

KELLY FERGUSSON  
MAYOR

ANDREW COHEN  
MAYOR PRO TEM

JOHN BOYLE  
COUNCIL MEMBER

RICHARD CLINE  
COUNCIL MEMBER

HEYWARD ROBINSON  
COUNCIL MEMBER



701 LAUREL STREET, MENLO PARK, CA 94025-3483  
www.menlopark.org

September 25, 2007

California High Speed Rail Authority  
Attn: California High Speed Train  
Central Valley to Bay Area High Speed Rail Program EIR/EIS  
925 L Street, Suite 1425  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: City of Menlo Park Comments on the Central Valley to Bay  
Area High Speed Rail Program EIR/EIS

Members of the Authority:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the EIR/EIS for the Central Valley to Bay Area segment of the High Speed Train (HST) system.

The City of Menlo Park appreciates the Authority's efforts to analyze alternate routes and/or methods in order to avoid significant adverse impacts to the Peninsula area from the alignment of the HST.

The City of Menlo Park would, however, be directly affected by several of the alternatives, whether through the Caltrain mainline or the Dumbarton Rail Corridor. Menlo Park previously has expressed its concerns related to new rail activity on either of the two rail lines and reiterates here that the following issues need to be addressed when determining the most appropriate route:

1. Alternatives – The Authority should continue to further analyze terminating the HST project in either San Jose or Union City and connecting to existing systems with time-coordinated connections, etc. Also, two additional alternatives should be carefully studied and included in the document. First, a route generally along the I-280 corridor from San Jose to San Francisco should be included. This route would have reduced impacts to many of the communities on the peninsula and should be carefully addressed. Second, construct the system underground through the peninsula. This would significantly reduce many of the impacts associated with the system. Also, the air rights above the system could be leased to offset the cost of the system with this alternative.

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2. Grade Separation -- The Program EIR/EIS provided little information regarding grade separations within Menlo Park. Grade separations on the Caltrain mainline will create impacts because of the constrained nature of the development in Menlo Park as well as the presence of a historical structure. One likely alternative for grade separation would include raising the tracks. This particular alternative has another unique issue of creating a "wall effect" within the community and dividing the City. A trench alternative would lessen the impacts in the City, similar to the undergrounding alternative described in item # 1 above. The City would also expect that any project level EIR/EIS's would address and mitigate all the impacts of grade separation including, but not limited to, the economic impacts.

3. Electrification --The appearance of overhead electric power supply for the trains, including the wires, supporting poles, mast arms and insulations, is a matter of significant concern. Also, the electrification system should also be compatible with the proposed Caltrain electrification such that two systems do not need to be constructed and maintained.

4. Noise and vibration mitigation -- The additional noise and vibration caused by the HST needs to be clearly stated and addressed. Any noise and/or vibration impacts need to be mitigated as part of the project. Such measures should be included as integral components of the project. These measures should not create other impacts such as construction of a sound wall that might divide the City and affect the neighborhood feel of the community.

5. Freight -- Menlo Park is concerned about freight traffic using either the Caltrain mainline or the Dumbarton Rail line and its impact on residents and traffic in the area. Since the rail lines will be grade separated, which allows for faster trains times and reduced vehicular and pedestrian conflicts, the lines would be more easily suited for freight traffic. This may lead to increased freight traffic on rail lines that currently have minimal freight traffic. A new San Francisco Bay crossing along the Dumbarton alignment may open this corridor up to freight traffic, which could substantially increase impacts to adjacent residential neighborhoods in Menlo Park.

6. Funding -- The project intends to use State General Obligation bonds to fund the project. This funding method would create a long-term financial obligation that could impact existing State programs. A detailed

cost/benefit and fiscal impact analysis should be provided for the project, so voters can make an informed decision. Also, additional funding sources should be sought to share the costs of the project.

7. Other Environmental Impacts – The HST project will require the removal of trees, affect view corridors and grade separation will significantly impact local traffic circulation. The HST would also change the close neighborhood character of Menlo Park by introducing a train system that would not fit within the community. These issues need to be clearly understood prior to making a final decision on the best alignment for the project. The current program level EIR/EIS is not sufficiently detailed to allow those affected to understand the potential impacts before they are asked to vote on funding for the project. A project specific EIR/EIS should be completed for work on the San Francisco peninsula before the HST project appears on the ballot due to the higher level of likely environmental impacts as compared with other parts of the HST project.

Attached to this letter are Menlo Park's previous comment letters for other rail projects on the same rail corridors. The issues related to HST are very similar to the issues raised in those comment letters. The City of Menlo Park would expect the Authority to consider all of these comments when evaluating the City's responses to the draft EIR/EIS.

Finally, the City of Menlo Park appreciates the opportunity to provide input on the High Speed Rail Program EIR/EIS. The City looks forward to participating in the EIR/EIS process to review any impacts and proposed mitigation measures within Menlo Park. As previously noted, the City of Menlo Park cannot declare itself in support of the project until the issues described above have been carefully evaluated and addressed through the evaluation and design process.

Sincerely,



Glen Rojas  
City Manager

Cc: Members of the City Council  
Quentin Kopp, High Speed Rail Authority Board Chairperson  
Fran Florez, High Speed Rail Authority Board Vice-Chairperson  
Donna Andrews, High Speed Rail Authority Board Member

David Crane, High Speed Rail Authority Board Member  
Rod Diridon, High Speed Rail Authority Board Member  
Kirk Lindsey, High Speed Rail Authority Board Member  
Curt Pringle, High Speed Rail Authority Board Member  
Lynn Schenk, High Speed Rail Authority Board Member  
Tom Stapleton, High Speed Rail Authority Board Member  
City Attorney  
Director of Public Works

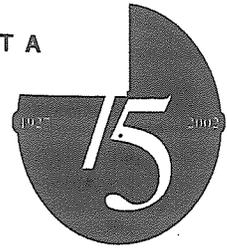
Attachments:

- A. City of Menlo Park comments and resolution on the first California High Speed Rail Program EIR/EIS dated August 26, 2004.
- B. City of Menlo Park comments on the Caltrain Electrification EIR/EIS dated May 24, 2004.
- C. City of Menlo Park comments on the Dumbarton Rail Corridor Project dated July 23, 2007.
- D. City of Menlo Park comments on the San Francisco Bay Area Regional Rail Plan dated August 29, 2007.



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ATTACHMENT A



August 26, 2004

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

LEE B. DUBOC  
MAYOR

MICKIE WINKLER  
MAYOR PRO TEM

PAUL J. COLLACCHI  
COUNCIL MEMBER

NICHOLAS P. JELLINS  
COUNCIL MEMBER

CHARLES M. KINNEY  
COUNCIL MEMBER

**Subject: City of Menlo Park Comments on Draft Program EIR/EIS**

**Members of the Authority:**

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the Draft Program EIR/EIS for the proposed statewide high-speed rail project.

While we understand that the nature of a "program" environmental document on a statewide project is inherently general, we wish to bring to your attention specific concerns of the City of Menlo Park that are not adequately addressed in the Draft Program EIR/EIS and that must have "project level" environmental review before the overall program can proceed.

The Draft Program EIR/EIS information on the Menlo Park grade separation issue is limited to a map of northern California extending from the Carquinez Strait to Gilroy entitled *Figure 2.7-5, HST Alignment Options-Profile Characteristics, Bay Area To Merced Region*. This Figure has a single colored line passing through Menlo Park bearing the legend "*Slightly Elevated or Depressed*". This level of information is inadequate as a description of the grade separation work the Authority intends to undertake. Furthermore, grade separation and expanding the line to four tracks as proposed would necessitate relocation of a historic structure within the Menlo Park rail station complex. The document does not provide adequate information on what right-of-way may have to be acquired in Menlo Park permanently or for temporary construction easements to develop four tracks in the Caltrain alignment and construct the grade separations. Until the HST project defines an explicit horizontal and vertical alignment proposal for tracks and roadways, the City and the affected public in Menlo Park cannot reasonably know what the real impacts of the project are.

The document needs to include additional information on impacts and mitigation measures in relation to noise resulting from High Speed rail operation in the areas of Menlo Park with residential housing near the rail corridor. Other issues of concern to the City of Menlo Park are loss of trees, impact to view corridors, economic impacts to nearby property owners and local traffic circulation. These issues need to be discussed in more detail in the document.

The appearance of overhead electric power supply for the trains, including the wires, supporting poles, mast arms and insulators, is a matter of significant concern for Menlo Park. Any new electrical substations in Menlo Park would also be of concern. The Draft Program EIR/EIS provides insufficient information for the public to determine whether these aspects of the project would be detrimental to Menlo Park. The electrification system proposed for the HST is similar to that proposed for the Caltrain system by the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (the JPB). On May 25, 2004 Menlo Park filed formal comments on the JPB's Draft EIR for Caltrain Electrification. Menlo Park attaches its letter of comment on the proposed Caltrain Electrification to this letter, and identifies those comments as applicable to the HST Program EIR/EIS.

Although the document indicates the Authority will conduct a project level EIR to the extent needed to assess potential Environmental Impacts not already addressed in this Program EIR/EIS, the fact that the project is being taken to the voters of the state for funding approval on the basis of the Program EIR/EIS document tends to deprive the public of full disclosure of the program's environmental impacts at the time they make their decision on whether to vote funding for the project. The opinions of voters in communities like Menlo Park, that are to be traversed by, and likely to be significantly impacted by the high speed rail project, would be more heavily influenced by the details of local impacts of grade separations, right-of-way acquisition and electrification that are not adequately addressed in the Program EIR/EIS than by the information on statewide travel needs and impacts that the Program EIR/EIS focuses on.

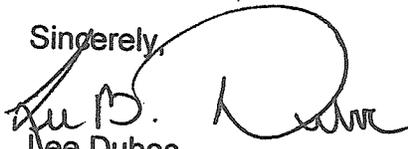
Menlo Park is compelled to comment that while economic issues are not normally addressed in the EIR funding the High-Speed Rail Project with general obligation bonds to be paid from the State General Fund seems inappropriate and irresponsible at a time when the general fund is in a deficit condition and state funding to schools and local government is being squeezed to offset the general fund deficit. At a minimum, Menlo Park urges that any bond obligations on the State General Fund be deferred for several years, and that preferably the project be funded through revenue bonds or with a new direct taxation funding source, not through draw-downs on existing state and local fund resources.

Finally, the City of Menlo Park does not concur in the decision to exclude the Altamont Corridor rail route from further consideration and evaluation in the HST

EIR/EIS. It is premature to arbitrarily eliminate an alternative at such an early stage.

The City of Menlo Park does not wish to be in opposition to the Statewide High-Speed Rail Project. However, until the potentially critical local impacts described above are carefully worked out through the design process and evaluated in a project-level EIR/EIS, and until a financing plan that does not compound the difficulties facing local government is developed, Menlo Park cannot declare itself in support of the Project (please see attached Resolution).

Sincerely,



Lee Duboc  
Mayor

Attachment: Resolution # \_\_\_\_\_  
Letter of comments on Caltrain Electrification Program

**RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL  
OF THE CITY OF MENLO PARK  
COMMENTING ON THE CALIFORNIA HIGH SPEED RAIL SYSTEM DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL  
IMPACT REPORT/ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

WHEREAS, the California High Speed Rail Authority was established by the Legislature in 1996 for implementing a statewide high speed train system for California; and,

WHEREAS, it is the intent of the State Legislature and the High Speed Rail Authority that a statewide ballot measure to authorize bonds that would fund the project through design and the first stages of construction go to the voters in November of 2006; and,

WHEREAS, the California High Speed Rail Authority has circulated a Draft Program Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement on the proposed California High Speed Rail Project seeking comments; and,

WHEREAS, as proposed, the high speed rail line would pass through Menlo Park in the Caltrain corridor, the project would expand the Caltrain line to four tracks, electrify the line, grade separate all crossings, would generate 86 trips a day by the year 2020, and the Authority would perform more specific environmental impact analysis for segments of the rail line and the stations should the high speed train advance to subsequent phases of project development.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Menlo Park that:

1. The fact that the project is being taken to the voters of the state for funding approval on the basis of the Program EIR/EIS document tends to deprive the public of full disclosure of the program's environmental impacts. The opinions of voters in communities like Menlo Park, that are to be traversed by and likely to be significantly impacted by the high speed rail project, would be more heavily influenced by the details of local impacts of the project that are not adequately addressed in the Program EIR/EIS than by the information on statewide travel needs and impacts that the Program EIR/EIS focuses on.
2. The project sponsor needs to identify issues of critical concern to Menlo Park at this stage of the project development in order to assure that these issues will be addressed in some depth in subsequent project-level environmental documentation.
3. Funding a \$37 billion project with state general obligation funds seems inappropriate at a time when the State General Fund is in a shortfall condition that is already adversely impacting local governments.
4. The Program EIR/EIS is so general it does not provide adequate information regarding the impacts on right-of-way, noise, historic buildings, trees, businesses, aesthetics and local traffic circulation.
5. Menlo Park would experience staff cost in coordinating the planning, design and construction activities of the high speed train project.
6. Menlo Park does not concur in the decision to exclude further evaluation of the Altamont Corridor rail route, and requests the Authority to revive consideration of that route at this stage of environmental review process.
7. Menlo Park expresses its strong desire for exploring alternate routes and/or methods to avoid the Peninsula area as the alignment for the high speed rail line, i.e. by integrating it with existing systems.

I, SILVIA VONDERLINDEN, City Clerk of the City of Menlo Park, do hereby certify that the above and foregoing Resolution was duly and regularly passed and adopted at a meeting by said Council on \_\_\_\_\_, 2004, by the following vote:

AYES: Council members:  
NOES: Council members:  
ABSENT: Council members:  
ABSTAIN: Councilmembers:



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ATTACHMENT B



May 24, 2004

Caltrain Electrification  
1250 San Carlos Avenue  
San Carlos, CA 94070

LEE B. DUBOC  
MAYOR

MICKIE WINKLER  
MAYOR PRO TEM

PAUL J. COLLACCHI  
COUNCIL MEMBER

NICHOLAS P. JELLINS  
COUNCIL MEMBER

CHARLES M. KINNEY  
COUNCIL MEMBER

**Subject: Caltrain Electrification Program, Environmental  
Assessment / Draft Environmental Impact Report**

Members of the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Environmental Assessment / Draft Environmental Impact Report on the proposed Caltrain Electrification Program. Menlo Park recognizes that it benefits substantially from Caltrain services and wishes to cooperate with the JPB in improving the quality and efficiency of Caltrain services and operations. However, it must also be recognized that the central portion of Menlo Park is adversely impacted by some of the characteristics of Caltrain operations. As a result, any significant change in Caltrain operations is a matter of considerable public concern. This letter is intended to convey those concerns on behalf of Menlo Park's most directly affected citizens.

After carefully considering the draft document, we believe that there are a number of considerations that must be addressed in more depth before the document would be reasonably adequate for certification.

Our concerns include the following points:

- The project's impact on trees in and near Menlo Park is not sufficiently clear. We understand that there is a detailed arborist's report, but that report has not been directly incorporated in the document. If the content of the arborist's report concerning tree loss in and near Menlo Park is as has been reported in the press (eight to twelve trees at the San Francisquito Creek crossing, fifteen to twenty-two of the fifty-six trees along the tracks in Menlo Park and twenty-five percent of the trees along the tracks in nearby Atherton slated for removal), the DEIR's conclusion of "no permanent impacts" to biological resources may be incorrect. We suggest that this area of the analysis be thoroughly reconsidered, that more specific detail be

provided in the report and that consideration be given to transplanting trees rather than removing them. We would also suggest that planting new trees be given consideration as mitigation for the loss of existing trees.

- Regarding visual impacts, it seems certain that many in Menlo Park will consider the prospect of catenary wires, insulators, support poles and mast arms, portal support frames in the station areas and higher poles and wires for the distribution system unsightly. And because the impacts of tree removal associated with the project have not been clearly documented in the DEIR (see point above), it is evident that the visual impacts are likely to be more extensive than analyzed in the DEIR. To be a fair indicator of likely visual impact, the DEIR needs additional photo-simulated views that combine the effects of introduction of the electrification overhead gear together with those of the project's tree removal effects. Tree planting and other landscape treatments should be considered as mitigation for the visual impacts created by the project.
- The DEIR claims the potential for substantial noise reduction benefit as the result of electrification. However, in areas near grade crossings, any such benefit would be imperceptible because of the continued impacts of the much more disturbing train horn soundings. In Menlo Park, where there are four grade crossings in the corridor's 1.5 mile traversal of the community and two more, one just north and one just south of City limits, for an average of one grade crossing every quarter-mile, the adjacent land use in Menlo Park along the entire corridor is adversely impacted by train horn noise. Until grade separations or other actions eliminate the routine sounding of train horns at grade crossings, the claimed noise reduction benefits of the electrification project will generally be unperceived by the public. To eliminate the inaccurate portrait of noise reduction benefit that the DEIR currently presents, the document should provide noise contour maps for the alternatives in which the effects of train horn noise are considered as well as the other forms of train noise.
- On page 2-53, the DEIR opines that grade separating the entire system would delay electrification for several years. It also states that grade separating the entire line would increase costs with no commensurate improvement in train service. This particular assertion appears unfounded given that a fully grade separated system is an adopted goal of the JPB. We question this conclusion of the DEIR given the substantial history of grade crossing accidents on the line that grade separations would avert, given the serious disruption to system reliability that results when a rail accident occurs at a grade crossing and given that the claimed noise-reduction benefits of the electrification project generally will not be truly realized until and unless completion of grade separations eliminates the most disturbing noises created by train horns and wayside warning devices. Contrary to the

statement of the DEIR, grade separations are obviously not just a benefit-less cost to the rail system. From the perspective of a community that is substantially benefited by Caltrain service but significantly adversely impacted by certain aspects of Caltrain operations that relate to a lack of grade separations (the train horn noise, congestion and safety at the grade crossings) a fair argument can be made that what the JPB should be doing is using first available funding to grade-separate the entire system and using later funding to do the electrification, in which case: 1) the claimed noise-reduction benefits would be realized because the train horn noise would be eliminated and 2) the electric third rail system that avoids all the overhead equipment many people may consider unsightly may prove most practical.

If electrification precedes complete grade separation of the Caltrain line, during any subsequent grade separation project, the electrification gear will need to be moved over to the shoofly and back again to the permanent tracks, an activity that obviously adds complexity, cost and time to any grade separation project. Less obvious but nonetheless significant, aside from moving the electrical system twice, just having to work near the hot wires while doing the ordinary grade separation construction activity will add complexity, time and cost and may also necessitate more intrusive and disruptive temporary construction easements. These are significant considerations for communities that are prospective candidates for grade separations.

- The DEIR notes that the statewide high-speed rail operation that hopes to operate in the Caltrain corridor will need the high voltage overhead type system and that cost-efficiency could be realized by having the Caltrain electrification compatible with it. However, at this point the statewide high-speed rail is nothing more than a speculative project; it is not assured of moving forward. Therefore, it may be premature to lock-in an electrification technology decision on the presumption that high speed rail will be under construction soon to share electrification costs with Caltrain. Caltrain may be wise to defer decision making on the details of electrification until the fate of the statewide high speed rail project is determined. If the statewide high-speed rail project proves a non-starter, Caltrain might be well advised to rely on the less intrusive electric third rail type system rather than the overhead system that high-speed rail would require and that some may regard as unsightly.
- The "Public Services and Facilities" section of the DEIR contains no information about the potential safety risks of the electrified system. What happens when 'hot wires' fall down due to some kind of incident (storm winds, motorist collision with support, etc.)? How quickly does the power get shut off? How frequently do such incidents happen in areas like the Boston to Washington corridor where such systems are operational? The DEIR is

completely lacking regarding information of this type. Such considerations should be addressed in the document.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kent Steffens". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Kent Steffens  
Director of Public Works

cc: Mayor and Members of City Council  
City Manager  
Community Development Director  
City Attorney  
Town Council Members – Town of Atherton,  
Via: Jim Robinson, City Manager

KELLY FERGUSSON  
MAYOR

ANDREW COHEN  
MAYOR PRO TEM

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HEYWARD ROBINSON  
COUNCIL MEMBER



701 LAUREL STREET, MENLO PARK, CA 94025-3483  
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July 23, 2007

Dumbarton Rail Corridor Policy Advisory Committee  
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San Carlos, CA 94070-1306

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Honorable Chairman Green and Members of the Committee,

Menlo Park City Council recently held two meetings to educate the Council, staff, and the community about the plans for the Dumbarton Rail Corridor (DRC) project. At these meetings, a number of issues of concern about the project were raised. On July 19, 2007, the Council voted unanimously to submit a letter to the DRC Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) listing the City's primary concerns and requesting a response to these concerns. Menlo Park submits this letter to the PAC now, recognizing that policy direction given by the PAC now and in the future will significantly impact how these issues are addressed and resolved.

The City of Menlo Park strongly supports the goal of increasing public transit throughout the region and in particular along the Dumbarton corridor. Clearly the Dumbarton Rail project could bring many benefits, including enhancement of our local and regional economies. However, if not properly mitigated, this project will result in significant impacts on several Menlo Park neighborhoods. In addition, careful consideration must be given to all project alternatives to ensure the best use of voter-approved transit dollars.

Menlo Park hopes that this letter will serve to open a dialogue with the PAC around the issues raised by the project. The primary items of concern are:

1. **Freight** – Menlo Park is concerned about freight trains using the Dumbarton rail line and its impact on residents and traffic in the area. The project should eliminate the possibility of freight on the Dumbarton Rail line.
2. **Cost Projections** – Include all costs, and in particular estimates for the cost of mitigations, in the cost projections for each proposed option so that alternatives can be compared on an equivalent basis.
3. **Ridership Data** – This data has changed over time based on new information and updated models. The model is complex and involves many factors. The ridership estimates, model assumptions, and model parameters need to be clearly explained and provided to the public. A detailed explanation of the differences in ridership between the various alternatives needs to be provided.

4. **Electrification** – The project should include electrification or the possibility to easily implement electrification, without further construction, to reduce air pollution and fit with the current plan to electrify the Caltrain mainline. One specific alternative that should be considered is the use of lighter electric vehicles such as the ones proposed for the Caltrain mainline. We understand that Caltrain has made significant progress with Federal regulators so that lighter electric vehicles could be used on the Caltrain mainline. Since the Dumbarton trains will be integrated into the Caltrain mainline at Redwood Junction, using the same vehicles throughout the Caltrain system would maximize operational efficiencies. These lighter vehicles provide more flexibility, less pollution, and noise.
5. **Alternatives** – Make a fair, thorough and realistic comparison of alternatives, including increased bussing and Bus Rapid Transit. These alternatives may have a reduced cost and could be implemented with a phased approach.
6. **Mitigations** – The project plan should include mitigations to address the impacts of each option under consideration. The City cannot support a plan that does not budget funds for noise and vibration mitigation. These mitigation measures need to be thoroughly studied and alternatives developed. They are an integral component to the project and need to be included in all future cost estimates for the project.
7. **Traffic** – The rail service will increase delay on several already-congested roadways in Menlo Park. The impact of the rail service on traffic in the area needs to be analyzed using properly validated models. Options for mitigating the increased traffic delay should be considered, including advanced signal timing, grade separations, etc.

Menlo Park has previously submitted communications regarding the DRC project. These include a letter from Mayor Borak in 2000, and a letter from Mayor Winkler in 2006. Many of the policy issues raised in those letters remain unresolved. In addition, comments from the City on the Notice of Preparation for the environmental process were submitted in 2006.

Menlo Park trusts that the Dumbarton Rail PAC will seriously consider the issues raised in this letter. Menlo Park requests and looks forward to your response.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Kelly Ferguson  
Mayor

KELLY FERGUSSON  
MAYOR

ANDREW COHEN  
MAYOR PRO TEM

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August 29, 2007

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Ms. Katie Balk  
Regional Rail Project Offices, c/o BART  
300 Lakeside Drive, 16<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Oakland, CA 94612

**Subject: Comments on the San Francisco Bay Area Regional Rail Plan**

Dear Ms. Balk:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the San Francisco Bay Area Regional Rail Plan. The City of Menlo Park supports your efforts to plan for future improvements to the rail system that incorporates both passenger trains and freight service.

City representatives attended the Regional Rail Plan Community Workshop held in San Carlos, and received a copy of the Regional Rail Plan Draft Report Summary dated August, 2007. The City's comments will focus specifically on this document.

**Plan and Budget for Adequate Mitigation of Service Expansion Impacts.** Menlo Park and much of the San Francisco Peninsula are currently near built-out conditions, with substantial residential areas near or immediately adjacent to the Caltrain right-of-way. As the Caltrain system has changed over the years from a freight line to a mostly commuter railroad, the frequency and speed of trains have dramatically increased. Most of the impacts (e.g. noise, vibration, diesel exhaust, and traffic congestion at crossings) affect those residents nearest the tracks. As any future expansion of service is along the Caltrain right-of-way is planned, it is imperative that projects be designed and funded to include mitigation of those impacts.

Section 10.0, Next Steps of the Draft Report Summary acknowledges that cost estimates are currently at an "order of magnitude level of detail" and that more refinement is needed as projects are developed further. Too often, engineering studies of this magnitude focus only on the infrastructure required to deliver a functional system. Prudent mitigation measures can become an unaffordable extra cost to the project if they are not included from the beginning. Realistic mitigation costs for increased noise, traffic impacts at crossings and other impacts should be built into cost estimates now. Making the environment around the rail corridor more livable will help promote transit-oriented development and increase future ridership.

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The City of Menlo Park has been closely following the planning efforts for the Dumbarton Rail Project. Similar concerns about planning for and funding mitigations for impacts of this project were recently raised in a letter from Menlo Park's Mayor, Kelly Fergusson to the Dumbarton Rail Corridor Policy Advisory Committee. A copy of the letter is attached for information.

**Integrate the Regional Rail Plan with Other Transit Modes.** More work is needed to better integrate rail services with other transit modes such as buses and feeder shuttles. As alternatives for rail travel expand, providing time-coordinated transit options to deliver passengers to and from rail stations will be an important component that appears to have received little attention in the Regional Rail Plan. The efficiency of the rail station feeder system will significantly affect ridership and, ultimately, capital costs and operating expenses. Further studies should identify the best ways to get passengers to and from rail stations, and those costs should be built into the overall plan.

**Better Balance the Needs of Local Service and Regional Express Service.** The City of Menlo Park remains concerned about local Caltrain service being sacrificed for the sake of regional express services. The Regional Rail Plan relies heavily on transit-oriented development (TOD) to increase future transit ridership in the Bay Area. This strategy can be effective only if relatively frequent service is available at a large number of rail stations. Only so much land is available for TOD around regional express stops. Frequent local service maximizes the potential for TOD and future ridership increases.

Thank you for considering these comments. The City of Menlo Park appreciates the opportunity to comment on this important plan. If you have questions regarding the City's comments please contact the City's Director of Public Works, Kent Steffens at 650-330-6781.

Sincerely,



Glen Rojas  
City Manager

Attachment: Letter from Mayor Fergusson to the Dumbarton Rail Corridor Policy Advisory Committee

cc: Members of City Council  
Director of Public Works  
Transportation Manager