

Bill Bronte
Chief, Division of Rail
California Department of Transportation
1120 N Street, MS-74
P.O. Box 942874
Sacramento, CA 95814-5680

October 30, 2012

Dear Chief Bronte:

The California State Rail Plan “establishes a statewide vision, sets priorities, and develops implementation strategies to enhance rail service in the public interest, and will serve as a basis for federal and state rail investments within the state for high speed and intercity passenger rail , commuter rail and freight rail projects” (California State Rail Fact Sheet, 8/24/2011). With the signing of AB 1779 this September, this key document also became critical to the future of the San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority (SJJPA). In regards to the SJJPA’s initial business plans, AB 1779 was amended to state, “the initial business plans shall be consistent with the immediately previous plans developed by the department pursuant to Section 14036....”

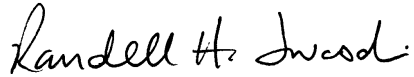
Our understanding is that work on the Draft State Rail Plan began in June 2011 and that it is expected to be released to the public in February 2013. We have concurred on key elements that we believe need to be included and analyzed as part of the Draft State Rail Plan (please see the attached document). We believe that our corridor-wide working group (which includes participation from most of the transportation planning agencies throughout the corridors) provides a new asset to the state towards achieving agency and stakeholder consensus in the San Joaquin Corridor for the development of the State Rail Plan. In addition, we will become a strong voice in advocating for protecting and improving the existing San Joaquin intercity passenger rail service.

We would like to have representatives discuss our input with you and your staff at your earliest convenience. Please have your staff contact Dan Leavitt, Manager of Regional Initiatives with San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission, at (209) 944-6266 or by e-mail at danl@acerail.com.

We look forward to working with you on this important rail planning document.

Sincerely,

Members of the Regional Governance Working Group for the San Joaquin Rail Service



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Executive Director
Contra Costa Transportation Authority



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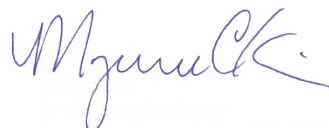
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cc Brian Annis, Clem Bomar, Emily Burstein,
Supervisor Vito Chiesa, Angelo Lamas

Regional Governance for the San Joaquin Rail Service Working Group Recommendations for the Draft State Rail Plan

General:

- The Draft State Rail Plan should commit the state/Caltrans DOR to working in partnership with local and regional agencies and other stakeholders throughout the San Joaquin Corridor in determining the future development, improvement, and optimal schedule of the San Joaquin intercity rail service.
- The Draft State Rail Plan should include detailed information regarding to AB 1779 and SB 1225 and the experience of the CCJPA and its partnership with Caltrans DOR.

Existing Service:

- There should be a section or chapter of the Draft State Rail Plan that is focused on the San Joaquin Rail Service that would include an Appendix with detailed information on the San Joaquin service.
- There should be corridorwide data presented (like totals for the service ridership, revenue, farebox ratio, customer satisfaction, etc.)
- There should be detailed information provided within the corridor (for example: ridership at each station, station-to-station ridership, performance information for the different San Joaquin trains, and detailed data regarding the various connecting bus services).
- There should be a table of detailed historical data for the service provided (from its inception to today) which includes ridership, financial and frequency of service information – as presented in the previous State Rail Plan.
- The Draft State Rail Plan should discuss the long-standing support within the San Joaquin Corridor for providing direct intercity passenger rail service to Southern California.

For 2020:

- The Draft State Rail Plan needs to model and present a range of San Joaquin trains that would utilize the new HSR infrastructure, including a forecast that maintains the current number of through trains on the existing San Joaquin line (6 round trip).
- Model “conservative” (with at least 8 round trips) and “optimistic” (with at least 11 round-trips) alternatives for the number of San Joaquin trains for 2020.
- All alternatives/ridership forecasts should maintain through service on the existing San Joaquin rail line between Madera and Bakersfield.
- Model and consider having additional stations for the existing BNSF line between Madera and Bakersfield at North Fresno and North/West Bakersfield. In addition, Allensworth State Park could be a stop for special events.

- Assess having “infill” service between Bakersfield and Madera on existing BNSF line to act as a feeder service to the San Joaquin trains that would use the HSR infrastructure.
- Model having the through service that remains on the existing BNSF line, and the “infill” service be priced at a reduced rate (“local service”) as compared to the “express” service that uses the new HSR infrastructure.
- Include assessment of double-tracking the BNSF line from the southern point of the new HSR infrastructure to the Bakersfield downtown station.
- There must be alternatives/ridership forecasts (for each scenario) that do not have a station at Kings/Tulare along the initial construction segment of the HSR for 2020.
- Assess additional stations at Elk Grove and University/66th Street in Sacramento along the UPRR line (Fresno Subdivision) to Sacramento.
- Assess the benefits/drawbacks of having the last Northbound San Joaquin train to Sacramento arriving earlier.
- Rail improvements to Sacramento should be focused on the UPRR (Fresno Subdivision) line. Do not include alternatives/ridership forecasts with service to Sacramento on the WPRR (Sacramento Subdivision) line.
- Model Berkeley and Hercules station stops for some of the San Joaquin trains on the line to Oakland.
- Study having first trains timed so they can reach end-points earlier in the morning. This will require some early morning trains beginning mid-corridor in the Central Valley. Also study having last trains from end-points terminate in the Central Valley.
- Modeling should take into account use by potential business travelers who may use the intercity trains.
- Provide detailed modeling assumptions and results for existing and future connecting bus service levels, including connecting buses that support other intercity rail corridors.

For 2025:

- All alternatives with the HSR initial operating segment (IOS) should have the northern terminus of the IOS in Merced (as depicted in the CHSRA’s Revised 2012 Business Plan).
- Modeling should include alternatives with substantially improved conventional services from Merced to Sacramento, Oakland, and San Jose (via direct use of ACE corridor), with much higher frequencies and significantly improved travel times.
- San Joaquin service must continue through service along the existing BNSF line to Bakersfield.

Beyond 2025:

- The Sacramento-Merced Section and the Altamont Corridor Rail Project should be included as “completed” in CHSRA modeling beyond 2030.
- San Joaquin service must continue through service along the existing BNSF line to Bakersfield.