Caltrain workshop focuses on new electric train cars

The California commuter railroad Caltrain yesterday held a workshop to gather public input on design specifications for its future fleet of electric train cars and new boarding platforms.

Discussion centered on the compatibility of the platforms with the proposed California high-speed rail line, Caltrain officials said in a press release. In particular, officials have proposed a common 50-inch platform height for both Caltrain and the high-speed rail.

Feedback from these and other public workshops will be used to develop staff recommendations, which in turn will be included in a request for proposals for Caltrain's new Electric Multiple Units, Caltrain officials said.

Bringing on the new units and electrifying the system are part of the Caltrain Modernization program, which is expected to be completed by 2020.

The $1.7 billion modernization program also involves the installation of positive train control. Caltrain officials expect the improvements and accompanying service increases to more than double current weekday ridership, in addition to improving air quality, by 2040.