



PENINSULA CORRIDOR ELECTRIFICATION
PROJECT
PUBLIC SCOPING MEETINGS
SCOPING REPORT
FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

FEBRUARY-MARCH 2013

Prepared for:

Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board

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1.0 Introduction

Over the last decade, Caltrain has experienced a substantial increase in ridership and anticipates further increases in ridership demand as the Bay Area population grows. The [Caltrain Modernization Program](#), scheduled to be completed by 2019, will electrify and upgrade the performance, operating efficiency, capacity, safety and reliability of Caltrain's commuter rail service.

The Peninsula Corridor Electrification Project (PCEP) is a key component of the Caltrain Modernization Program and consists of converting Caltrain from diesel-hauled to Electric Multiple Unit (EMU) trains for services between the Fourth and King Streets in San Francisco and approximately 2 miles south of the Tamien Station in San Jose. The project would include the installation of new electric power supply and distribution infrastructure (poles and wires), including traction power substations and other facilities needed to electrify the corridor and EMU vehicles.

On January 31, 2013, the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (JPB) issued a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the PCEP pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

In February and March 2013, Caltrain hosted four scoping meetings at key locations along the Caltrain Corridor. The intent of these meetings was to invite interested parties to provide input on the scope and content of the environmental information to be studied, including suggested alternatives.

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2.0 Outreach

To notify interested parties of the opportunity to comment on the scope of the EIR, copies of the NOP were mailed to City and Agency officials in the 17 cities along the project corridor, regional and local transportation agencies, and community and environmental organizations. Libraries along the corridor were mailed copies of the NOP to provide at their reference desks, to be made available to the public upon request. On January 31, 2013, half-page advertisements were placed in local and regional papers to announce the release of the NOP, scoping period, and scoping meetings. These advertisements ran in the San Francisco Examiner, Daily News Groups, and Bay Area News Group.

To notify property owners, residents, stakeholders, and all interested parties of the scoping meetings, the following methods were used.

Corridor Mailing: A formal, multilingual meeting announcement was sent to those living within 300 feet of the project corridor (or 500 feet within the corridor in the vicinity of the substations), and to those who expressed interest in the project during prior outreach efforts by Caltrain. The notice included instructions printed in Spanish, Vietnamese and Chinese to visit a web page with translations of the NOP and a hotline with messages translated into the three languages, with the opportunity for minority language speakers to request translation at a scoping meeting.

Website/Social Media: The Caltrain website, www.caltrain.com/electrification, served as a key portal for announcing the scoping meetings. A multilingual announcement was posted on the project website, as well as a link to the full NOP available in English, Spanish, Vietnamese and Chinese. The scoping meetings were announced on the Caltrain Twitter and Facebook pages.

Media: Caltrain distributed a press release to 150 reporters in print, radio, and television, including Chinese- and Spanish-language outlets. The meetings were announced or covered by Palo Alto Online News, Mountain View Voice, Almanac Online, the Loma Prieta Chapter of the Sierra Club, San Mateo Daily Journal, and posted to various City webpages.

Digital Displays: All Caltrain Stations featured displays announcing the public scoping meetings along the corridor through the visual message signs on the station platforms.

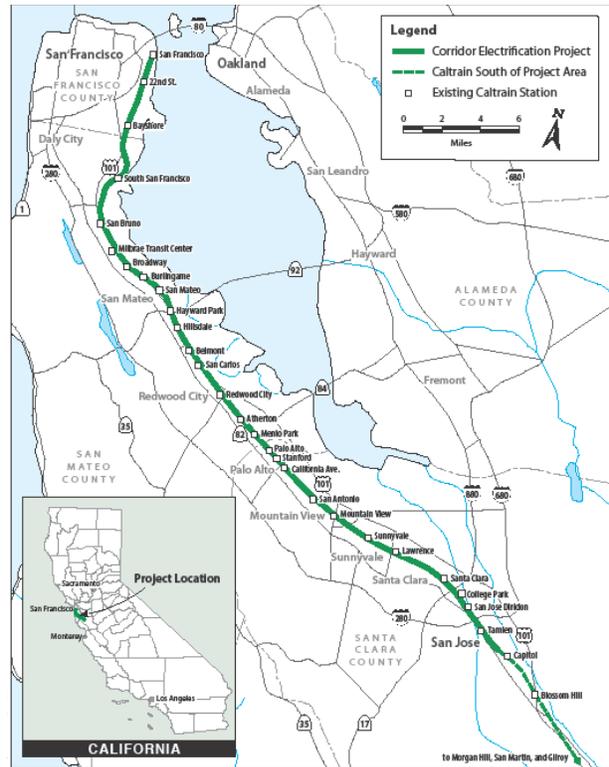


Figure 1
Project Location
Corridor Electrification Project

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Agency Notification: The following agencies provided notices at Board meetings held in late February and early March.

- San Francisco County Transportation Authority
- Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (JPB)
- JPB Citizens Advisory Committee
- Samtrans
- San Mateo County Economic Development Association

3.0 Meetings

Meeting Location	Meeting Date/Time	Estimated Number of Attendees
Caltrain Office, 2 nd Floor Auditorium 1250 San Carlos Ave. San Carlos, CA <i>(Spanish Interpreter provided)</i>	February 27, 2013 3pm-6pm* 6pm-8pm	68
Palo Alto City Hall, City Council Chambers 250 Hamilton Ave. Palo Alto, CA	February 28, 2013 6pm-8pm	38
Santa Clara VTA Headquarters, Auditorium 3331 North First St. San Jose, CA	March 5, 2013 6pm-8pm	25
San Francisco City Hall, Board of Supervisors Chambers 1 Dr Carlton B Goodlett Pl. San Francisco, CA	March 7, 2013 6pm-8pm	27
*Open House		

3.1 Meeting Format

The four Scoping Meetings (6pm-8pm) used a hybrid presentation/open house format, including a public comment period. Attendees were given an overview presentation that provided information on key project elements such as the blended system and the environmental process. After the presentation, attendees were invited to provide their scoping comments at a microphone, which were documented by the project team. An open house before the Scoping Meeting was held in San Carlos from 3pm – 6 pm.

During the open house period, attendees were invited to move around the room to view informational exhibits, express additional comments and concerns to project team members, and ask the project team questions about the project.

The open house followed the presentation at the meetings held in Palo Alto, San Jose, and San Francisco. At the San Carlos meeting, the open house portion was held from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., prior to the start of the presentation. This offered attendees flexibility, allowing them to show up at any point during the three hour block, depending on their availability, to speak to the project team and provide scoping comments.

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The following informational materials were provided at the Scoping Meetings.

- **Presentation:** A PowerPoint presentation provided an overview of the project and discussed the blended system and the relationship between High-Speed Rail (HSR) and Caltrain, the environmental process and schedule, anticipated environmental issues, and a description of multiple methods to provide public comment. A video and audio narration of the presentation has been posted on the project webpage.
- **Handouts:** A fact sheet about the project was provided at each public meeting, in both English and Spanish. The agenda, also translated to and available in Spanish, provided attendees with information about the meeting format and ways to provide comments. Printouts of the NOP, the presentation, and exhibit boards were available to attendees upon request.
- **Exhibit Boards:** Exhibit boards were prepared for the informational open house portion of the public meetings to provide attendees with an overview of the project, details about the project, potential benefits and impacts of the project, and next steps in the environmental process.

All of The informational materials have been posted on the Caltrain website as a resource for those who could not attend the meetings. These materials can be found in the Appendix to this report.

4.0 Scoping Comments

At the Scoping Meetings, the following means to comment on the project were provided.

- Comment Forms
- Speaker Cards
- Flip Charts
- Information on how to provide comments later, via e-mail or mail

4.1 Key Themes

Although the team noted a wide range of issues and concerns, there were several key themes consistently identified by multiple commenters. These themes are summarized below.

- Noise due to train horns along the corridor
- Visual impacts to trees and due to overhead electrical wires
- Right-of-way takes in residential areas
- Traffic and safety impacts at at-grade crossings and need for grade separations
- Support for bikes on trains
- Diesel air pollution
- Impact on freight rail
- Parking accommodation for an increase in riders
- Impacts to emergency response time
- Land use compatibility
- Construction period impacts (service, noise, etc.)
- Project alternatives
- The relationship between High-Speed Rail and the Peninsula Corridor Electrification Project
- Support for the Peninsula Corridor Electrification Project

4.2 Summary of Scoping Comments

The following is a summary of the key issues, questions, and comments raised by community meeting attendees, provided in written and oral comment and expressed to the project team in sideline dialogues. This is not a comprehensive list of issues; the reader is referred to the actual comments.

General Questions/Comments

- Sign individual Community Development Agreements to mutually agree to the handling of each community's issues.
- Are switching and paralleling stations on top of berms where tracks are?
- Concern about metal theft.
- Traction power station should be relocated.
- If shoofly tracks are necessary, how long will they be?
- Will the trains have a battery back-up in case of a downed wire?

Caltrain Stations

- Provide separate northbound platform at the Atherton station not in the middle of the tracks.
- Consider a station at 4th and Townsend.
- Extend to Transbay Terminal.
- Trains storage near 4th and King should be moved.
- Station capacity should be increased, along with longer trains.
- Concern about platform heights.
- Level boarding should be provided.

Caltrain Service and Ridership

- Unnecessary work is being done to only provide one extra train a day.
- Passengers should not have to transfer at Tamien Station.
- Ensure that Caltrain service continues uninterrupted during construction.
- Don't eliminate any transfer stations during the electrification project.
- Restore/increase weekday service to Belmont, Broadway and Atherton Stations.
- Caltrain electrification will improve Amtrak ridership.
- Update ridership data/use independent modeling from High-Speed Rail.
- Impact of blended service on Baby Bullet service.

Funding and Costs

- Focus on elements of the project Caltrain can actually pay for with identified sources of funding.
- Is there a "Plan B" if use of Prop 1A funds are found to be "illegal"?
- Provide data on funding sources for the project.
- What are the projected changes in operating costs that will be achieved through electrification?

Relationship with other Railroad Tenants

- Consider Union Pacific's response to electrification and intercity commute use by HSR.
- Diesel moves freight, which keeps trucks off the road, while electrification might put more trucks on the road due to difficulty of operating freight (because of height restrictions, operating hours, and storage capacity of railcars).
- Consider economic and environmental benefits to maintaining and enhancing freight rail service.

Environmental Analysis

- Consider impacts that are commonly raised by Peninsula stakeholders (e.g., ridership, traffic congestion, boarding level, grade crossings, schedule types, Caltrain revenue).
- Carefully craft the scope of the EIR in a way that does not delay implementation of the project by 2019.
- As the details of the project design are determined, clarify which assumptions are specifically for the purpose of environmental clearance and how they may change in final design.
- Will JPB commit to following current EIR requirements regardless of future actions which may be taken by the Governor and State Legislature?
- To the extent allowed by CEQA, consider the economic implications of environmental impacts (e.g., lost commuter work hours resulting from traffic impacts of various alternatives).

Aesthetics

- Focus on making power stations as aesthetically pleasing as possible.
- Consider the visual impact of electrification infrastructure and the alternatives to the "Y" shaped electrification power poles.
- Proposed train design is not appealing.

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Air Quality and Energy

- In the EIR baseline portion, consider air quality at the 4th and King Station and rail yard with a focus on diesel pollutants.
- Concerns about an increase in greenhouse gas emissions with implementation of electrification.
- Concern about diesel engine air pollution.
- Concerns about sufficient energy supplies for electrification in California.
- Analyze greenhouse gas emissions impacts (construction, operations, including indirect emissions from electricity)

Biological Resources

- Evaluate impacts to trees.
- Consider the impact to existing trees and the loss of heritage trees.
- Impacts to creek/riparian corridors.

Cultural Resources

- Consider the impact to the historically significant stations
- Consider impacts to historic trees/groves (Burlingame, Palo Alto)
- Consider impacts to other historic resources (Greenmeadow neighborhood; others within 0.5 mile)

Electromagnetic Fields/Interference

- Analyze Electromagnetic Field (EMF)/Electromagnetic Interference (EMI) impacts to adjacent areas
- Analyze stray current impacts and peak period power issues on BART

Hydrology and Water Quality

- Flooding impact on electrical infrastructure
- Sea level rise impact on tracks and stations

Land Use and Planning

- Ensure consistency with State Rail Plan.
- Consider the impacts to Atherton Town Center facilities.

Property Acquisition

- Identify the conditions necessitating grade separations and specific ROW property acquisition requirements.
- Include a study of impacts to home and property values along the Caltrain right-of-way.
- What project alternatives trigger



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- acquisition of additional right-of-way? Are less intrusive designs possible?
- When will official list of eminent domain properties be published?
- Farmers, land owners, and small communities are impacted by ROW acquisitions.
- Concern about eminent domain in Sunnyvale.
- Concern about right-of-way takes

Noise and Vibration

- Consider noise and vibration impacts through residential zones.
- Measure nighttime noise in the EIR baseline portion.
- Concern about increase in train horns along corridor.
- Analyze after-hour construction noise and impacts along the rail line and intersections.
- Who establishes quiet zones?
- Impact of tree removal on noise.
- Noise from electrical equipment?

Public Services and Utilities

- How will additional train traffic affect emergency response time, with regard to the Police Department, Fire Department, and ambulances?
- Analyze safety of new electrical lines, especially in case of downed wires due to earthquake or falling trees.
- Impact on San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) facilities

Transportation and Circulation

Traffic and Transportation

- Analyze impacts of increased gate down time and increased traffic to stations
- Analyze construction impacts to traffic
- Impact on BART facilities and system (including additional ridership)
- Impacts on the proposal to relocate the San Francisco 22-Fillmore trolley coach route from 17th and 18th street to 16th street
- Impacts on freight and freight yards

Safety

- Analyze impacts of increased service on safety
- Station access safety/American with Disabilities Act (ADA) access
- Analyze impacts on emergency access

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Grade Separation

- Grade separation at at-grade crossings must be thoroughly analyzed, and related safety issues (including conflicts to pedestrians and other vehicles) must be mitigated.
- Grade-separations are needed at Castro St. and Rengstorff Ave. in Mountain View.
- If grade crossings are eliminated, put the train in a trench instead of building an over- or underpass at cross streets.
- Funds are needed for grade separation.
- Grade separation will decrease risk of suicide.
- Would grade separation eliminate need for horns?.
- Grade separation would lay groundwork for High-Speed Rail.
- Below grade separation is preferable.
- EIR should study putting trains underground to Mariposa St.
- Changes in San Francisco since the original EIR (such as industrial land that has been rezoned to residential) make tunneling more feasible.
- Grade separation is needed in Menlo Park and Santa Clara County.
- Install quad gates at Watkins Avenue grade crossing.

Bicycle/Pedestrian

- Study advantages of bringing bikes on the new electrified trains.
- Include bike capacity on trains.
- Construct a bicycle/pedestrian overpass to keep people separated from trains.

Parking

- Concern about parking accommodation once regular service is restored to Atherton station.
- Concern about access and parking for extra people riding Caltrain.



Cumulative

Blended Service/High Speed Rail

- What is the relationship between Caltrain and High-Speed Rail?
- Because the details of the blended system (Caltrain and High-Speed Rail) will not be precisely known during this period of environmental review, the study should concentrate on key components of the electrification project for the commuter rail system.
- Cooperation with the California High Speed Rail Authority should prioritize those elements of the blended system that will directly affect connectivity between Caltrain and High-Speed Rail.
- If the EIR studies possible passing tracks for High-Speed Rail, refer to prior experience with passing tracks for current baby bullet service (which had relatively minor impacts).
- Environmental analysis of the electrification component should address the cumulative effects of HSR as part of the analysis.
- Will “Y” shaped poles be compatible with HSR’s catenaries across the entire right-of-way?
- Study the impacts of a three- or four-track system in Atherton.
- Oppose at-grade passing tracks in City (Belmont, Atherton, Burlingame, Menlo Park).
- Study the cumulative impact on freight operations.

Other Cumulative

- Analyze the following in the cumulative analysis:
 - BART to San Jose (Diridon) and Santa Clara
 - BART Millbrae short track extension
 - Transit Oriented Development (TOD) at Millbrae station
 - Brisbane Baylands
 - San Carlos Transit Village
 - Mt. View Moffett Blvd. Gateway
 - VTA Light Rail Train Efficiency Improvement
 - San Francisco planning (Central Corridor, Mission Bay, and others)
 - San Francisco Central Subway
 - San Francisco Downtown Extension project
 - Growth in freight traffic including freight due to port expansion (Redwood City, San Francisco)

Alternatives

- Consider alternative vehicle and propulsion systems.
- An economic analysis of electrification vs. EMU, Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU), and Diesel-Electric Multiple Unit (DEMU) alternatives should be done.
- Consider a landscape of solar photovoltaic (PV) and other renewable systems in the right-of-way, creating its own energy.
- Keeping diesel service is a mistake; funding should be sought to fully electrify by 2019. Consider modern diesel.
- Consider a project alternative that would raise areas of constrained clearance to 23 feet (tunnels, overcrossing).
- Couple an electric engine with a diesel engine to provide direct service from south of Tamien station.
- For blended service, study 8 Caltrain trains per hour per direction with possibility of only 1-2 High-Speed Rail trains per hour during peak hours. Include the Dumbarton corridor in the

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modernization program, and study the impacts of building a holding track up to Fair Oaks Lane or beyond.

- Level boarding
- Common platform heights (Caltrain/CHSRA)
- Hybrid DMU (diesel/electric)
- Electric locomotives
- 23 feet clearance (for freight)
- Construction alternative (“factory trains”, no night work, accelerated construction)
- Buried trench alternatives for parts of the route.
- Grade separate all at-grade crossings
- Third-Rail instead of Overhead Contact System (OCS)
- BART along Caltrain corridor
- Underground San Francisco 4th and King Station and back to 16th or 22nd street in SF
- Alternative alignment under 3rd Street in SF
- Full electrification in 2019 (or earlier)
- Design trains for 125 mph
- Diesel service stop at Bayshore/electric only in San Francisco
- Ped/bike tunnels or bridges to connect two side of right of way
- Consider relocating paralleling station PS5 to reduce impacts to Greenmeadow neighborhood

5.0 Next Steps

During the environmental review process, the team will keep stakeholders informed of project activities through the following methods.

- Working and coordinating with existing working groups
- Holding agency briefings, public hearings, and interim meetings
- Developing informational materials and FAQs over the course of the project

These outreach activities will correlate to milestones in the environmental process. Below is the anticipated schedule of the key steps of environmental review.

- **January 31, 2013 - March 18, 2013 – Scoping Period:** A 45-day scoping period allowed interested public agencies, organizations and community groups to submit comments on the NOP.
- **Fall 2013/Winter 2014 – Draft EIR Release:** The Draft EIR will be made available for public and agency comment.
- **Spring/Summer 2013 – Final EIR Release:** The Final EIR will address comments collected related to the Draft EIR and during the scoping period.
- **Summer/Fall 2014 - Project Approval:** After certifying a Final EIR, lead agency decision-makers are in a position to approve a project, if they so choose.