaritan House
Lydia Tan, Chair SPUR
Louis Mirante, Vice President of Public Policy, Housing, Bay Area Council

Sonja Trauss, President, YIMBY
Laura Foote, Executive Director, YIMBY Action
Home For All
Rick DeGolia, Mayor of Atherton
Julia Mates, Mayor of Belmont
Madison Davis, Mayor of Brisbane
Michael Brownrigg, Mayor of Burlingame
Joanne del Rosario, Mayor of Colma
Ray Buenaventura, Mayor of Daly City
Lisa Gauthier, Mayor of East Palo Alto
Jon Froomin, Mayor of Foster City
Deborah Penrose, Mayor of Half Moon Bay
Chirstine Krolik, Mayor of Hillsborough
Jen Wolosin, Mayor of Menlo Park
Tygarjas Bigstyczk, Mayor of Pacifica
Jeff Aalfs, Mayor of Portola Valley
Jeff Gee, Mayor of Redwood City
Rico E. Medina, Mayor of San Bruno
Adam Rak, Mayor of San Carlos
Amourence Lee, Mayor of San Mateo
Buenafior Nicolas, Mayor of South San Francisco
Chris Shaw, Mayor of Woodside
Caltrain Board of Directors
Rico E. Medina, Chair, San Mateo Transportation Authority
Carlos Romero, Vice Chair, San Mateo Transportation Authority
Emily Beach, Board Member, San Mateo Transportation Authority
Noelia Corzo, San Mateo Transportation Authority
Julia Mates, San Mateo Transportation Authority
Ray Mueller, San Mateo Transportation Authority
Mark Nagales, Board Member, San Mateo Transportation Authority

From: [Rosanne Foust](#)
To: [Rosanne Foust](#)
Subject: CLARIFICATION RE: City of Millbrae Transit Center Letter Sent on August 31, 2023
Date: Friday, September 8, 2023 8:31:25 AM

You don't often get email from rfoust@samceda.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

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If you are receiving this email from me, then you were on the distribution list for a letter from the City of Millbrae regarding **"Support Housing, not Parking, at Millbrae Station's Transit Center"** sent on August 31, 2023.

The City's letter incorrectly included a reference to the San Mateo County Economic Development Association. SAMCEDA did not authorize the use of its name. I appreciate that City Manager Tom Williams contacted me and offered to send a corrected letter.

On September 6, 2023, the California High-Speed Rail Authority sent a response letter to the City of Millbrae. Rather than confuse this situation with one more letter, let me confirm the following:

- SAMCEDA has supported the concept of a high-speed rail system since Proposition 1A was approved by California voters in 2008.
- SAMCEDA supports housing in the City of Millbrae (and in every community), especially along transit corridors and near transit stations.

SAMCEDA encourages the City of Millbrae and California High-Speed Rail Authority to continue their dialog and work together to address the critical issues of housing and transportation.

Thank you,

Rosanne Foust
President and CEO

San Mateo County Economic Development Association (SAMCEDA)

1900 O'Farrell Street, Suite 380

San Mateo, CA 94403

650-413-5600

rfoust@samceda.org

www.samceda.org

From: [Roland Lebrun](#)
To: madisondavis@brisbaneca.org
Cc: terryoconnell@brisbaneca.org; kcunningham@brisbaneca.org; cliffentz@brisbaneca.org; cmackin@brisbaneca.org; [Board \(@caltrain.com\)](mailto:Board (@caltrain.com)); [SFCTA Board Secretary](#); [cacsecretary \[@caltrain.com\]](mailto:cacsecretary [@caltrain.com]); [SFCTA CAC](#)
Subject: Item H. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL—PENDING LITIGATION
Date: Thursday, September 7, 2023 5:17:28 PM
Attachments: [Item H. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL—PENDING LITIGATION.pdf](#)
[Brisbane Baylands DEIR Comments.pdf](#)

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Dear Mayor Davis,

Further to my recommendation to look at Brightline West's Light Maintenance Facilities to restore a modicum of common sense to the conversation, I am pleased to inform you that these facilities:

- Consist of 3 tracks with an option for 3 additional tracks at a later date
- Can be accommodated between Icehouse Hill and the existing tank farm as mentioned in my 2014 DEIR comments (attached)
- Do not require any modifications to the Tunnel Avenue overpass

I hope that you find this information useful and that it will assist you and your staff bring a rapid conclusion to this issue.

Sincerely,

Roland Lebrun

Brisbane Mayor and Council
Caltrain Board
SFCTA Board
Caltrain CAC
SFCTA CAC

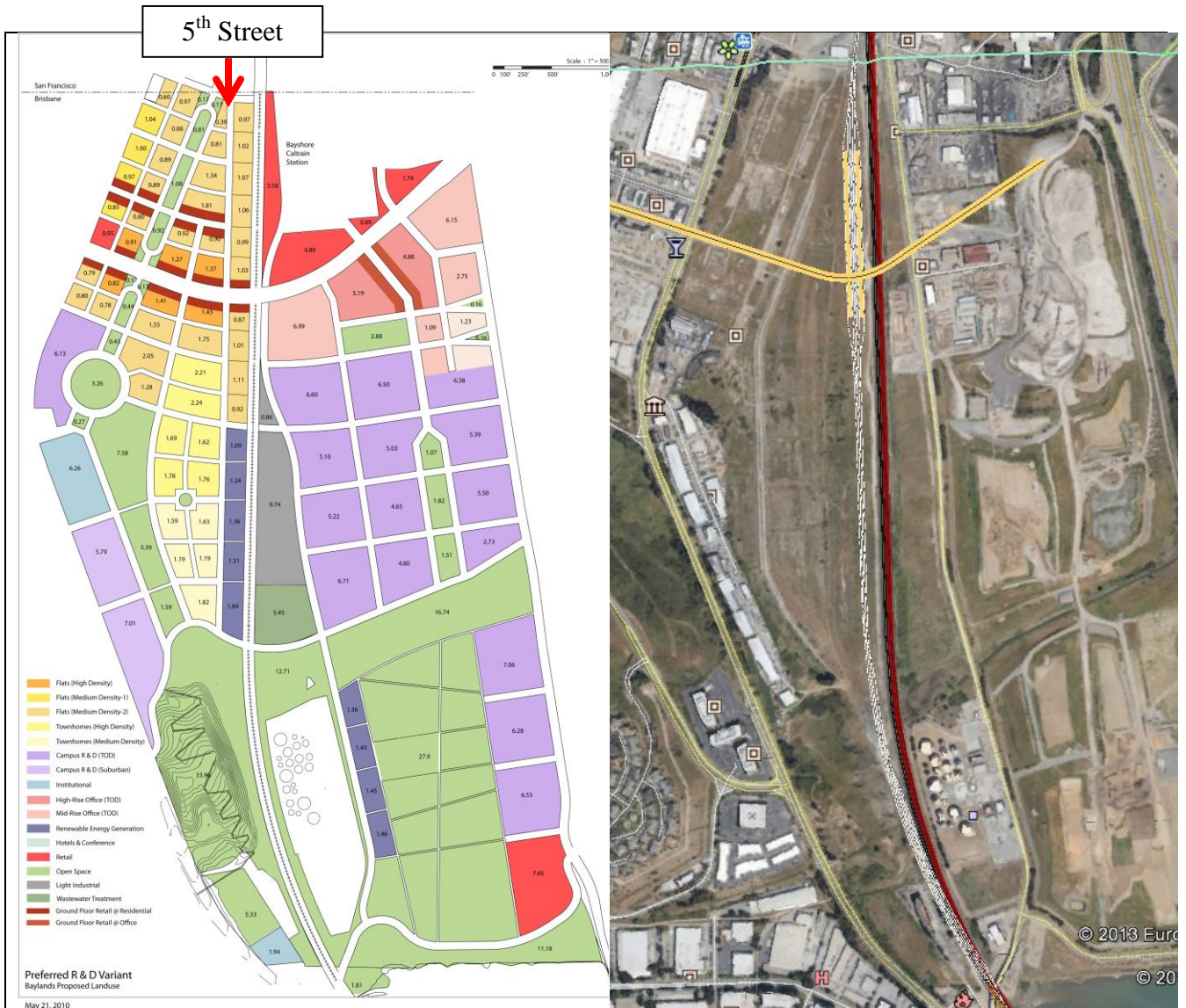
Roland Lebrun
ccss@msn.com
Brisbane Baylands Draft EIR
January 19 2014

Dear Mr. Swiecki,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Brisbane Baylands Draft EIR.

While it is generally accepted that 200 MPH high speed trains will not appear in the Peninsula for at least another 20 years, plans for land use adjacent to the rail corridor should consider future higher speeds in the Peninsula with an eventual objective to connect San Jose to San Francisco in 30 minutes or less.

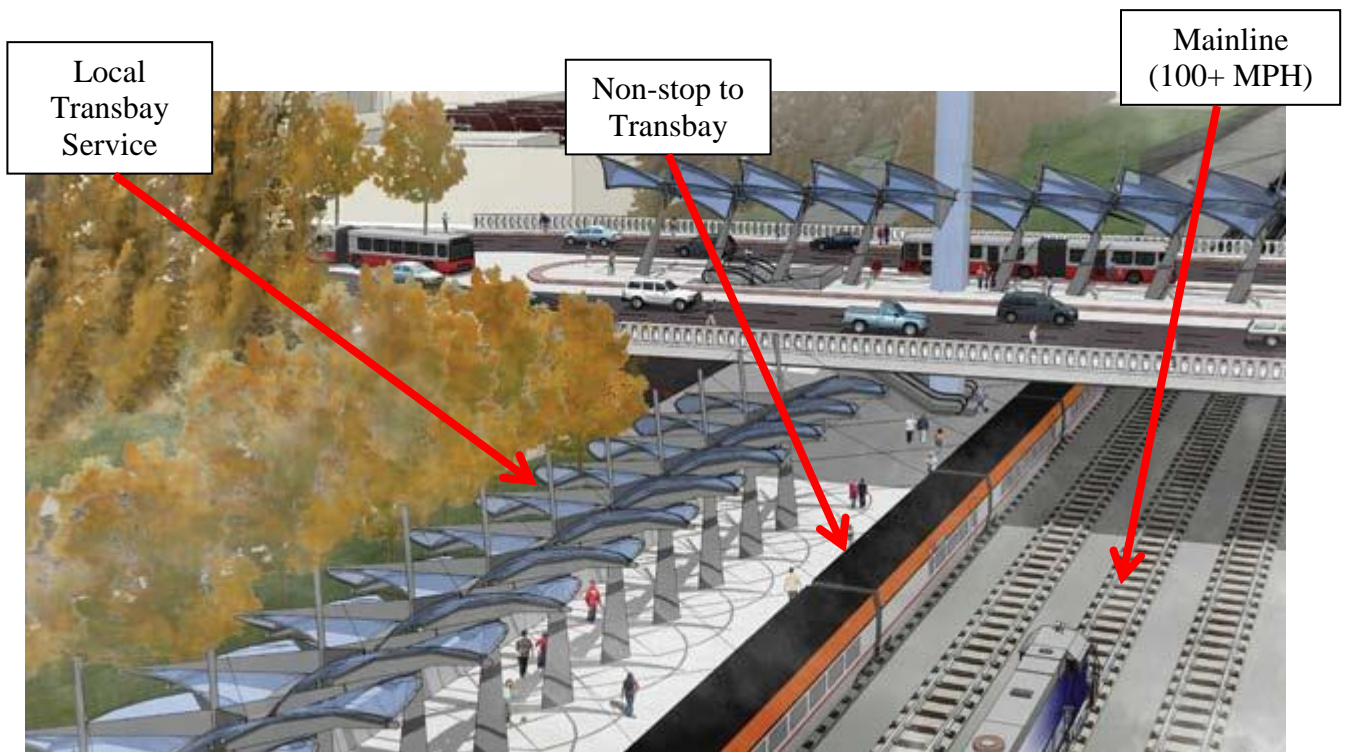
It is in this context that the DEIR should consider a new rail alignment capable of supporting speeds in excess of 100 MPH along the proposed future 5th Street.



The relocation of the tracks and the Bayshore station to the 5th Street alignment would also significantly enhance transfers between Caltrain and the proposed Muni T-Third light rail station on 5th Street.

The relocated Bayshore station would have two additional tracks to facilitate cross-platform transfers between Baby Bullets (5-minute non-stop to Transbay) and locals stopping at Oakdale, 22nd Street, Mission Bay and the Transbay Terminal. The additional station and turnaround tracks would support a capacity of 12 trains/hour between Brisbane and Transbay, 10-20 years ahead of the rest of the Peninsula (Policy 6-12).

The impacts caused by the higher speeds of express trains should be mitigated by creating embankments on both sides of the tracks thereby giving the impression that the proposed Geneva Avenue extension is at grade while the platforms and the tracks are in a trench.



The proposed new alignment would have the following additional advantages:

- Faster, safer and more cost-effective construction of the relocated Bayshore station, including connections to MUNI light rail and Geneva Avenue BRT.
- No construction impacts on Caltrain service.
- Foundation for a future 5-minute connection to San Francisco International (Transbay to SFO in 10 minutes, including a one-minute stop in Brisbane).

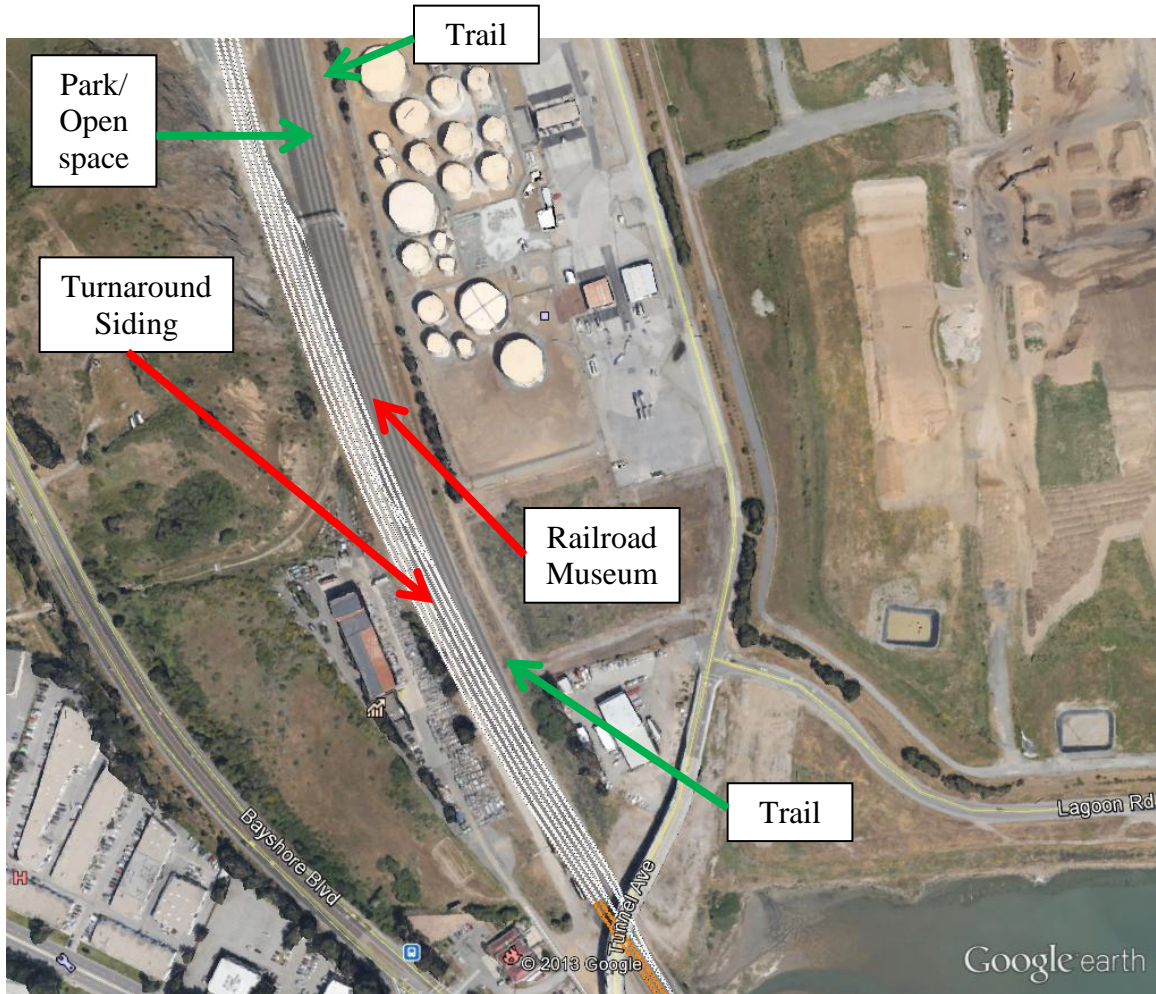
Platform lengths.

Please refer to "Platform Dimensions" on page 13 of Chapter 3 of the Caltrain Engineering Standards: <http://www.caltrain.com/assets/engineering/engineering-standards-2/criteria/CHAPTER3.pdf> : *"The standard platform length shall be 700 feet to accommodate a six (6) car train consist. Platform design shall consider or not preclude a possible expansion of platform length to 1000 feet"*

The DEIR should consider this 1,000-foot requirement because it would enable a Bayshore Caltrain station entrance at Beatty Avenue which is within walking distance of the Schlage Lock development. The DEIR should also consider extending the platforms south of Geneva Avenue to match Transbay's 1,330-foot platform lengths for two reasons: support for double-length Caltrain consists capable of transporting 2,000 passengers to/from special events in downtown San Francisco and/or Brisbane and the ability to disembark and turn around full-length HSR trains in case of an emergency between Brisbane and the Transbay terminal.



- Relocation of the mainline would also facilitate the repurposing of the existing tracks between Ice House Hill and the Kinder Morgan Energy Tank Farm into a siding yard and a location for the future railroad Museum while maintaining an opportunity for a linear park and trail connection between the siding yard and the Tank Farm. The siding yard could provide off-peak storage for up to 8 Caltrain consists as well as the ability to turnaround additional train service (up to 6 additional trains/hour between Bayshore and Transbay) over and above the proposed maximum six Caltrains/hour by 2019.



Thank you for considering these enhancements to this exciting project.

Sincerely,

Roland Lebrun

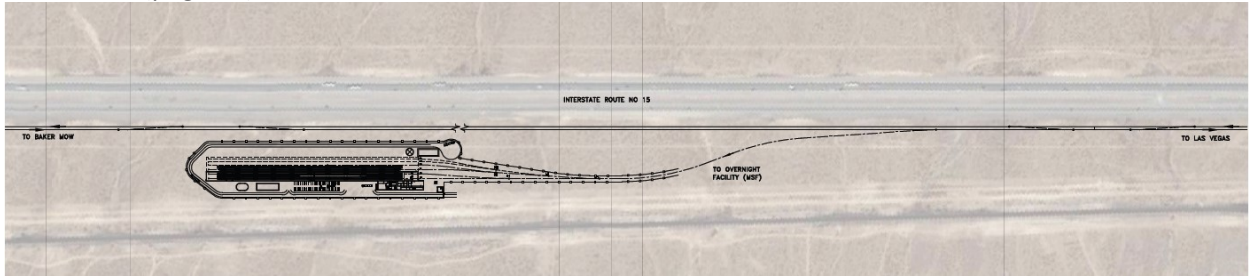
Dear Mayor Davis and Council,

Further to my comments about Brightline West's sensible approach to Light Maintenance Facilities (LMF), I am pleased to report that I was able to locate the relevant document on the FRA website (https://railroads.dot.gov/sites/fra.dot.gov/files/fra_net/2638/Appendix_A-4_MSF_Plans.pdf) which shows that the proposed alternatives being considered for the Las Vegas LMF align very closely with my 2014 Baylands DEIR comments (attached), specifically "*- Relocation of the mainline would also facilitate the repurposing of the existing tracks between Ice House Hill and the Kinder Morgan Energy Tank Farm into a siding yard.*"



There are 3 alternatives under consideration in Las Vegas:

Sloan Road (page 24)



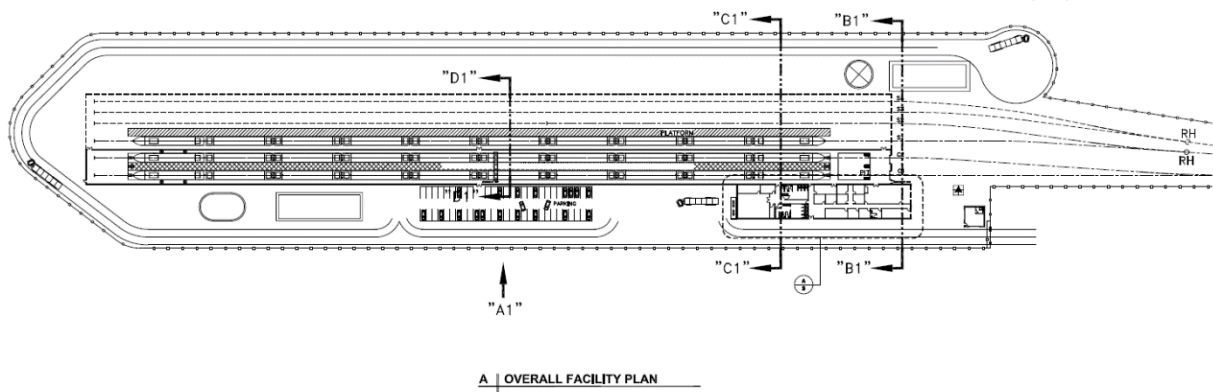
Robindale Avenue (Page 29)



Wigwam Avenue (page 35)



Each LMF consists of 3 tracks in the first phase followed by 3 additional storage tracks in a later phase:



I hope that you find this information useful and that it will help you and your staff bring a sense of reality to the High Speed Rail Authority and its consultants.

Sincerely,

Roland Lebrun