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as of 4-24-2020



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April 24, 2020

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Re: BUILD Grant for Burlingame Broadway Grade Separation Project

Dear Secretary Chao:

Thank you for your national leadership in ensuring our Nation has the safest, most efficient and modern transportation system in the world, especially during the current COVID-19 pandemic. On behalf of the San Mateo County Transportation Authority (SMCTA), I am writing to express our unequivocal support for the City of Burlingame's Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) grant application for the Burlingame Broadway Station Project (Project), a critical component of the larger Burlingame Broadway Grade Separation Project.

The SMCTA is very supportive of the Project, and is one of the major capital projects receiving local matching funds from the county sales tax program we administer. The City of Burlingame and Caltrain have been and will continue to work together to deliver this important Project. Caltrain, the seventh largest commuter rail system in the country, has been partnering closely with the City on the Broadway Grade Separation Project (Project) for a number of years. With the recent completion of preliminary engineering and the near completion of the environmental clearance, the City and Caltrain are positioned to quickly proceed to the design and construction phases of this Project.

As background, the existing Broadway station has two narrow, non-standard platforms serving Caltrain's two mainline tracks. Because of this, the station is required to operate under what is called the "holdout rule" requiring approaching trains to wait until the station area is clear of stopped trains. This condition negatively impacts Caltrain weekday service and since 2005, the station has only received service on weekends.

SAN MATEO COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
1250 San Carlos Ave. – P.O. Box 3006
San Carlos, CA 94070 650.508.6269

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The Project addresses the holdout rule problem through rebuilding the station with a single, center-board platform. The Project, which will be constructed as part of the Broadway Grade Separation, will allow much-needed weekday commuter service to return to the Broadway area.

It is also important to note the City of Burlingame is applying concurrently for an INFRA grant to help fund the Broadway grade separation, a required component of the Project. As we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, it will be important to get people back to work and this project will help stimulate the economy from local construction jobs to the procurement of materials and services from companies across the state and the nation. I strongly support both grant applications and urge you to support funding for these critical infrastructure improvements which will be an unqualified success locally, regionally, and nationally.

Sincerely,



Jim Hartnett

Executive Director

San Mateo County Transportation Authority