



City of
SANTA CLARITA

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March 26, 2024

Cameron Smyth
Mayor

The Honorable Tom Richards
California High-Speed Rail Authority
Attn: Draft 2024 Business Plan
770 L Street, Suite 1180
Sacramento, CA 95814

Bill Miranda
Mayor Pro Tem

Dear Chair Richards:

SUBJECT: 2024 Draft Business Plan Comment Letter

Jason Gibbs
Councilmember

On behalf of the City of Santa Clarita (City), I am writing to reaffirm the Santa Clarita City Council's position to only support fully underground alignments within the Palmdale to Burbank Project section of the California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) Project.

Marsha McLean
Councilmember

As you may know, the Santa Clarita City Council voted unanimously to only support a fully underground alignment within this project section on July 14, 2015. The City has been closely involved with the review of the proposed Palmdale to Burbank alignments, specifically, as it relates to ensuring that potential negative impacts felt by the community are given careful consideration by the Authority and are included in any environmental impact reports.

Laurene Weste
Councilmember

While there have been recent developments made to the Authority's preferred SR-14 Refined alignment that adds underground/tunneling to the project section, the Santa Clarita City Council continues to remain concerned over the negative consequences associated with existing surface elements currently included in the SR-14 Refined and SR-14A Corridor alignments within the Palmdale to Burbank Project section.

As it was shared in our comment letter dated November 22, 2022, for the draft Environmental Impact Report for the Palmdale to Burbank Project section, the City owns 208 acres of open space, known as Bee Canyon, located east of State Route 14 and north of Soledad Canyon Road. As the SR-14A Build Alternative proposes to bifurcate Bee Canyon, at-grade, we respectfully request



that the Authority consider mitigation measures on the potential impacts the construction and operation of the Palmdale to Burbank Project section could have on recreational uses and wildlife corridors within this open space. Additionally, we respectfully request that the Authority take into serious consideration these potential impacts to Bee Canyon in its decision on an alignment within this segment.

Furthermore, east of Bee Canyon is Soledad Canyon, in which the City owns the surface rights to the property. The Bureau of Land Management, which owns the mineral rights to Soledad Canyon, awarded two 10-year mining contracts to CEMEX Inc. to aggregate 56 million tons of sand gravel within 490 acres of Soledad Canyon. At this time, CEMEX Inc. is still in the process of obtaining its necessary permits to start the proposed mining project.

The City has strongly opposed this proposed large-scale mining project for over two decades, citing significant concerns with regard to the potential environmental and quality of life impacts the proposed mining project would have to the City and surrounding communities.

At capacity, the proposed mining project will have excavation activities 17 hours per day, six days per week. Processing is scheduled to take place 16 hours a day and shipping activities are expected to take place 24 hours a day. Even more concerning, blasting will occur at least twice a week for the first 10 years of the proposed mining project and four times a week during the subsequent 10 years. Moreover, concrete batch plant and ready-mix shipping will occur up to seven days a week, 24 hours a day. Ultimately, this proposed mining project will add up to 1,200 truck trips to our already-congested freeways.

With that said, we respectfully request that the Authority consider the potential impacts the nearby proposed large-scale mining project at Soledad Canyon could have on the construction and operation of the SR-14A Build Alternative and that the Authority seriously consider the consequences this may have to the viability of the Authority's Preferred Alternative.

Additionally, just north of Bee Canyon, the SR-14A Build Alternative proposes to be at-grade or elevated for a stretch through Agua Dulce Canyon Road. We respectfully request that the Authority take into serious consideration the impacts this stretch will have on the movement of wildlife habitats living in or moving through this area.

Honorable Tom Richards
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As the Palmdale to Burbank Project section continues to advance through the environmental review process, we look forward to continuing our work with the Authority as more information becomes available. Should you or your staff have any questions, please contact Masis Hagobian, Intergovernmental Relations Officer, at (661) 286-4057 or mhagobian@santaclarita.gov.

Sincerely,



Cameron Smyth
Mayor

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cc: Members of the City Council
Senator Scott Wilk
Assemblywoman Pilar Schiavo
Supervisor Kathryn Barger
LaDonna DiCamillo, CAHSRA
Kenneth W. Striplin, City Manager
Leadership Team
Masis Hagobian, Intergovernmental Relations Officer
Arthur Sohikian, NCTC
John Bwarie, SFVCOG
Joe A. Gonsalves & Son