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March 12, 2021

Boris Lipkin, Northern California Regional Director  
Audrey, Van Deputy Project Manager of San Jose to Merced  
California High Speed Rail Authority  
100 Paseo De San Antonio, #206  
San Jose, CA 95113

**RE: CHSRA REVISED DRAFT 2020 BUSINESS PLAN**

Dear Mr. Lipkin,

The City would like to thank CHSRA for continued communication and the opportunity to comment on the Revised Draft 2020 Business Plan. The City continues to prefer an alignment that remains entirely within the U.S. Highway 101 right-of-way. All proposed alternatives for the HSR project have major implications for Morgan Hill residents and businesses, and the City bears the brunt of significant and widespread construction and operational impacts, and economic losses. But, unlike San Jose or Gilroy, Morgan Hill does not benefit from the opportunities that come from a station. With that in mind, the City requests that the HSR Authority select the Alternative with the least impacts on the City.

Alternative 4 is identified as the Preferred Alternative within the Draft EIR for the San Jose to Merced Segment and may ultimately be selected for implementation. Therefore, the City requests the Business Plan address the following:

- Prioritize negotiations with Union Pacific Railroad that would allow the HSR to operate mostly within the existing right-of-way providing electrified tracks from San Jose to Gilroy.
- Prioritize identification of funding for the electrification of the tracks from San Jose to Gilroy to ensure future rail service for South County.
- Identify a funding plan for future Bookend and Connectivity projects required to mitigate impacts for Morgan Hill such as grade separations and Caltrain Station Refinements.

We take this opportunity to remind the Authority that as the HSR San Jose to Merced project moves forward, the City of Morgan Hill has requested attention to the following matters as part of the Draft EIR mitigations:

### **Grade Separations**

If Alternative 4 is selected for implementation, the City requests funding be identified for Bookend and/or Connectivity projects that would include funding for grade separations at Tilton Avenue, East Dunne Avenue, and Tennant Avenue. Grade separations at these locations have been conceptually evaluated for feasibility and the information provided within our comments sent on the Draft EIR. In particular, the grade crossings at E. Dunne Avenue and Tennant Avenue have the highest average daily

trips in the entire segment (and are behind only Peninsula Avenue in Burlingame for the entire Caltrain corridor). The City requests an opportunity to engage with HSR staff to further develop and refine these grade separations so they can be included in Alternative 4. As discussed in more detail in our comments sent to the Authority on the Draft EIR, grade separations at these crossings are the appropriate and necessary solutions to several environmental impacts specifically, but not limited to safety response times, circulation, and noise as disclosed in the EIR/EIS for which vague and unconvincing mitigation measures have been offered.

### **Downtown Morgan Hill Caltrain Station Refinements**

The UPRR/Downtown Alternatives (Alts. 2, 4) require modifications to the Downtown Caltrain Station. The station improvements as currently proposed are inadequate, and do not appear to meet the requirements of the Americans With Disabilities Act. The City has developed conceptual refinements to improve the experience of pedestrians and bicyclists while preserving parking to the extent possible. The following should be taken into consideration with the redesign of the station:

- Maximizes natural light –Consider open (uncovered) underpass when possible.
- Add stair access in addition to ramps at each access point.
- Width of walkways need to accommodate both pedestrians and cyclists (at a minimum of 16-foot wide for ramps and 20 for covered underpass).
- Add elevator for central ramp per Caltrain Design Criteria adopted in 2007 for grade changes that exceed 10-feet or more.
- Consider design that utilizes one centrally located platform for the Caltrain station.
- Create design features that provide a sense of place, with landscaping, night time lighting for ambiance in addition to safety.
- Incorporate infrastructure for telecommunications, seating, charging stations, and other features needed for a station.
- Replace impacted parking spaces at a 1:1 ratio.
- Develop a MOU for the on-going maintenance of the station by Caltrain or HSR.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments and concerns. We appreciate the HSR staff's willingness to incorporate these items within the Draft Business Plan, and look forward to future discussions to resolve issues to achieve a project that completes the HSR Authority's mandate while minimizing impacts on the communities that will have to co-exist with the operating rail system long-term.

Sincerely,



Christina Turner  
City Manager

cc: City Attorney  
Mayor and City Council