



March 4, 2016

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The Honorable Marsha McLean  
The Honorable TimBen Boydston  
Councilmembers  
City of Santa Clarita  
23920 Valencia Blvd., Suite 300  
Santa Clarita, CA 91355

Dear Councilmembers McLean and Boydston:

Thank you for your letter dated January 11, 2016 regarding the November meeting held by the North Los Angeles County Communities Protection Coalition and the status of the early independent studies following our Board's June 2015 Board meeting. I apologize for the delay in responding, but I wanted to ensure we could provide you with an accurate timeline for completion of these studies before I wrote back to you.

As we communicated last month to our stakeholders, the Authority has proceeded with independent technical studies on the topics of equine impacts, tunneling, and groundwater. Independent authors and institutions with the requisite expertise have been identified and substantial progress has been made towards completing the studies. The first study "High-Speed Rail and Equine Issues" was published by the Mineta Transportation Institute at San Jose State University at the end of December. We anticipate that the tunnel study, also conducted by the Mineta Institute, along with the initial groundwater study which is being conducted at Cal State Fullerton, will be completed by March 17.

These studies will certainly provide useful information for the Authority, stakeholders, and the public as we advance our work; however, they do not supplant or in any way replace the environmental review process currently underway. The professional teams engaged to conduct preliminary engineering and environmental work have also been busy reviewing past comments about the project section, and conducting data gathering and analysis that will ultimately be used to support the environmental document. I am confident that these activities are conducted with the utmost professionalism and will provide the technical, scientific, and engineering information required to ultimately select a preferred alternative when the time comes.

While initiating these studies took longer than we anticipated, the Authority continues to fulfill our commitment to the elected officials who requested this work. An update on the progress of the studies was provided at the San Fernando Valley Council of Governments meeting on September 24, 2015, and a subsequent update was provided via e-mail to

relevant government officials, stakeholders and the interested public on December 2, 2015. As we did with the first study, each subsequent report will be announced and made public as soon as it is completed.

Finding the best route for high-speed rail through northern Los Angeles County requires a broad and open assessment of all potential alignments. While we fully respect your position to request the removal of surface alignments, we are following an objective planning process and will continue to do so as we move forward. It is in the best interest of all communities that we follow this process and document decisions so that we do not need to revisit them at a later date.

We strive to keep stakeholders across all of our project sections informed and will continue to work to do so as the environmental process moves forward. As always, we appreciate your ongoing involvement with the high-speed rail project. Only with the invaluable input of impacted communities will be able to arrive at the best possible outcome. Thank you again for your correspondence, I look forward to continuing to work with you on this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Richard", written in a cursive style.

Dan Richard  
Chairman, Board of Directors  
California High-Speed Rail Authority