

SamTrans

CORRESPONDENCE

as of
September 27, 2019

From: Ian Bain
To: [Jeremy Smith](#)
Cc: [GRP-City Council](#); [Board \(@caltrain.com\)](#); [Board \(@samtrans.com\)](#); [Warren Slocum](#); [Sequoia Center Vision](#)
Subject: Re: The Gravity of RWC Station
Date: Friday, September 27, 2019 3:22:31 PM

Dear Mr. Smith,

On behalf of the City Council, thank you for writing to express your thoughts on the Sequoia Station proposal. If this proposal were to go forward, it would require a general plan amendment. As part of due process, City staff will evaluate the developer's proposal, and I believe it will take a couple of months before this issue comes before the Council to consider whether to initiate an amendment process. When it does, your thoughts and concerns will be considered.

Thank you again for writing to us.

Respectfully,

Ian Bain



IAN BAIN

Mayor

City of Redwood City

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www.redwoodcity.org



On Fri, Sep 27, 2019 at 10:06 AM Jeremy Smith <jsmith.build@gmail.com> wrote:

Esteemed council members,

I am one of the “young” people riddled with worry about climate change and how the destruction it poses to our world and local communities. Living densely around transit is one of the best ways we in the Bay Area can reduce our carbon emissions and maintain economic growth per a UC Berkeley report in 2017 and several others since then. Personally, I use Caltrain every day to get to my graduate school at Stanford M-F (by the way it takes 19 mins door-to-door from my parent’s home on Opal Ave/Brewster).

Development at Sequoia Station is **critical** to Redwood City’s future for many reasons I’m

confident you understand. But I'd like to underscore how important the Redwood City Transit Center is to this future. Here are some points from a blog post that illustrate my views on what should be considered for the station:

- [Think Big](#). Redwood City is one of the few stops on the peninsula rail corridor not surrounded by a sea of low-density single-family housing. Intensive land use and transportation must fit together to achieve a dynamic yet sustainable low-carbon future.
- [Form follows function](#). No amount of architectural flourish or amenity can make up for a poor station design. Optimize for convenient access, easy transfers between trains and buses, short walks, direct and intuitive routes.
- [Put the station at the center](#) of the action, right over Broadway. Don't shove it to the north, out of the way of the development. The city rendering at right shows precisely what NOT to do.
- [Configure the station as two island platforms](#) to facilitate cross-platform transfers, without time-consuming vertical circulation or platform changes. The Caltrain business plan's staff-recommended service vision relies **entirely** on these Redwood City cross-platform transfers; every single train that pulls into Redwood City will make a timed transfer to another same-direction train docked at the opposite edge of the same platform. Denoting express tracks as 'F' for Fast and local tracks as 'S' for Slow, [the optimal layout is FSSF](#) with two islands, resulting in F-platform-SS-platform-F. Again, the city rendering shows precisely what NOT to do: passengers would not only have to change platforms, but also cross the tracks at grade.
- [Elevate the train station](#) to reconnect the street grid and make the railroad permeable to pedestrians, bikes, and other traffic. A busy four-track station is fundamentally incompatible with at-grade railroad crossings, and the only reasonable way to grade separate at this location is by elevating the entire station. Obstacles to pedestrian circulation such as the Jefferson Avenue underpass would be removed. Once again, the at-grade city rendering shows what NOT to do.
- [Use four-track approaches](#) from the north and the south. Cross-platform transfers are most efficient if trains do not have to arrive and depart sequentially using the same track, which adds about 3 minutes of delay. The best transfer is one where the two same-direction trains can arrive and depart simultaneously on their own separate tracks. Temporal separation is efficiently established by having the local train stop one station away from Redwood City (southbound at San Carlos or northbound at a new Fair Oaks station at Fifth Avenue) at each end of a new four-track segment that will ultimately measure four miles. In this arrangement, the express trains naturally gain on the local trains without a single passenger being delayed at Redwood City.
- [Include turn-back tracks](#). Preserve room in the right of way north and south of the station for turn back pocket sidings, between the central slow tracks. Dumbarton rail corridor trains may not necessarily "interline" or continue on the peninsula rail corridor, so it's important to give them a convenient place to transfer and turn around without fouling other train traffic on the express tracks (hence FSSF arrangement). Same thing for a possible San Mateo local, which could serve the more densely spaced stops north of Redwood City.
- [Don't be constrained by discrete city blocks](#). It could make sense to build structures or connect them over and across the tracks, more tightly knitting the station

complex into surrounding mixed-use neighborhoods. This has some surmountable safety and liability implications, but buildings on top of busy stations are a common feature of successful cities around the world.

- Plan for long 400-meter platforms, not Caltrain's standard 700-foot platform length (again as seen in the city rendering of what NOT to do). While statewide high-speed rail plans currently do not include a stop in Redwood City, it is becoming enough of a destination and a regional transportation node that it makes sense to build a station large enough to future-proof it for service by long high-speed trains, regardless of what the California High-Speed Rail Authority might have to say about it.
- Think ahead about construction sequencing. Redwood City should be grade separated in one project from Whipple to Route 84, including the elevated station, taking advantage of [Caltrain's land holdings](#) to minimize the use of temporary tracks. A shoo-fly track would have to be built on Pennsylvania Avenue (within the railroad right of way) to make room for construction of the western two-track viaduct. Trains would begin using the elevated station while a second eastern two-track viaduct is constructed. Pennsylvania Avenue could re-open later, under the new four-track viaduct. Construction sequencing may drive how much extra land is needed for the railroad, so it's important to think it through up front.

"Risk and Opportunity in Redwood City"

<https://caltrain-hsr.blogspot.com/2019/09/risk-and-opportunity-in-redwood-city.html>

"Right Type, Right Place: Assessing the Environmental and Economic Impacts of Infill Residential Development through

2030": http://ternercenter.berkeley.edu/uploads/right_type_right_place.pdf

"To save the planet, the Green New Deal needs to improve urban land

use": <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/the-avenue/2019/01/15/to-save-the-planet-the-green-new-deal-needs-to-improve-urban-land-use/>

Sincerely,
Jeremy Smith

From: Luis Galindo
To: [Board \(@samtrans.com\)](mailto:Board@samtrans.com)
Subject: Introduction of a student fair proposal
Date: Friday, September 27, 2019 11:35:51 AM

Dear San Mateo County Transit District,

I am a first-year university student at Notre Dame de Namur University. Now after all the financial aid and associated cost of attending a school of higher education. I was appreciative of the very reasonable \$27 dollar a month bus pass for youth that will end once I turn 19. This reduced cost not only helps me travel from my house to school but around the county I otherwise couldn't do by another means. There are 2 things I want YOU to do beginning with establishing a student monthly pass and promoting the creation of a Caltrain student monthly pass while maintaining the free rides/ride credit currently available to eligible discount Caltrain monthly pass holders.

I'm writing to you urging that the San Mateo County Transit District to finally provide a student monthly pass for institutions of higher education on a paper ticket and clipper card. Yet this isn't the only thing I want to happen to promote the idea and eventual adoption of a Caltrain student monthly pass. While as mentioned before maintaining the current interagency transfers with Caltrain applicable to current eligible discount holders providing free rides/ride credits regardless of many zones the monthly pass is for. One last remark regarding the price of this propose student monthly pass having it be affordable maintaining it close to the youth monthly pass.

It's time for not only Samtrans but the entire bay area to adopt affordable fares for students who go to higher education. Not only helping students with a little that goes a long way but expanding SamTrans rider base. This should've been a given by now.

Best Regards,
Leyva lfgljr2001@gmail.com

Luis Galindo

From: [Board \(@samtrans.com\)](mailto:Board@samtrans.com)
To: [Noelle Langmack](mailto:Noelle.Langmack)
Cc: [Board \(@samtrans.com\)](mailto:Board@samtrans.com); [Pam Aguilar \(paguilar@redwoodcity.org\)](mailto:Pam.Aguilar@redwoodcity.org)
Subject: Confirmed receipt re. Housing units at Sequoia Station RE:
Date: Wednesday, September 25, 2019 9:38:16 AM

Dear Noelle Langmack,

Thank you for taking the time to provide comment. This email is to confirm receipt and acknowledge that your comments have been relayed to the appropriate staff here. Meanwhile, I have also copied the Redwood City Clerk herein as well so that she may relay them to appropriate City staff as well.

Kind Regards,

Dora Seamans
Executive Officer/District Secretary

From: Noelle Langmack <nlangmac@alumni.nd.edu>
Sent: Monday, September 23, 2019 7:57 PM
To: Board (@samtrans.com) <Board@samtrans.com>
Subject:

Hello,

I would like to encourage you to support the building of housing units at Sequoia Station - especially given that the plan includes a completely affordable housing unit on the property! Increasing housing density near transit is HUGELY important for solving traffic and housing issues - and approving the proposed plans would help continue to propel downtown Redwood city into being an awesome place to live or visit. Thank you for your consideration, and I am looking forward to seeing Redwood City continue to grow and serve the community.

Best,
Noelle Langmack
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Inline image

From: John Cordes
To: board@caltrain.com; [Board \(@samtrans.com\)](mailto:Board (@samtrans.com))
Subject: Need better Caltrain/Samtrans schedule coordination
Date: Tuesday, September 24, 2019 1:51:46 PM

Dear Decision makers,

- Please take Grand Jury report seriously and study opportunities to increase ridership by coordinating “Caltrain Connections” routes with Caltrain. Transit's ease of use and reach must be greatly improved to handle our growing population.
- Thank you for the recently [supporting the business case study for regional fare integration](#). . This is another essential next step toward provide more customer-friendly, seamless transit service.

Sincerely,
John Cordes