



November 30, 2017

Dear (All Elected Officials Representing the Northeast San Fernando Valley):

**SUBJECT: SAVE THE DATE AND PLEASE RSVP – “UNITY MEETING” ON THURSDAY, JANUARY 18, 2018, 6:30 P.M.**

**As we observe the 3-year anniversary of the introduction of above ground high speed train routes through the heart of the northeast San Fernando Valley this Saturday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>, please join the SAFE Coalition and concerned stakeholders to take action that will lead to the CHSRA Board of Directors eliminating these routes from further consideration.**

***Three years of being held hostage!*** It's time for decisive action and closure to eliminate above ground high speed train routes from further consideration. We respectfully request your attendance, participation and leadership at our “Unity Meeting,” to be held Thursday, January 18, 2018, 6:30 p.m. at All Nations Church in Lake View Terrace.

The under funded, over-budget, behind schedule and terribly flawed California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) has held *your* communities – Palmdale, Acton, Aqua Dulce, Santa Clarita, San Fernando, Sylmar, Pacoima, Sun Valley, Shadow Hills, La Tuna Canyon, Sunland-Tujunga, Lake View Terrace, and Kagel Canyon - hostage for three years, impacting decision-making, investments and quality of life for residents, businesses and communities.

Our communities learned of the high speed train threat via a *postcard* in the mail in August 2014 and of the specific route proposals by attending an out-of-town meeting on December 2, 2014 *in Santa Clarita!* As a result, a large, grassroots community response, led by the volunteer SAFE Coalition was created in Fall 2014, later bringing together more than 2,300 people at All Nations Church on January 13, 2015, united in one voice to oppose the threat of high speed trains.

Since that time, the SAFE Coalition, comprised of the most knowledgeable and experienced community leaders from the northeast San Fernando Valley, has led and coordinated efforts throughout the region to eliminate this threat. Our accomplishments include:

- Convening 30+ community leaders regularly for three years to increase project-related knowledge, study project-related research and reports, implement a broad-based community education campaign, and provide official written/oral comments and testimony to the environmental review process.
- Achieving credibility with communities throughout the northeast San Fernando Valley as their representative on this issue, as well as networking with impacted communities in central and northern California.
- Providing thousands of written and oral comments/testimony on CHSRA plans through their formal federal/state environmental review process.
- Articulating shared goals and common ground which enabled formal expressions of support from a diverse, wide variety of elected officials, community leaders, homeowner associations, businesses, Neighborhood Councils, church leaders, educators and equestrians.
- Raising significant funding for education, outreach and legal defense efforts.
- Managing an educational website ([www.dontrailroad.us](http://www.dontrailroad.us)), also, obtaining extensive media coverage.
- Raising the profile of the high speed train issue to become a leading issue in numerous election campaigns.

- We are at a critical time. Not surprisingly, CHSRA recently announced yet *another* 2-year delay in their environmental studies, bringing the delay to *a whopping 4 years* since their original plans and projections were made in 2014. Best case, the environmental studies will be completed by 2020. Best case, high speed train construction will last another 7-11 years from that point. Best case, operations in our region will begin by 2031.

*Another 14 years of delay, uncertainty and threat? We say, "No More! Don't Railroad Us!" Thus, we propose:*

Every two years, CHSRA must submit an updated Business Plan to the legislature for approval. The 2018 Business Plan is being formulated NOW and NOW is the time for the northeast San Fernando Valley to come together and speak as a "United Front" comprised of residents, businesses, community leaders, community organizations and elected officials, **and demand the Authority immediately remove above ground high speed train alternatives, located in our densely populated and sensitive environmental areas, from further consideration.**

We have witnessed the success of other "United Fronts" in communities impacted by the high speed train throughout California. The following cities and counties have supported their residents with motions, resolutions, lawsuits and other forms of representation. We're seeking the same unity here in greater Los Angeles!

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|------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Santa Clarita | 9. Shafter        |
| 2. San Fernando  | 10. Menlo Park    |
| 3. Atherton      | 11. Chowchilla    |
| 4. Gilroy        | 12. Kings County  |
| 5. Morgan Hill   | 13. Kern County   |
| 6. Fresno        | 14. Madera County |
| 7. Palo Alto     | 15. San Carlos    |
| 8. Bakersfield   |                   |

We are calling on each of our elected officials and community-leading organizations to re-state and communicate their unequivocal opposition to the damaging above ground high speed train routes now, early in the Authority's 2018 Business Planning process, so the Authority has NO wiggle room that would lead to ANY of our communities remaining hostage to the high speed train threat. Our "Unity Meeting" on January 18 provides you an ideal forum to demonstrate your commitment to your constituents and colleagues. Toward that end, SAFE Coalition has formulated a number of time-sensitive, strategic initiatives essential to success. These initiatives are shown below and we hope you will work with us to ensure their accomplishment. SAFE Coalition has already reached out to and/or met with every elected official representing the northeast San Fernando Valley to begin this process.

The past three years of living under this high speed train threat have been divisive and have taken a tremendous toll on our communities. Further delays, uncertainty and threat are just unacceptable. We have sacrificed and suffered long enough. We need timely, concerted action by our "United Front." Please contact me if you have any questions and please extend us the courtesy early on of confirming your attendance and participation at our "Unity Meeting" on January 18, 2018. Thank you.

On behalf of the SAFE Coalition of Community Leaders, Representing All of the Northeast San Fernando Valley,

Dave DePinto  
 Member, SAFE Coalition ([www.dontrailroad.us](http://www.dontrailroad.us))  
 President, Shadow Hills Property Owners Assn.



**“UNITED FRONT” STRATEGIC INITIATIVES NEEDED TO  
“ELIMINATE ABOVE GROUND HIGH SPEED TRAIN ROUTES IMMEDIATELY”**

**1. Request for All Levels of Government**

- a. Communicate regularly with SAFE Coalition leadership to discuss status and strategy.
- b. Re-submit your past letter, or submit a new or “refreshed” letter to the CHSRA board calling for removal of above ground high speed train routes from the 2018 Business Plan and current environmental studies, and distribute your letter in the form of a news release.
- c. Express your opposition to above ground high speed train routes at CHSRA, METRO, SCAG and San Fernando Valley COG board meetings.
- d. Secure agreement with local unions to oppose above ground high speed train routes.
- e. Create joint City/County/State-sponsored financial/economic impact analysis of permanently lost revenue (property tax, sales tax, utility users tax, horse licensing, DWP revenue, business tax, franchise tax, income tax, transient occupancy tax, etc.).
- f. Secure withdrawal of bogus, inaccurate Mineta Equine Study by CHSRA.
- g. Display SAFE lawn signs and posters in your offices.

**2. Request for City of Los Angeles City Council Members and Mayor’s Office**

- a. Secure LA City Council Motion opposing above ground routes/proposing new alternatives based on existing support from Councilmembers Wesson, Krekorian, O’Farrell, Rodriguez and Martinez.
- b. Clarify Mayor Garcetti letter to CHSRA, dated February 28, 2017, where Metrolink Antelope Valley line as a right-of-way for high speed trains is referenced.
- c. Schedule meeting with City Attorney and SAFE Coalition to discuss legal options.

**3. Request for County of Los Angeles Supervisors**

- a. Secure San Fernando Valley COG Motion opposing above ground routes/study of new alternatives.
- b. Schedule meeting with County Counsel and SAFE Coalition to discuss legal options.

**4. Request for State of California Legislators**

- a. Submit official NEPA/CEQA EIS/EIR comment letter to Governor and CHSRA.
- b. Secure commitment for CHSRA board meeting in NE San Fernando Valley ASAP and prior to announcement of preferred alternative and EIR studies.
- c. Secure CHSRA Board Member site visits – Paskett and Camacho.
- d. Evaluate development of legislative means of removing above ground routes and studying new alternatives.

**5. United States Congressional Representatives**

- a. Meet with and write to Federal Railroad Administration, U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to convey opposition to tunneled and above ground routes through/adjacent to northeast San Fernando Valley.

**6. Los Angeles Unified School District**

- a. Secure LAUSD Motion opposing above ground routes/study of new alternatives.