

# THE CITY OF SAN FERNANDO

## CITY COUNCIL

April 20, 2015

*Transmitted via Certified US Mail and Email  
(info@hsr.ca.gov)*

MAYOR  
JOEL FAJARDO

MAYOR PRO TEM  
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COUNCILMEMBER  
JAIME SOTO

Dan Richard, Chairperson  
California High-Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA)  
770 L Street, Suite 800  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Honorable Chairperson Richard:

While the San Fernando City Council ("City Council") does not oppose the concept of a high-speed rail network for the State of California, we must, nevertheless, express our strong and united opposition to the California High-Speed Rail Authority's ("Authority") proposed route through the City of San Fernando ("City") – a poorly conceived proposal that will split the San Fernando community in half, obliterate the City's historic downtown and civic center areas<sup>1</sup> and result in enormous economic and environmental harm to a community that is only beginning to emerge from the Great Recession.

In addition, environmental justice principles and ethics demand that adverse environmental impacts and other negative externalities created by the project should not be born disproportionately or exclusively by communities like the City of San Fernando. These same principles demand that State, regional and local governmental officials fully and carefully take into consideration all impacts created by the project including, impacts on the environment, impacts on public health, impacts on local infrastructure, and impacts on local economies and minority communities – impacts which could stretch well into the millions of dollars.

Any Environmental Impact Report under the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") as well as any Environmental Impact Statement under the National Environmental Policy Act ("NEPA") must thoroughly and carefully study a broad range of impacts, including but not limited to the following:

### Environmental Justice

- Do the economic and environmental impacts of the proposed route disproportionately impact minority communities?

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<sup>1</sup> The City's Police Department, City Hall, Public Works Operations Facilities, the San Fernando Middle School Auditorium (a potential local historical landmark), and the Cesar Chavez Monument are adjacent to or within 300 feet of the existing railroad right of way that is being considered as the future route of the proposed high-speed rail road.

- What socioeconomics and community impacts will the San Fernando community experience as it relates to: the physical divide created by a high-speed rail line infrastructure project that passes through a predominantly Latino working class community with no rail line access; disruption of the physical makeup of the community; adverse economic impacts to the community by increasing the physical separation of the downtown area and neighboring civic uses from the neighboring commercial, industrial, institutional and residential land uses that exist on both sides of the existing railroad right of way and proposed route; social equity issues attributed to the undergrounding of rail line segments and placement of stations in more affluent communities such as Santa Clarita, Burbank, and Los Angeles?

#### *Safety and Security*

- How will the proposed route impact vehicle and pedestrian safety?
- How will the railway impact the movement of emergency responders in the City and response times during construction and after construction is completed?
- What impact do existing seismic conditions have on the safety of a high-speed rail line through a populated area like the City of San Fernando? What measures are being considered to ensure public safety to avoid derailment in general as well as derailments caused by seismic activity?

#### *Impacts on Pedestrian Access and Traffic Move and Circulation*

- How will the proposed route impact pedestrian access and motor vehicle traffic circulation along the City's feeder streets and major arterial boulevards?
- What impact will occur to neighboring residential streets due to the required modifications to streets adjacent to those through streets that will have to have grade separation from the proposed route?
- What traffic mitigation measures have been considered during the construction phase, including detouring and coordinating the movement and idling of construction vehicles through the City?

#### *Noise, Vibration and Dust*

- What impact will fast moving high-speed trains have on noise and vibration endured by neighboring properties, including neighboring residential properties? What mitigation measures are reasonably feasible to eliminate these impacts?

- What measures are being considered to mitigate noise and vibration associated with construction?
- What measures does the project implement to mitigate dust generated throughout the construction phase of the project?

*Impacts on Existing Utilities and Infrastructure*

- What impacts with the construction of the line have on existing utilities infrastructure, including temporary and/or permanent relocation of existing infrastructure? What measures will be taken to mitigate the impact on business and residents while such infrastructure is moved or relocated?
- What will be the impact to the City's Public Works Department yard facility located at the southeastern terminus of First Street, which currently has access to the southern portion of the City along Jessie Street?

*Community Compatibility and Aesthetics*

- What consideration has been given to the compatibility of a high-speed rail line with land uses adjacent to the proposed line?
- What consideration has been given to the visual and aesthetic impact the line will have on the San Fernando community, particularly upon areas of historical and cultural significance?
- What impacts will result from the potential elimination and/or altering of greenway corridors, bike/pedestrian pathways and public access to said recreational and open spaces?

In closing and in light of the foregoing, the San Fernando City Council strongly urges that the Authority consider alternative routes that do not pass through the City of San Fernando. We also express our deep concern that the Authority's study and analysis to date has failed to identify the full range of economic and environmental impacts a route through San Fernando would generate. Indeed, it is difficult to see how a route through the City will not lead to many millions of dollars in added burdens and lost opportunities, even with mitigation measures which may leave much to be desired and will do little, after the fact, to make the City whole. Accordingly, please know that the City of San Fernando will insist on a very thorough vetting of this matter and will also urge the Authority and others to reconsider any route through the City of San Fernando.

**DAN RICHARD, CHAIRPERSON**

California High-Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA)

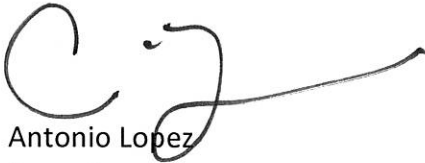
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Very Sincerely,



Joel Fajardo  
Mayor



Antonio Lopez  
Councilmember



Sylvia Ballin  
Mayor Pro Tem



Robert C. Gonzales  
Councilmember

Jaime Soto  
Councilmember



cc: Honorable California High-Speed Rail Authority Board of Directors  
Honorable Tony Cárdenas, Congressman, 29<sup>th</sup> District  
Honorable Robert M. Hertzberg, State Senator, 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Honorable Patty Lopez, State Assemblymember, 39<sup>th</sup> District  
Honorable Sheila Kuehl, Los Angeles County Supervisor, 3<sup>rd</sup> District  
Honorable Felipe Fuentes, Los Angeles City Councilmember, 7<sup>th</sup> District  
Honorable Mitch Englander, Los Angeles City Councilmember, 12<sup>th</sup> District  
Honorable James C. Ledford Jr., Mayor, and City Councilmembers, City of Palmdale  
Honorable Mayor Marsha McLean and City Councilmembers, City of Santa Clarita  
Honorable Mayor David Gordon and City Councilmembers, City of Burbank  
Honorable Mayor Zareh Sinanyan and City Councilmember, City of Glendale  
Honorable Chairperson Eric Garcetti and Board of Directors, Metro