

The Board of Supervisors

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Contra Costa County



David Twa
Clerk of the Board
and
County Administrator
(925) 335-1900

February 2, 2020

Julie Pierce, Chair
Contra Costa Transportation Authority
2999 Oak Road, Suite 100

Subject: Iron Horse Corridor Management Program Advisory Committee: Contra Costa Transportation Authority Appointment

Dear Chair Pierce

As you are aware, the Governor signed Assembly Bill 1025 (Grayson) in to law at the end of 2019. The bill relieved the County of obsolete conditions in legacy grants from the 1980s related to the acquisition of the Iron Horse Corridor. In addition, the bill made changes¹ to the oversight of the Corridor by way of modifications to the Iron Horse Corridor Management Program Advisory Committee. One such change is the addition of a seat for the Contra Costa Transportation Authority.

The Board of Supervisors is requesting that the Authority appoint a member to the Iron Horse Committee. We look forward to your contribution in this forum and are confident that County residents and visitors will benefit from an enhanced corridor as a result.

Sincerely,

Candace Andersen, Chair
Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors
Supervisor, District II

Copy: Carrie Ricci, Deputy Directory – Public Works Department
Attachment: Assembly Bill No. 1025

¹ § 2. (a) The County of Contra Costa shall do both of the following: (1) Revise the bylaws of the Iron Horse Corridor Management Program Advisory Committee to include a seat for a Contra Costa Transportation Authority representative and expand the management program elements to include a new, seventh element that considers proposals to study new and emerging mobility modes and technologies in the corridor. (2) Include a new task in the committee's work program to recommend a framework for acting on the proposals.

Assembly Bill No. 1025

CHAPTER 816

An act relating to transportation.

[Approved by Governor October 12, 2019. Filed with Secretary
of State October 12, 2019.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1025, Grayson. Transportation: California Transportation Commission: San Ramon Branch Corridor: reimbursement.

Existing law creates the California Transportation Commission, with various powers and duties relative to the programming of transportation capital projects and the allocation of funds to those projects, pursuant to the state transportation improvement program and various other transportation funding programs. Through certain commission resolutions, the commission allocated moneys appropriated to it in the 1980s from the Transportation Planning and Development Account to the County of Contra Costa for the acquisition of a specified right-of-way, and for associated projects, relating to the San Ramon Branch Corridor. Those resolutions require the county to reimburse the state if the county fails to meet specified conditions.

This bill would relinquish the rights of the state to reimbursement pursuant to those resolutions.

This bill would also require the County of Contra Costa to revise the bylaws of the Iron Horse Corridor Management Program Advisory Committee to: (1) include a seat for a Contra Costa Transportation Authority representative, (2) expand the management program elements to include a new, 7th element that considers proposals to study new and emerging mobility modes and technologies in the corridor, and (3) include a new task in the committee's work program to recommend a framework for acting on these proposals. The bill would also make findings and declarations in support of these requirements.

By imposing new duties on local public officials, the bill would create a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to the statutory provisions noted above.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(a) The Southern Pacific Railroad's San Ramon Branch Line started service in 1891. That section of the rail line in the County of Contra Costa extended 18.5 miles from the City of Concord to the Alameda County line.

(b) In 1978, Southern Pacific Railroad received federal permission to abandon the rail line. The line's railroad tracks were removed over the following one to two years.

(c) The County of Contra Costa obtained \$10,579,000 in Transportation Planning and Development Account (TP&D) grants starting in 1982 to fund a feasibility study and pay for the partial acquisition of the San Ramon Branch Corridor's right-of-way, including a 1982 TP&D grant, MT-83-16, for \$2,000,000, a 1985 TP&D grant, MT-86-1, for \$2,579,000, and a 1986 TP&D grant, MT-87-2, for \$6,000,000.

(d) The grants' requirements included (1) the conduct of a feasibility study with costs to be shared equally by state and nonstate sources, and (2) the planning and construction of a busway or exclusive mass transit guideway. The feasibility study investigated possible transportation improvements within the right-of-way and the Interstate Route 680 corridor between the Cities of Concord and Pleasanton.

(e) The County of Contra Costa raised some of the nonstate moneys necessary to purchase the right-of-way through the sale of easements to the Central Contra Costa Sanitary District and the Contra Costa County Flood Control District. The Contra Costa County Redevelopment Agency (RDA) also acquired portions of the right-of-way in the redevelopment area. The RDA used a portion of that right-of-way to construct bicycle and pedestrian access improvements, including a bridge exclusively for bicycles and pedestrians crossing over a major arterial that serves the Pleasant Hill/Contra Costa Centre Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) station.

(f) In 1986 the County of Contra Costa entered into a license agreement with East Bay Regional Park District to operate a 10-foot wide paved multiuse trail within the right-of-way called the "Iron Horse Regional Trail." On July 5, 2017, the East Bay Regional Park District's Board of Directors authorized an electric bicycle pilot program, for Class 1 and 2 E-bikes, on the Iron Horse Regional Trail. On October 18, 2017, the Contra Costa Transportation Authority appropriated \$350,000 in funds from Measure J, the local transportation sales tax initiative approved by the voters in November 2004, to conduct the Iron Horse Active Transportation Corridor Study.

(g) Due to a combination of an acute shortage of automobile parking at the Pleasant Hill/Contra Costa Centre BART station and the immediate proximity of the Iron Horse Regional Trail, a significant expansion of bicycle accommodation in the station area has taken place to improve BART station access. New accommodations include the installation of a 215-space secure bike station, the placement of a fleet of docked and dockless bikes, and improvements to the surrounding infrastructure to accommodate bikes.

These investments concurrently rely on, and increase the usage of, the Iron Horse Regional Trail.

(h) When the County of Contra Costa purchased the right-of-way, water lines and a high pressure gas line were already in place in the right-of-way. The county has expanded access to utilities by authorizing the installation of a reclaimed waterline, a fiber optic line, sewer lines, and additional water lines.

(i) Consistent with requirements in the grants described in subdivision (c), the County of Contra Costa has identified, and restricted the use of, a 34-foot wide transit area throughout the right-of-way for a busway or exclusive mass transit guideway while continuing to use and manage the right-of-way, emphasizing active transportation projects and the general benefit to the public. The Board of Supervisors of the County of Contra Costa is advised on this use and management by the multijurisdictional Iron Horse Corridor Management Program Advisory Committee that is comprised of representatives from the community of Alamo, the City of Concord, the City of San Ramon, the Town of Danville, the City of Walnut Creek, and the City of Pleasant Hill, the board of supervisors, and the East Bay Regional Park District.

(j) The Iron Horse Regional Trail is one of the largest and oldest multiuse trails in the San Francisco Bay area, is the East Bay Regional Park District's most used trail, and has evolved into a cherished community element. The County of Contra Costa, through grant funding and project sponsors, constructed alternate trails in several sections of the right-of-way allowing walkers and joggers to use the right-of-way separately from faster moving cyclists and other wheeled modes of transportation.

(k) The County of Contra Costa receives requests from adjacent cities and companies to make improvements to the right-of-way. Approving the requests continues to be a challenge while maintaining the 34-foot wide clear area to accommodate the busway or exclusive mass transit guideway.

(l) While there is potential for emerging transportation technologies to be implemented in the corridor, a busway or exclusive mass transit guideway is no longer a best practice or appropriate use of the right-of-way. The right-of-way is used annually by over one million recreational users, commuters, and students for access to 11 schools, three BART stations that face severe parking shortages, numerous commercial and recreational activity centers, as well as other regional trails which together with the Iron Horse Trail form a sophisticated countywide active transportation network comprised of the Contra Costa Canal Trail and two other trails to which connections are planned, the Lafayette-Moraga Regional Trail and the Delta de Anza Regional Trail.

(m) With the evolution of new mobility technologies, including ride hailing, transportation network companies, autonomous vehicles, miscellaneous wheeled devices, and other "last mile" options, an investment in a busway or exclusive mass transit guideway in a corridor bounded by the BART commuter rail line in both the north, the Pittsburgh-Bay

Point-SFO Line, and in the south, the Dublin-Pleasanton-Daly City Line, is unlikely to meet cost-benefit expectations.

(n) The construction of a busway or exclusive mass transit guideway is no longer operationally or financially viable due to the cost of developing these modes of transportation in compact, established communities with substantial density immediately adjacent to urban and suburban uses, and the corresponding density of road and trail crossings, the overwhelming presence of active mode users, and the status in the community of the corridor and trail as a linear park, recreational, and multiuse facility.

(o) Above and beyond the requirements to study and construct the busway or exclusive mass transit guideway, the Contra Costa Transportation Authority has conducted comprehensive analyses in the broader travel corridor, the “I-680 Investment Options Analysis” (2003) and the “I-680 Transit Investment/Congestion Relief Options Study” (2015). Neither effort recommended the use of the Iron Horse right-of-way as a viable option to address congestion on I-680. With the rapid emergence of new mobility options, an update to these prior studies is warranted.

(p) The County of Contra Costa remains committed to continuing its good faith effort in working with corridor-adjacent cities and the Contra Costa Transportation Authority, to collaboratively invest, study, and develop the corridor for the public benefit, including the examination of new transportation modes and technologies as they evolve. This commitment is evidenced by the Iron Horse Active Transportation Corridor Study currently underway. The study includes an examination of the accommodation of shared autonomous vehicles. Study oversight includes representatives from the Contra Costa Transportation Authority, corridor cities, and the East Bay Regional Park District.

SEC. 2. (a) The County of Contra Costa shall do both of the following:

(1) Revise the bylaws of the Iron Horse Corridor Management Program Advisory Committee to include a seat for a Contra Costa Transportation Authority representative and expand the management program elements to include a new, seventh element that considers proposals to study new and emerging mobility modes and technologies in the corridor.

(2) Include a new task in the committee’s work program to recommend a framework for acting on the proposals.

(b) The state hereby relinquishes the rights to reimbursement established pursuant to the following California Transportation Commission resolutions relating to the San Ramon Branch Corridor: Resolution MT-83-16 (December 17, 1982), TP&D Abandoned Railroad Right-of-Way Program, Resolution MT-86-1 (September 1985), TP&D Transit Capital Improvement Funding, Resolution MT-87-2 (July 1986), and TP&D Abandoned Railroad Right-of-Way Program.

SEC. 3. If the Commission on State Mandates determines that this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to local agencies and

school districts for those costs shall be made pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.

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