



# The City of Burlingame

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August 26, 2010

Mr. Roelof van Ark  
Chief Executive Officer  
California High-Speed Rail Authority  
925 L Street, Suite 1425  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. van Ark,

The City Council and the community of Burlingame were disappointed in the release of the August 2010 Supplemental Alternatives Analysis Report for the San Francisco to San Jose Section (Supplemental AA Report). The residents, commercial businesses, and our citizens have lost confidence in the High Speed Rail Authority's (CHSRA) willingness to work cooperatively toward a mutually acceptable solution for the alignment of the high-speed rail in the City of Burlingame. Only two options are shown for further study through the City: the aerial viaduct and the open trench. In addition the CHSRA announced that only the aerial alternative will be cost effective in its FRA federal funding application. CHSRA eliminated the most preferred option (underground tunnel/covered trench) by the community and included the most unacceptable option (aerial structure) in the Supplemental AA report which demonstrates the serious disregard in working with the local communities.

To be clear, we are in favor of a high speed rail line running beneath our cities, which would facilitate transit-oriented development. We also favor HSR running on routes such as Highway 101 or 280, which would not disrupt living communities to such a degree. Please note that our call for an underground covered rail line is strongly supported by local community groups, including the San Mateo Union High School District, Burlingame High School, Burlingame Chamber of Commerce, Broadway Improvement District and the Putnam Motor Group, among many others on the Peninsula. In addition, vast majority of the community input received through the public outreach process demonstrates strong opposition for aerial structure and support for an underground covered solution.

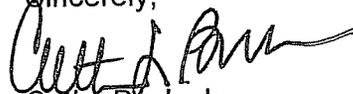
We continue to urge the CHSRA to retain a covered underground alternative for the City of Burlingame or an alternate alignment along 101. For the past year and a half Burlingame has specifically requested a covered underground solution as stated in numerous correspondence (\*see list below) and through the Technical and Policymaker Working Groups.

The CHSRA has directed the community, city staff and policymakers through what now seems to have been meaningless exercises including numerous city meetings, workshops and open forums. The Context Sensitive Solutions process adopted by the CHSRA appears to have been an effort to receive input but not to consider working towards a solution addressing the concerns of the community. The CHSRA has not been forthright, open, or sincere regarding alternatives that would be seriously considered and carried forward in the review process.

In addition it seems that other cities will have the opportunity for a covered underground solution while our concerns have been dismissed. We have repeatedly asked the CHSRA to consider its high-speed rail project from the perspective of the community and our exceptional quality of life. High-speed rail decisions will impact our city and its quality of life for decades, if not centuries, into the future. It is critical that high-speed rail not split or physically divide our community through an elevated structure, however it is obvious to us that the CHSRA did not consider such a vision when it eliminated a covered trench and deep tunnel alternative from further study.

We request that covered underground alternative through Burlingame be included in the Supplemental AA report and comprehensively studied and genuinely considered in all future alternatives studies as well as the Environmental Impact Report.

The City of Burlingame desires to work with CHSRA cooperatively toward a mutually beneficial solution whereby High Speed Rail project accomplishes its goals while respecting the local community's desire to protect and preserve the quality of life. By building the rail line in a covered trench or tunnel, environmental impacts such as noise, vibration and visual impacts will be minimized while the city's natural and historic resources would be protected. We would like to re-iterate that an elevated structure is not acceptable to our community. The City will fight it at every step of the way and will not rest until the aerial alternative is taken off the table for Burlingame.

Sincerely,  
  
Cathy Baylock  
Mayor

- \* June 25, 2010 mayor letter to CHSRA on Preliminary Alternatives Analysis report
- April 26, 2010 mayor letter to CHSRA on Program EIR
- January 19, 2010 mayor letter to Peninsula Rail Program on CSS process and alternatives
- November 13, 2009 mayor letter to CHSRA on Preliminary comments on alternatives study
- April 3, 2009 mayor letter to CHSRA on EIR/EIS
- January 22, 2009 initial comments to CHSRA on preliminary concerns regarding the project

Cc: Board of Directors, High-Speed Rail Authority  
Robert Doty, Director of the Peninsula Rail Program  
Dianne Feinstein, U.S. Senator  
Barbara Boxer, U.S. Senator  
Jackie Speier - Congresswoman representing California's 12<sup>th</sup> District  
Anna G. Eshoo - Congresswoman representing California's 14<sup>th</sup> District  
Leland Yee - State Senator Assistant President pro Tempore representing the 8<sup>th</sup> Senate District  
Joe Simitan - State Senator representing California's 11<sup>th</sup> Senate District  
Fiona Ma - State Assemblywoman Speaker pro Tempore representing the 12<sup>th</sup> District  
Jerry Hill - State Assemblymember representing the 19<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
San Mateo County Board of Supervisors  
Joseph C. Szabo, Federal Railroad Administration  
Ray LaHood, U.S. Secretary of Transportation