

September 17, 2024

The Honorable Amit Bose
Administrator
U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

SUBJECT: Support of the Railroad Crossing Elimination Program Application for Fiscal Years 2023 and 2024: ***Stockton Diamond Grade Separation Project***

Dear Administrator Bose,

The Madera County Transportation Commission (MCTC) strongly supports the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission's (Rail Commission) application to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) Railroad Crossing Elimination Program (RCE) for the Fiscal Years 2023 and 2024 for ***the Stockton Diamond Grade Separation Project (Project)***.

The purpose of the Project is to eliminate the at grade intersection of the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe (BNSF) Stockton Subdivision and the Union Pacific (UP) Fresno Subdivision located in Stockton, California and to eliminate or bring up to current safety standards at grade intersections of certain local streets identified for inclusion in the Project. The junction of the BNSF and UP tracks, referred to as the "Stockton Diamond," is the most heavily congested freight bottleneck in California, as well as one of the most congested rail junctions in the nation. Completion of the Project is critical for unlocking capacity needed for the "Valley Rail" future expansion of the ACE commuter rail and Amtrak San Joaquins intercity passenger rail service to improve the safety and efficiency of freight mobility in the growing San Joaquin Valley and Northern California Megaregion.

The Rail Commission is requesting \$25 million in grant funding for the Project. The Rail Commission has secured significantly more than the required 20% non-federal matching funding needed to apply for the RCE grant.

This Project aligns with the RCE Program purpose to improve safety and mobility of people and goods. Further, it supports the stated Administration Priorities of safety, equity, and climate and sustainability.

MCTC would like to thank the FRA for its consideration and welcomes the opportunity to support the Rail Commission in the pursuit of RCE grant funding to support the Project.

We urge your careful consideration and review of this important funding request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'PTaylor', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Patricia Taylor
Executive Director
Madera County Transportation Commission