

April 9, 2013

Mr. Peter M. Rogoff, Administrator  
Federal Transit Administration  
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE  
Washington, DC 20590  
[peter.rogoff@dot.gov](mailto:peter.rogoff@dot.gov)

Subject: San Francisco Central Subway Project and High Speed Rail Connectivity

Dear Mr. Rogoff:

I am writing in response to a March 25, 2013, letter from Quentin L. Kopp regarding the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency's (SFMTA) Central Subway Project. Mr. Kopp's letter, which argued in favor of substantially and unnecessarily changing the Project's scope, contained misinformation about the Project's funding plan, construction impacts and environmental approvals. The intent of this letter is to provide clarification about the points raised in Mr. Kopp's letter and to reaffirm the soundness of our financial, engineering and environmental plans and processes. Specifically, Mr. Kopp claims that the Central Subway Project is ineligible for state Proposition 1A high-speed rail bonds and should, as a result, amend its construction plan so the Central Subway tunnels end in Chinatown.

On June 27, 2012, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) approved a commitment of \$61.3 million in state Proposition 1A high-speed rail bonds for the Central Subway Project. The SFMTA applied for and was awarded the funds because the Central Subway will offer direct connectivity to the proposed high-speed rail system at 4<sup>th</sup> and King streets (see attached map). Contrary to what is stated in Mr. Kopp's letter, the revised 2012 California high-speed rail business plan, published in April 2012, does include the 4<sup>th</sup> and King station as a possible stop for high-speed rail trains in San Francisco (see [page 2-22](#)). The CTC awarded these funds consistent with the requirements of Proposition 1A and in consideration of the revised high-speed rail business plan.

Regarding the plan to change the retrieval site for the Central Subway Project's tunnel boring machines (TBMs), the SFMTA is pursuing this change with all due adherence to environmental regulation and engineering best practices. We are working closely with the relevant staff at the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to ensure the site change is in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Construction at the new site, including demolition of an existing structure and construction of a retrieval shaft, will not proceed until the FTA provides the necessary approvals under NEPA.

The total cost of the retrieval site change, including a two-year lease of the property, demolition of the building, construction of the retrieval shaft and extraction of the TBMs, is not anticipated to exceed \$9.15 million. We will initially use funds from the SFMTA's General Fund reserve, which is larger than expected due to a strengthened economy, to finance the lease, increased construction costs and reimbursements to the property owner. Pending FTA approval, these costs may be reimbursed from the Central Subway Project's contingency funds. Even if the use

of contingency funds is not approved, the funding plan will not reduce Muni service or the SFMTA operating budget.

Mr. Kopp also expressed concerns about the impact of construction on neighboring buildings. At this time, design drawings for the retrieval shaft are still being developed; however, we expect the construction methods at the new TBM retrieval site to be the same as those planned, designed, vetted and approved for the retrieval shaft on Columbus Avenue. To protect buildings adjacent to the retrieval site, the construction contractor will perform pre-construction surveys to confirm existing site conditions, and monitoring equipment will be installed on nearby buildings. If necessary, ground improvement work and shoring will be performed. These measures will safeguard neighboring properties during construction.

As we move forward with the TBM retrieval site change, we remain confident that our financial, engineering and environmental plans are sound. We will continue to work closely with the FTA to ensure compliance with all relevant regulations.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership as we work to improve public transit in San Francisco.

Sincerely,



John O. Funghi  
Program Director  
SFMTA Central Subway Project

JF EH

Attachment: Map of Central Subway Project High-Speed Rail Connectivity

Cc: Leslie Rogers, FTA Region 9 Administrator  
Edward D. Reiskin, SFMTA Director of Transportation  
Quentin L. Kopp  
Gillian Gillett  
CS File No. M544.1.5.3020.c