

23 ELECTED OFFICIAL COMMENTS

Submission 1380 (Enrique Navarro-Donnellan, Office of Councilmember John Khamis, City of San Jose, May 27, 2020)

San Jose - Merced - RECORD #1380 DETAIL

Status : Action Pending
Record Date : 6/16/2020
Submission Date : 5/27/2020
Interest As : Local Elected
First Name : Enrique
Last Name : Navarro-Donnellan

Stakeholder Comments/Issues :

MR. NAVARRO-DONNELLAN: Hi. My name is Enrique Navarro-Donnellan. Just work as a council assistant there at City of San Jose.

I just wanted to make sure that I -- that I understood this right. So it's just comment, right? So if we just have like a quick clarifying question on the EIR, that this wouldn't be the place to ask it?

MR. GOLDMAN: Yeah. I'm afraid we're not responding to questions today.

MR. NAVARRO-DONNELLAN: Ah, okay.

MR. GOLDMAN: So anything that you wish to share could be by comment and then we can point you to some resources here so that you can have questions answered.

1380-154

MR. NAVARRO-DONNELLAN: Oh, okay. Well, then, just on that note, I just wanted to say we had a constituent who e-mailed our office. I'm with the office of Councilman Johnny Khamis. A constituent e-mailed us asking about the about the alignment. Basically I understand that the High-Speed Rail is going to kind of follow the Union Pacific alignment of their Monterey Corridor in San Jose. So it would be intersections of Branham and Chynoweth and Skyway. They just wanted to request, you know, that there be some kind of a grade separation.

And so I'm basically just communicating a comment on some constituent's behalf. If you're -- our crew represents the interests of a lot of -- a lot of other residents in the area who at a future point in time when this comes to fruition may exhibit some concerns about an increase in traffic or an increase an environmental concerns and safety concerns in that if the rail maintains its current at grade alignment without any kind of grade alterations at this particular existing intersection.

So that's just all I wanted to say. I report to seeing any kind of responses that may be published on that front in the future.

Thank you.

MR. GOLDMAN: Thank you, Enrique. And before you go, just -- we didn't get your -- if you could just repeat your first and last name and spell them, please, so that we can add that to the record that the court reporter can put that down.

MR. NAVARRO-DONNELLAN: Sure. Enrique Navarro-Donnellan. So first name Enrique, E-N-R-I-Q-U-E,

kind of like Enrique Iglesias. And then Navarro, hyphen, Donnellan, which is a handful. Letter N as in Nick, -A as in apple, -V as in Victor, -A as in apple, -R as in rabbit, -R as in rabbit, -O as in octopus, hyphen Donnellan, D as in dog, -O as I orange, -N as in Nick, -N as in Nick, -E as in Eric, -L as in Louis, -L as in Louis, again, -A as in apple, -N as in Nick.

MR. GOLDMAN: Thank you very much.

MR. NAVARRO-DONNELLAN: Office of Councilmember John Khamis.

MR. GOLDMAN: Enrique, I think it was just a request to spell the councilmember's last name.

MR. NAVARRO-DONNELLAN: Oh, oh, Khamis, K-H-A-M-I-S.

MR. GOLDMAN: Thank you very much for your comment.

MR. NAVARRO-DONNELLAN: All right. Thank you. Bye-bye.

Response to Submission 1380 (Enrique Navarro-Donnellan, Office of Councilmember John Khamis, City of San Jose, May 27, 2020)

1380-154

Refer to Standard Response SJM-Response-GS-1: Requests for Grade Separations.

The comment noted safety concerns about at-grade crossings at Branham, Chynoweth, and Skyway in San Jose. Please refer to Figure 2-48 in Chapter 2, Alternatives, of the Draft EIR/EIS for information about these intersections. Alternative 4 includes the placement of four-quadrant gates at these three intersections. Please refer to Section 2.4.6, At-Grade Crossings, of the Draft EIR/EIS for a description of these at-grade crossings. Please refer to Section 3.11.6.3, Community Safety and Security, for information about safety at at-grade crossings.

Submission 1426 (Zoe Lofgren, U.S. Congress, June 21, 2020)

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1426-213

1426-214

June 20, 2020

California High-Speed Rail Authority
Attn: Draft San Jose to Merced Project Section EIR/EIS
100 Paseo de San Antonio, Suite 300
San Jose, CA 95113

Re: San Jose to Merced Project Section Draft EIR/EIS Comments

This submission responds to the California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) for the San Jose to Merced Project Section of the California High-Speed Rail (HSR) Project released on April 24, 2020. Specifically, this comment focuses on the impacts the Authority's preferred track alignment, "Alternative 4," will have on the 19th Congressional district and my constituents.

The State of California, and especially the San Francisco Bay Area, could benefit from the increased connectivity and reductions in traffic congestion that high speed rail may potentially deliver. As I have shared with the Authority previously, the Project's benefits must not come at disproportionate cost to the communities it serves, and local feedback must be taken into consideration.

1426-212

Track Alignment Along US 101 and I-280

At various stages of the Project's development, I have had the opportunity to discuss the merits of potential track alignment alternatives for the San Jose to Merced Project Section directly with the Authority. And, on several occasions I have raised the benefits of running this section of track parallel to the US 101 and I-280 highways. I continue to hear from my constituents that a route that runs along the US 101 and I-280 would be least disruptive to the communities in the 19th Congressional district. I am taking this opportunity to submit a comment to, once again, relay the strong preference, on behalf of the many residents of CA's 19th Congressional District who have contacted me, for the San Jose to Merced Project Section to be built along the US 101 and I-280.

1426-213

State's Preferred Track Alignment - Alternative 4

While the benefits of extended Caltrain electrification and potential for construction efficiency that come with using Caltrain and Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) presented by Track Alternative 4 have not gone unnoticed, this alternative also comes with negative impacts that significant portions of "at-grade" track bring to communities along this route. These include but

are not limited to the sound, vibration, aesthetic, and logistical impacts of HSR trains running through communities on at-grade tracks.

There are myriad concerns presented by Alternative 4 that make it a disadvantageous alternative for my constituents. I would like to use this comment to highlight just one in particular as an example—the threat posed to a United States Historic Landmark located in Morgan Hill, Villa Mira Monte (VMM). VMM is the site of the founder of the City of Morgan Hill's home, built in the 1880's. The property is used for education, cultural, fundraising, and private events, and is maintained by funds raised by these events. Alternative 4 would have tracks built adjacent to the eastern boundary of VMM, potentially compromising the site's historical integrity and disrupting the events held there. I recently shared with the Authority a letter I received from the Morgan Hill Historical Society (MHHS), the organization that holds title to VMM and is required to maintain and preserve the site. I echo MHHS's concerns and urge you to take them under strong consideration.

Community collaboration and engagement is key to ensuring that HSR is a success. I appreciate the opportunity to comment and hope the Authority will consider my comments seriously.

Sincerely,



Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress

Response to Submission 1426 (Zoe Lofgren, U.S. Congress, June 21, 2020)

1426-212

Refer to Standard Response SJM-Response-ALT-1: Alternatives Selection and Evaluation Process.

The comment states that there are benefits of running the section of track around Morgan Hill parallel to the US 101 and I-280 highways and supports such an alternative. Chapter 8, Preferred Alternative, of the Draft EIR/EIS identifies the Preferred Alternative for the San Jose to Central Valley Wye Project Extent as Alternative 4. It was selected based on a balanced consideration of the environmental information presented in the Draft EIR/EIS in the context of project purpose and need; project objectives; the CEQA, NEPA, and Section 404(b)(1) of the Clean Water Act requirements; local and regional land use plans; community and stakeholder preferences; and costs. Section 8.4.1, Review of Alternative Key Differentiators by Subsection, of the Draft EIR/EIS describes the key community and environmental factors that differentiate the alternatives within each subsection of the project.

1426-213

Refer to Standard Response SJM-Response-ALT-1: Alternatives Selection and Evaluation Process, SJM-Response-GS-1: Requests for Grade Separations.

The comment noted concern about Alternative 4 running at grade. Please refer to Table S-3 and Table S-5 of the Draft EIR/EIS for a comparison of the impacts of each alternative.

1426-214

The comment noted concerns about Alternative 4 effects on Villa Mira Monte. Please refer to Section 4.6.1.22, Villa Mira Monte (Resource #33), in the Final EIR/EIS for information about effects of Alternative 2 and 4 on Villa Mira Monte. No use would occur under Alternatives 1 and 3; and no constructive use would occur under Alternatives 2 and 4.