



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

SHERRI S. LIGHTNER
CITY COUNCILMEMBER – DISTRICT 1

DONNA FRYE
CITY COUNCILMEMBER – DISTRICT 6

November 12, 2009

SANDAG Executive Committee
401 B Street, Suite 800
San Diego, CA 92101-4231

Dear Chair Pfeiler & Honorable Committee Members:

Subject: SANDAG Comments to the California High-Speed Rail Authority on the Notice of Preparation for the Los Angeles to San Diego via Inland Empire Section Project EIR/EIS

At your meeting tomorrow, you will consider comments from SANDAG to the California High-Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) on a high-speed train (HST) corridor through our region (Item 4).

We appreciate that your draft comments include a pledge from SANDAG to continue to support the state's efforts to plan, design, and construct an HST corridor through our region, and to work cooperatively to move forward with a project level EIR/EIS and implementation of the corridor. HST will bring many benefits to our region, including 45,250 more jobs by 2030, economic stimulus, decreased demand for auto travel, and an overall reduction in carbon emissions.

We respectfully request that the following comments also be included in your letter:

- **An alignment alternative along I-15 to a station alternative at Qualcomm Stadium should be included in the process.**

The CHSRA's own 2005 program EIR/EIS demonstrated that this alignment is cheaper to build, faster to the region, and will attract more intercity passengers than the Carroll Canyon or Miramar Road alignments. This alignment was also shown to have lower potential impacts to aesthetic, visual, cultural, and paleontological resources. Moreover, a stop at Qualcomm is more

centrally located in the San Diego region and provides opportunities for Smart Growth and redevelopment. This route does not preclude a final stop at Lindbergh Field or downtown San Diego. The corridor could also be continued to the international border.

○ **Summary of comments received at local public scoping meetings, including those which the CHSRA has acknowledged receiving.**

While these comments were also collected by the CHSRA, SANDAG represents the citizens of our region and its comments ought to reinforce and reflect their views. According to your backup material for Item 4, public comments at local scoping meetings “focused on concern for the proposed alignment through Rose Canyon in University City, potential traffic impacts near stations, and the need for additional construction along the Interstate 15 corridor.” At the November 10th University Community Planning Group meeting, CHSRA officials said that major themes of public comments they have received so far are to consider the I-15 corridor to Qualcomm, and concerns regarding Rose Canyon, property impacts, earthquake safety, and financing. Most of these comments are not currently reflected in your letter, and we believe they should be included.

○ **A corridor to the border should be studied as a part of the project level EIR/EIS.**

At this stage in the environmental process, we believe that a continuation of the I-15 corridor route to the border should be included in the evaluation. HST presents a remarkable opportunity to partner binationally to bring progress to our entire region. Building HST to the border will provide redevelopment opportunities and economic growth in Otay Mesa, San Ysidro, and the South Bay area. An HST station at Rodriguez International Airport could be a part of a larger plan for a binational regional airport.

Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to working with you to bring HST to our region.

Sincerely,



Sherri S. Lightner
Councilmember, First District
The City of San Diego



Donna Frye
Councilmember, Sixth District
The City of San Diego