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September 14, 2020

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Executive Director

Honorable Robert Rickman
Mayor, City of Tracy
333 Civic Center Plaza
Tracy, California

Subject: Valley Link – Downtown Tracy TOD

Dear Mayor,

I want to take this opportunity to congratulate the City of Tracy for its expeditious efforts to advance transit-oriented development (TOD) planning for the proposed Downtown Tracy station. It's exciting to think that you have initiated the very first TOD plan in all of San Joaquin County – and have taken vital steps needed to ensure the viability of the proposed Downtown Tracy Station.

The Valley Link TOD policy, along with the Board adopted Sustainability policy, present strategies to create vibrant and livable station area communities within the proposed station environs through the development of station area plans. But these plans are also necessary to ensure that Valley Link as a passenger rail system will be eligible to achieve highly competitive regional, state and federal funding. To have a train competitive for funding, the Valley Link policy requires local jurisdictions to conform to a minimum corridor threshold average of 2,200 units of housing near Valley Link stations and to complete station area plans. These plans, to be finished prior to the completion of 30% project design, must address, at a minimum, future land use changes that can include a variety of housing types and mixed-use development to showcase a diversity of business, station access needs, circulation improvements, pedestrian-friendly design, and other key features in support of transit-oriented development.

As you may be aware, in Plan Bay Area 2050, the Regional Transportation Plan for the nine-county Bay Area, the Valley Link project was evaluated for cost and benefit to the region and ranked among the highest of the rail projects analyzed. It is among the few transportation projects selected for Period 1 of the plan. This rating can be attributed in large part to the commitment the Board has made to the system wide adoption of the TOD policy. In San Joaquin County the Sustainable Communities Plan also identifies the advancement of TOD as a key goal to meet GHG targets while leveraging the project impact.



There is an urgent need to position the project for potential State and federal stimulus funding. For State funding, the reduction of GHG is a key funding metric – one for which TOD can provide further reduction. To compete for federal funding, NEPA analysis will require that we undertake the analysis of a wide range of alternatives – including alternative routes and stations. Therefore, preparing robust TOD plans that meet corridor thresholds for housing units as quickly as possible will further support the potential implementation of a Downtown Tracy Station and minimize the risk of the Valley Link Board looking at other options for station development.

Valley Link will provide an estimated 22,000 jobs during construction and when operational support 400 jobs per year with labor income of over \$19 million per year and \$69 million in business sales annually. It will also reduce congestion and improve safety on Interstate 580 – ranked as one of the most congested goods movement corridors in the region. It is now even more vital to our economy given the recovery needs we are now facing.

Please let me know how I can assist you in continuing to move as quickly as possible to advance the TOD planning taking place for the proposed Valley Link station in downtown Tracy. The Valley Link project and the City's TOD planning efforts will be the catalyst for an increasingly vibrant and sustainable downtown area.

Sincerely,



Michael Tree
Executive Director

CC: City Council
Jenny Haruyama, City Manager



Tri-Valley San Joaquin Valley
REGIONAL RAIL AUTHORITY

