

[Quentin Kopp on KCBS In Depth: High-Speed Rail, Friday, Oct 23 2009.](#)

Provided by Rita Wespi on behalf of CARRD.

This is a partial transcript, with gaps. All text in “quotes” is verbatim. The rest of this transcript is either verbatim, close to verbatim, or paraphrased. Use the video link to verify before quoting passages where exact accuracy matters.

Audio: [Quentin Kopp on KCBS In Depth](#) Part 1 of 2.

8:05

Kopp: It’s certainly the largest non-defense project in the history of CA.

Come with many problems and responsibilities you have to deal with them day to day.

8:37

Question: Of course Europe has the history, the tradition and the infrastructure set up for passenger rail. “How do you convince people in CA and the United States that this is something that will work and that they should embrace?”

Kopp: “Giving them the experience of actually riding it. It’s interesting, 3 years ago or so, I’d asked my audience how many people know what I’m talking about with high-speed rail? More and more and more people now raise their hands. Now, how about California? **Well, one of the reasons for the strategy of opening a short section –relatively short, from here to San Jose is about 50 miles or so – is to have people actually experience a high speed rail ride. Once you experience it, you’re sold.**”

9:45

Expects to vote on station locations in 18-24 months.

625 grade crossings from here to Anaheim.

21:20 Question: Going back to the practicality of using it let’s say regionally first, you talked about how you’re gonna have a chunk of an operational, you’re not gonna wait for the whole system to be in place. So let’s say I want to commute from San Jose to San Francisco and I have the option now of driving to Fremont to take BART or taking Caltrain, or if I could hop on this section of the bullet train [sic] how would that compare, let’s say, to me taking Caltrain? And would that be feasible for us – a commuter of that distance?”

Kopp: The answer is yes. That'll take 30 minutes. These trains are capable of speeds now of up to 220 mph. Top speed on the Peninsula will be 125 mph. [] Caltrain will be capable with new equipment as part of the HSR project [] will provide an electrification - not just for us – not just for high-speed rail alone – but also for Caltrain. **“So Caltrain is also a possibility at a speed and with that 30 minute time it'll be close to it if not also within 30 minutes.”**

Kopp: (talks about ridership forecasts, one due after the first of the year.) Roughly, approximately 100 million rides a year when the whole 790 mile system is finished from SD up to Sacramento []. Because by 2030 it's predicted California will have 51 million people. First of the year [] told us that CA had a population of 38.2 million. Think of 51 million by the year 2030. It's estimated that to accommodate the new transportation requirements we'd have to have [] new lanes of freeway, 5 new runways at major airports, your average [lists airports]. People are going to use HSR because it's attractive. And because the overall speed compared to the airplane – and certainly compared to the automobile – is less. As well as the environmental factors. [] [talks about 1/3 emissions of planes, 1/5 of cars]

Q: There's a lot of concern from people living along the corridor there about what this means to them. You talked about maybe the possibility of maybe a [] way next to their homes or businesses going through there. There's a lot of concern. Are you going to have to buy and destroy homes and businesses to go through there?

25:20 Kopp: “Not very much. Not very much. **Right of way between here and San Jose is about 50 feet wide up and down. And that's enough for 4 tracks.** Two for high-speed rail on the outside and 2 for Caltrain on the inside. If there are stations out of Millbrae, for example, or Palo Alto or Redwood City, some additional taking of land will be necessary. But it's not a sure thing that any of those three, much less Mountain View, will have a station. Not when you've got a limit of 24 throughout the whole state. **And the amount of taking for purposes of construction also will vary on the technique used. If you go underground, you need to take land. Believe me, much more land than you do if you go aerial or via trench.**” And as some people evidently got the idea that somewhere there've been notices of eminent domain. There are no notices of eminent domain, certainly on the Peninsula which is the only right of way that's owned by the people of California.

Q: What's the next step?

K: [includes mention of legislation for \$50 billion]

I'd look after the

SEC of Trans grants as far as the application out of the stimulus

I'd look at what the Congress does on the **re-authorization of the Service of Transportation Act** – legislation in the Assembly (?) that I mentioned for \$50 billion.