



**SAN FRANCISCO
PLANNING
DEPARTMENT**



MTA Municipal Transportation Agency

June 30, 2010

Robert Doty, Manager – Peninsula Rail Program
California High Speed Rail Authority
925 L Street, suite 1425
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear California High Speed Rail Authority,

This letter serves as comments from the undersigned agencies of the City and County of San Francisco (CCSF) on the Preliminary Alternatives Analysis (AA) report released by the California High Speed Rail Authority (CAHSRA) in April 2010. The City and County of San Francisco remains an enthusiastic supporter of the High Speed Rail project. This project is a necessary investment for the future of the City and Bay Area region, and is a critical infrastructure project to ensure robust economic and environmentally sustainable growth for the entire state.

The City and County of San Francisco was pleased to see the April 2010 AA reject the non-viable Beale Street Alternative and to confirm the Bay Area terminus of CAHSR at the Transbay Transit Center (TTC), with split service to TTC and to the 4th/King Railyard.

Despite our strong support for the project, CCSF is very concerned by the vertical alignment proposal being considered by CAHSRA in the April AA, specifically the proposed maintenance of the existing Caltrain tracks at street grade north of Tunnel #1, requiring the trenching of 16th, 7th, and Commons Street, along with the severing of other connecting streets. Our concerns in this regard have been expressed in previous letters to CAHSRA, and we are troubled that no alternatives to this proposal are being considered that would maintain 16th, 7th, and Commons Streets at grade.

The trenching of these major arterials, the only east-west connections between the Mission Bay neighborhood and the rest of the City, will substantially degrade the function and character of this quadrant of the City. The trenching would compromise major public and private investment in the transit-oriented development of Mission Bay and adjacent neighborhoods, which include a bio-technology and life science economic cluster of statewide significance, anchored by a new University of California campus and hospital, and new residential areas home to tens of thousands of people.

We understand that the support columns of the Interstate 280 structure pose several obstacles along the Caltrain corridor. It is our observation that the AA did not consider even modest modifications I-280 in order to provide the best HSR alignment and urban environment.

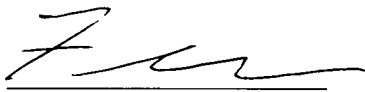
We formally request that CAHSRA include and carry forward through environmental review additional alternatives that:

- (1) Maintain 16th, 7th, and Commons Streets at existing grade; and
- (2) Consider both minor and major modifications to Interstate 280, as necessary.

At a meeting on June 24, 2010 staff from our agencies discussed with your staff some alternative concepts that we feel are viable and would address the City's concerns and opportunities. We are eager to continue this discussion to ensure additional alternative alignment concepts are fully studied and considered by CAHSRA.

We look forward to continued collaboration with CAHSRA to improve and refine the proposed rail alignments and station configurations toward a satisfactory outcome so that we can expeditiously bring this important project to realization.

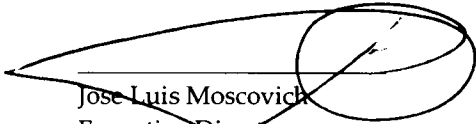
Respectfully,



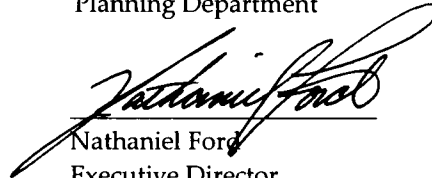
Fred Blackwell
Executive Director
Redevelopment Agency



John Rahaim
Director
Planning Department



Jose Luis Moscovich
Executive Director
County Transportation Authority



Nathaniel Ford
Executive Director
Municipal Transportation Agency

Cc: Dominic Spaethling, Parsons Brinckerhoff
Tim Cobb, HNTB
Maria Ayerdi-Kaplan, TJPA
Robert Beck, TJPA
Michael Cohen, SF Office of Economic and Workforce Development