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Subject: **Answers to your questions**
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To: David Schonbrunn <david@schonbrunn.org>

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Dear Mr. Schonbrunn:

Regarding your questions on several railway operational issues involving the Bay Area and high speed rail, I will answer them below in no particular order.

Dumbarton Bridge Capacity

The present abandoned movable swing bridge across San Francisco Bay has a single-track leading to it. For its entire existence it was a useful component to the Southern Pacific Railroad. Its proposed use as access for high speed inter-city trains to The City of San Francisco and as an additional commuter rail route would not necessarily require double-tracking.

However, double tracking would ensure absolutely smooth operations and even provide for single-tracking as a back-up for maintenance and emergency situations. Hourly high speed trains in each direction will be no problem at all for such a bridge. A possible commuter service initially established with four peak direction trains to San Francisco in the two-hour morning peak and four returning in the evening would be easy to add. If the service proved successful and resulting in an all day fleet of, say, hourly trains all day, it could be scheduled with the commuter train always timed to immediately follow the high speed.

Railcar Buff Strength Issues

Caltrain has asked for a Federal waiver to able to operate low-buff-strength Electric Multiple Unit trains (EMUs) on its right-of way alongside its diesel-powered consists. If the federal government grants such permission, high-speed trains will be able to operate on the Dumbarton Rail Bridge, intermixed with diesel-powered local commuter trains. The only possible problem that might come would involve the slower acceleration of the diesel trains keeping pace while intermixed with the electric fleet. It also could well be that surplus rail cars of Caltrain could be put to work inaugurating the initial Dumbarton commuter rail service in a low capital cost start-up.

My Professional Background

With regards to my professional background, I grew up in Chicago and have worked around railroads for 33 years since leaving high school. I began my career “up against the iron” (in the words of the railroad colloquialism) in yard operations with Atchison, Topeka, & Santa Fe. After beginning graduate studies in Urban Planning with a concentration in transportation, I began working in the planning department with Metra, the Chicago-area commuter rail agency.

I have worked with several consulting firms as a rail operations simulation specialist in Los Angeles, Boston, New York, and New Jersey. I was most recently with the Bay Area’s Caltrain system. The coordination of several different classes of rail operations onto mixed-use alignments (such as with local commuter, freight, and high speed and other inter-city passenger services) has been a professional specialty of mine. I have extensive background working the commuter rail systems of Chicago, New York, Boston and San Francisco; as well as proposed systems in Cleveland and Kansas City.

I hold a Bachelor of Science degree in business administration from Elmhurst College (Elmhurst IL) and a Masters degree in Urban Planning and Policy from the University of Illinois/Chicago.

Regards,

Anthony E. Waller